



Andrew, 14

I was walking in a park near my home when I met Andrew and his parents. The park marks the place where the last major battle of the American Revolution happened. Andrew and his parents are part of a group of people who come to the park to teach about American history. They wear historical clothes and live the way people did many years ago. It is called reenactment. Everything they do is like things were 200 years ago.

What have you been doing this week?

I came here to the park yesterday afternoon, and we slept here last night in that tent. It's like the kind they used in the Revolutionary War, but a little bit bigger because people then were shorter than they are now.

What do you do while you're here?

We pretty much* cook over the fire. I've been playing the drums, hauling wood, and throwing a tomahawk.

What's a tomahawk?

It's kinda* like an ax. It's got only one sharp edge. You try to get it to hit a target.

Are you good at that?

Ohhh yeah.

What kind of a shirt are you wearing?

Uh, it's a shirt they would have worn in the 18th century.

How about your shoes? Your socks?

Yeah. Everything I'm wearing is like clothes they wore in the 1700s.

How long have you been doing reenactments?

Pretty much since I was born because my parents are reenactors. We go at least once a month, pretty much all over the state of North Carolina.

What did you do the rest of the week?

School. Monday we had marching band* practice. I play percussion—the tenor drum.

Tell us about marching band.

There are ninety-one of us in the band. While we march, we play music and do different formations and stuff. We have formations like boxes and figure eights. We play in competitions and at football games. We've won forty-one trophies in competitions.

Tell me about your dog over there.

Oh, he's a German Shepherd. He's two or three years old. We found him while we were at a reenactment. He was hungry and didn't have a home, so we took him home with us. When we got him, he weighed sixty pounds* and now he weighs 125 pounds, so he was pretty hungry and thin when we found him.

When I wait for the school bus,* he goes to the end of the road and waits with me until I actually get on the bus before he goes back to the house. He comes out to the end of the road right about the time school gets out and waits for me to get off the bus. Then he walks home with me.

Is there anything you'd like to say to kids in other countries?

Hmm. I guess, "Hi!"

A Few Words

Pretty much: An informal expression that means "almost completely" or "almost all of the time." Andrew uses this expression often.

Kinda: This is a casual way to say "kind of," an informal expression which means "a little."

Marching band: It is a tradition at American football games for a student music band to play during a break in the middle of the game.

Sixty pounds: A little bit more than 27 kilograms. One hundred twenty-five pounds is almost 57 kilograms.

School bus: In the U.S., there are special buses that are used only for taking students to and from school. They are always yellow with black markings.

Discussion Questions

1. Andrew and his family spend a lot of time studying history and learning about life in the 1700s. Do you enjoy studying history? Do you think you would enjoy living outside sometimes as a reenactor? Why or why not?
2. Andrew has a dog as a pet. Do you have any pet animals? What makes them special? What kind of animals would you like to see someday (in a zoo or in their natural habitat)?