

Pre-Viewing and Discussion Questions

Attendance and Achievement: Dwayne

Grade Level: High School

Pre-Viewing:

1. **Before watching the video, ask students** to define the word motivation and ask them to discuss motivation in terms of their own lives. (motivation: a reason, force, or influence that causes or inspires someone to do something)
2. **Distribute several Post-it notes to all students** and draw two columns on the board/screen/chart paper. On each Post-it, students write a moment when they need motivation to do something. This might be as simple as waking up in the morning to go to school or as big as running in a marathon. Tell them to write actual moments in their own lives as well as moments they imagine in other people's lives. They should post their moments in the left column.
3. **Read each moment Post-it out loud** and ask group to consider who the person might be needed to do the motivating. These can be as generic as "a coach" or "an adult" or as specific as "Ms. Wright" or "POTUS." Write those names in the right hand column.
4. **Ask students** if anyone wrote their own name or a pronoun such as "me, myself, and I" for the motivator. What do their answers say about how they think of motivation?
5. **For older students**, create a third column and call it "circumstances." What circumstances would motivate someone to do something? Write their examples in the third column. Some examples might include how an impending hurricane would motivate a person to board up windows and get out of town, or how knowing you were going to be in a wedding party might motivate you to lose a few pounds.
6. **Discuss** what students consider to be the greatest motivator of all and have them explain their answers.
7. **Explain** that they will watch a video of a young man who was motivated by others until he found the strength within to motivate himself.

Discussion Questions:

1. Dwayne says, "I saw my future." Describe his past and then describe his vision of his future. Was that enough to change his behaviors? Why or why not?
2. What was Dwayne's "epiphany"? (**NOTE:** an epiphany is a sudden moment of insight into the reality or deep meaning of something.) Why do you think that event had such a strong impact on him? Have you ever experienced an "epiphany"? Describe your experience.
3. Dwayne's high school English teacher discovered his real talent for writing and poetry. Why does it sometimes take another person to point out our talents?
4. Dwayne says his books contain "everything that has happened to (him) so far in (his) life," and he reads one of his poems aloud in the video. How does the poem capture Dwayne's life as you know it from the video? What else do you imagine has happened in his life from hearing the poem? What images stand out from the poem? Why?

5. Near the end of the video, Dwayne says, "If you look into a mirror deep enough, you will see your soul... you will see your potential...and then you will see it thrown out the window by what you are doing now." What does this mean? What did Dwayne see? How did this motivate him to do better? How would looking deeply into a mirror motivate you?
6. Dwayne closes by saying, "I don't need anyone to push me anymore...I have the motivation within me to do right." How does this statement connect to your life? Would you benefit from somebody pushing you at this stage of your life, or do you think you are capable of pushing yourself "to do right"? Explain your answer.

Notes:

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