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### All It Takes is One Teacher to Change Your Whole Educational View

Growing up I really didn't like school, until I met this one teacher in high school who changed my view on education. I was always told I wouldn't make it to college. I would say to myself, "Why do I need school?" School would never really teach me anything that I felt I would've enjoyed learning about. Since I grew up as the older sibling with a single mother who was trying to raise my sisters and me, I had so many responsibilities so my mind wasn't focused on learning. I was trying to learn more about the real world and how to get my family out of poverty. Meanwhile, all it took was one teacher to change my whole educational view.

Since school was never really a big deal for me, I would never do homework, wouldn't pay attention in class, etc. I felt that focusing on bigger and better things was of more interest than school. When I was young I had so many responsibilities because my mom would always be at work. I had to make sure my sisters were good, not in the sense of their mental health but making sure they weren't doing something they weren't supposed to be doing, that they had their homework done, and they were fed. While my mom was at work she would constantly call me trying to figure out if my sisters were okay. My mom would always put so much pressure on me for the wellness of my sisters. Because of that, I felt like I had to mature faster than other kids my age. Around that time I was just beginning my teenage years, and a lot of my friends would always like to stay out after school and not go home until sunset. Although my friends would always invite me, I would always say "Nah I can't, I gotta go pick up my sisters" or it would

always be something revolving around my sisters. Not being able to go out with friends and not have “fun” made me feel like I was missing out on my childhood.

So, once I got to high school all I would really think was, “Why do I need this?” I was so focused on trying to get my family financially stable. I wasn't so motivated to learn because I felt like I had matured already, and thought that I should just go get a job for my family. Having to read a book and write essays about it didn't drive me to want to go to school and learn. All I really wanted to learn was how to make money and real world skills. I really thought that writing would never do any good for me.

Also, I really never had anyone believe in me or think I would be good in school which didn't drive me to even want to show up to school. Back in middle school, I had this one teacher who told me, “Get ready to work at McDonalds” all because I would never do my work for her class. Me being the funny dude I am, I laughed it off and even said, “Alright, let me practice right now” and said out loud, “Welcome to McDonalds, how may I help you?” After I gave her that response she really didn't react, she just put her head down and walked away in shame. Even though I laughed it off, she didn't know I had bigger responsibilities to worry about than just getting her homework done. In highschool, I felt so unmotivated about going to school that when I did go my teachers would be shocked to see me. Some of them even told me that I would never be someone or make it to college if I kept it up.

Then, my school paired me with a teacher as my mentor to help me get my grades up. This mentor I got paired with was my history teacher at the time. Her name was Ms. Cameo. Even though she knew I would hardly ever go to school, let alone go to one of our so-called “meetings,” she wouldn't give up on me. Since I am not a morning person she would call me every morning to try and wake me up for our meetings, sometimes even blowing up my phone so

I could wake up and go to school. Sometimes she would even call my mom. After she saw that the morning meetings were not working for me, she made time after school to have meetings with me so we could catch up on some work. After a long time of me telling myself, “I’m only doing this because if not she will call my mom,” I finally got comfortable and realized that she actually believed in me and was trying to help me move on from high school. After having talks with her about why I felt school wasn't important and how I had bigger shit to worry about than some essays, she had to make me understand it wasn't just some essays. She made me realize that regardless I’m going to need to learn how to write papers for something as simple as trying to apply for a job and emails. She made me understand that writing was also another way of speaking formally because slang wouldn't bring me very far.

Malcolm X, in his essay “Learning to Read,” states, “I became increasingly frustrated at not being able to express what I wanted to convey in letters that I wrote, especially those to Mr. Elijah Muhammad... But now, trying to write simple English, I not only wasn’t articulate, I wasn’t even functional. How would I sound writing in slang, the way I would *say* it, something such as, “Look, daddy, let me pull your coat about a cat, Elijah Muhammad—”. Malcolm X expresses how frustrated he is not being able to express his thoughts on writing. I also felt like this is what my mentor tried to make me understand when she told me that writing would help me with a simple email.

My mentor believing in me helped me a lot throughout high school. She helped me realize that there's way more opportunities with a high school degree than without one. For instance, in the *Root* essay “Pete Buttifging is a Lying MF” by Michael Harriot, Harriot states, “In the summer of 1992, for weeks, those same D-boys I walked past every day collected all of the ones (and a few five-dollar bills) from guys on the block and handed it to me when I left for

college.” Harriot explains how while the government wasn't funding him to go to college, the “D-boys” who believed in him did. “D- boys” means the drug dealers that would sell drugs on Harriot’s way to school. This relates to my experience because my mentor was the only one who truly believed in me and showed me she cared about me succeeding. After countless times she would push me even when I had given up myself. She never gave up on me. If she wouldn't have believed in me and given up on me, I probably wouldn't be here in college trying to improve my education.

- I fixed the page # because that's how the format is supposed to be (bold and font size)
- I capitalized all "I's" because all 'I's' should be capital
- In the title if "it" gets capitalized why doesn't "is" get capitalized too?
- I capitalized the beginning of every quote because the beginning of every quote should be capitalized.
- I don't get the difference between "I and me" in the 1st paragraph
- In the first sentence of the 2nd paragraph I changed a coma to a period because they were 2 different sentences.
- I added a lot of comas in the whole essay because of punctuation \*key point\*
- Replaced a lot of words because they were unnecessary \*key point\*
- Never refer an author by their 1st name
- Write the title how its written - caspitaslize