



DISCUSSION GUIDE: ETHAN'S STORY

Objective: Students find common ground with students outside their social circle to build more connections.

Themes: Loneliness, isolation, physical health challenges, mental health challenges, depression

Option 1: Watch the entire video all the way through and have a conversation using these questions or ones that make sense for your students.

1. Start by asking, "Is there anyone in your life that this video makes you think about? Can you reach out and connect with them right now?"
2. Allow time for students to text or call someone they are thinking about in the moment.
3. Use the questions below to engage in a rich conversation with your students focusing on student engagement. Lead the conversation with the whole group or have small groups answer each question and then share their answers.
4. It is vital that all students feel seen in this process so pay close attention to anyone responding in a way to the videos that is unexpected. Follow up with them after the discussion to ensure the video or conversation was not upsetting to them.

Option 2: Play the full video once all the way through, then go back and play it again, pausing for conversation.

As you rewatch, pause at 1:01 and engage with students about Ethan's story. What expectations do you feel in your life and have you exceeded them or do they make you feel stressed?

Pause at 3:40, and talk about how at the beginning of the video, Ethan talks about how no one checked in on him but at this point, he talks about understanding that they didn't reach out because they assumed he knew they cared, can you think about someone in your life either close to you or a casual friend and what would deepening that friendship mean to you or to them?

Pause at 5:00, Ethan encourages us to think about finding our value in who we are versus what we do. Can you think about how what you do informs who you are? Can you name some things that are of value that you get from the things you do? For example, if you love sports, is it because you value the competition or pushing yourself to get your best or if you love theater, is it because you love to escape into other stories or because you love making people laugh.

Connection Challenge:

- Hand out Connection Challenge sheets. Students can be paired for this activity.
- Students will search for people who match the descriptors. When they find someone, they will take a photo with that person.
- If completing the challenge tech-free, students can obtain their signature.
- Remind students the goal is to reach out to those outside your circle of influence to make more connections.

Extension:

1. Challenge students to complete the connection challenge outside of school as well!