

DIFFERENTIATING MEANING: MAKE, HAVE, LET, HELP, GET

Complete this article about math teacher Jaime Escalante by circling the correct verb.

Born in Bolivia, Jaime Escalante emigrated to the United States to follow his passion—teaching mathematics. He did this at Garfield High, an East Los Angeles high school noted for its tough students and high drop-out rate of almost 55 percent. The school administration was so ineffective that they let / made gangs of students (and nonstudents) roam the halls and spray the walls with graffiti. Escalante changed all that. A strict disciplinarian, he let / made students do massive amounts of homework, take daily quizzes, and fill out daily time cards. He believed in his students' ability to succeed and would never get / let them drop out of class. He considered vacations a waste of time and let / made his students do homework during the semester break. He even planned two full mornings of classes during spring vacation. He wasn't going to let / make a school vacation erase what his students had learned!

Escalante often used nontraditional methods. To develop a spirit of camaraderie, he got / had his students to do football-like cheers before the start of class. He praised them, teased them, insulted them—anything that worked. Most of all, he got / helped them believe in themselves. Then he did the impossible. He had / let them take the Advanced Placement exam, a national test that only 2 percent of high school students take. This difficult exam, consisting mostly of calculus, gives students college credit for high school work. In preparation for the test, Escalante let / made his class work harder than ever. Because the results on the tests were so high, and because many students made the same kind of error in one of the problems, the company that published the test suspected his students of cheating. To prove their innocence, Escalante decided to get / have them take the test again. To ensure that no cheating could occur, the official administering the test let / made them sit at desks spaced wide apart. Everyone passed, proving once and for all that even students from “disadvantaged” backgrounds could succeed.

Escalante's story became well known when film director Ramón Menéndez made the movie *Stand and Deliver*. Escalante got / let the actor Edward James Olmos, who plays him in the film, spend eighteen hours a day with him. Escalante, as well as movie critics and theater critics, were pleased with the results.

What makes Escalante such an effective teacher? In the words of one of his students, Escalante “really cares. He let / made us feel powerful, that we could do anything.”