



Connect with Kids

WebSource

For the Classroom

Becoming College and Career Ready

Video Overview

Glen Curtis was smart but very shy, and he always had trouble making real friends. His quiet and introverted demeanor didn't exactly make Glen the type of person his classmates wanted to spend time with, but the feeling was mutual because Glen didn't feel comfortable hanging out with other students. In high school, Glen finally realized that being an introvert was holding him back. He wanted to meet people and get involved in more activities, but he didn't even know how to start a conversation.

Glen challenged himself to attend a club meeting after school, which led to a major turning point in Glen's life. Even though he felt like crying after his first club meeting, Glen didn't let his fear stop him. He joined the choir, the golf team and a few other clubs at school. Glen says he met people who were earnest and "pulled" the shyness out of him, and he realized it was fun to interact with other people. His new-found confidence to speak up and get involved has helped him find the courage not only to say yes to friends and activities, but also to say no to negative influences like drugs and alcohol. Glen says he now knows nothing is as bad as it seems, and he's bold enough to accomplish his goals and "conquer the world."

Discussion and Self-Reflection Questions

- How did Glen's failure to interact with people affect his quality of life at school, at home and in his neighborhood?
- How do you think Glen's high school experience would be different had he not developed the skills to speak up?
- Do you face situations at school that require you to get outside your "comfort zone" and try something new? What are those situations?
- Glen says people who don't get involved in activities in high school "disappear" later in life due to their lack of confidence. Is it important for everyone to be outgoing, or is it acceptable for some people to remain in the background? Explain.
- Glen says he's now ready to "conquer the world." What do you think the relationship is between having self-confidence and the kinds of experiences Glen had, and success in college or a chosen career?

Activity: This College Speaks to Me

In order to help students hone presentation skills, ask each to select a college that they will research in order to present a short three- to five-minute presentation to the class on why they might want to consider this school.

When students have selected a school, suggest that they go online and complete research and/or request a brochure or admissions packet. Brainstorm with students about the types of general information they might want to gather about the school for their presentation to the class:

- Its location.
- Availability of two year and/or four year programs.
- Size of enrollment.
- Admission requirements (GPA, SAT or ACT test scores)
- Financial aid, loan and grant information.
- Descriptive words. How can you describe the photos you see online or in a brochure? What does this school look like to you?

Then review these presentation and public speaking tips:

- **Speak slowly.** Experts say one of the biggest mistakes teens make is talking too fast.
- **Practice.** This can help you prepare and slow the pace. Practice delivering your speech into a recorder, to a family member or a friend. Avoid saying words including “like” and “um.”
- **Make eye contact.** If you're particularly nervous about speaking in front of the class, try looking at an object just beyond the people in the audience, such as a clock or bulletin board on the back wall of the room.