

A reflection on service learning: working with eric article review examples

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Introduction

“ A Reflection on Service Learning: Working with Eric” is a reflective essay written by Onnalee I. Gibson that chronicles his adventures in a Michigan school, Waverly High School tutoring a young African American 11th grader named Eric Johnson.

This well-written piece utilizes a variety of literary devices and the final product is a really captivating tale. The underlying thesis of Gibson’s essay is that Waverly High School is unlike any other school because of its unique approach of handling the educational, social and behavioral needs of its students in an individual manner. This theory is comprehensively substantiated throughout the essay by using reasonable, factual and applicable arguments.

Gibson begins his essay with a vivid description of his journey to Waverly High School. He describes the architecture of the school as beautiful yet simple and states that the first time he saw it, he was enchanted. He talks of the school’s reflective windows, shapely bushes and the cleanliness of the school grounds. Within the first paragraph, Gibson also manages to give the reader a little insight into his own life, for example, the reader is able to establish that he is a transfer student from Michigan State University.

According to Gibson, the school avails a curriculum that is designed to meet the individual needs of every student. The school uses an exceptional grade system that catalogues each and every aspect of a student’s grade. Gibson states that this unique system permits both parents and teachers to view where achievement as well as academic problems surface. Gibson delves

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further into this when he states that the school has a report card that actually records individual grades for homework, tests, participation, projects, attendance and community service. This breakdown according to Gibson helps to highlight how a failing student can be assisted.

Gibson quotes Jean Anyon's assertion that " students from higher social class backgrounds may be exposed to legal, medical, or managerial knowledge. while those of the working classes may be offered a more practical curriculum and states that this kind of social reproduction is not evident at Waverly High School. He states that in spite of the diverse social classes exhibited by its student body, the school's main philosophy is to encourage all students to consider attending college. This is done through the curriculum, the guidance department literature and field trips. Gibson uses an example of his student, Eric who has an immense desire to attend college even though his parents never actually went to college. By encouraging Eric to go to College, Gibson claims that his parents are attempting to break the cycle. He further states that Eric's belief that college education is key to success is in contrast to the common belief by most individuals that social reproduction is exclusively responsible for their current socio-economic status.

Gibson further develops his argument by talking about the school's vast resources and the role they play in supporting the school's unique educational approach. Gibson states that the lack of or the abundance of resources can play a significant part in the opportunities accorded to student's to learn and succeed. Waiver High School has plenty of resources that include a fully equipped library that has a rich collection of journals,

books, magazines and computers. The library is also very user friendly. The availability of such credible resources is attributed to the school's adequate funding that it consequently spends on curriculum materials and staff.

Gibson finally addresses the school's relatively conservative student placing. For instance, Gibson notes that there are a lot instances when students who do not actually require special education are coded for special ed when their weaknesses or failures can be handled by good teacher in a normal class.

Gibson is absolutely appreciative of the fact that the school did not place Eric under special ed because according to him, Eric's only problem is that he is very prone to distractions.

In conclusion, Gibson states that his time at Waverly High School deepened his conviction about the importance of high quality education in achieving success. He states that Waverly's unique educational approach of paying attention to the individual needs of each student and helping them to achieve success at their own level is very admirable. Finally, he admits that he still has lot to learn about teaching and that the experience at Waverley helped him see that a student's opportunities as well as educational quality are things that should not be approached with a trial and error and attitude.

In a nutshell, it is safe to say that Gibson successfully presents and substantiates his argument about Waverly unique educational approach and is therefore able to dispel any lingering doubts or questions that the reader may have.

References

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