

TEEN PRESS

EXPLORATION GUIDE

1

The Teen Press program at Santa Barbara Middle School was created in 2011 by two teachers, John Seigel-Boettner and David Teton-Landis. It has become a highly sought-after elective course for a select group of eight students each year and a nationally recognized program that is now being replicated in other schools and contexts. More info on setting up your own Teen Press Club can be found at

www.teenpressthemovie.com.

Most of us probably don't look back fondly on those turbulent middle school/junior high years. However, the one-of-a-kind experience for this group of students carried with it some important life lessons that they will hopefully retain for the rest of their lives. Do you remember a person, class, or experience from your early adolescent years that has stuck with you?

2

One of the most interesting parts of the Teen Press experience are the four extended interviews with Yvon Chouinard of Patagonia, Christian Gheroghe of Tidemark Software, Civil Rights legend, US Representative John Lewis, and then Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom. Each of them shared some interesting anecdotes and advice from their lives for the Teen Press students.

Reflect a little bit about this portion of the film as these kids are learning how to do thorough background research, be engaged listeners, ask unexpected questions that solicit insightful and personal responses, and not be intimidated to interview people that are older and more experienced. Did anything in particular stick with you from one of these interviews?

3

Yvon Chouinard, the founder of Patagonia, seems pleasantly surprised to learn that one of the students, Alexis, learned how to do blacksmithing in one of her recent summer camp experiences. Yvon offers some career advice and tells the kids not to study international marketing or computer science (since everyone else is doing that). "Learn a trade", he states, "Want a job? Learn blacksmithing."

Did someone in your life encourage you to learn a trade or a practical skill that has served you well in the rest of your life? Is there some sort of practical skill or craft that you would still like to learn to enhance your experiences in life or set you up for a new career opportunity?

4

In the last scene, Jayden, one of the students, reflects on something he will take away from his Teen Press experience. He says, "I learned that I actually have a story as well. I didn't realize that before. That I have something to say about myself and my life." Earlier in the film, another student, Ben, reflects that "the most important thing that I have learned is how to listen and stay engaged."

We are in the midst of a cultural moment where we are all learning to listen more carefully to the stories of people we might have overlooked in the past. What insights did you glean from this film? Have you found yourself seeking out the people and stories that you might not have noticed before? How are you learning to become a better and more engaged listener? Have you found yourself telling your own story in a different way that sheds new light on what has shaped you to become the person you are today?