



SAMPLE: A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN IDA DC LEARNER

Meet Darnell Lawson! Darnell is an energetic, 8 year old who previously attended a traditional public school in Southeast DC. Darnell loves his new school, I Dream Academy DC.

Each morning, Darnell wakes up, gets dressed, and arrives to be greeted at the door warmly by I Dream Academy DC staff and he makes his way to one of his favorite places for Me Time - the field. Today, he runs and plays catch with a staff member and other learners with the same interest. Darnell spends the first 20 minutes of his day doing what he loves to begin the day energized and ready for learning.

Feeling ready to start the day, Darnell heads to his advisory group to spend time with his mentor and his smaller community of learners building community and developing his social emotional skills. This month, he has set a goal with his coach to reduce his impulsivity through breathing techniques and an accountability partner.

Darnell finds a quiet corner in the room to sit on the carpet and still his body. He closes his eyes and begins to use the balanced breathing technique that has worked well for him in his academic learning block when his mind wants to race through a close reading activity or when he feels compelled to interrupt a group discussion to blurt out a thought.

Everyone in Darnell's crew is sitting or laying down around the room and engaged in some form of meditation. Darnell's coach added this 5-minute routine to their Advisory time because so many of the crew members selected impulsivity as an area for growth in their SEL reflections. After 5 minutes, Darnell gets up and joins his crew seated in a circle to start the day's greeting and team building initiative. Darnell's accountability partner, Marta, greets him and congratulates Darnell for sticking to his SEL plan. Darnell greets Marta and smiles at her because he feels proud and cared for.

In math, Darnell has developed a new interest in cooking through a focused investigation of recipes in math class. This investigation has deepened both conceptual understanding and practical application of fractions for many learners. Darnell is eager to make the connection between fractions and decimals, so he can have a better understanding of baseball statistics.

In ELA class of 7 and 8 year-olds, Darnell has been learning to become an expert who can use reading, writing, listening, and speaking to build and share deep knowledge about frogs that have unusual adaptations. He isn't as interested in the topic as some of his peers and ELA has always been a challenge for him, but he has enjoyed writing porquoi tales to answer why questions that his class has generated about frogs in a creative way. Yesterday, he finished his first draft of his tale, "Why Do Frogs Sleep With Their Eyes Open?" Today, he is working with a partner, a 7 year-old who is also learning to use a graphic organizer to support with sequencing her story. Because of this shared learning goal, their peer critique is focused on giving feedback on how well their first drafts are sequenced to match their graphic organizers. Darnell is also eager to apply the research skills he learned as he has developed knowledge on frogs to explore his love of baseball during Dream Time.

After a full day of rigorous academic learning, outdoor adventure, and a healthy lunch, most children are tired and ready to end the day. Not so at IDA DC. In particular, Darnell is eager for Dream Time, where all learners get to explore and investigate their interests and curiosities.

Everyone knows Darnell's passion is baseball. He is currently training to be a pitcher and recently became fascinated by an injury specific to pitchers after witnessing a player experiencing this injury during a game. He wonders, what exactly is this injury? How does it happen? Why is this something that only happens to pitchers? What is the medical procedure?

Darnell is using Dream Time to explore his curiosity about this injury. He is working on generating thick questions like he's learned to do in ELA class to develop a research plan for answering these questions. He's eager to figure out how he might share his learning about the Tommy John Surgery by demonstration. At the end of Dream Time, Darnell emails his Dream Collaborator, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Fufa, about scheduling a Google Hangout meeting to discuss presentation ideas.







