

Blake Academy Discussion

Oliver Queen faced many challenges growing up in addition to his dyslexia. Fortunately, he was able to change once he hit a turning point in his life. It was during his crisis that he realized, although he had a challenging life that it was up to him to continue going down the same path or to work harder so that he could overcome his disadvantages. Although Oliver does mention that with his new outlook, he suffered a few relapses resulting in “drugs, sex, and rock and roll”. I cannot pretend to imagine what Oliver may have experienced growing up. I do believe he may have been better off at his original school, so that he could avoid the abuse and mental trauma he suffered from the students at Dixon Valley. What amazes me is regardless of how much torment Oliver experienced he was able to sympathize with the Dixon Valley students since he was able to put himself in their shoes and relate to their hardships.

A lot has changed since the 1970's when Oliver first attended the school for LD's. In today's schools LD students are given more opportunities and are many times able to stay in public schools. Counseling is also readily available to students at risk, or may have experienced mental trauma. Reading about Oliver's story makes me relate this to my students and the personal issues they may be experiencing outside of school. It makes me reinforced my concept of creating a “safe zone” for students to feel comfortable and are able to open up. Oliver, also refers to one specific teacher- Mr. Hoffman who motivated him to push his limits and broaden his mind-set. I hope that one day, I will have this impact on my students and know that they were able to accomplish their goals because there was someone who believed they would be able to excel.

Similar to the LD Bubble, Oliver also describes the feeling of social isolation due to the learning disability. He felt as if he did not fit in with “normal” students and was taught that he was lesser than them. Having a learning disability does not mean that a person is incapable of learning, but just that they learn in a different way. I believe that it is because of the unknown about LDs in the 1970's that students were stereotyped in this way. Unfortunately, even with the current knowledge about LDs, I feel as if some people still refer to them as inferior.