



Connect with Kids

WebSource

For the Classroom

Disconnect: Why Kids Skip School

Discussion Questions – Segment 3

1. Have you ever been aware of your peers purposely performing poorly in school so that they will not stand out? What do you think about this attitude?
2. Have you witnessed other students being pressured by their peers to do poorly? How did you react? Why? What does this say about the people being pressured as well as the people doing the pressuring?
3. What is wrong with getting good grades?
4. What is the formula for being popular in the school discussed in the documentary? What is the formula for popularity in your school? How do they compare and contrast?
5. Have you ever stopped to focus on what you can become in the future rather than what you have done in the past? Why or why not? What did you 'see'?
6. What qualities do you look for in a good friend?
7. Do you know of a teacher or other adult in your school who lifts you up? Describe that feeling
8. What talents did Gena's teacher see in her? How did her teacher's encouragement keep her focused on staying in school?
9. Gena Keane says, "Without a high school diploma you're nothing in life." What does that mean for your self-esteem? What does it mean financially? Career-wise?

Activity

Dream Big

PROJECT AND PURPOSE

Students will describe their dreams and list the steps they will need to take in order to reach those dreams. Students will:

- Describe their talents, skills and abilities
- State their dreams for the future
- Chart the steps they will need to take to reach that dream

MATERIALS

- Pens, pencils
- “Connecting Building Blocks” worksheet
- Paper, two pieces per student
- Access to career information either through counselors, the Internet, research materials in the media center, etc.

PROCEDURE

1. Open a group discussion by asking the students, What do you do well? What are your talents? What are your skills?
2. Distribute the “Connecting Building Blocks” worksheet and have students complete step one: to write your three best talents, skills and/or abilities. Then have them turn to two other people in the group and complete step two.
3. In the third block on the worksheet, have students write down two or three things they would like to do with their lives in the future. Remind your students to dream big. Ask, What would be your dream career or your dream future? What do you see yourself doing? Where will you live?
4. Have them pick one of their dreams and ask, How do your talents and skills fit in with your dreams? Explain your answer.
5. On lines provided, students should write down five steps they will have to take in order to reach that dream. These might include things like, “Enlist in the Marines,” or “Get a job at a famous hair or beauty salon in Los Angeles,” or even “Win the lottery,” etc. They should list them in some kind of chronological order, such as, “This year I will...,” “In two years I will...,” etc.
6. Ask students to consider the most realistic first step they would need to take on the journey to achieve their dream. Ask, How does school fit into your plan? Has anyone considered whether or not you will need a high school diploma or further education? Why or why not? Discuss as a group.
7. In the space provided beneath the five steps, ask students to write down at least three people, either specifically by name (i.e., Dr. Farnsworth, our guidance counselor; Ms. Schuster, my ballet instructor; Bob, the manager at the store where I work; Ms.

Bellamy, the French teacher; etc.) or by generic category (i.e., a guru, a fine chef/cooking instructor, a flight instructor, etc.) who can help them hone their skills, fine tune their talents and abilities, and keep each individual connected to his or her dream. Ask, Why did you choose these people? Write that reason down next to that person's name/title.

8. In the last section, ask the students to list two things that might threaten their achieving their dream. Next to each, they should write a way they will overcome the threat.

9. Now ask the group to stop for a moment and look at their big dream and their lists. Their assignment is to create a strategy for achieving their dream and write it either as a formal paper or as a large chart. Be sure to give a due date and check points.

10. On the due date, have the students share their dream works and discuss how being connected to their dream will help them achieve their goals.

Connecting Building Blocks Worksheet

1. In this first block, write your best talents, skills, qualities and/or abilities.

2. Now ask two other people in class what they think your best talents, skills, qualities and/or abilities are.

3. Write down two or three things you would like to do with your life in the future. Dream big!

Connecting Building Blocks Worksheet

Continued

4. Pick your favorite dream from question No. 3. List five steps you will need to take to make that dream come true.

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5. Write down at least three people, either specifically by name or by generic category, who can help you hone your skills, fine tune your talents and abilities, and keep you connected to your dream.

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6. Write two things that might threaten your achieving your dream. Next to each, you should write a way you will overcome that threat.