

Letter to My Teacher for the Coming Year

Dear Mr. Jones,

Hello. My name is Samantha Taylor and I will be a senior in your Contemporary American History class. I wanted to take some time to share a little information about myself and my hearing loss with you before school begins in a few weeks.

I am the youngest of three girls in my family and the only one born with a hearing loss. I have a severe loss in my left ear and a profound loss in my right ear. I began wearing hearing aids and signing as a toddler. This year through my IEP I am working on transitioning to college and living on my own in a dorm. I am planning on studying Computer Programming in college. I excel in math and computer skills and I am very social. I struggle a bit more with reading and vocabulary skills.

Over the past year I have studied a lot of information about my rights through the Americans with Disabilities Act. I understand my rights as a qualified person with a disability: rights concerning fair employment, participation in state and local government activities, public accommodations, telecommunication services, and transportation. I plan to use this information as I apply for a summer job, a job in college, and as I transition to living on my own. In any job where I will have interactions with a customer or co-worker I will need an interpreter some of time, just as I do in school.

As you look at my IEP, you will see I need several accommodations in the classroom. I need to have an interpreter with me for all of my classes. My interpreter even attends all my basketball practices and games to interpret for me. I also need to use captioning for all the movies we watch. I need to use a notetaker from the class to help me be able to take in all the information through my interpreter and not miss anything important you will be saying. Each week I meet with my itinerant deaf and hard of hearing teacher to preview any new vocabulary and work on my IEP goals.

Outside of school I use a few other devices to help me. I primarily text on the phone or use FaceTime to communicate with my signing family and friends. I also have a vibrating alarm clock as well as flashing lights for the doorbell and phone at home that help me.

I am planning on attending college next year and know I will have a lot of challenges to overcome there. This year I am starting my college visits and picking which schools have students with a hearing loss attending now and finding out what accommodations the schools can provide for me in the classroom and for living on campus. I am excited to work toward going to college.

I look forward to your class this year and hope you now know a little more about me. If you have any questions about me that I did not answer, please just ask. I love to share with people information about myself and my hearing loss.

Sincerely,

Samantha Taylor