

The Zane Cruzo Story

A senior at Rockledge High School in Florida was in danger of failing. He had been "written off" by our PLC group. He had given up. There are several examples of students going from an F to an A in my classes, but Zane Cruzo's story is the most telling because he was at the very bottom of his class when he arrived in grade twelve.

After he read the Florida Today article and saw the video recording and saw his classmates teaching his class, Zane began working. I told him, "Forget learning. You are going to teach your class. Get with the program". I could see he had begun to make a terrific effort.

In the next test he scored 84%. I informed him 'I am disappointed with you. I was very sure you were going to score 100 out of 100. What went wrong?' The student replied, "I am sorry, I made a mistake". This was a new experience for Zane. All his life, no one had reprimanded him when he failed.

That day, before the class, he was reprimanded for not scoring 100% in a test. He was immensely pleased with that.

In the very next test he scored 100 out of 100. I showed his paper to the rest of the class and informed them "Ladies and gentlemen, Zane has arrived. Look at the classiness of his paper. Now if you have difficulties, talk to Zane before talking to me". Zane had moved from the bottom of the class to the very top.

Analyzing this true story, I felt teachers who taught him for the first eleven years were probably very good too. I was not necessarily better than them. However, they acted on the premise that Zane's success was their responsibility, so they kept working for him – more and more. As a result, the student began working less and less, till he had been reduced to the status of a non-student who came along for the ride.

When Zane came to me in the twelfth grade, instead of working for him, I began working on him, so he began working for himself.

As he began working for himself, he discovered his student-hood. In his new-found student-hood he discovered his own abilities and began to apply his mind and developed a hunger for excellence. With two quick leaps he leaped to the top of his class.

In the final analysis, Zane Cruzo did not reach the top because of me. He reached the top because of Zane Cruzo. Thomas Edison said, "Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration". The Lord God used me to provide the 1% spark of inspiration and the student provided the 99% perspiration and that is how he rocketed to the top of his class.