



Jason Hines

Jason is an 8th grader at Binford Middle School, reportedly one of the best middle schools in the Richmond City Public School district in Virginia.

In the last interim period, Jason had a D in History class and is not optimistic about improving his performance in class.

Environment

Jason's history class is mostly taught through PowerPoint lectures, readings, maps, and videos. There is a limited amount of technology used in the History classroom.

Attitudes

Jason has almost no motivation to learn history. He fails to see the relevance or connection of past events to his present life as a 12-year old boy. During class, he feels that the teacher simply "goes on and on" and he finds this learning method extremely boring. He "tunes out" during class, preferring to daydream about the video games he will be playing when he gets home. When History homework is assigned, he finds excuses to delay making it, or he might completely miss making it, simply because he does not know where to start. He avoids studying for History quizzes and exams because it is pure memory work and according to him, "I am not really good at memorizing." The one time that he got really interested in History class was when the students were divided into the two groups representing the English and the revolutionaries. The two sides then re-enacted a Revolutionary War battle. He enjoyed this particular class activity because it was like playing a "live" video game where each side had a mission to destroy the opposing team.

Jason is especially interested in video games and he spends hours in the evenings and on weekends playing his favorite ones. These are action and adventure games like Star Battalion. In this particular game, he plays the role of an ace pilot leading the Resistance against the Royals who took over the government. In his role as a fighter pilot, he goes on missions that require either speed or tactical strategies in order to win the battle.

Skills

Aside from being good at mobile device technology and video games, Jason has above average Math and analytical skills. When given Math exercises that demonstrate a pattern, he is good at discovering the mathematical rule, testing the accuracy of the rule, and applying the rule to subsequent exercises. His verbal skills even allow him to explain his discoveries to his classmates.

Mobile Device Proficiency

Jason was able to get an iPod touch using the Binford Bucks school program that allows students to purchase items like school supplies and iPods at designated times throughout the school year. He is completely comfortable with the device and has discovered many of the shortcuts available for use. He even teaches his classmates when they are stuck using the device or an application.

Frustrations

Jason is frustrated by the fact that he has to take History class. The fact that he is failing frustrates him even more as his parents have threatened to take away some of his privileges (such as playing video games or going out with friends) if his grade does not improve. He opens his History notes and textbook and they are just a blur of words to him. After choosing certain names and events to memorize in preparation for a test, he fails to retain the information. When he opens his notes or textbook again the next day, he feels that he is back in square one and will have to start all over again.

Goals in History Class

Jason would like to:

- Understand why middle-school students need to learn History
- Get a passing grade in History class
- Increase his understanding of historical events