

## Student Activity



## Topic

Working Hard,  
Changing the  
Narrative



## Competency

Responsible Decision  
Making,  
Self-Awareness



## Grade Band

Middle School,  
High School

## Isaiah

Isaiah is both a star football player and an honor student at his school. Hard work is an important value in his life, but he is also concerned about society's perceptions about young men of color and how that narrative impacts his life and others.

### Conversation Starters and Writing Prompts

The conversation starters and writing prompts following each video are designed to help youth understand their own mirrors and windows and how their perspectives, feelings and behaviors influence how they see and feel about themselves and others. Please review the **Defining US Facilitator Guide** for a full explanation of design, suggested implementation, and best practices using the videos and prompts.

#### How Do We See?

1. Do you believe Isaiah has been successful so far in life? Why?
2. Who are the people who support him?
3. What are his goals?
4. Do you have goals for the future?
5. What are some things you have to do to reach your goals?
6. Do you believe hard work will help you achieve your dreams?

#### What Do We Feel?

1. Describe how Isaiah feels about his accomplishments.
2. Isaiah mentions "hard work", does working hard lead to success? Why or why not?
3. Do you think working hard is satisfying? Why or why not?
4. How do you feel when someone older supports you?
5. Why does Isaiah say "you have to be hungry"?
6. Why does Isaiah say it is important to be "humble"?
7. Do you agree with Isaiah about being "hungry" and "humble"? Why or why not?

#### How Can We Change?

1. What is the most important thing you learned from Isaiah's story?
2. What do you think Isaiah means when he talks about "changing the narrative"?
3. Do you agree with Isaiah regarding the narrative surrounding young men of color in this country? Why or why not?
4. Isaiah talks about the importance of hard work. Do you think he has to work harder because of his race? Why or why not?
5. What obstacles do you see that could interfere with you reaching your goals?
6. What examples of systematic or structural racism are seen in Isaiah's story? Describe.
7. What actions can you take that could improve the narrative for young men of color?

#### Deeper Look: Define and Discuss

- Hard work
- Support
- Family
- Humility
- Systematic Racism
- Narrative regarding people of color
- Bias