Case Study 1 Group Assignment

Case Study Summary

Level A \* Case 2

Mr. English, a 4th grade Language Arts teacher, has 23 students. Of those 23 students, 4 students leave halfway through Mr. English’s writing lesson, to receive morning special education Language Arts services. The students return 20 minutes before it is time for lunch and miss portions of the writing activities in his class. The special education teacher attempts to cover as many of the 4th grade writing skills, but Mr. English has noticed the students are falling further behind. Even though the students are receiving Language Arts services, from the special education teacher, when they return to class, Mr. English does not include the 4 students in his daily writing lessons. The students become increasingly disruptive, much to Mr. English’s frustration, which results in him having to spend the last half of each writing lesson attempting to quiet down the 4 disruptive students. Mr. English’s goals for the next 4 weeks are to increase the quantity and quality of writing time and decrease the misbehavior of those 4 students.

Summary of Problem

From reading the case study, the major issue is that the students have nothing to work on when they return to class. The students become bored and will begin to be disruptive, which will affect the remaining students who are completing their writing activity. Since Mr. English does not include the 4 students in his daily writing lessons, they are missing out on concrete writing practice, which will affect their grade.

Response

The STAR sheet states that rules and procedures are connected in numerous ways. Rules are the teacher’s expectations of the students and procedures are the routines of accomplishing a classroom task (STAR sheet, p. 11). Rules are expectations that are to be followed within a procedure. Procedures guide students to meet those expectations that are within the rules and both must be practiced and continuously revisited, when needed. A teacher’s reaction to a disruptive student can either support or undermine those rules and expectations so it is imperative that the teacher react in a way that does not embarrass the student or is condescending because it could cause the student(s) to lose respect for the teacher (STAR sheet, p. 12). Mr. English should’ve created and implemented procedures for the 4 students when they return to class. The STAR sheet (p.12) also states that the teacher should respond to student behavior, that are not compliance with the rules and procedures, on a consistent basis. From the case study, it does not give the impression that Mr. English was readdressing those rules and procedures about how the students should conduct themselves upon entering the classroom and during the last 20 minutes before lunch. Dr. McIntyre (2015) suggests “self-management” as a method to correct an action. For example, Mr. English should’ve asked the students what should they currently be working on, in a positive tone. Due to Mr. English’s frustration, he would need to keep that in mind.

If Mr. English established what the expectations are for his students, who enter later in the class period, then he is not consistent with them. If a teacher is inconsistent with their expectations of the students, the student may forget those expectations or feel as if those expectations no longer apply to them (STAR sheet, p.15) as cited in (Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham,2003). Hathaway (2015) states that students become more confident with consistent expectations. The students are more confident and engaged, which allows teachers to easily recognize positive behavior and make corrections to problem behaviors in a less disruptive manner. Hathaway (2015) suggests tracking students’ behavior daily and applying rewards and consequences. This can motivate the students toward acting in a more positive manner and make improvements, where needed. Tracking students’ behavior can be as simple as a points system towards a reward such as homework pass, purchasing something from the school store, or extra credit. Students will become more accountable towards their behavior.

Mr. English may have to revisit his expectations and adjust them, where needed, for those 4 students. STAR sheet (p.17) states that the teacher should involve the students in the planning and implementation process of certain expectations. Mr. English should inform the students the reason for the change in procedure. The same procedures that Mr. English had for those 4 students, in the beginning of the year, may need to be tweaked or completely revised because they are not on the same pace as the remainder of the class. Expectations and establish the norms of the classroom go hand in hand. Since Mr. English is not reminding those students of his expectations, it interrupts the established classroom norms, which creates the culture of the classroom. Norms inform students of how they are expected to conduct themselves. Norms are created through established rules and procedures. According to the University of Vermont Center on Disability & Community Inclusion (n.d.) when students contribute to composing class norms, they are more likely to feel a level of ownership, participate in instruction, and engage in a more respectable and cooperative manner. If Mr. English provides work for the students or remind them of the work that they need to complete, it will remind them of the expectations and procedures of his classroom, which can reestablish those norms.

Case Study Summary

Level B \* Case 1

Mr. Washington, a 5th grade teacher, discovered, at the end of the grading period, that his student, Shandra, has a low grade in his class. Mr. Washington spoke with Shandra’s Title I math teacher, who informed him that she is doing well in tutoring. Shandra’s tutor also informed Mr. Washington that in tutoring, Shandra talks with her Title I peers about her mathematical thinking. Mr. Washington’s math period consists of lecturing and then independent seat work. Mr. Washington realized that he will need to change his math period to include collaboration so he plans to include partner work in his math instruction. In Mr. Washington’s Science period, he includes partner work with the expectations that student conversations cannot begin until he gives permission, must be on topic, and volume should be low enough that the rest of the class cannot hear. Since this procedure has worked in his Science period, he decides to implement it in Math period. Mr. Washington’s goals for Shandra is to increase her conversation with peers about her mathematical thinking and increase her grade. The goals that he set for himself are to increase his use of partner work in math instruction and his assistance with students vocalizing their mathematical thinking.

Summary of Problem

After reading the case study, the first problem that stood out was that Mr. Washington didn’t realize that Shandra was struggling in his math class until the end of the grading period. Low grades on assignments should’ve given Mr. Washington an indication that Shandra had difficulties in his class. Another problem is that Mr. Washington only spoke to Shandra’s Title I math tutor when he noticed that Shandra was struggling. There should be consistent conversations with Mr. Washington and Shandra’s tutor throughout the grading period to ensure that both her teacher and tutor are on the same page. Since Shandra’s tutor informed Mr. Washington that she was doing well in class, he would’ve came up with the idea to include student collaborations during the current grading period, which would’ve improved her grade in his class.

Response

After reading the STAR sheet, Mr. Washington did not hold up his end of the bargain in communicating to Shandra his expectations. Mr. Washington’s goal is to increase his assistance with students vocalizing their mathematic thinking. STAR sheet (p.9) as cited in (Brophy, 1998; Good & Brophy, 2000) states that when a teacher provides less feedback, fewer or inappropriate feedback, or showing less acceptance in the student’s ideas, then the teacher is communicating to the student that they have low expectations of them. The expectations that teachers place upon their students affect the student’s performance (STAR sheet, p.9) as cited in (Wong, 1998). Mr. Washington should’ve monitored Shandra’s progress and provided detailed feedback on her work (STAR sheet, p.9). Mr. Washington should’ve provided immediate feedback to Shandra so that she knew the quality of work that was expected of her and if she was on track with mastering it. Reynolds (2013) states that feedback should be sensitive to the individual needs of the student.

Once Mr. Washington noticed that Shandra was struggling, his feedback should have been tailored towards pushing Shandra towards a higher level of achievement, but not be discouraging. Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1992) state that “it is insufficient for teachers to record unsatisfactory scores and grades week after week and then to conclude at the end of the year that the students were unsuccessful” (p. 94, para.1). Two of Mr. Washington’s goals are to increase Shandra’s conversation with peers about her mathematical thinking and increase his use of partner work in math instruction. Dr. McIntyre (n.d.) states that cooperative learning increases student achievement, encourages positive self-concept, and increases respect for others. Cooperative learning provides face to face interaction with students, increase individual accountability for completing their assigned duties, a division of labor, and development of interpersonal skills. In cooperative learning, students collaborate with their peers and can gain other perspectives on the content, which can increase their understanding. Mr. Washington’s lack of collaboration with Shandra’s tutor was a form of negligence on her academic success. Loop (n.d.) states that teacher collaboration increases the likelihood of student success and helps with teacher effectiveness. Mr. Washington should have collaborated with Shandra’s tutor, earlier, so that he would know what strategies were used in her tutoring sessions that were effective.

Reference

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