What is TULA like for a kid?

The story of how a 10-year-old reignited his love for learning at TULA

Makati, Philippines - January 18, 2016 - School can be tough. There are a lot of subjects to learn, tests to pass, and social norms to navigate. Because of all this pressure, many kids are discouraged. But for kids, entering TULA is a bit of an awakening. Here’s a glimpse of what TULA is like for a 10-year-old public school student.

I’m not sure about school. I go every day but it’s really hard. I listen to the teacher. I copy notes off the board. And I try to recite when called. But I am afraid to make a mistake. I don’t want to sound dumb in front of everyone. When I don’t understand, I raise my hand but we always run out of time. So each day, when the bell rings, I can’t wait to get home.

Then one day, my mom brought me to TULA. She said it could help with my grades. I stepped into the center and felt nervous. A tall young lady entered the room. She spoke English fluently and she told me to call her “Coach”. She told me she studied at UP and that her dream was to teach kids like me. She asked me about my favorite hobbies, my heroes, and my dream career. No one had asked me this before. I told her I liked playing games with my brother, that my hero was Captain America, and that I wanted to be a Doctor.

Coach told me it was my turn to ask questions. I was surprised. I had never asked adults many questions before. But she told me about curiosity and how asking questions is the best way to learn. So I asked her what was her favorite subject and why there were tablets. She said she likes Math and that we were going to play Math vs. Zombies on the tablets.
The game was fun but I was afraid I’d get the answer wrong. I stopped. Coach said it’s okay to make mistakes – they are proof that you are learning. He even praised another student for being brave and making a mistake. So I kept playing.

Then we went on a “mission” to investigate real life heroes. We learned about grit. I didn’t realize that successful people like Lebron James had gone through so many hard problems. But they never gave up. That’s grit.

We ended the class with a “reflection”. We closed our eyes and thought about what we had learned. It was only a short time, but I had learned a lot - that asking questions is how you learn, that making mistakes was proof of learning, and that it was important to practice grit and never give up. But most importantly, I realized that learning didn’t have to be so hard. Learning could actually be fun. So when I left TULA and said bye to Coach, I immediately asked my mom - when can we go back?

TULA is a new social enterprise that provides high-quality and affordable after-school learning. TULA operates modern learning centers in Makati and Pasig, and also serves nearby schools with free teacher training and extra-curricular activities for students. TULA branches are open every weekend and on select weekdays, from 10am to 6pm. You can learn more by visiting www.facebook.com/TULAphilippines or inquire about a free trial by emailing ask@tulaphilippines.com.