



Connect with Kids

WebSource

For the Classroom

Academic Motivation: What is *Your* Destiny?

Video Overview

For most of his young life, Dwayne was a quitter. He admits school was “going really bad... getting suspended every other day.” And then, he says, something changed. What happened and who was behind it? One day his English teacher pulled him aside and let him know how smart and talented he is – that has a natural gift for English. And he began to believe it... and in himself. He wrote poems, and letters of apology to his mom.

And now, he says he doesn't need others to push him from the outside. “I don't need anyone to push me anymore. Everyone has done all the pushing they can do in my life. Now it's my turn to push myself. I have to find my motivation. I have the motivation within me to do right.”

Discussion and Self-Reflection Questions

- In the beginning of the video when describing his many school suspensions, Dwayne shares that he had “a real problem with authority. I didn't like being told what to do.” Do you ever feel that way? How do you handle those feelings?
- Dwayne was encouraged by his high school English teacher and discovered a real talent for writing and poetry. How would you describe your strengths? Who encourages you?
- Describe a school assignment or outside school experience that was really engaging. What about it did you like?
- Dwayne describes getting a lot of pushing from his mom and dad – and that now it's “my turn to push myself.” What motivates you? What are some of the things, big and small, that you hope to accomplish?

Activity

Haki Madhubuti (alias Don L. Lee) is an African-American poet. His work is characterized by anger at social and economic injustice and by rejoicing in African-American culture. Open this online link to read his poem entitled Destiny. http://www.math.buffalo.edu/~swm/madhubuti-lee/madhubuti_lee2.html#destiny

Try your hand at poetry and write about your destiny. Or write a paragraph about what Haki Madhubuti's poem means to you.

Related College Board Advisory Guide Resources

<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/CollegePlanning/media/pdf/CBSchools-Advisory-Guide-Grade-9.pdf>

Adding or Subtracting: What's My Impact – Page 88

Re-introduce students to terms for skills and behaviors that may add to a group's effectiveness or subtract from it. Emphasize that even though some students may not like working in groups, it is an important skill in school, college and life, and that knowing about these skills and behaviors and being able to talk about them will help students improve the way they work together in groups. Also, remind students that it's okay to admit that our behavior might subtract from a group at times (including yours — the adviser's). Noting that we sometimes use behaviors that have a negative impact on others does not mean we are bad people; it means that we are honest with ourselves and can be responsible for changing.