
CLAYTON

Grade Level:

Middle School (6-8)

High School (9-12)

Clayton tells the story of a very difficult time in his life. He was being abused at home, and bullied at school. He felt like nobody cared about him and was utterly alone.

Resources: [Clayton \(video\)](#) Contains strong language and violent imagery while discussing suicide and gun violence.

Useful teaching strategies that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards:

- Identify and define key vocabulary words: hopeless, rejection, bullying, compassion, abuse, suicide, loneliness, vulnerability, honesty, openness, fearlessness.
- Have students do an activity called "Think-Pair-Share," where they work with a partner to discuss loneliness, rejection, and bullying in our society. What are consequences and possible solutions?

1. Prior to showing the video above, briefly explain the primary themes of the video:

- Growing up can be incredibly complicated.
- Hurt people hurt people.
- Trauma can lead to learning, growth, success, and happiness.
- Kindness, compassion, and inclusion can change lives and change the world.

Use some or all of the following activities (include at least one writing prompt).

- Create a [KWL chart](#) based on the vocabulary and Think-Pair-Share exercise (a chart that highlights what they know, what they want to know, and what they learned).
- Discuss problems that can arise for both individuals and community when people feel lonely or excluded.
- Discuss the benefits to individuals and community when people feel valued and included.
- Have students generate questions about what they want to learn and chart those questions in the W sections of the chart.

2. After watching the video, engage students in a dialogue about Clayton using some or all of the following questions (include at least one writing prompt):

- What problems was Clayton facing when he was 13?
- What was his parents' marriage like, and how did it affect him?
- How did Clayton's parents discipline him?
- Who did Clayton have to talk to?
- What happened at school that led to Clayton being suspended?
 - Did anyone listen to his side of the story?
 - Why or why not?

- Why was Clayton so afraid of being suspended?
- Had Clayton thought about suicide before?
 - How did it make him feel?
 - Why did it make him feel that way?
- What big decision did Clayton make next?
- What did Clayton want his parents to feel?
- What happened when his dog walked into where he was sitting in his parents' bedroom?
- How did Clayton feel when the gun fired accidentally?
- What did he say in his note?
- Where did Clayton decide to go when he left his house? Why?
 - How was he feeling then, and why?
- Who did Clayton see as bullies?
 - How did he want to make them feel? Why?
- What had Clayton's gym teacher done, and how did that make him feel?
- What happened when Clayton saw another student leave the school?
 - What did that student do?
 - Why was this so important?
- Where did he end up next?
 - What did he do then?
 - What was he feeling?
 - What did he see that changed things?
 - Why was that special?
- What happened when the police arrived?
 - What was going through Clayton's mind?
 - What did the officer say to Clayton?
 - How did he feel about that at the time?
 - How does he feel about it now?
- What inspired Clayton to make this video?
- How does he feel about school shooters?
 - What does he want people to know about them?
 - What stopped him from becoming one?
- According to Clayton, what do humans need?
 - What happens to people who don't get those things that they need?
- Does Clayton say that we have to make friends with everyone?
- What does Clayton want us all to do?
 - How?
 - Why?
- How did Clayton feel when he was growing up?
 - Was he right?
- What happened in-between then and now for Clayton?
 - Why is it so important to know that?
- How many years after Dec 13, 1987 did Clayton move to California?
 - What happened then?
- How does Clayton feel about life today?
 - How old is he?

- What is he doing now?
- Why do you think Clayton is so emotional at the end of the video?
- How does this video make you feel?

3. Complete the L section of the chart by indicating what was learned. Look back at the questions in the W section to see if those questions were answered or if more information is needed.

Extension Activities

- Service Learning: ask students to brainstorm service projects inspired by Clayton's video.
 - What social problems does the video connect to?
 - What are possible solutions to those problems?
 - What actions could your class take, either in school or out in the community?
- Dyads: organize into Dyads with the topic of Clayton's video and what feelings it brought to heart.
- Filmmaking: organize into small groups and create intimate storytelling videos that convey trauma experienced and lessons learned.
 - Each group organizes into roles. Suggestions:
 - Storyteller
 - Director
 - Photographer
 - Editor
 - Interviewer
 - Lighting Technician
 - Audio Technician
 - Set Designer

Global Mentors

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