How Can I Reduce Impulsive Behaviors in my Classroom?

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Question in Context

What do I wish to explore about my own teaching?

Introduction: *"My Teaching"*

I have decided to conduct a comprehensive study on two of my most impulsive high school students, Maria and Larry. Both students are in my period seven choir class of 65 students total. These two students tended to be the students I journaled about the most with regard to finding ways to improve their behavior throughout a 56 minute class period at Watchung Hills Regional High School in Warren, NJ. Impulsive behavior is defined as behavior without adequate thought, the tendency to act with less forethought than do most individuals of equal ability and knowledge, or a predisposition toward rapid, unplanned reactions to internal or external stimuli, without regard to the negative consequence of these reactions (International Society for Research on Impulsivity). During class time, I often find these two impulsive students focused on content for one moment and acting without thinking the next. This often disrupts the continuity of productive class discussion and instruction.

The daily routine and structure of choir may have an impact on how my students behave in the classroom. I see my students for 56 minutes 3-4 times per week depending on when the particular class drops. Watchung Hills runs on an eight period rotating drop schedule. With a rotating drop schedule, students meet for 6 out of their 8 classes per day. One class is "dropped" in the morning and another class is "dropped" in the afternoon rotation. Each class period is dropped once in a four day rotation. All 8 classes meet 3 times every 4 days. Students know when they walk into the classroom they first have a sight reading activity that involves them

taking a look at music they have never seen before. They actively and independently apply strategies they have learned in class to assist them with the daily sight reading exercise. Sight reading music gets students to become fully immersed in the music literacy process; they become independent learners during those initial five minutes of class and understand what notes on a page actually mean. When five minutes are up, we work through the sight reading pattern as a class, isolating pitch followed by rhythm. Immediately after sight reading, students vocally warm up their voices. Vocal technique and terminology is introduced during warm-up that will later be applied to the rehearsal of repertoire for the upcoming winter concert. After warm-ups, students know to sit down in their seats as I take attendance and then go over any announcements for the week. Following announcements always comes the main part of the class - the rehearsal of winter chorus concert repertoire. Students know that all warm-up terminology and application of vocal technique will be utilized and transferred from the vocal warm-up to the rehearsal of choral repertoire. During choral repertoire rehearsal, I usually choose between one or two pieces to work on per class period. Rehearsal involves student and teacher critique as well as immediate feedback based on what needs work and what students may be struggling with. When a particular section of the choir needs work on a section of music I still have the remainder of the class actively listening, following along in their music, and critiquing what went well and what needs work (positive and constructive criticism). For example, I may need to work with the girls to fix a pitch problem in one of the pieces we are working on. When I am working with the sopranos and altos (girls of the chorus), the boys know I expect them to actively listen and continue to follow along in their music while humming their vocal line and staying engaged. All students are also marking their music accordingly as I go over important musical terminology in the score.

Every student has their own music binder with their sight reading worksheets and music. All of my students are well aware of classroom routine and know what I expect of them (sight reading, warm-ups, attendance and announcements, repertoire). There is a very specific routine to choir that students now understand and follow. It has been established since the first day of the semester.

My research question centers around the overarching theme of classroom management and discipline and how to reduce impulsive behavior in my classroom. Is impulsive behavior gender-specific, grade level-specific, special education-specific, none of the above, or a combination of all three? What role do I have in reducing impulsive behavior? For instance, would refocusing my attention or being strategic about classroom arrangement support more positive behavior? Can impulsive behavior also include other factors as well?

How can I use background information pertaining to my students to my advantage, and what strategies can I implement to assist this impulsive population and redirect unproductive behavior in a more positive and productive way? As an educator, I work extremely hard to maintain the flow of productive choir rehearsal time. When off-task impulsive disruptions occur, it is difficult to get a class of 65 back on track and maintain the continuity of instruction for the remainder of class time. I sometimes find myself redirecting my impulsive students every five minutes or so. Some impulsive behaviors I encounter in my classroom include students finding the need to get up out of their seats at an inappropriate time. Other examples include students bringing up a topic in discussion having nothing to do with the day's lesson. I would like to implement classroom management strategies throughout the year in order to allow for these impulsive students to feel successful in the choir room without being seen as a distraction. My

plan is to search for ways to channel the sometimes overwhelming energy of an impulsive

student and turn this energy into something positive in the classroom. The energy of any student

should always be used appropriately and productively, especially in a performance-based class

where positive energy is certainly beneficial in a classroom.

How can I go about implementing productive classroom management strategies to ensure

that 56 minutes of effective learning is taking place in my classroom and that impulsivity is

channeled in a positive way? There always seems to be a mismatch between allotted time and

how much actual academic learning time there is in class. Academic learning time occurs when

three learning conditions are applied simultaneously: students need to be engaged in the task,

time must be allocated to a task, and students must have a high rate of success (Fisher, Marliave,

and Filby, 1979). Classroom management is absolutely crucial in larger classes. Once

impulsivity is redirected and used to work to my advantage, I am hoping class time will be more

efficient and productive.

Literature Review

What is the larger research beyond my research question?

As a high school educator struggling with students who have a difficult time monitoring self-regulation, it is extremely important to ask myself *why* I often encounter this problem in my classroom. Is it me? Is it the student? Is it home life that plays a crucial role in regulating this impulsiveness? Studies in the field of education have found ample evidence in the importance of understanding how the mind learns and works. Helping students better self-regulate is a daunting task because it seems such a personal, permanent quality of an individual. But researchers have shown that impulsivity can be monitored and regulated. Good self-regulation is associated with a broad spectrum of positive academic and social outcomes, and poor self-regulation is associated with greater risk for correspondingly bad outcomes (Willingham, 2011). These facts certainly highlight the urgency for teachers to do all they can do to help students grow in this area. It is our job as educators to build a vision for a peaceful and effective 21st-century classroom while providing positive classroom management techniques (Schibsted, 2009). There are several main themes discussed in the articles I have read that I have found useful to aid in answering my research question (how can I reduce impulsive behavior in my classroom?):

1. Good behavior needs to be taught.

2. Factors affecting impulsivity

3. Classroom management strategies to reduce impulsivity

The articles I found argue for the importance of teaching self-regulation and good behavior in order to reduce impulsiveness in the classroom.

Good behavior needs to be taught

Learning acceptable social skills like sitting quietly, sharing, and discussing problems may be difficult for even well-behaved children. For children from chaotic homes, such skills may never be learned without direct instruction, modeling, and practice (Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham, 2004a). This underlying theme of teaching acceptable and appropriate behavior to all children (beginning early in a child's life) was emphasized in several articles I read. According to Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004a), social skills training in schools can benefit a wide range of students and can be a worthwhile investment even for schools with moderate or mild levels of student misbehavior. It is suggested that training can be as little as 30 minutes once or twice a week to eliminate future behavior issues for students. In one evaluation of the importance of social skills training, observers recorded students' behavior in intervention and nonintervention classrooms and found that in intervention classrooms, aggression decreased 29 percent from Fall to Spring - in nonintervention classrooms, aggression went up 41 percent (Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham, 2004a). At the same time, while positive and neutral behavior increased by 10 percent in intervention classrooms, it is increased by just one percent in nonintervention classrooms. The following Fall, six months after the end of the intervention, students who had been exposed to the intervention were still better behaved (Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham 2004a). Daniel Willingham (2011) also agrees with the idea of teaching good behavior and providing training to help children. The earlier the child is exposed to the modeling of proper behavior, the more likely the child will be able to self-regulate his or her behavior in the future. There have been several attempts to write school curricula that improve self-regulation in young children. One

example is known as Tools of the Mind, an early childhood program comprised of 40 activities

meant to improve a set of three mental functions, one of which is self-regulation. Some activities

include dramatic play, activities that encourage turn-taking, and activities meant to encourage

talking to oneself as a self-regulatory strategy (Willingham, 2011). These specific interventions

of one or two years have shown to have positive effects on children's self-regulation. The earlier

in life students are taught to self-regulate, the more successful they will be throughout their

educational career.

  Self-regulation is partly due to genetics; a propensity toward impulsivity or

self-regulation may be inherited directly from a child's parents (Willingham, 2011). However,

these inherited traits may change. With that being said, self-regulation can change due to two

underlying factors in the home: emotional support and cognitive support (Willingham, 2011).

Emotional support and praise from parental figures in the home can result in more successful

self-regulation. If parents are often cold and tend to criticize more than praise, these traits are

associated with poor self-regulation in a child. In conclusion, positive interaction with adults

helps children understand their own individual emotional experiences, the emotional experiences

with others, and how to interact in a sensitive manner. The second underlying factor that affects

impulsivity in the home is cognitive support. If parents intellectually stimulate their children (ask

questions and use complex sentence structures) and have equally intellectually stimulating

resources in the home (books and toys), children will be more likely to self-regulate effectively

(Willingham, 2011). In addition, children are better self-regulators when there are clear,

well-structured, and consistent home rules. When the daily routine inside a home is predictable,

children are more likely to adjust to their own behavior and regulate accordingly (Willingham, 2011).

In the late 1960s, Walter Mischel conducted several experiments with preschoolers at a Stanford University nursing school. Known as "The Marshmallow Test," 4 and 5-year olds were presented with two options: they could either eat one marshmallow immediately or wait several minutes longer to eat two. Several years later, Mischel followed up on his original study. He discovered that the kids who waited for the 2 marshmallows had higher SAT scores, greater workplace success, and a lower body mass index later in life. Mischel became a leading expert on self-control and self-regulation (Mischel, 2014). Self-discipline and positive talk can be extremely beneficial at a young age. If parents are emotionally and cognitively supportive and take the time to reinforce what is being learned at school, children will be exposed to consistent modeling and rehearsal of good behavior throughout their day.

Behavior problems that teachers face in the classroom come from students who quickly see whether or not their teachers value appropriate behavior according to what the individual teacher deems "appropriate" for each individual student (Curwin, 2014). If we as educators teach what acceptable and proper behavior looks like and students recognize our willingness to follow through and enforce rules in the classroom, we present ourselves as good role models to our students. We are in a sense teaching our students what good behavior looks like by modeling positive behavior choices. Psychologist Albert Bandura discovered the importance of behavioral models as he worked with patients with snake phobias. He found that the patients' observation of former patients handling snakes was an effective therapy. Bandura discovered that these observations were far more effective in treating their phobias than persuasion and observing the

psychologist handle the snakes. Bandura's social learning theory stresses the importance of

observational learning, imitation, and modeling (Hurst, 2010). Being a good role model

essentially means never doing anything to a child that you would want them to do to others.

Teaching by example is crucial; educators must always think carefully about the way to

intervene with a student before following through with the decision (Curwin, 2014). Schibsted

(2009) believes that correcting students is the weakest way to teach rules. It is not about the

"gotcha, you're wrong" all the time. Modeling an effective way to approach misbehavior by

saying "here's the right way" will allow for your "students to be able to trust you and feel safe.

That enables them to experience emotional health and flourish" (Schibsted, 2009, p.2).

Who you are as an educator can also be influenced by teaching exemplary behavior

(Willingham, 2011). One study found that teaching behavior can have a profound impact on

kindergarteners. Researchers categorized certain kindergarteners at 15 months as being "socially

bold" (which previous studies have found as an indicator that children are more likely to be off-

task in kindergarten). The researchers then identified three teaching styles of the teachers who

taught these "bold" kindergarteners: sensitive, over-controlling, or detached. Sensitive teachers

were consistent, positive, and warm in their modeling of good behavior. Overcontrolling teachers

imposed their own learning agenda on their students regardless of the specific needs of their

classes. Detached teachers were usually unaware of what children were doing and did not put

much focus on behavior. When students were paired with an over-controlling or detached

teacher, kids who were not originally socially bold at 15 months were likely to be off-task and

act in impulsive ways. If paired with a sensitive teacher, these students showed fewer negative

behaviors and less time off-task. Teachers can most certainly have an impact on those who need it most (Willingham, 2011). Teaching style is another way to track behavior in a classroom.

Factors affecting impulsivity

Students are usually not only impulsive during the school day. Generally, this characteristic of impulsiveness carries into the home as well. Other factors affecting impulsivity not grounded in the school setting includes genetics and peer acceptance. In the following paragraphs, I will provide examples of each of these factors.

Students diagnosed with ADHD tend to be incredibly impulsive. The heritability of ADHD is about 80 percent (Willingham, 2005, p.2). Therefore, whether or not a child develops ADHD depends largely on his or her genetic inheritance. Geneticists have shown that ADHD is one of the most heritable psychiatric diseases known. There was a study on ADHD that examined twins. Twins can either be identical (share 100 percent of their genes) or fraternal (share 50 percent of their genes). Studies show that if one twin has ADHD, then the other is much more likely to have it if the twins are identical than if they are fraternal. The home lives of either identical or fraternal twins will obviously be quite similar. Thus it is the greater shared genetic component that drives the effect. Geneticists have identified several genes that may be the culprit, most of which concern the regulation of dopamine (Willingham, 2005).

There are far more children diagnosed with ADHD in the United States when compared to France, for example. Because the United States psychologists consider ADHD to be a biological disorder with biological causes, the preferred method of treatment is also biological -

medications include psychostimulants. In comparison, French psychologists view ADHD as a medical condition with psycho-social and situational causes. Instead of drug treatment, French psychologists look at the child's social context instead. They choose to treat the problem with psychotherapy and counseling. Included in the French psychosocial approach are possible nutritional causes for ADHD-type symptoms, specifically the fact that behavior of some children worsens when foods with artificial coloring and certain preservatives are consumed. Finally, the French philosophies of child-rearing are a bit different than those of the United States. From the moment their children are born, French children are brought up with structure. Snacking throughout the day is not allowed; mealtimes are at four specific times per day. French parents also provide more limits to their children, which allows them to in turn feel more safe and secure. Spanking is also not considered child abuse in France - parents are much more firmly in charge of their children (Wedge, 2012). When children have more structure and abide by a particular set of rules beginning at a young age like what is seen in France, they tend to be less impulsive and are better able to self-regulate later in life.

Burr Snider (2005) suggests that acting out in a classroom may be the only way a child can gain acceptance. Goofing off may also suggest social insecurities or academic shortcomings. Frequently, a troubled home life also generates the student who comes to be known as the "class clown." As educators, our job is to ultimately find out *why* a particular student is choosing to act out. "Often it's anxiety and stress coming from the home. In alcoholic families, for instance, kids take on different roles - be it the scapegoat, caretaker, or clown - and if they are being validated in that role, then they bring it to school, where they suck up all the energy in the class and deprive others of quality learning time" (Snider, 2005, p.2). Once the educator does a bit of

research on his or her own, it may be decided that counseling may be the best option for a particular student. "The wiring of these students is very sensitive, and when there's dysfunction in the family, they internalize it and often blame themselves. They try to compensate in the healthiest way they know, through creative humor" (Snider, 2005, p.2). This creative humor is a talent in and of itself. If the teacher is able to positively channel this ability, it can be very useful in a child's future! Many ex-class clowns are now comedians and actors in the real world. Henry Winkler who starred as "The Fonz" on *Happy Days* confessed to having been a class clown in high school. Acting out for him was a way of coping with his dyslexia. "Clowning around was the only thing that made school tolerable" (Snider, 2005, p.2). The question arises, once a class clown, always a class clown? Former educator and current administrator Dianne Maxon has reason to think so (Snider, 2005). It is our job as educators to positively channel that enthusiasm and energy in our class clowns to allow them to also be a successful asset to the classroom environment.

Sometimes acting out in class can be attributed to Carol Dweck's idea of learned helplessness (Fincham, 2009). Learned helplessness in the classroom can result from teacher behavior. This discovery emerged from the observation that girls in grade school receive higher grades and less negative feedback in the classroom than boys. Dweck specifically observed teacher feedback in classrooms. She found that 45% of boys' work-related feedback was non-intellectual (comments were made about legible handwriting instead) (Fincham, 2009). Feedback for girls referred almost exclusively to its intellectual quality. Although non-intellectual feedback is recommended, research suggests that focusing the students' attention on learning should help to combat learned helplessness (Fincham, 2009).

According to psychologist Dr. William Glasser, all behavior is purposeful (Glasser, 2007). Once basic needs are met, relationships improve between student, teacher, and parent. The teacher and parent will better serve as effective models for the child. Humans and other mammals are driven to do all they can to survive. Other mandatory needs include love, belonging, freedom, and fun. One of the students I have chosen to actively research, Larry, is dealing with parents who are recently divorced. Perhaps Larry's struggle with self-regulation has to do with what he has to deal with at home. According to Glasser, if Larry is not actively receiving the love, belonging, and freedom he should be getting while at home, he may be craving those basic needs during the school day. Beyond these needs, only humans are genetically driven by the need for power. This need has led all human societies to try and control others with whom they disagree. By teaching choice theory, the concept of external control can be replaced to include understanding why specific behaviors are chosen (Glasser, 2007).

Classroom management strategies to reduce impulsivity

Teachers must learn to be able to implement new classroom management strategies if they would like to prevent impulsivity. For example, after reading the article about students with ADHD, a particularly impulsive population, there are strategies in place that may help combat this poor self-regulatory behavior. Specifically, we as educators must ensure it is easy for an impulsive child to pay attention. Sometimes desk arrangement can be crucial; finding a way to limit all possible distractions for a student with ADHD in a classroom is helpful (Willingham, 2005). Willingham (2011) also agrees that when students are distracted, it is always worth

considering removing the distraction altogether, rather than counting on the students to ignore it. When there is a trigger in the environment that prompts poor self-regulation in one or more students, it is worth weighing the pros and cons of removing the trigger altogether. Creating an organized and well-thought-out classroom will have a positive impact on a student's self-regulation (Willingham, 2011).

Another classroom management strategy that may help impulsive students involves following through with consequences. Kids with ADHD in particular do not think about the consequences of what they are doing before they do it. Choosing to follow through with an immediate consequence may help them to make the connection (Willingham, 2005). Dr. Richard Curwin (2014) agrees that following through with consequences will model effective classroom management. Behavior problems that teachers face in their classrooms come from students who quickly see whether or not their teachers value appropriate behavior. The most disruptive students are often the ones who best understand when teachers are hypocritical and do not follow through with enforcing rules. As educators, we must follow the rules we implement in our classrooms and remain professional in all situations. If a rule is ever too hard for an educator to follow, it will be extremely difficult for a child to follow it and make sense of it. When students take part in determining a set of classroom rules, students understand expectations because they are participating in the process (Schibsted, 2009). They understand they are fully responsible for breaking rules if they help in creating them. Not only should rules be followed consistently in the classroom, they should also be honored cross-curricularly. Being consistent about expectations from classroom to classroom can be difficult. However, students may think, "If I go to this

teacher, I get this answer, but if I go to the principal, he'll tell me another answer" (Schibsted, 2009, p.2). It is like a kid who gets different answers from Mom and Dad. Consistency is key.

In order to ensure good behavior in a classroom, experts suggest educators handle situations quietly and calmly (Schibsted, 2009). If there is a behavioral issue, it should not be made a big deal in front of the entire class. Staying neutral and not accusatory can also lighten the situation. Instead of a "Why did you do that?" type of approach, it is important to ask the student what happened, opening the way for students to tell their side of the story. Follow up questions can often include, "How do you think that made John feel?" Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004b) agree that confrontation in front of the class only makes matters worse. This is considered an ineffective reaction to bad behavior. If the student "wins" the battle, forcing the teacher to concede, the teacher's ability to manage the classroom may be severely damaged. Other students may lose respect for the teacher and may resent the fact that a single student, rather than the teacher, can essentially control the classroom (Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham, 2004b, p.2). In contrast, if the teacher "wins" and is successful in establishing his or her authority over the student, the victory is likely to be short-lived and will end up being very costly in the long run. The student may feel humiliated in front of his or her peers and will most likely feel long-term resentment toward the teacher. Willingham (2011) also suggests that when a student does decide to act impulsively, a calm, warm correction and redirection of the student is more likely to prevent further impulsive acts than an argument or confrontation that would make the student feel bad. Teachers need to remember that a student who is depressed or has negative feelings will have a harder time controlling his or her temper and will be unable to self-regulate appropriately. This is when environmental support again comes into play. Willingham (2005,

2001) agrees that a quiet environment in which to work will benefit impulsive students. The teacher should remain sensitive and work hard not to single out the one or two impulsive students in the classroom. This is directed back to teacher personality and student reaction to each (sensitive, over-controlling, and detached teaching personalities).

Lastly, lapses can lead to students giving up their attempts to self-regulate in a classroom setting. For example, an alcoholic sees a drink for the first time in a few weeks. Once the alcoholic goes for the drink because he or she thinks it is "okay" at this point, he or she will fall back into bad habits of drinking. Because the abstainer has lapsed, it will be easier for him or her to lapse again and fall into a self-destructive cycle (Willingham, 2011). If a student-teacher relationship is warm and trusting, the teacher will have the credibility to encourage the student to put the lapse behind him or her and to behave appropriately again. Schibsted (2009) and Curwin (2014) both agree that the secret to effective discipline is positively building relationships, not reacting punitively to student misbehavior. If the class clown knows that they can trust you, perhaps they will take your advice to pursue stand-up comedy or acting. Establishing that trust will enable the student to feel confident that their teacher believes in them (Snider, 2005).

Conclusion

After reading these articles it is obvious that understanding different classroom management techniques and developmental processes along with knowing your students can help to control impulsivity and allow it to work to your advantage. All the articles I read discuss the importance of *teaching* and *modeling* proper behavior. Social skills training may sound at

first like just another requirement to be piled onto teachers and crammed into precious teaching time (Walker, Ramsey and Gresham, 2004a). But school requires such a unique set of skills that learning how to self-regulate is crucial. If students are not exposed to it and taught it, how do you expect them to behave the way you want them to? They cannot read your mind! Impulsive behavior is also not only present on the playground or during the school day. Students most likely display the same behavior at home, particularly students with ADHD. When teachers do research and find out information about impulsive students, they may find answers - *why* is Johnny acting out in class? If a teacher was concerned and cared about the well-being of Johnny, she would contact home, interview mom and dad, and maybe even interview the student. Because I would like to focus my research on two extremely impulsive students in particular, perhaps learning more about Larry's and Maria's home life will help me better get to know my students outside of the classroom. Finally, if teachers are aware of effective classroom management strategies that may help control impulsivity, the classroom climate will be much more effective. I agree with Schibsted (2009) that before any classroom management comes positive student-teacher relationships. Once these are in place, management techniques can be implemented. I particularly was interested in how teachers react to bad behavior. Because I tend to fly off the handle when dealing with impulsive behavior, Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004b) put classroom management into perspective for me. Singling a child out in front of the class can be humiliating. Being a good role model means never doing anything to a child that you do not want them to do to others (Curwin, 2014). I need to think before I act in every situation, and therefore *also* not be impulsive: do I want this child saying or doing what I am about to say or do to another child or adult? If I were to yell "get out" without thinking, I first

need to imagine that student yelling the same thing to another child in the classroom and then reassess my dialogue.

As a teacher-researcher, all three themes (teaching good behavior, targeting specific factors that affect impulsivity, and implementing new classroom management techniques to reduce impulsivity) pertain to my research question (how can I reduce impulsive behavior in my classroom?). I hope to implement new strategies and conduct research accordingly based on my article findings. However, questions still run through my mind as I begin data collection: how can impulsive behavior be monitored if it is not always predictable? Because impulsivity is not always consistent in my classes, how can I effectively monitor students who I define impulsive? What if Johnny is acting out one day and is behaviorally fine the next? Because I am dealing with unpredictability, this may stifle my data collection. Another concern of mine centers around parent reaction to the interview process. When collecting data, I understand the interview may not go as planned. Because there is a strong possibility that I may gather different data than I originally sought out, will this also affect my research? One does not only have one question - from one question sparks several others.

By doubting we are led to question, by questioning we arrive at the truth. – Peter Abelard

Methodology: Data Collection and Analysis Activities

What was the journey?

I chose to conduct my case study on two high school students: one twelfth grade general education male student Larry and one sophomore special education classified ADHD female student Maria. In large choir classes of 65 students, I tend to focus most on maintaining complete focus during the fifty-six minutes of time I have with the class. I have worked hard during data collection to target the distracting behavior in my classroom and have discovered new ways to redirect this behavior. Once there is a distraction in larger classes, it is often difficult for me to refocus the remaining students in the class. To compare my larger choir classes to my smaller choir class, the one abnormally small choir class of 30 students I have this year is exponentially easier to manage - there are absolutely no disruptions because there are fewer students and fewer chances to *be* distracted. Students know they cannot get away with as much in a class size that is significantly smaller than my other classes. Many students also know that in their core academic classes that are larger, there are always two teachers in the room, a co-teacher and a general education teacher. For elective classes, this is not the case; it is always only the elective teacher in the room who is leading instruction with no assistance. Because students know that there are not two sets of eyes on them at all times, they again realize that getting away with things is much easier.

Maria is a 10th-grade female student at Watchung Hills Regional High School. She has both an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and 504 plan. Her 504 states specifically that Maria needs to be seated near the front of the classroom during instruction. She also needs a copy of

class notes and requires re-clarification on any material discussed in class. Her IEP states that she

requires extended time on tests, needs re-clarification, and works best in a small, structured

co-teaching environment. Maria is a social butterfly inside and outside of the classroom. She is a

cheerleader and is easily distracted by the boys in the chorus classroom. Both of her parents

work full-time jobs. She is left alone after school until approximately 6PM when her mother

returns home from work. Her father works the late shift at a local liquor store and spends most of

his time with her on weekends.

Larry is a 12th-grade male student at Watchung Hills Regional High School. Unlike

Maria, he does not have an IEP or 504 plan. Larry has dreams to become an aspiring actor on

Broadway. However, this dream tends to change weekly. One week Larry will be researching

music schools in hopes of becoming a music educator. The following week he will be looking at

medical school programs. In another blink of an eye, he will change his mind to wanting to be a

psychologist after he graduates high school. His parents do not support his dreams to be involved

in music. They are set on him making a career as a doctor because they "make a lot of money."

Larry is also not allowed to stay before or after school for music-related activities. When he

does, he lies and tells his parents he is attending meetings pertaining to becoming a doctor (we

have a club in our school called "Future Doctors of America"). Larry is the oldest of eight

brothers and sisters. He splits half of the week living with his mother in Piscataway

(approximately forty minutes from Watchung Hills) and the other half of the week living with

his father in Green Brook (approximately twenty minutes from Watchung Hills). Two years ago,

his parents split up when his mother realized she would rather date other women. His parents are

not on speaking terms at the moment. He will sometimes go several weeks without seeing all

seven of his other siblings together because they are divided up amongst the two households. When he is at his mother's, he is not allowed to stay after school for any extra-curricular program. If he does, he is not picked up until 7:30PM; this is when his mother is able to pick him up after leaving her job. When Larry is at his mother's during the week, his morning commute is troublesome because of how far away his mother's apartment is from the school. He is often late to school and has had several detentions due to the fact that he cannot get to the high school on time in the morning. Every year I choose a select group of my best singers to be a part of my select choir. This group meets every morning at 7AM before school starts. Larry used to be a part of this group; however, because of his inability to get to school on time, he sadly has not been able to audition this year. Because Larry is living two different lives at two different homes throughout the week, he tends to forget his materials for class and cannot retrieve them until the next time he is at that particular home. Larry's stressful home life may contribute significantly to his absentmindedness and constant need for attention.

After approximately two months of journaling, I quickly discovered through coding that I journaled three out of four times a week about these two impulsive students in particular, Larry and Maria. Their disruptions during class time and interactions with other students were of particular interest to me. I wanted to find a way to improve their behavior and channel their negative impulsive behavior into positive behavior during structured choir rehearsal. I repeatedly found myself saying the same thing about both students in my journal - "I know they can do better; their impulsiveness is something that can be improved. Now to uncover the reason for this impulsiveness and where it is coming from!"

My primary source of data I used throughout my research was journaling. Keeping a journal helped me to record my thoughts, ideas, questions, and frustrations (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). Even though sometimes I felt I would remember a particular moment in class, I still managed to find the time to jot down my thoughts of the day after school. I found this extremely helpful in the research process. As mentioned above, I found myself journaling about two students in particular 3-4 times a week. I would journal at the end of every school day at 2:15PM, 3-4 times a day, for 15 minutes. I set a timer the second the 2:15 bell rang for 15 minutes and simply wrote whatever was on my mind; I did not allow my pencil to leave the paper during this time. Throughout the journaling process, I documented what I had done throughout two months to lessen impulsivity specifically with my two students I found myself writing about day after day. I was able to write about where my students were seated during instruction and how changing their positioning in the classroom would affect their disruptive behavior. I also journaled about my plan to keep a tally of students I called on most often during the class period. I began using a checklist during the school day, trying to vary who was called on from day to day. Finally, I journaled about how to keep students *engaged*; creating meaningful connections in a classroom can often lead to less disruptions during class time. Some other main ideas that stood out while journaling also included teaching good behavior as a role model, Larry's "acting out" during class time, following through with specific consequences during the allotted fifty-six minutes, *my* behavior and how *I* tend to handle situations, and my students' trust in me.

My secondary source of data included observations and field notes. Field notes can take many forms, depending on the overall purpose of a study. Field notes of observations in the

classroom are qualitative research methods (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). They contain detailed

and concrete descriptive information about the setting, the context, and the personal interactions

of what or who is being observed (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). Good field notes are dated and

include the time, location, and the setting or context in which the observation occurred.

Language is also descriptive, not evaluative. I was able to collect this data twice a week for

fifteen minutes a day at the end of my most difficult period seven choir class with Larry and

Maria. My observations and field notes allowed me to understand my students' behavior in other

classes; I wanted to find out if there was a link between impulsivity in my classroom and in other

classrooms. I found myself yet again collecting notes pertaining to Larry and Maria in particular.

I often took notes on their interactions with others in the classroom and their level of focus

during valuable class time.

My third source of data included thirty-minute interviews. I chose to conduct structured

interviews. Structured interviews require adherence to a very particular set of rules (Falk and

Blumenreich, 2005). Using interviews helped me to understand my research participants'

perspectives on the matters I was studying. Interviews are best suited for finding out in-depth

information from a small group of people (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). Each question I posed

was read word for word without any deviation. I also made sure I was showing consistency in

behavior across all interviews. This consistency included body posture, facial expressions, and

emotional affect. Reactions to participant responses were kept to a minimum. Because I was

looking for very specific information, this type of interview was best for the given situation. I

wanted to ensure that the data was kept concise and bias was kept to a minimum (Interview

Types). Interview questions were open-ended. If I wanted a simple yes or no answer, I would

have given out a questionnaire instead (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). I was fortunate enough to

interview the parents of Maria and Larry. The questions I posed for the parents of my students

are below (see Picture 1):

<center>*PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS*</center>

- *Question #1: How is Larry's/Maria's behavior at home? What do you specifically do to discipline her when discipline is necessary?*

- *Question #2: How does Maria/Larry interact with his/her siblings/the rest of the family?*

- *Question #3: What are Maria's/Larry's interests that I may not know about as his/her teacher?*

Picture 1: Interview questions used for teacher-parent interviews I conducted

My fourth and final source of data collection included generating a survey using

surveymonkey.com. Surveys are appropriate for obtaining information from a larger group of

people (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). Surveys can include close-ended questions, open-ended

questions, attitude questions, or a combination of all three. Close-ended questions can be

answered with a simple yes or no, true or false, multiple choice answer option, or an attitude

(Likert) scale (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). During the first Friday in February, I had each choir

class complete an online survey using their smart phones. There were several students without

smart phones who used laptops. The survey took most of my students approximately 20 minutes.

With this very specific data, I was able to tap into individual student likes and dislikes. In

understanding individual student needs, I was hoping the survey would aid in lessening

impulsivity, specifically for Larry and Maria. The survey included questions students had to

"rate" on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being "never true" and 10 being "always true." This type of

question utilizes an attitude (Likert) scale. These kinds of questions are especially useful if a

research goal is to obtain definitive answers that can be easily aggregated across large groups or

expressed as percentages of the whole (Falk and Blumenreich, 2005). The survey also included

several open-ended questions (see Picture 2):

1. On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being "never true" and 10 being "always true," answer the

following:

> *i.   I think about the future consequences of my actions.*
>
> *ii. I get distracted by little things.*
>
> *iii. I get fidgety after a few minutes if I'm supposed to sit still.*
>
> *iv. I find that I often say things out loud in class before I think about what I had*
>
>   *just said.*

> *2.   My interests are:*

> *3.   I enjoy music because:*

> *4.   Some music I enjoy listening to includes…*

Picture 2: Survey questions

Findings and Implications

What did I learn and what do I think it means?

Focusing my research on two of my most impulsive students proved to be both

enlightening and challenging. Both Larry and Maria would be resistant to change at times,

especially when it had to do with where they were placed in the classroom. Because I

experimented with interactions amongst both students, I found myself changing their seats and

journaling about their interactions often. I moved several students around at any given time (not

only Maria and Larry) so they would not be seen as the potential "targets" of my study. It took

about a month to finally come up with a seating chart I was happy with. As a choir director,

keeping students organized by voice part is often helpful. However, in Larry and Maria's class, I

was able to thoughtfully organize them so that they were sitting next to someone of the opposite

sex and not near another person with the same voice part assignment. When students are not next

to another student sharing the same voice part, it is often difficult to learn one's part (the person

next to them is singing a completely different part than them; this reinforces individual student

independence in class). However, because my period seven class is one of my higher level choir

classes I teach (I have had Larry for four years now and Maria two), they have enough

experience to not be seated by voice part. The idea of removing the distraction altogether in a

classroom relates back to finding a way to limit all possible distractions, especially for students

like Maria with ADHD (Willingham, 2005). Willingham (2011) states that removing the

distraction altogether can certainly improve overall classroom engagement and focus. Creating

an organized and well-thought-out classroom will have a positive impact on the both students'

self-regulation (Willingham, 2011).

Journaling

As I began to think more critically about my journaling during data collection, I was able

to identify some of the main themes I came across while writing. In my journaling, three main

themes emerged with regard to my two students of study, Maria and Larry. The first theme had

to do with student participation and engagement. The second theme centered around classroom

management. Finally, the third theme pertained to the concept of classroom management and

following through with specific classroom rules and consequences.

Journaling said a lot about what frustrated me the most about my teaching. The reason

why I chose to conduct a study on only two of my students was because Larry and Maria were

practically the *only* students I vented about while writing! This was entirely unintentional! I

never expected this to be the case throughout the journaling process. When teachers vent to one

another, they also tend to fixate on what bothers them the most about particular students. Once I

adjusted my lesson plans and geared them more toward student interest based on the

observations, surveys, and thirty-minute interviews I conducted, I tended to see a change in my

writing. The negative venting transformed to more optimistic writing! Seeing this drastic change

in my journaling was quite a relief indeed! All educators strive to work toward bettering

themselves in the field. When optimism is identified in one's own journal writing, educators

know they are one step closer to achieving what they want to achieve - genuine success in

teaching!

Early on in the journaling process, I began keeping tally of which students I called on the most during class instructional time. To my complete surprise, it ended up being the same two students who *always* had their hands up. Neither student was Maria or Larry. Both students were AP level females I have had for three years. I did not realize who I tended to frequently call on until I began keeping track in my journal. These two girls always had the correct answers. Perhaps this was why I chose to call on them; I never wanted for anything to be *wrong* and it just felt *comfortable*. Maybe *I* was the one who was afraid to take the risk and call on someone I have never heard from in class (it is easy for a student to just "exist" in a class of 65!). After realizing that I called on the same two people during class, I encouraged more students to answer questions and let my students know that it was *okay* to be wrong and to take risks when answering a question. As long as students understood the reason *why* something was incorrect, I encouraged more student discussion. I also gave students I called on who did not have their hands up some wait time to think about the question being asked before they answered it. If they were confused and needed reclarification, I made sure to call on a different student who was not called on during the class period to help them. I still kept the initial student who was initially asked the question involved in the discussion. My goal was to not call on the same person twice in a class period. This will certainly help in keeping more students engaged. If students already know the same two girls being called on throughout the class period, why stay engaged and pay attention to the material? This has certainly helped Larry's and Maria's overall engagement during class time. They *wanted* to be included in discussion; they just never felt they were *allowed* to be. Sometimes teaching a group of 65 can be overwhelming; however, tweaking one or two things in a classroom can make all the difference! As stated in my literature review,

students need to feel safe and know they can trust you. Schibsted (2009) and Curwin (2014) both agree that the secret to effective discipline is positively building relationships, not reacting punitively to student misbehavior. Establishing a trusting teacher-student relationship will enable the student to feel confident that their teacher believes in them (Snider, 2005). Once trust is firmly established, more students will feel comfortable raising their hands in class and participating in group discussion.

I also found myself journaling about different classroom management techniques I chose to implement based on my literature review. The first technique involved removing a classroom distraction altogether. I allow students to use the bathroom one at a time throughout the class period. Once I paid closer attention to who visited the bathroom and who did not (I again kept a log in my journal), I noticed the same few students would visit the bathroom every single day (Maria, Larry, and several others). I also noticed that there was usually not a single minute during class time when a student was *not* in the bathroom! One student would come back and another would leave immediately. This started to be a bit of a distraction seeing students constantly enter and exit my room during instructional time! I decided to change the bathroom rule. Students were given a bingo chip at the beginning of the week to keep in their binders. This was their bathroom pass for the week. They were allowed to visit the bathroom one time during the week and were told to use the chip wisely. Some students tend to wander the halls instead of going to use the bathroom. The bathroom bingo chip idea will certainly prevent that from happening. Maria and Larry have done a magnificent job following the new rule put into place. Willingham (2011) states that removing a distraction altogether will certainly improve student

self-regulation and overall classroom focus. I am hoping this will continue to be one less distraction in my classroom!

I finally paid closer attention to the classroom management technique of following through with consequences and not confronting students in front of the entire class. According to Willingham (2005), kids with ADHD in particular do not think about the consequences of what they are doing before they do it. Choosing to follow through with an immediate consequence may help them to make the connection. Dr. Richard Curwin (2014) agrees that following through with consequences will model effective classroom management. I personally tend to be a bit too lenient with behavioral discipline and cell phone issues. If a student has their phone out I kindly ask them to put it away. Ten minutes later, it will be out again because students *know* I will not take it or write them up for it. I decided to put a consistent cell phone policy into place: the first time a phone is out, I will ask you to put it away. The second time it is out, I take the phone for the entire class period. The third time it is out, administration will be given your phone and discipline will be handled accordingly. Maria was the first student who got to my "strike three." It "wasn't fair" to her, but to me, it was an "I did it!" I followed through with my consequence of handing the phone over to an administrator. If students see teachers following through with their implemented rules, they will be less likely to engage in inappropriate behavior during class time. Another instance involved Larry feeling the need to get up out of his seat and run around the room in the middle of rehearsal. Instead of me yelling and screaming and flying off the handle (my normal behavior), I bit my tongue and thought about what I wanted to say before actually saying it. I was in a much calmer state when I pulled Larry aside and spoke to him privately. I asked him what made him want to run up out of his seat and cause a distraction. He responded

with, "I just had all this energy." I corrected his wrongdoing and Larry went right back to his seat and was fine during the remainder of class. I have learned to be a bit more understanding with Larry when it comes to his behavior. Some kids just need to move and be active! Kids are still kids. My normal instinct would be to yell and give a detention right away. However, I am slowly learning to calm myself before disciplining without any follow through.

Observations and Field Notes

Observing both Larry and Maria in other classes was eye-opening for me. When a student is acting out or misbehaving in a class, the teacher tends to think they are the only ones having the discipline problems. After observing both students in other class settings, I knew this was certainly not the case!

I observed Larry in his dance and science classes. In dance class, Larry responded very well to structure. However, the instant the dance teacher worked with two other students who needed extra assistance (not Larry), he lost focus and did not stay concentrated on what the dance teacher was doing with the few individuals who needed the extra attention. The dance teacher even made it a point to remind the students in the class that watching her work with others is a learning opportunity for the remainder of the class. Regardless of those instructions, Larry was moving about the room, paying little attention to anything the dance teacher was doing. It was as if he completely disconnected from the class; his mind was obviously somewhere else. Larry's actions are very similar in choir class; there are times when I need to work with specific voice parts. Perhaps the girls need work on a particular piece. The second my attention goes away from Larry, he does something he should not be doing. Larry is extremely

gifted; however, when he does get bored and is not challenged, Larry does what Larry wants. I

came to the conclusion that perhaps entirely structured classes are what he needs. This explains

my choice to observe Larry's science class. This class was co-taught (two teachers in the room).

The teacher gave a very structured and detailed lecture using PowerPoint and then had the

students apply what was learned in lecture to a hands-on lab experiment. The science teacher

lectured as the special education teacher walked around the room, assisting other students. Larry

remained on task. When Larry was off-task while the science teacher was lecturing, the

co-teacher was there to assist him. There were a few times Larry raised his hand and proceeded

to get up out of his seat. While the general education teacher was still providing the instruction,

the special education teacher went over to Larry. Now this is all making sense: Larry craves

structure. The second the focus is not on him is the second he tends to lose his focus. When it

was time for the lab portion of class, Larry dove right in. The hands-on lab activities were ideal

for him. He was able to work on the experiment at his own pace and worked well with the other

students in his group. When he was off-task, another peer from his group reminded him to

continue to focus on the given task at hand. I wonder if the science teacher asked this particular

student to encourage Larry to stay on task? I was particularly impressed with that student's

behavior. The thoughtfulness of the science teacher's careful choosing of the lab groups allowed

for Larry to thrive as both a respectable student and lab partner. I need to always remember to

keep in mind that there must be a reason for Larry's impulsiveness. According to psychologist

Dr. William Glasser, all behavior is purposeful (Glasser, 2007). Once basic needs are met,

relationships will improve between student, teacher and parent. Apparently in science class all of

Larry's basic needs were met: he certainly felt a sense of belonging and community with his lab group as he worked on the hands-on lab experiment.

I observed Maria's math and art classes. In her math class, Maria was seated in the back row along with several male students. I recognized one in particular; I have often seen both Mackenzie and this other boy walking in the halls together in between classes. I was appalled as I began to observe the class. Maria and two of the males in the back row had their phones out while the teacher at the front of the room had her back turned to the class as she was putting a problem on the board to review. There was a complete lack of focus and concentration. Maria certainly did what she does best - socialized. The socialization had nothing to do with the math problems, however. I was not sure if she grasped a single concept during class time. Being in the back row *and* with boys was enough to tempt her to lose complete focus. It baffles my mind to see a student who struggles with concentration in the back row of a classroom. Especially when a student has a 504 plan that is easily accessible via the internet, I was perplexed to see Maria far removed from the rest of the class in the back of the room. Perhaps the teacher gave up on her and her friends and figured the students who were going to pay attention should be the closest to instruction. Journaling and continuing to find hope for students like Maria certainly drives my passion for bettering myself as an educator. There is always a way to improve a given situation! Giving up on a predicament is taking the easy way out! The second class I observed Maria in was her art class. When Maria walked in, she went right to work. She immediately walked to the back of the room to grab her project. The art teacher encourages a very social environment. Students are allowed to talk to one another and/or listen to music while working on their projects. Maria was able to work on what she was doing (she created a beautiful self-portrait; I

was *very* impressed. I even went over to Maria after class to tell her how beautiful her artwork was!) *and* socialize with the people she wanted to. She had her friends in the class but was still able to multi-task (socialize *and* get work done). The class did not have much structure, but students knew what was expected of them as they worked independently. The teacher must have set his expectations for the class at the start of the semester. The current project they were working on was also due by the end of that week, so most students were working on putting their final touches on the particular project. Maria thrived in a more lax environment. She was able to work independently and also maintain her need to verbalize with others. The idea of setting expectations and in a sense teaching good behavior relates back to the idea of good behavior needing to be taught. According to Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004a), social skills training in schools can benefit a wide range of students and can be a worthwhile investment even for schools with moderate or mild levels of student misbehavior. It is suggested that training can be as little as 30 minutes once or twice a week to eliminate future behavior issues for students. Maria's art teacher certainly seemed to "train" his students during this particular class period. I wish students received more of this behavior training throughout the school day! Consistency across the curriculum is an issue I feel should be addressed at Watchung Hills.

Immediately after observing both students in two different class settings each, I had the following question: how can two students be so impulsive but yet so different? Larry craved structure while Maria worked better with very little structure. Student needs relate directly back to my literature review of Glasser's Choice Theory and the basic idea that we are motivated by a never-ending quest to satisfy the following basic needs woven into our genes: love, belonging, freedom, and fun (Glasser, 2007). Each individual student in my classroom has a different set of

very specific needs. Linking back to my review of literature, we are always motivated by what

we *want* at any given moment (Glasser, 2007). How can I learn to get to know 65 students'

needs and individual likes/dislikes in a classroom setting? Do I need to observe them in a variety

of different classroom settings as well? Observing 65 students in five different classes would

mean a whole lot of observing! Obviously that approach would drive me to the point of insanity!

What can I do to ensure every student is actively engaged and participating 100% of the time? Is

this even possible? I began to feel a bit discouraged and exhausted at the thought of maintaining

this idea of 100% engagement. I then thought of the concept of teaching to different types of

learners and Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Gardner's early work in

psychology and later in human cognition and human potential led to the development of the six

initial intelligences (Aronoff). Today there are nine intelligences and the possibility of others

may eventually expand the list. These intelligences relate to a person's unique set of abilities and

strengths. The nine intelligences include verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial-visual,

bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist, and existential (Aronoff).

Larry, the bodily-kinesthetic learner, is a hands-on learner who likes to move around and craves

attention. Maria, the verbal-linguistic learner, needs to socialize in order to learn. Perhaps in

choir I can design lessons to accommodate each and every intelligence: I can encourage more

group discussions (to accommodate verbal-linguistic learners like Maria), and also have more

movement in the room to encourage expressive singing (to accommodate students like Larry).

These were just two new rehearsal techniques I added to my lesson planning in order to continue

to reach all learners. To my surprise, many of my students in choir enjoy movement. Choir,

unlike other classes, involves moving and not taking part in monotonous desk work. Because

students are sitting at desks all day, why not encourage more movement and get students up and out of their seats? Yes, there is gym class of course, but music class can also encourage more active participation. I have students up and moving the second they get into choir now. After this "aha" moment in realizing students need to be *active* not only in gym class, I am a big proponent of bodily movement and physical involvement that begins early on in the class (warm-ups, including physical bodily warm-ups).

Thirty-minute interviews: Parents

The thirty-minute interviews I conducted with Larry's and Maria's parents relates directly to one of the three main themes discussed in the articles I read that I found useful to aid in answering my research question: *many factors affect impulsivity*.

Larry's parents are separated and refused to meet together to interview with me. I met with Larry's mother prior to meeting with Larry's father. Larry's mother seemed very personable and comfortable during the interview. She remarked that she gets home late from work the four days she has Larry (shared custody). With Larry being the oldest, he takes care of his younger siblings immediately after school. All siblings along with Larry are often fast asleep by the time mom gets home from a long day. Now I understand why Larry craves attention; he does not get any at home. Discipline is also a concept Larry is not familiar with. There is no parental figure in the picture *to* discipline him! Because Larry is never disciplined at home (he is the only "parental" figure who disciplines his siblings), this may be the reason why he is so impulsive at school. No one is at home to discipline his impulsiveness. As for interactions with siblings, Larry *is* the mother *and* father figure to his younger brothers and sisters. He is the oldest child of eight

siblings. During the four nights he is with his mother, he is taking care of three of his siblings. When he is with his father, he is taking care of his other four siblings. Sometimes he goes for weeks without seeing some of his siblings (they will be at his grandparents' house). The boy never gets a break! He never gets the time to just be a kid. Again, Larry *is* the disciplinarian and has learned to make "mature decisions" according to his mother. How can his decisions be mature if he does not recognize what "being mature" even is? Has there been that emotional and cognitive support in the home? Without the necessary praise and intellectual stimulation that should come from his parents, it is expected that Larry receive all of this support at school. Students also function better when there are clear and consistent home rules. It seems as though Larry is making his own rules and *is* the parental figure in the home. Willingham (2011) states that children are better self-regulators when there are clear, well-structured, and consistent home rules. When the daily routine inside a home is predictable, children are more likely to adjust to their own behavior and regulate accordingly (Willingham, 2011). Because the rules at Larry's homes are unpredictable and inconsistent (Larry makes the rules when there are no parental figures at home and he is traveling between two very different homes during the week), he is an automatic candidate for poor self-regulation and impulsivity.

When interviewing Larry's father, he seemed a bit more distant and removed at the start of the interview and then opened up toward the end when he talked about Larry. He showed some animosity toward Larry's mother, who divorced him when she realized she was sexually more attracted to other women. Larry's mother now has a fiancee and his father is also engaged to marry another woman. This realization of his parents both finding love for the second time

must also be quite difficult for Larry. Larry's father had some words of encouragement with

regard to Larry and his behavior at home:

> "Larry has had to grow up *very* fast. He is the mother *and* father when I am not home,
> which is a lot of the time. I have to work late nights to pay child support for all my kids.
> Larry can't participate in many after school activities because he needs to be home for his
> brothers and sisters. It's not fair; the boy {has} had to grow up so fast. I wish I could be
> there more for Larry - I know he does a lot for his other siblings. I know one thing,
> though: he's always teaching those kids how to sing. He writes his own music and shares
> that with them {his siblings}. I am a singer myself; I think he got those music genes from
> me. He loves gospel music - he grew up with me in the church and we would sing a lot of
> spiritual and gospel hymns. You should see him on Sundays - it's the only time I have
> with my oldest. It's like the music takes over and becomes a part of him. Boy, can he
> sing. It's a great hobby of his, but I would never encourage it as a profession. The man's
> gotta make the money in the house, and music ain't gonna do that. I struggle enough as it
> is."

How interesting - gospel music. I never would have guessed Larry had a passion for that

type of music. For my next concert I will make sure to program one of his favorite gospel tunes,

"The Storm is Passing Over." Larry never mentioned his love for the gospel genre until I asked

him in class after meeting with his father. Perhaps music is what creates a strong and unique

bond only Larry and his father share, and not his other siblings (or maybe it is just that I have not

created a strong enough connection with him?). Why isn't music valued as a profession if his

father knows he is good at it and has a talent and passion for it? Shouldn't pursuing one's dreams

include doing something that makes you happy? Because his father is a musician, perhaps he

does not want Larry to struggle financially like he has had to, hence the disapproval of a career

in music. The only time Larry can be a kid is at school. This explains why his actions are so

impulsive and scatter-brained and why he acts so immature. He has to focus on being the adult at

home and has no choice but to be the attention-seeking, immature, impulsive "kid" at school.

According to Snider (2005), students try to mask their impulsivity in the healthiest way they

know, through creative humor. Clowning around may be the only thing that may make school and home life tolerable for Larry. I feel Larry should have been diagnosed with ADHD early in life. I know for a fact he was sent to be referred for testing by the Child Study Team. My guess is that Larry's parents saw their child being diagnosed with ADHD as a stigma (many parents do). Perhaps they were not properly informed as to how the diagnosis would prove to be incredibly beneficial for him in the long run.

I was only able to interview Maria's father due to the fact that her mother works during the day and was not able to take off of work. Her father works at a local liquor store most evenings (stocking during late-night hours); he was therefore able to take the time to attend the meeting. Maria is an only child. She is often left alone after school until around 6PM when her mother gets home from work. When mom cooks dinner, Maria is often found doing homework, texting on her cell phone, and watching television all at the same time. Her father commented on Maria's multi-tasking talent:

> "When I'm home with Kenzie on weekends, I don't know how she does it. She can text, watch television, and do her homework all at the same time. The quality of her homework, I have no idea. But boy, her ability to multi-task...just incredible. I've never seen anything like it. I guess when I was a kid the whole cell phone thing never existed. We live in a completely different world nowadays."

Judging by the conversation I had with Mr. Peters, it did not seem as though Maria is receiving any effective and meaningful discipline at home. Mr. Peters then proceeded to talk about Maria's social life. Being heavily involved in cheerleading, she is often out of the house and attending parties on the weekends (God knows what she is up to after school until 6PM when Mrs. Peters finally gets home). The weekends are the only time of the week Mr. Peters gets to spend with his daughter. Because she is part of the "popular" crowd at Watchung Hills, she

needs to maintain the image of being at all of the parties she is invited to every weekend. Failing

to do so would result in "not being as cool," according to Maria. Mr. and Mrs. Peters often fight

about allowing Maria go to so many parties on the weekends. Mrs. Peters usually blames Mr.

Peters for babying her and allowing her to do whatever she wants, considering he is the one who

gives her permission to attend the parties (Mrs. Peters is usually still at work when Maria is told

she can go out by her father). It is quite obvious that there are parenting issues both Mr. and Mrs.

Peters need to work through. I feel it is important they both sit down and discuss Maria's

progress in school. If her social life is affecting her grades and school work, shouldn't she be at

home, working to improve? During the interview, Mr. Peters discussed Maria's behavior at

home:

> "Do I think she should be going to all these parties? Of course not! But Maria
> has a way about her. She was always good at persuading us. Whether it be for a lollipop
> at the age of 5 or for a new cell phone, she just has that way about her. I know I shouldn't
> let her party all the time and enjoy herself, but she *is* a teenager. Isn't that what teenagers
> do? Part of me just wants her to be with people her own age - with Maria being the only
> child and all. She's only got us old farts at home. I wish one day she would just come to
> me and say, 'Dad, I want to spend the day with you today.' When that day comes, it will
> snow in July."

Outside of cheerleading and being social, Maria has taken up a hobby one would never

expect! Apparently her love for art and drawing has encouraged her to sketch several framed

portraits for the Peters' home. She has sketched pictures of the family and of landscapes (she

again does this best when multi-tasking, a rare talent I certainly do not have!). Her most

treasured artistic possession is a portrait of her and her mother when she was five years old. Mr.

Peters shared with me Maria's love for vacationing down the shore when she was much younger.

She captured childhood memories in her art that she never wanted to let go of. Perhaps she

misses the "easier" life of being young and having both parents around. Once Maria was in

second grade, Mrs. Peters went back to working full-time again and had very little time for her

daughter during the week. A nanny would be waiting for her after school until she was able to

independently take care of herself in eighth grade. The lack of socialization at home may trigger

Maria's need to socialize elsewhere (i.e. in the school setting or at weekend parties). Glasser's

basic needs are probably not being met for Maria. Is she feeling a sense of love and belonging at

home when mom and dad are not home until later on in the evening? She certainly is free to do

what she wants outside of the home and is having fun at parties with her friends, but is this

freedom and fun also taking place in the home (Glasser, 2007)? Her need to act out in school

may also be a cry for help. Glasser's theory of all behavior being purposeful fits very well here

(Glasser, 2007). In addition, Burr Snider (2005) suggests that acting out in a classroom may be

the only way a child can gain acceptance. Maria craves attention and acts out to ensure her peers

notice her since her parents are not paying much attention to her at home. Sitting in the back of a

classroom is just an invitation for her to continue to socialize and distract herself. Getting Maria

to socialize and apply it to what is being learned is one thing. Placing a student who likes to talk

in the back of a room with a group of her male friends is something completely different. 504

plans *should* be followed closely. Maria also needs some more mother-daughter time. I worry

about her wild partying ways and what trouble that can get her into in the near future. According

to Oregon State University's source David Kerr (2015), "positive parenting" includes factors such

as warmth, monitoring children's activities, involvement, and consistency of discipline. If

Maria's father better monitored her nightly activities, he would in turn finally have a say in what

she did on weekends. Maybe he would get the response from her he always wanted: for her to

want to stay home with him on occasion. "What we find is that 'negative' parenting such as

hostility and lack of follow-through leads to 'negative' parenting in the next generation not

through observation, but by allowing problem behavior to take hold in adolescence," Kerr (2015)

said. "For instance, if you try to control your child with anger and threats, he or she learns to deal

in this way with peers, teachers, and eventually his own children. If you do not track where your

child is, others will take over your job of teaching him {or her} about the world" (Kerr, 2015).

Perhaps if Maria's father paid more attention to Maria's whereabouts, he can be more of a

positive mentor and teacher model for her as well.

     I decided to pay closer attention to the way I comment and ask questions. The art of

posing a question in a meaningful way can be attributed to Carol Dweck's idea of learned

helplessness (Fincham, 2009). Learned helplessness in the classroom can sometimes result from

teacher behavior. This discovery emerged from the observation that girls in grade school receive

higher grades and less negative feedback in the classroom than boys. Dweck specifically

observed teacher feedback in classrooms. She found that 45% of boys' work-related feedback

was non-intellectual (comments were made about legible handwriting instead) (Fincham, 2009).

Feedback for girls referred almost exclusively to its intellectual quality. Although

non-intellectual feedback is recommended, research suggests that focusing the students' attention

on learning should help to combat learned helplessness (Fincham, 2009). I constantly found

myself asking non-intellectual questions particularly to Maria early on in the data collection

process. I have worked hard to change my feedback to have more of a focus on learning. Maria

should never be seen as incapable of handling intellectual feedback. According to the math

teacher, she is "just another dumb cheerleader." She is clearly more than that and very capable

when her strengths are praised and acknowledged! One day in class, instead of asking Maria to

agree to my liking of a piece of music, I asked her to draw a picture pertaining to how it made

her feel. The response she put on paper for me was far more exceptional and impressive than I

ever would have imagined. This is another good example of how learning styles might play into

the realities for these two students. It also suggests that schools value certain types of intelligence

and that while Maria may be very intelligent, it is not in the areas that are valued at school.

Never judge a book by its cover...

Survey

Surveying both students helped me to better recognize whether or not Larry and Maria

realized they were being impulsive during class time. I decided to use a Likert scale where

students can choose between 1 being "never true" and 10 being "always true."

Here are the results of the rating scale (see *Table 1)*:

	Larry	Maria
I think about the future consequences of my actions.	7	7
I get distracted by little things.	3	9
I get fidgety after a few minutes if I'm supposed to sit still.	2	9
I find that I often say things out loud in class before I think about what I had just said.	3	9

Table 1: Likert scale results from surverymonkey.com

Very interesting! I thought student responses would be the *exact* opposite. I genuinely thought Larry knew when he was impulsive and accepted the fact that he does get distracted and senses when he cannot sit still. According to the survey, it seems as though for the most part Larry does not know when he is a distraction to himself. He does not realize he fidgets and says things without thinking of the consequences. There are always limitations to surveys, however. Perhaps Larry *does* realize when he is being impulsive but just chose to respond with the opposite response to play the innocent student. If Larry was true to his word and responded honestly to all questions, then this all goes back to students needing to be *taught* good behavior via direct instruction, modeling, and practicing both in the home *and* in the classroom. According to Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004a), social skills training in schools can benefit a wide range of students and can be a worthwhile investment even for schools with moderate or mild levels of student misbehavior. If there is no family support at home for discipline, the only place students learn proper discipline is at school. As a teacher, it is my job to model this good behavior and redirect Larry when appropriate. I plan on teaching my students proper social skills more often during class time. When Larry is a distraction to himself and others I will point that out and work hard not to confront him in front of the entire class. On the other side of things, if he is demonstrating positive behavior, I will also make sure he is praised for his actions. Maria realizes she is a distraction to herself. If she acknowledges it, why can't she do something about it? Maria's math teacher obviously sets her up for failure, which makes it impossible for her to better herself. Her math teacher decided to give up on her; therefore, Maria is seated in the back of the room. She knows she is a distraction if she is not in the front of the room. Having moved

Maria to the front of the class in choir has helped tremendously. I feel as though Maria wouldn't want to ruin her "cool cheerleader" image and come to me to seek help. She expects her teachers to understand what she needs in order to thrive (i.e. 504 plan and IEP!). It is almost like a silent cry for help. I truly feel she *does* want the guidance and needs it in order to be successful. Maria wants to do well. It is just the nature of her personality that allows her to be quite distracted the good majority of the time. With teacher support, mutual trust, a meaningful teacher-student relationship, and recognition of what she needs, Maria *will* succeed.

Both Larry and Maria genuinely enjoy music. None of their interests match what we are singing in choir. I was delighted to find that Larry indicated he enjoyed gospel music. Next semester I will make sure Larry's favorite gospel piece is part of the concert repertoire. I just recently purchased "The Storm is Passing Over" for the spring! Maria loves pop music. We always try to perform a pop piece at every concert. Perhaps I will ask her what her *favorite* pop songs are and use the selections in future concerts! If a student is not interested in the material being studied, there cannot be positive engagement. In addition, if students know you are interested in what it is they like to do outside of school, there will hopefully be more productive and positive participation and engagement. Since data collection, I have made the time to see Maria cheerlead for the boy's basketball team. It meant a great deal to her to see me there. She took the time to approach me the following Monday to say how much she appreciated me being there for her! With mom and dad so busy with work, there has to be that adult figure there to support her! According to Schibsted (2009), if a student-teacher relationship is warm and trusting, the teacher will have the credibility to encourage the student to do his or her best in an academic setting.

Conclusions and Emerging Questions

Impact on Student Learning

Since my data collection, I have implemented several strategies I have discussed in my findings section. To begin with, Maria is still seated in the front of the classroom in an ideal spot best suited for her. We worked together to select the next pop selection for the spring semester as well. We have decided on a selection from Hannah Montana. She was absolutely *thrilled* that she was asked to be a part of the repertoire selection process. "I thought that was only for your favorite students," she remarked. I explained to her that I never choose "favorites"; students are all treated equally in choir. My talented singers are valued the same as my students who struggle but still work extremely hard to do their best. I let Maria know that she was selected because I knew she had a strong love for pop music. She has responded well to my decision to involve her in the selection process and has been more actively engaged in class. I am letting her know that she *is* wanted and I will *not* give up on her in the choir room. According to Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson, teachers need to especially be patient (DeWitt, 2011). Because students come from diverse backgrounds and different students are exposed to different experiences, teachers must also learn to keep an open mind. Education is an important profession. We as educators leave a lasting impact on our students. Tomlinson also discusses the most important elements to teaching students of differing abilities. The first is being able to provide an environment where students can take risks. As discussed earlier, students need to feel a sense of safety and belonging in a classroom if they are not receiving these two basic needs in the home (DeWitt, 2011). The second element involves being an expert on the curriculum: teachers need to ensure they know what students need to specifically know and understand as a class. The third element revolves

around the concept of formative assessment and what each student *actually* knows and understands. The fourth element includes tools and strategies teachers must utilize in order to address differentiation and the understanding that students come to us with varying abilities and understandings. Finally, teachers must remain flexible at all times and understand that sometimes a lesson does not always immediately "click" (DeWitt, 2011).

Flexibility can make or break a classroom. Students have their share of bad days; they are human! I know when students need to simply get up, move around the room, and chat with someone new they have never conversed with before for five minutes in between pieces. Especially with Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) state-mandated testing and moments where I do not have all of my students in class at one time due to testing, this socialization and "bonding" time is necessary! Choir is a family and a collaborative team that must work together 100% of the time. What do teams do well? They bond and socialize and get to know one another! Another thing that has worked *very* well with Maria has been positive reinforcement. I not only point out what she needs work on, but I also tend to fixate on what she does well. Educators need to let their students know that they believe in them and that they *do* have the potential for success! I wish all educators felt the same way and did not give up on their students so easily! I wish I had the opportunity to work with Maria's math teacher and let her know how extraordinary Maria really can be in the classroom if she were given the *tools* to do so. The real question is, is Maria too far gone and "checked out" to ever improve in math class this year? Can a student be "reeled in" at such a late point in the year? I wonder if Maria's math teacher *did* ever happen to have a change of attitude, would Maria's behavior and impulsiveness continue to worsen or improve?

Moving on to Larry, the source of data I felt was most important during the research and data collection process were the interviews I had with both his mother and father. It was eye opening to hear about Larry's life outside of school from day to day. His home life is incredibly unstable; he is moved from house to house, some weeks not even able to see all of his siblings. He is the true disciplinarian of the family. Because Larry lacks any sort of disciplinary skills as an immature young adolescent, how can he discipline his younger siblings? With that being said, since data collection, I have worked with Larry to make sure he recognizes *when* he is being impulsive. I try to meet with Larry after school once a week to go over strategies to help him to overcome his impulsiveness so that it does not always interfere with class time and with his own concentration. When Larry is doing something that is unacceptable in class, I will make sure to point out what he is doing wrong and discuss how it can be changed in order to promote more positive behavior. I also make sure I model the acceptable behavior and provide Larry with the tools he needs to better himself as a respectable student. Home life can tell a great deal about a student. In this case, it tells all. Larry has finally decided on going to college to become a music educator. I have been assisting him with the application process and audition preparation since he cannot afford a private music teacher. Knowing what he should specifically be focusing on and again helping him through the college application process has allowed Larry to really put a great deal of effort and hard work into *one* priority. Instead of juggling many things at once and becoming overwhelmed (typical Larry), he now is learning how to concentrate on one task at a time. Yes, multitasking is a great skill, but with Larry, the multitasking becomes too overwhelming and he tends to shut down. I hope I have become more of a role model and

"parental" figure for Larry. I also hope he is able to apply the discipline he has been taught within the past few months to his life at home with his siblings.

Revisiting my research question, was I truly able to help to reduce impulsivity in my classroom? Yes, I think so! What happened when I did this? What I observed while I was implementing new strategies to improve impulsivity was encouraging: two motivated, engaged, and active students who *wanted* to improve and *wanted* to change. Both of my students in a way realized they wanted to be better in the classroom. They were in no way resistant to change (with change of seating arrangements in the classroom, Maria was only resistant in the very beginning!). The majority of the time, they did not even realize they were in any way a disciplinary issue. Once Maria and Larry realized what it was that needed to improve and be altered, they were more than willing to work with me. I cannot simply expect students to understand *how* to act appropriately and *how* to make decisions before acting upon them. It is something my students need to be *taught*; good behavior must be modeled.

Both students have definitely learned to trust me more as well. After every concert, I feel a bit more of a connection to my students. After the winter concert, my choir of 250 strong all worked together to make beautiful music as a collaborative whole. It took the dedication and focus of each individual student in the choir in order for the concert to be successful. Several weeks ago I took my choir to Disney World to participate in an adjudicated competition. Again, my students had to learn to trust me and know that what I had been teaching them would get them the gold! The level of trust was even more apparent when my students did exactly what I asked them to do musically in front of the Disney judges. Even after performance, all of my students remarked, "all of the judges' comments were exactly what you have been telling us!" We

walked away with a golden Mickey because my students trusted me and knew I would lead them to success! Trust is key!

I may not be an expert when it comes to reducing impulsivity, but I feel I have a stronger connection with both Maria and Larry. I hope to transfer this to my new students in the near future. It is always a challenge I am willing to accept and conquer! That is what makes me the educator I am; I always want to better myself to make me the best that I can be! Getting to know each and every one of your students is key - if that is the case, how can I tie all 250 student interests into my choir repertoire and lessons? Is this even possible? Would surveying all 250 students be just too overwhelming or would it enrich my lessons in the long run? Do I need to connect with each and every one of my students on a more meaningful level? The question remains unanswered...

"The important thing is not to stop questioning." – Albert Einstein

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Appendix A

Subjectivity Paper: *What do I bring with me? In what perspective(s) was I standing?*

Subjectivity refers to how someone's judgement is shaped by personal opinions and feelings instead of outside influences. Subjectivity is partially responsible for why one person loves an abstract painting while another person hates it. Looking back on my teacher research paper, there are several aspects of my writing that appear to be subjective.

My selection of who I wanted to take part in my teacher research study was certainly a subjective decision on my part. Larry's strong will to go to school for music made me want to act as a valuable resource for him. Because I was a music major in college and inspired Larry to want to become a music teacher as well, I wanted to help out the best I could in order to continue to inspire his will to also educate others. When you have a student who wants to go to college to be "just like you," you want to do everything in your capacity to be of assistance. I *know* Larry will make an excellent music teacher; he just needed some guidance when it came to controlling his impulsiveness. Along with proper guidance, I have also provided Larry with the tools he needs in order to better control his behavior. Teachers are very organized and thoughtful people. Again, I wanted to do my best to assess and correct Larry's impulsive and scatterbrained actions and act accordingly in order to allow him to be successful.

My decision to choose Maria was also extremely subjective. Only a sophomore, Maria has been blessed with a beautiful high soprano voice. Maria has never acknowledged the fact that she *does* in fact have talent. When she is tested in class in groups of four in preparation for our concerts, she always begins testing with the same comment: "I can't sing." I tell my students that this is not acceptable and that there is no such thing as "can't." Having a student with such

natural talent, I did not want to let her 504 Plan and ADHD get in the way of such a beautiful instrument! Because I have two more years with Maria, I chose to study her because I knew I wanted to help build her confidence and determination over her junior and senior years. I want to encourage her to try out for more solos, be a member of my select choir for the next two years, and keep her interested and engaged now that her focus has been better in class! I have certainly been working hard to tame her impulsivity and build a better relationship with her; now I need to work on building her confidence!

The reason why I chose my emerging question was also because of Larry, my main target and study for my writing. Everytime I journaled, I wrote about how flattered I was to have Larry want to be a high school choir teacher just like me! This inspired me to want to target what it was about Larry that made me crazy! I journaled often about Larry's behavior and his interactions with others. I also wrote a great deal about Larry talking out of turn, randomly getting up out of his seat, and saying things randomly in class not having to do with the current discussion topic. 'Random' and 'acting without thinking' to me was more directly related to classroom management, discipline, and impulsivity.

While interviewing Larry's and Maria's parents, some of my thoughts and ideas while writing were incredibly bias. I tended to blame Maria's behavior and partying on Maria's parents and their inability to work together to make collective decisions in the household. Shouldn't *both* parents make decisions for their child? Why did Mr. Peters always have to be the one responsible for deciding whether or not Maria should attend these parties? Why did Mrs. Peters always put the blame on her husband when she easily could have taken part in the decision-making process? With Larry's father, I was shocked to find out that he did not want Larry going to school for

music or education. He strongly believed Larry should make more money and do bigger and better things. Does this mean that education is not valued by Mr. Drew? As a teacher, am I not doing "bigger and better" things according to Larry's father? Is educating the future not valued? I was disappointed to hear his disgust and disappointment for the music profession. As parents, I always think it is important to encourage your child to do what you love. However, because I am not yet a parent and have never been a mother, would I still feel the same way years from now with a teenage son or daughter ready to graduate high school? This is a question I will have to wait to answer. With older age comes experience and hopefully a better understanding of why Mr. Drew said what he did in such a way that came across as harsh to a music educator.

Journaling in and of itself is extremely subjective. Journaling clearly facilities teacher reflection and assumptions about oneself. I tend to over-react when things go wrong in class. As was shared in my teacher action research paper, I tend to fly off the handle and sometimes overreact negatively to certain inappropriate behaviors . However, after identifying this negative teacher characteristic in my teacher research, I have been working to instead assess the situation before acting upon it. Perhaps some of my journal writing reflected my occasional exaggerated and inflated description of certain classroom events. Especially because I tended to reflect at the end of a long day, all of my often extreme emotions and tensions of the day were dumped onto paper right at the last period bell. This impulsiveness on my part explains why I asked that my fellow colleagues assist in the coding process. I did not want to appear biased when it came time to code, or choose emerging themes, that recurred in my writing. Having colleagues take a glimpse at what I highlighted as important was meaningful to me in order to ensure I was not in fact being in any way subjective during the research process.

In conclusion, subjectivity can take many forms in teacher action research. I clearly identified bias in my writing. The two students I used to conduct my study as well as parent interviews and journaling were all clearly subjective during my research to some extent. Subjectivity will always be linked to teacher action research. As long as this subjectivity is acknowledged and reflected upon, it certainly is supported and part of any teacher's research.

Appendix B

Implementation Plan: *Now what? What will I do with this information? How can I use it?*

After conducting my teacher action research on classroom management and impulsive behavior, I plan to implement, use, and share the information and knowledge garnered from my project. After writing my paper, I spoke with my department chair in detail about my research. He asked me if I would be interested in giving a presentation about my study at next month's performing arts and world languages department meeting. I was honored to be offered the opportunity! A great deal of my research can certainly be immediately transferred to any classroom! I decided to focus on my three main topics from my literature review and include specific examples from my data collection to support my research:

i. Good behavior needs to be taught.

ii. Factors affecting impulsivity

iii. Classroom management strategies to reduce impulsivity

Sharing what I have learned while conducting my research to other elective teachers will be extremely useful to any classroom teacher. Department meetings at Watchung Hills are divided up amongst disciplines. My supervisor oversees both the performing arts and the world languages department. Because both departments are extremely diverse, I will make sure I generalize all of my findings so that all data and supported research can be applied and taken back to any classroom for implementation. For example, in teaching good behavior, we as educators must ensure it is taught in our classrooms daily. This is a statement that can be

generalized and implemented by any subject teacher in the arts and world languages

departments. Below is an outline of what I will be discussing during my presentation:

i.   Good behavior needs to be taught

      i.   Daily instruction

      ii.   Teacher model and demonstration

      iii. My experiences with both Larry and Maria

            i.   We *are* their only disciplinarians and teachers throughout the day!

ii.   Factors affecting impulsivity

      i.   Home life - there is usually another reason for why a child is acting out

      ii.   Interview parents

      iii. Once a class clown, always a class clown - *as educators, our job is to channel impulsive energy to more positive energy in the classroom!*

      iv. My experiences with both Mr. Peters and Mr. and Mrs. Drew

iii. Classroom management strategies to reduce impulsivity

      i.   Different management techniques

            i.   Remove the distraction altogether (personal experience: bathroom, seating)

            ii.   Follow through with consequences (personal experience: newly implemented cell phone rule)

            iii. Handle situations quietly and calmly (personal experience: do not embarrass the student in front of the entire class - sometimes students do not even realize they are a distraction!)

iv. Acknowledge lapses in student behavior and act accordingly (personal

experience: build trust and meaningful connections with all students;

involve students in the decision-making process)

I hope my presentation will be both enlightening and motivating for other teachers in my

department. I look forward to hearing feedback from my colleagues!