

Chad McAlister **Star Teacher**

On the first day of class, Mr. McAlister told us we were not special. It was quite a shock the first time we heard it even though it wasn't meant to be offensive or malicious. Instead, it was like a reality check of what we would expect in class and ultimately in life.

I was hesitant to take AP Language and Literature because it was notorious for being difficult. We heard horror stories about Mr. McAlister being a hard grader, intimidating, and very blunt. However, I'll blow his cover as he is equally helpful and compassionate. Mr. McAlister is eager to talk and hear from us, creating a welcoming and happy atmosphere. While his grading is hard, he never wants to hurt you or your grade, helping you with anything you need even if it is not for his class.

Our class became a huge highlight of my day. I learned many skills for the future and about myself. You gave me more credibility and respect than I have received before. You showed me how English was important in our lives and how to write confidently, teaching me things I will never forget that positively impact my professionalism and personality. I became a better writer and person as you helped me with anything, putting up with me even if I came to you outside of our class period.

Back to when you said we weren't special, I think this was for us to recognize our lives and how we're free of expectations. You showed us reality and respect as adults, not children, a sense of accomplishment as we felt heard, and a learning experience instead of an academic checklist. It was liberating to know we could just be. And, how everything comes down to Gatsby and the green light.

Lyndie Humphrey
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