**INSIDERS Artifact # 1**

***Observation of a Student***

**7 March 2012**

**Focus Student—“Rich”**

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| **Time** | **Observations** | **Interpretations** |
| **10:57** | Students come in and start to follow habit routine of getting laptops out, Mrs. Iron corrects them saying there’s no laptop’s. Only a few kids had gotten them anyway, so they returned them with no real complaints. | Mrs. Iron has done a good job establishing a regular routine for her classroom and she’s also good at keeping them under control when she has to change the norm. |
| **10:58** | Mrs. Iron collects homework (to complete an outline for the “limited essay” the students will be writing—Mrs. Iron gave them a handout with an outline format that they had to fill in)  Rich did not have his outline completed and ready to turn in. | Last week, Mrs. Iron told us that Rich rarely does his homework and has A’s in all of his classes except hers—which he is failing.  Rich seems like a brilliant student that has challenging behavioral issues and since he has already acted-out, doesn’t want to please his authorities and show that he is capable of getting the A. |
| **10:59** | Mrs. Iron gives the students “silent reading” time while she looks over their outlines. She tells Rich to write his outline during that time. | If Rich had done his outline for homework like he was supposed to, he could have relaxed with a book during this time. |
| **11:06** | Rich is working intently on his outline and is only distracted by the girl (Grace) next to him.  Grace got up to visit her locker—when she returned a few minutes later, Rich stopped working on his outline. It looked like he was asking Grace for help and she answered him. | Watching Rich and Grace interact is interesting. Rich seemed like he was working well while she wasn’t near him but when she sat down, neither of them were 100% focused on their work anymore. |
| **11:10** | Rich brings his outline to Mrs. Iron. She looks it over and sends him back to his seat with it. (She then comes to us and tells us that his outline was perfect…if only he’d have done it for homework like he was supposed to.)  Rich goes to the class bookshelf and signs out “The Last Lecture” (a book I heard him ask Mrs. Iron about at the start of class) | Between Rich’s other grades and his ability to write a perfect outline in about 6 minutes proves that he is academically apt to succeed in Mrs. Iron’s class.  I hope to find out why he is so against satisfying Mrs. Iron during my interview with him.  I also want to look up the book that he signed out, it might help me understand his interests. |
| **11:13** | Rich joins in on the “silent reading.” He stops to talk and flirt with Grace quite a few times as he tries to read the first few pages of his book. | I am impressed by how focused Rich looks on his book until Grace distracts him. |
| **11:15** | Grace puts her hand on Rich’s arm and distracts him from reading again to chat. |  |
| **11:16** | Rich returns to reading and actually seems really focused on it. Grace is looking at him more than at her own book for the rest of class. | It looked like Rich was beginning to get annoyed that Grace kept interrupting his reading. It was pretty obvious that Grace did not want to read at all since she never turned a page—she watched Rich read most of the class period. |
| **11:26** | Mrs. Iron comes over to show us some of the outlines that students turned in.  He keeps reading and is only distracted by a friend walking by. Grace still looks like she’s not reading her own book. | I was surprise to look over Mrs. Iron’s shoulder and see that Rich was still focused on reading even when Mrs. Iron wasn’t watching him. |
| **11:30** | Grace tries to talk to Rich three times. He shakes his head after each time. | Because I couldn’t hear what Grace was saying to Rich, I couldn’t tell what Rich shaking his head meant. I figured he was either responding “no” to questions she asked or trying to get her to stop talking to him… |
| **11:35** | Rich had been focused reading another 5 minutes. Grace finally distracted him by kicking his chair. | It was difficult to only observe Rich when he spent most of the class interacting with Grace. I think Rich might have gotten farther in his book if Grace wasn’t sitting next to him. |
| **11:36** | Mrs. Iron is going through Grace’s outline with her—she also did it very well.  Rich keeps reading and is not distracted by Mrs. Iron and Grace talking right next to him.  Someone knocks in a door down the hall and he looks up immediately, but returns to his book very quickly. |  |
| **11:37** | Rich closes his book—he knows the bell will ring in 2 minutes.  Mrs. Iron sees him close the book—he talks to her briefly about how he liked what he read. Rich talks to Grace until the bell rings. It sounds like they’re talking about another class. | Rich looked satisfied with himself when he closed his book and crossed his arms for the last two minutes of class. |
| **11:39** | The bell rings—Rich stood up in perfect timing with the bell, grabs his bag and leaves. |  |

**After Class Debriefing**

Mrs. Iron debriefs us on the status of our focus students grade-wise. She said that Rich won’t get full credit for his outline, even though it was perfect, because he did not have it done at the proper time. She said that homework is frequently a problem for Rich. When Rich finally does turn it in, he get angry that he can’t have full credit and that restarts the cycle of him not wanting to do his homework.

Mrs. Iron also told us about the new classroom rules that she put into effect on Monday. She put 8 specific changes into effect and reminded the class of the responsibilities they already know. Two of the new rules (that are a direct result of homework problems that she sees from all of her students) are: “all late homework receives a zero with no partial credit given” and “not taking the time to follow directions will result in a zero.” One of the reminders is about homework too: “no printing of homework during class, all printing should take place the day before or during homework.” Mrs. Iron stressed the importance of finishing assignments on time and turning them in at the deadline.

**INSIDERS Artifact # ½**

***Full class observation***

**2 March 2012**

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| **Time** | **Observations** | **Interpretations** |
| **10:57** | Students came into class happy—it’s Friday.  Routine was followed: they all got laptops out in preparation to finish writing their PSSA practice essay. Mrs. Iron is teaching them the 5-paragraph essay format. She showed us several handouts that she’s used. She color codes the organization format to help the students gather and arrange their ideas.  Today, students are supposed to write their introductions and conclusions. | After class, Mrs. Iron told us how much difficulty the students were having following the format. She said color-coding helps.  I think few 10th graders are excited about writing and that’s why they’re having such difficulties. They’re also probably not looking forward to their PSSAs. |
| **11:02** | It took less than 10 minutes for one student, Justin, to ask who Danielle and I were.  Mrs. Iron goes through the conclusions assignment sheet she just handed out. Most students are following along on the sheet as Mrs. Iron asks several of them to read pieces of it aloud. Their task today is to complete a conclusion and begin revising the entire essay—it is officially due on Monday. | I was surprised that we weren’t really a distraction for the students—since Mrs. Iron sat us at the front of the classroom on her raised “stage” in cushion chairs.  Reading aloud seems to keep students engaged and focused. |
| **11:10** | Independent work starts and Mrs. Iron begins circulating. She checks the progress of several students. |  |
| **11:20** | Mrs. Iron stops to help a girl in the front, Jamie, reign in her writing. She tells Jamie that she’s writing too much detail. Jamie says that she’s “too used to journalism” and Mrs. Iron reminds her to stay within the assignment for this class. | Later, Mrs. Iron tells us that Jamie is failing her class because she doesn’t do many of the assignments. I think Jamie is fixated on her passion for journalism and can’t see the value in any other class. |
| **11:30** | Mrs. Iron hands Danielle and I some essays that students have just turned in early. | The essays all follow the 5-paragraph structure but they seem rushed. One of the essays could have used peer review to eliminate many of the easily-fixable mistakes. |
| **11:35** | A girl in the center of the room, Mini, falls over her chair, un-hurt and laughing. Many students were just staring at their laptops—it’s difficult to tell if they’re reading and revising or just zoned out | I was surprised that only a few other students even took noticed, let alone laughed (I figured they were either really focused on their own work or didn’t necessarily care for Mini)—the class returned to normal very quickly and were barely off track in the first place. |
| **11:37** | Students pack up early and quite a few turn in their papers. |  |