Mr. V Uses MindMeister in the Classroom to Engage And Inspire Students.

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Anthony Valentin, High School Teacher

At a Glance...

★ Improved test scores

★ Verfied student participation

★ Improved critical thinking

★ Better link between classroom and homework activities

Anthony Valentin, or Mr. V as he's more commonly known to his students, is a World History teacher at New York City's famed Stuyvesant High School. On a daily basis, Mr. V teaches 168 students divided amongst five classes, and has been for the past 25 years. To reach tomorrow's leaders and instill in them not only critical thinking skills, but collaborative and team efforts for solving challenging problems, Valentin uses MindMeister. Here's how.

As a long time personal mind mapper, Mr. V has been a MindMeister customer since our original beta testing phase. He says of his initial search that he was after a mind mapping application that wouldn't tie him to a specific computer. Yet, the application had to be intuitive and simple to master without extensive use of the school's computing facilities. MindMeister filled the need.

Once in the classroom, Mr. V points to the uses of MindMeister. "Mind mapping allows me to assign tasks or explain concepts graphically. Students have varied learning styles, and mind mapping appears to aid most of them." When it comes down to functionality, Mr. V regularly creates topic and discussion templates, and then circulates them to all of his students. These templates may either be filled in by students, or used as a springboard to create their own maps. Valentin notes that for individual and simpler assignments, students usually work alone, but work as groups on larger-scale projects. These assignments generally begin in the classroom and then carry over into homework activities.

"I often use MindMeister to elicit responses to questions posed after students had watched a film or read a document. Other students can then edit and / or substitute their own commentary. The goal is to get students to critically think about sources and share their thoughts," comments Mr. V. "We review the work in class by projecting the mind map on a screen using my MindMeister for iPad app."

Two of the most important features of MindMeister for Mr. V are the History View, which allows him to view who made what changes and when —"The history playback feature is absolutely awesome…"— and also the Embedding Maps feature, meaning he can place a map in any HTML editor. "Embedding permits me to place a mind map in context with the subject materials," says Mr. V.

The Result

As a result of Anthony Valentin's application of MindMeister in the classroom he reports a noted increase in students' test scores. "I have seen complex and content rich mind maps. I can attest to the improved test scores my students have had while using mind maps for content reviews."