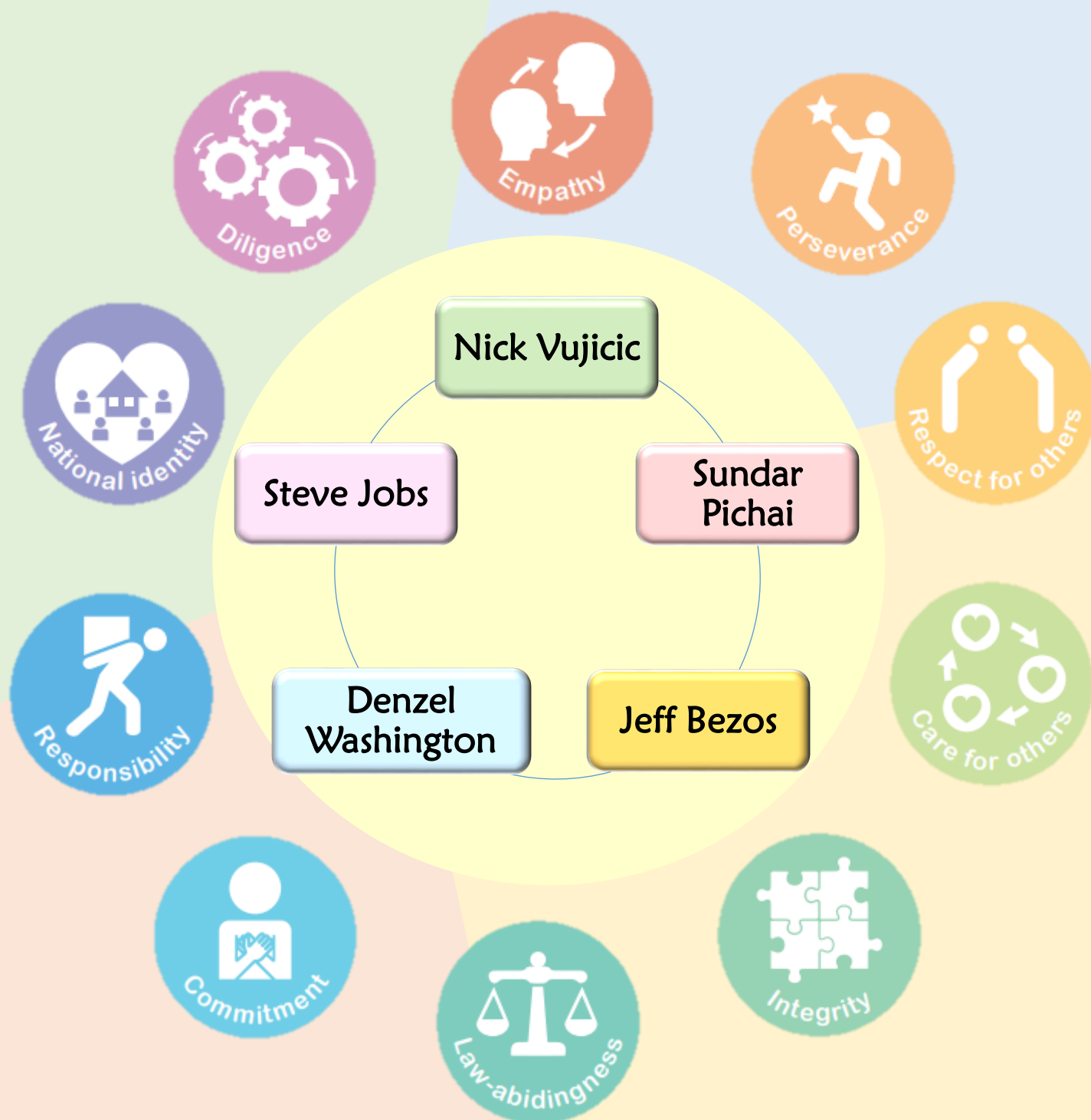


Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes  
through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)  
Resource Kit on Inspirational Speeches



**English Language Education Section  
Curriculum Development Institute  
Education Bureau  
The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

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## Preface

**Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW) – Inspirational Speeches** is a resource kit produced by the English Language Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, in support of the cross-curricular campaign “Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)”. Learning and teaching materials are developed based on 5 selected speeches to promote positive values and attitudes, and enhance students’ understanding of public speaking skills and creative use of English through appreciating speeches in the English Language classroom.

### Aims of the Resource Kit

This resource kit aims to:

- facilitate the development of positive values and attitudes through appreciating and reflecting on the selected speeches,
- enhance students’ knowledge on public speaking skills (e.g. using rhetorical questions and telling personal stories), and
- provide opportunities for students to appreciate the creative use of the language in public speeches.

### Suggested Levels

- Key Stage 3 (Secondary 1 to 3)
- Key Stage 4 (Secondary 4 to 6)

### How can the resource kit be used?

This resource kit contains 5 selected speeches. Each set of materials consists of two parts:

Part A: Students watch the video of the speech and answer questions on the global understanding of it.

Part B: Students read the transcript of the speech and answer questions with reference to it.

This resource kit is available in both PDF and MS WORD formats for ease of use and adaptation. Teachers might like to select and use the materials in this resource kit or adapt them to suit their students’ needs, interests and abilities.

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**Nick Vujicic**

## Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)

### SOW Speech Series –

**Featured SOW: “It’s not the end until you’ve given up”**

**from a speech by Nick Vujicic<sup>1</sup>**

A. Watch the speech delivered by Nick Vujicic and answer the following questions. You may use these keywords: Nick Vujicic, 2016, never give up, Nick’s life without limbs to find a video of the speech on YouTube.

1. Which of the following values is NOT touched on in Nick’s talk?

A. hope

B. perseverance

C. integrity

D. courage

A B C D

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. What did Nick do before starting his speech? What is the purpose of doing it?

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3. Nick strategically employed pauses throughout his speech. Which of the following is NOT an intended effect of employing pauses?

A. To allow time for the audience to absorb the information

B. To allow time for the speaker to organise his ideas

C. To draw the audience’s attention

D. To add weight to what has just been said

A B C D

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

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<sup>1</sup> Nick Vujicic was born without arms or legs, which has brought him tremendous obstacles. His perseverance has got him through life challenges and now he is a world-famous motivational speaker.

4. Which of the following techniques did Nick use in delivering this speech?

- (i) Using age-appropriate language and experience to connect to the audience
- (ii) Supporting his points with statistics and quotations
- (iii) Asking questions to involve the audience
- (iv) Complementing the speech with actions
- (v) Adding humour and jokes to bond with the audience

- A. (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv)
- B. (i), (iii), (iv) and (v)
- C. (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v)
- D. All of the above

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B. Read the script of Nick Vujicic's speech and answer the questions that follow.

*I'm coming. Ready? Hey! Is that cool? Awesome!*

[1] I want to talk about, like, when I started to go to school and stuff, and a lot of people put me down. You know what I mean? Like people tease each other. I mean, people come up and say, "Hey, you're fat ...", you know, "Lose some weight!" And you go home and look at  
5 yourself in the mirror and go, "Argh! I'm fat! Right?" And so many people tease each other, you know, you're too short, you're too tall, you look ... whatever! Different hair and all that. It doesn't matter. See, the thing is, when you're in school, and when you're growing up in life, it actually sort of matters to people how you look. And then it matters to you because it matters to others. Why? Why does it matter how you look? Because if they don't like you, then who  
10 will? If they don't accept you, then who will? And the fear that we have is that we're gonna be alone. That we're not good enough and you know, we have to change ourselves. You know, so many people put me down and say, "Nick, you look too weird and no one's really your friend and you can't do this and you can't do that." And I couldn't change anything. It's not like just fixing my hair one day and everything was fine. I couldn't change my circumstance.  
15 I couldn't just wake up one day and say, "Hey, give me arms and legs. I need arms and legs." You know what I mean? Like you go to a bodybuilder, you know, "Can you make me some arms and legs?" No, I'm just joking. Bodybuilder, you get it? Right? I go up to people, "Can you give me a hand?" I'm just joking!

[2] But it was so hard because people put me down. And I started believing that I was not good  
20 enough. I started believing that I was a failure that I'd never be somebody who people would like or people would accept. And it was so hard, man, I thought to myself, you know, "I can't go on the soccer field like everybody else and I can't ride my bike and I can't skateboard and all these sorts of things." I started getting depressed. I thought, "What kind of purpose do I have to live?" I mean, are you just here to live to die? I mean, is there not a purpose for me?  
25 Is there not a purpose in life? And I had questions and no answers and I asked my mom and dad, "Why did this happen?" I asked doctors, "Why did this happen?" They don't know.

[3] There are some things in life that are out of your control, that you can't change and you've got to live with. The choice that we have, though, is either to give up or keep on going. I wanna ask you, what are you gonna believe? Are you gonna believe in yourself or you gonna believe  
30 in everybody else's judgement on you? Are you gonna believe people when they say that you're a failure, that no one really likes you, that no one really cares about you? And it's not really to say that hey you need somebody to come up to you and say, "Hey, I really like you.

I care about you.” It’s not that. But it’s the fact that people put you down. People don’t even look you in the eye. People ask you how you are and you say “Fine.” but you’re not fine and they’ll never know that.

[4] I tell you life is interesting. Life is a journey. You see this phone here? Let’s say that I want to go to the phone. Right? And I start from over here. Now to get to the phone, it’s not like I’m going to start meditating and going “hummmmm”, and float across the air, right? That’s not gonna happen. That’s not gonna work. It’s not like I’m going to go “hummmmm” and “wooo”, you know? It’s not gonna work. So I have to take one step at a time, one step at a time, one step at a time. You can only take one step at a time. I don’t care how big your step is, it’s still only one step at a time. You can’t take two steps in one. You understand? So it’s like one step at a time.

[5] You take steps in this direction and you take steps in that direction. You sort of get lost along the way and sometimes you fall down.

*Now to illustrate my point, I’m going to jump off the table and do a back twist and land on the floor. Okay? Is that cool? Are you ready? Oh. Is it a clock there? Can you move the clock for a second, please? Beautiful, beautiful. Alright. You ready? So, are you guys ready? Just let me know when you’re ready. You’re ready? One... Two ... I’m joking, man. Are you serious? Just put the clock back there. If I did that, I’ll break my arm or something. You know what I mean?*

But honestly, along the way, you might fall down like this. So what do you do when you fall down? Get back up. Everybody knows to get back up because if I start walking, I’m not going to get anywhere. But I tell you there are some times in life where you fall down and feel like you don’t have the strength to get back up. So you sort of put on a mask on your face and come to school, and pretend that everything is okay when it’s not. And you go home and lay in your bed when no one’s looking at you, when you don’t have to impress anybody and you’re yourself, and fear comes in. The fear that you have as soon as you walk into the doors of your house? Maybe it’s a broken home. Maybe you have doubt in your life. Maybe you don’t know for sure what’s going to be happening in the future and it scares you. Maybe you’re worried about what people think of you, what people say about you. Just that fear that paralyzes you. And I just want to ask you today, do you think you have hope? Because I tell you I’m down here, face down, and I have no arms and no legs. It should be impossible for me to get back up. I mean, you go home and tie up the legs and arms of your brothers and sisters, and push them down and see how long it’s gonna take them to get back up. You know what I mean? You can tell them that you’ll see them tomorrow. You know what I mean?

**[6]** But this is the thing—it should be impossible for me to get back up. But it's not. You see, I will try 100 times to get up and if I fail 100 times, if I fail and I give up, do you think that I'm ever going to get up? No. But if I fail and I try again? And again and again? For as long  
70 as I try, there is always that chance of me getting up. Does that make sense? And it's not the end until you've given up. And just the fact that you're here should persuade you that you have another chance to get back up. There's still hope. I'm not here today to tell you that I understand your pain. I don't know how it feels to be abused. I don't know how it feels to feel  
75 I don't know how it feels. But I know how it feels to have a broken heart. And I know how it feels to be alone. And I want you to know that I've found my strength in Jesus Christ and you're going to find your strength in whatever you find it in. But I just want you to know that it's not the end. It matters how you are going to finish. Are you going to finish strong? And you will find that strength to get back up, like this.

1. (i) Which technique is used when Nick said “bodybuilder” and “give me a hand”? (lines 17-18)

- A. pun
- B. metaphor
- C. alliteration
- D. personification

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- (ii) Explain how the technique is used.

Bodybuilder: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Give me a hand: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Nick shared that he got depressed in paragraph 2. Identify two reasons for his depression.

- i. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Words, phrases or sentences which come in patterns of 3 are inherently more powerful, memorable and effective. This writing / presentation technique is called the ‘Rule of Three’. Nick employed the ‘Rule of Three’ throughout his speech. For example, in paragraph 2:

*I can’t go in the soccer field like everybody else, and*

*I can’t ride my bike, and*

*I can’t skateboard and all these sorts of things ...*

Identify another example of the ‘Rule of Three’ in paragraph 3.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. In paragraph 4, Nick told the audience that life is a journey. Which of the following statements best describe(s) what Nick meant? You can choose more than one answer.

- |                                            |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Every step made in life matters.        | A                     | B                     | C                     | D                     |
| B. We should explore the world around us.  |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| C. Meditation helps us travel in our mind. |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| D. You cannot rush things through life.    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |


5. Study paragraph 5. Complete the following sentences by filling in each blank with ONE word. The first letter of the word is provided. Make sure your answer is grammatically correct.

*Nick drew the audience's attention by joking about jumping off the table. But he truly related and connected with the audience by acknowledging their f\_\_\_\_\_ and offering them h\_\_\_\_\_ by telling them he had faced similar obstacles and overcome them.*

6. Which of the following teenage problems did Nick NOT mention to relate to his audience?

- |                                        |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. family problems                     | A                     | B                     | C                     | D                     |
| B. peer pressure                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| C. problems with weight and appearance |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| D. academic performance                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

7. Nick has a key idea to express in each paragraph. Match the following key ideas with paragraphs 1-6? Put the letters in the boxes provided.



A. I have been sad and down too.

B. I was once lost in life.

C. Get back up when you fall.

D. Never give up and find your strength.

E. Accept what you cannot change.

F. Start taking steady steps.

"Nick Vujicic - World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2011" by World Economic Forum is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

- e.g. Paragraph 1
- i. Paragraph 2
- ii. Paragraph 3
- iii. Paragraph 4
- iv. Paragraph 5
- v. Paragraph 6

8. Nick wisely used actions to complement his speech to convey his message to the audience more effectively. Other than the opening act, identify one action that Nick performed in his speech that impressed you most and briefly explain how the action made his speech more powerful.

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9. The following quotes are taken from the speech. Choose the most appropriate quality reflected in each quote. Write the letters in the boxes provided. Each option can only be used ONCE.

self-worth	bravery	respect
diligence	perseverance	patience

Are you gonna believe in yourself or you gonna believe in everybody else's judgement on you? Are you gonna believe people when they say that you're a failure, that no one really likes you, that no one really cares about you?

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

So I have to take one step at a time, one step at a time, one step at a time. You can only take one step at a time. I don't care how big your step is, it's still only one step at a time. You can't take two steps in one. You understand?

I will try 100 times to get up and if I fail 100 times, if I fail and I give up, do you think that I'm ever going to get up? No. But if I fail and I try again? And again and again? For as long as I try, there is always that chance of me getting up.

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you ever felt worthless or powerless? Write a message to a family member or friend who may have similar emotional problems or suffer from depression. You may use the ideas from Nick's speech to encourage him/her. You may start your message with the following:

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_,*  
*I understand that ...*

--- End ---



**Sundar Pichai**

## Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)

### SOW Speech Series –

#### **Featured SOW: “You will prevail”**

**from the speech by Sundar Pichai<sup>2</sup> delivered at a virtual commencement celebration**

A. Watch the speech delivered by Sundar Pichai and answer the following questions. You may use these keywords: Sundar Pichai, Commencement Speech 2020, You will prevail to find a video of the speech on YouTube.

1. What is the purpose of Sundar Pichai’s speech?

- A. to convince the audience of the importance of technology
- B. to suggest to the audience ways to find one’s passion
- C. to tell his audience his success story
- D. to offer advice on life and remind the audience to stay hopeful

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Based on the speech, decide if the following statements are True (T) or False (F).

<u>Statement</u>	<u>T / F</u>
(i) Sundar Pichai’s pursuit of further studies in the US was not supported by his father.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Sundar Pichai regretted not having studied a PhD.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Sundar Pichai believed in the potential of the future generations.	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Which of the following public speaking techniques did the speaker use to engage the audience? You can choose more than one answer.

- A. starting with a startling fact or figure
- B. sharing personal experience
- C. recapping the key messages
- D. using audio-visual aids wisely

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>2</sup> Sundar Pichai is the CEO of Alphabet Inc. and Google. His speech entitled “You will prevail” has garnered over 455,000 views and become one of the most popular speeches on the “English Speeches” website.

4. What is the meaning of the featured SOW “You will prevail”?

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B. Read the script of Sundar Pichai's speech and answer the questions that follow.

[1] "Hello, everyone. And congratulations to the Class of 2020, as well as your parents, your teachers, and everyone who helped you get to this day.

5 [2] I never imagined I'd be giving a commencement speech with no live audience ... from my backyard. But it's giving me a much deeper understanding for what our YouTube Creators go through! And I certainly never thought I'd be sharing a virtual stage with the former President ... a First Lady, a Lady Gaga, and a Queen Bey ... not to mention BTS.

10 [3] I don't think this is the graduation ceremony any of you imagined. At a time when you should be celebrating all the knowledge you've gained, you may be grieving what you've lost: the moves you planned, the jobs you earned, and the experiences you were looking forward to. In bleak moments like these, it can be difficult to find hope.

[4] So let me skip right to the end and tell you what happens: you will prevail.

[5] That's not really the end of the speech, so don't get too excited.

15 [6] The reason I know you'll prevail is because so many others have done it before you. A hundred years ago, the class of 1920 graduated into the end of a deadly pandemic. Fifty years ago, the class of 1970 graduated in the midst of the Vietnam War. And nearly 20 years ago, the class of 2001 graduated just months before 9/11.

[7] There are notable examples like this. They had to overcome new challenges, and in all cases they prevailed. The long arc of history tells us we have every reason to be hopeful.

[8] So, be hopeful.

20 [9] There's an interesting trend I've noticed: It's very conventional for every generation to underestimate the potential of the following one.

[10] It's because they don't realize that the progress of one generation becomes the foundational premise for the next. And it takes a new set of people to come along and realize all the possibilities.

25 [11] I grew up without much access to technology. We didn't get our first telephone til I was 10. I didn't have regular access to a computer until I came to America for graduate school. And our television, when we finally got one, only had one channel.

[12] So imagine how awestruck I am today to be speaking to you on a platform that has millions of channels.

30 [13] By contrast, you grew up with computers of all shapes and sizes. The ability to ask a computer anything, anywhere—the very thing I've spent my last decade working on—is not amazing to you. That's OK, it doesn't make me feel bad, it makes me hopeful!

[14] There are probably things about technology that frustrate you and make you impatient.

35 [15] Don't lose that impatience. It will create the next technology revolution and enable you to build things my generation could never dream of.

[16] You may be just as frustrated by my generation's approach to climate change, or education. Be impatient. It will create the progress the world needs.

[17] You will make the world better in your own way. Even if you don't know exactly how. The important thing is to be open-minded so that you can find what you love.

40 [18] For me, it was technology. The more access my family had to technology, the better our lives got. So when I graduated, I knew I wanted to do something to bring technology to as many others as possible.

[19] At the time, I thought I could achieve this by building better semiconductors. I mean, what could be more exciting than that?

45 [20] My father spent the equivalent of a year's salary on my plane ticket to the U.S. so I could attend Stanford. It was my first time ever on a plane. But when I eventually landed in California, things weren't as I had imagined. America was expensive. A phone call back home was more than \$2 a minute, and a backpack cost the same as my dad's monthly salary in India.

50 [21] And for all the talk about the warm California beaches ... that water was freezing cold! On top of all that, I missed my family, my friends and my girlfriend, now my wife, back in India.

[22] A bright spot for me during this time was computing. For the first time in my life, I could use a computer whenever I wanted to. It completely blew my mind.

55 [23] And at that same moment, the Internet was literally being built all around me. The year I arrived at Stanford was the same year the browser Mosaic was released, which would popularize the world wide web and the Internet.

[24] The summer I left was the same summer that a graduate student named Sergey Brin met a prospective engineering student named Larry Page.

60 [25] These two moments would profoundly shape the rest of my life. But at the time, I didn't know it.

[26] It took me a while to realize that the Internet would be the single best way to make technology accessible to more people. As soon as I did, I changed course and decided to pursue my dreams at Google.

[27] Inspired by the wonder that first browser created in me, I led the effort to launch one—

65 called Chrome—in 2009, and drove the effort to help Google develop affordable laptops and phones so that a student growing up, in any neighborhood or village, in any part of the world, could have the same access to information as all of you.

[28] Had I stayed the course in graduate school, I'd probably have a Ph.D. today—which would have made my parents really proud. But I might have missed the opportunity to bring  
70 the benefits of technology to so many others.

[29] And I certainly wouldn't be standing here speaking to you as Google's CEO. Believe me when I say I saw none of this coming when I first touched down in the state of California 27 years ago.

[30] The only thing that got me from there to here—other than luck—was a deep passion for  
75 technology, and an open mind.

[31] So take the time to find the thing that excites you more than anything else in the world. Not the thing your parents want you to do. Or the thing that all your friends are doing. Or that society expects of you.

[32] I know you're getting a lot of advice today. So let me leave you with mine: Be open ...  
80 be impatient ... be hopeful.

[33] If you can do that, history will remember the Class of 2020 not for what you lost, but for what you changed.

[34] You have the chance to change everything. I am optimistic you will.

[35] Thank you.

1. Sundar Pichai illustrated his points with effective examples. Match the examples with the corresponding points made by the speaker and write the appropriate letters in the brackets.

Point	Examples
(i) “The long arc of history tells us we have every reason to be hopeful” (paragraph 7) (    )	A. “... you grew up with <u>computers of all shapes and sizes</u> . The ability to <u>ask a computer anything, anywhere</u> —the very thing I’ve spent my last decade working on—is <u>not amazing to you</u> ”
(ii) “... the progress of one generation becomes the foundational premise for the next” (paragraph 10) (    )	B. “... a phone call back home was <u>more than \$2 a minute</u> , and a backpack <u>cost the same as my dad’s monthly salary in India</u> . And for all the talk about the warm Californian beaches ... that <u>water was freezing cold!</u> ”
(iii) “... when I eventually landed in California, things weren’t as I had imagined” (paragraph 20) (    )	C. “... the <u>class of 1920</u> graduated into the end of a deadly pandemic ... the <u>class of 1970</u> graduated in the midst of the Vietnam War ... the <u>class of 2001</u> graduated just months before 9/11.”

2. Sentences of different parallel structures are extensively used in the speech. Identify the functions and effects achieved in the examples and write the letters in the appropriate brackets.

Example	Effect created
(i) At a time when you should be celebrating all the knowledge you’ve gained, you may be grieving what you’ve lost: <u>the moves you planned</u> , <u>the jobs you earned</u> , and <u>the experiences you were looking forward to</u> . (paragraph 3) (    )	A. to dismiss an assumption and draw attention to a new point B. to create a pattern and a stronger sense of rhythm through repeating a structure three times
(ii) <u>The more</u> access my family had to technology, <u>the better</u> our lives got. (paragraph 18) (    )	C. to emphasise the relationship and connection between ideas in the sentence
(iii) <u>Be</u> open ... <u>be</u> impatient ... <u>be</u> hopeful. (paragraph 32) (    )	
(iv) If you can do that, history will remember the Class of 2020 <u>not for what you lost</u> , <u>but for what you changed</u> . (paragraph 33) (    )	

3. Why did the speaker ask the audience to be impatient in his speech? What did he really mean?

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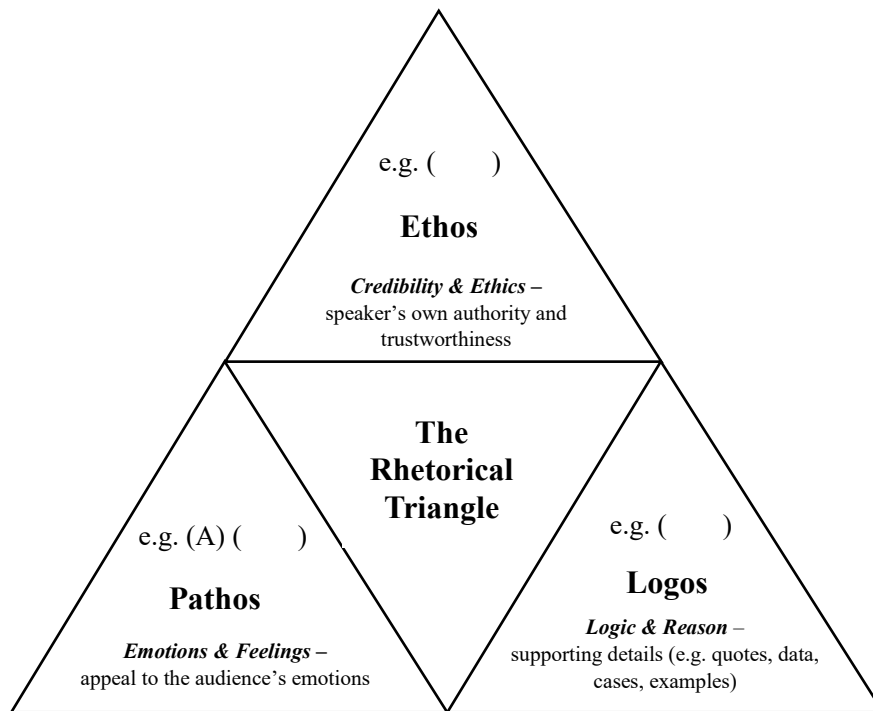


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4. What positive qualities / values / attitudes does Sundar Pichai demonstrate? Match his experience with the appropriate qualities / values / attitudes and put the appropriate letters in the brackets. One answer is given as an example.

Positive quality / value / attitude	Sundar Pichai's experience
A. risk-taking spirit B. gratitude C. benevolence D. passion E. open-mindedness	(i) He remembered how expensive the flight ticket was, a call back home and a backpack were in comparison to his father's salary and treasured his father's sacrifice for his education. (    )
	(ii) He discovered his love for technology and joined Google, launched the Chrome browser, and eventually became the CEO of Google. (    )
	(iii) He changed course after realising the power of the Internet and technology and decided to pursue his dreams at Google instead of staying in graduate school for a Ph.D. degree. (    )
	(iv) He embraced the rise of new technology despite growing up without much access to technology. He managed to ride on the opportunities brought by the popularity of the World Wide Web and the Internet to pursue his dreams. (    )
	(v) He launched the Chrome browser in 2009 and drove the effort to develop affordable laptops and phones so that a student growing up in any part of the world could have the same access to information. (    )

5. Rhetoric is the art of effective communication, involving appeals to the audience and the use of persuasive devices. Identify the strategies used to persuade and appeal to the audience in the speech and complete the diagram by putting the appropriate letters in the brackets. One answer is given as an example.



	Examples
A.	At a time when you should be celebrating all the knowledge you’ve gained, <u>you may be grieving what you’ve lost: the moves you planned, the jobs you earned, and the experiences you were looking forward to.</u> (paragraph 3)
B.	The reason I know you’ll prevail is because so many others have done it before you. <u>A hundred years ago, the class of 1920 graduated into the end of a deadly pandemic. Fifty years ago, the class of 1970 graduated in the midst of the Vietnam War. And nearly 20 years ago, the class of 2001 graduated just months before 9/11.</u> (paragraph 6)
C.	<u>You may be just as frustrated by my generation’s approach to climate change, or education. Be impatient.</u> It will create the progress the world needs. (paragraph 16)
D.	And I certainly wouldn’t be standing here <u>speaking to you as Google’s CEO.</u> Believe me when I say I saw none of this coming when I first touched down in the state of California 27 years ago. (paragraph 29)

6. Which of the following three lines from Sundar Pichai's speech is the most striking to you?  
Recount an incident in your life when you find the selected quote relevant.

(i) You will make the world  
better in your own ways.

(ii) The long arc of history tells us we  
have every reason to be hopeful.

(iii) You have the chance to change everything.

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--- End ---



**Jeff Bezos**

## Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)

### SOW Speech Series –

**Featured SOW: “Cleverness is a gift, kindness is a choice”**

**from the speech by Jeff Bezos<sup>3</sup> delivered at Princeton University**

A. Watch the speech delivered by Jeff Bezos and answer the following questions. You may use these keywords: Jeff Bezos, What will you be? to find a video of the speech on YouTube.

1. How many personal stories did Jeff Bezos share in his speech? What are they about?

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2. Answer the following questions about the two stories.

- (i) Why did Jeff Bezos’ grandmother burst into tears after listening to the smoking statistics?

- A. She was scared by the statistics and did not want to die early.  
B. She was touched by Jeff Bezos’ care and concern for her health.  
C. She found what Jeff Bezos said mean and offensive.  
D. She regretted being a heavy smoker.

A    B    C    D  
○    ○    ○    ○

- (ii) In the second story, did Jeff Bezos’ wife and boss support him after hearing his plan to quit a stable and high-paid job to start an online business? Tick (✓) the Yes/No box and support your answer with a reason.

	Supported	Reason
Jeff Bezos’ wife	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Jeff Bezos’ boss	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

<sup>3</sup> Jeff Bezos is the founder and executive chairman of Amazon, which began as an online bookstore in 1994 and has since expanded to a wide variety of other e-commerce products and services.

- (iii) What are the messages behind the stories? Fill in the blanks with the words provided below. Each word can be used ONCE only.

choice	clever	dreams	gifts	kind	passion
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Story	Message
His personal experience with his grandparents	✧ It's harder but more important to be _____ than _____ .
His plan to start his own business	✧ Follow your _____ . ✧ Use your _____ to pursue your _____ .

3. What is the overall tone of the speech?

- A. arrogant  
B. critical  
C. cynical  
D. reflective

A    B    C    D  
○    ○    ○    ○

4. Which of the following public speaking techniques did Jeff Bezos use in his speech to engage and appeal to the audience? You can choose more than one answer.

- A. asking a series of questions to provoke audience's thinking and emotional response  
B. using statistics to support his arguments  
C. using self-deprecating humour  
D. sharing personal stories

A    B    C    D  
○    ○    ○    ○

B. Read the script of the Jeff Bezos' speech to answer the questions that follow.

5 **[1]** As a kid, I spent my summers with my grandparents on their ranch in Texas. I helped fix windmills, vaccinate cattle, and do other chores. We also watched soap operas every afternoon, especially "Days of our Lives." My grandparents belonged to a Caravan Club, a group of Airstream trailer owners who travel together around the U.S. and Canada. And every few summers, we'd join the caravan. We'd hitch up the Airstream trailer to my grandfather's car, and off we'd go, in a line with 300 other Airstream adventurers. I loved and worshipped my grandparents and I really looked forward to these trips. On one particular trip, I was about 10 years old. I was rolling around in the big bench seat in the back of the car. My grandfather was driving. And my grandmother had the passenger seat. She smoked throughout these trips, and I hated the smell.

15 **[2]** At that age, I'd take any excuse to make estimates and do minor arithmetic. I'd calculate our gas mileage—figure out useless statistics on things like grocery spending. I'd been hearing an ad campaign about smoking. I can't remember the details, but basically the ad said, every puff of a cigarette takes some number of minutes off of your life: I think it might have been two minutes per puff. At any rate, I decided to do the math for my grandmother. I estimated the number of cigarettes per day, estimated the number of puffs per cigarette and so on. When I was satisfied that I'd come up with a reasonable number, I poked my head into the front of the car, tapped my grandmother on the shoulder, and proudly proclaimed, "At two minutes per puff, you've taken nine years off your life!"

20 **[3]** I have a very vivid memory of what happened, and it was not what I had expected. I expected to be applauded for my cleverness and my arithmetic skills. "Jeff, you're so smart. You had to have made some tricky estimates, figure out the number of minutes in a year and do some division." That's not what happened. Instead, my grandmother burst into tears. I sat in the backseat and did not know what to do. While my grandmother sat crying, my grandfather, who had been driving in silence, pulled over onto the shoulder of the highway. He got out of the car and came around and opened my door and waited for me to follow. Was I in trouble? My grandfather was a highly intelligent, quiet man. He had never said a harsh word to me, and maybe this was to be the first time? Or maybe he would ask that I get back in the car and apologise to my grandmother. I had no experience in this realm with my grandparents and no way to gauge what the consequences might be. We stopped beside the trailer. My grandfather looked at me, and after a bit of silence, he gently and calmly said, "Jeff, one day you'll understand that it's harder to be kind than clever."

35 [4] What I want to talk to you about today is the difference between gifts and choices. Cleverness is a gift, kindness is a choice. Gifts are easy—they're given after all. Choices can be hard. You can seduce yourself with your gifts if you're not careful, and if you do, it'll probably be to the detriment of your choices.

[5] This is a group with many gifts. I'm sure one of your gifts is the gift of a smart and capable brain. I'm confident that's the case because admission is competitive and if there weren't some signs that you're clever, the dean of admission wouldn't have let you in.

40 [6] Your smarts will come in handy because you will travel in a land of marvels. We humans—plodding as we are—will astonish ourselves. We'll invent ways to generate clean energy and a lot of it. Atom by atom, we'll assemble tiny machines that will enter cell walls and make repairs. This month comes the extraordinary but inevitable news that we've synthesised life. In the coming years, we'll not only synthesise it, but we'll engineer it to specifications. I believe you'll even see us understand the human brain. Jules Verne, Mark Twain, Galileo,  
45 Newton—all the curious from the ages would have wanted to be alive most of all right now. As a civilisation, we will have so many gifts, just as you as individuals have so many individual gifts as you sit before me.

[7] How will you use these gifts? And will you take pride in your gifts or pride in your choices?

50 [8] I got the idea to start Amazon 16 years ago. I came across the fact that Web usage was growing at 2,300 percent per year. I'd never seen or heard of anything that grew that fast, and the idea of building an online bookstore with millions of titles—something that simply couldn't exist in the physical world—was very exciting to me. I had just turned 30 years old, and I'd been married for a year. I told my wife MacKenzie that I wanted to quit my job and go do this crazy thing that probably wouldn't work since most startups don't, and I wasn't  
55 sure what would happen after that. MacKenzie (also a Princeton grad and sitting here in the second row) told me I should go for it. As a young boy, I'd been a garage inventor. I'd invented an automatic gate closer out of cement-filled tires, a solar cooker that didn't work very well out of an umbrella and aluminum foil, baking-pan alarms to entrap my siblings. I'd always wanted to be an inventor, and she wanted me to follow my passion.

60 [9] I was working at a financial firm in New York City with a bunch of very smart people, and I had a brilliant boss that I much admired. I went to my boss and told him I wanted to start a company selling books on the Internet. He took me on a long walk in Central Park, listened carefully to me, and finally said, "That sounds like a really good idea, but it would be an even

65 better idea for someone who didn't already have a good job." That logic made some sense to me, and he convinced me to think about it for 48 hours before making a final decision. Seen in that light, it really was a difficult choice, but ultimately, I decided I had to give it a shot. I didn't think I'd regret trying and failing. And I suspected I would always be haunted by a decision to not try at all. After much consideration, I took the less safe path to follow my passion, and I'm proud of that choice.

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**[10]** Tomorrow, in a very real sense, your life—the life you author from scratch on your own—begins.

**[11]** How will you use your gifts?

**[12]** What choices will you make?

**[13]** Will inertia be your guide, or will you follow your passions?

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**[14]** Will you follow dogma, or will you be original?

**[15]** Will you choose a life of ease, or a life of service and adventure?

**[16]** Will you wilt under criticism, or will you follow your convictions?

**[17]** Will you bluff it out when you're wrong, or will you apologise?

**[18]** Will you guard your heart against rejection, or will you act when you fall in love?

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**[19]** Will you play it safe, or will you be a little bit swashbuckling?

**[20]** When it's tough, will you give up, or will you be relentless?

**[21]** Will you be a cynic, or will you be a builder?

**[22]** Will you be clever at the expense of others, or will you be kind?

85 **[23]** I will hazard a prediction. When you are 80 years old, and in a quiet moment of reflection narrating for only yourself the most personal version of your life story, the telling that will be most compact and meaningful will be the series of choices you have made. In the end, we are our choices. Build yourself a great story. Thank you and good luck!

1. Why did the speaker share his childhood experience in the first part of his speech?

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2. According to paragraphs 2 and 3, are the following statements True (T) or False (F)?

<u>Statement</u>	<u>T / F</u>
(i) Jeff Bezos loved making all kinds of estimates as they were extremely useful in saving daily expenses such as gas fees and grocery spending.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Jeff Bezos wanted to be praised for his intelligence when he was young.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Jeff Bezos' grandfather scolded him harshly for the words he said to his grandmother.	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Identify the literary device used in "Cleverness is a gift, kindness is a choice." (line 34)

- A. alliteration
- B. irony
- C. parallelism
- D. simile

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Identify the meaning of the underlined idiomatic expressions. Write the letters in the boxes provided.

Idiomatic expression	Meaning
(i) You can seduce yourself with your gifts if you're not careful, and if you do, it'll probably be <u>to the detriment of</u> your choices. (line 36)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>A</b> try doing it for the first time
(ii) Your smarts will <u>come in handy</u> ... (line 40)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>B</b> harming or damaging
(iii) ... because you will travel in <u>a land of marvels</u> . (line 40)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>C</b> from the very beginning
(iv) I decided I had to <u>give it a shot</u> . (line 67)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>D</b> turn out to be useful
(v) Tomorrow ... your life—the life you author <u>from scratch</u> on your own—begins. (lines 71-72)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>E</b> a place with surprising or wonderful things or people

5. Answer the following questions with reference to paragraphs 11–22.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How will you use your gifts?</li> <li>What choices will you make?</li> <li>Will inertia be your guide, or will you follow your passions?</li> <li>Will you follow dogma, or will you be original?</li> <li>Will you choose a life of ease, or a life of service and adventure?</li> <li>Will you wilt under criticism, or will you follow your convictions?</li> <li>Will you bluff it out when you're wrong, or will you apologise?</li> <li>Will you guard your heart against rejection, or will you act when you fall in love?</li> <li>Will you play it safe, or will you be a little bit swashbuckling?</li> <li>When it's tough, will you give up, or will you be relentless?</li> <li>Will you be a cynic, or will you be a builder?</li> <li>Will you be clever at the expense of others, or will you be kind?</li> </ol>
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- (i) Why did Jeff Bezos ask a series of questions (a – l) towards the end of his speech?

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- (ii) What qualities are related to the questions asked by Jeff Bezos? Choose the best answers from the word box below.

gentle	caring	creative	enterprising
persistent	risk-taking	supportive	

Question	Adjective
c. Will inertia be your guide, or will you follow your passions?	<b>e.g. enterprising</b>
d. Will you follow dogma, or will you be original?	
e. Will you choose a life of ease, or a life of service and adventure?	
j. When it's tough, will you give up, or will you be relentless?	
k. Will you be a cynic, or will you be a builder?	
l. Will you be clever at the expense of others, or will you be kind?	

- (iii) Among the twelve questions, which one is the most thought-provoking to you? Choose a question and answer it. Explain your choice and answer with your personal experience.

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6. Which of the following is NOT a message behind Jeff Bezos' speech?

A. Gifts may help but the choices you make matter more.

B. People should give up what they have and do crazy things.

C. People should follow their passion.

D. Making the right choices sometimes requires courage and care.

A

B

C

D

☐

☐

☐

☐

7. Think of one gift or talent you possess. How can you make good use of it?

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--- End ---



**Denzel Washington**

## Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)

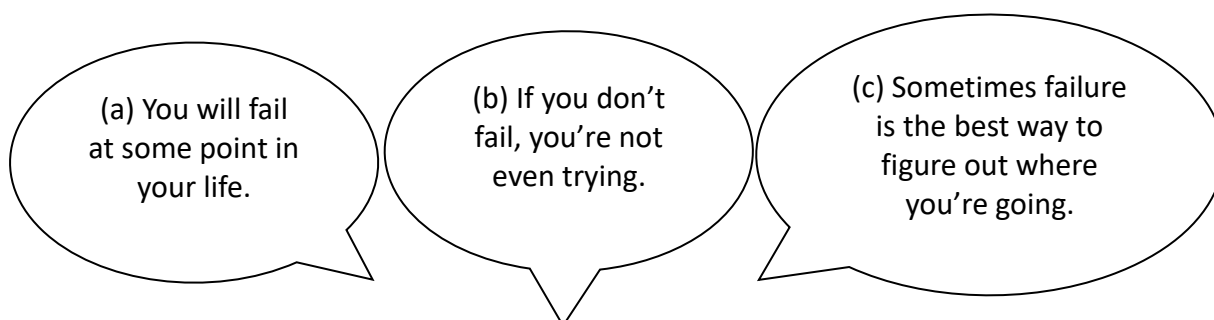
### SOW Speech Series –

#### Featured SOW: “Fall forward”

from the speech by Denzel Washington<sup>4</sup> delivered at University of Pennsylvania

- A. Watch the speech delivered by Denzel Washington and answer the following questions. You may use these keywords: Denzel Washington, University of Pennsylvania, Commencement Address 2011 to find a video of the speech on YouTube.

1. The following are three key points about failure mentioned in the speech.



Match the key points with the following analogy and personal stories used in Denzel Washington's speech. Write the appropriate letters in the table below.

Story/Analogy	Key point
His failure in Fordham University	
His failed audition for a Broadway musical	
Ghosts representing one's unfulfilled potential around the deathbed	

2. (i) The title of the speech is “Fall forward”. What do you think it means?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Why does the speaker try to illustrate with the stories of Reggie Jackson and Thomas Edison?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>4</sup> Denzel Washington is an Academy Award and Tony Award-winning actor and director.

3. What is the overall tone of the speech? You can choose more than one answer.

- A. sarcastic
- B. humorous
- C. encouraging
- D. skeptical

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Which of the following public speaking techniques did Denzel Washington use in his speech to engage and appeal to the audience?

- (i) using personal and relatable stories
- (ii) adding dialogues to make the speech more dramatic
- (iii) asking the audience questions
- (iv) ending with an inspiring and memorable line
- (v) using statistics
- (vi) using quotes from famous and authoritative figures

- A. (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv)
- B. (ii), (iv), (v) and (vi)
- C. (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi)
- D. All of the above

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B. Read the adapted script of an extract from Denzel Washington’s speech and answer the questions that follow.

5 [1] I’ve found that nothing in life is worthwhile unless you take risks. Nothing. Nelson Mandela said: “There is no passion to be found playing small—in settling for a life that’s less than the one you’re capable of living.” I’m sure in your experiences—in school, in applying to college, in picking your major, in deciding what you want to do with life—people have told you to make sure you have something to “fall back on.” But I’ve never understood that concept, having something to fall back on. If I’m going to fall, I don’t want to fall back on anything, except my faith. I want to fall *forward*. At least I figure that way I’ll see what I’m about to hit.

10 [2] Fall forward. Here’s what I mean: Reggie Jackson struck out 2,600 times in his career—the most in the history of baseball. But you don’t hear about the strikeouts. People remember the home runs.

[3] Fall forward. Thomas Edison conducted 1,000 failed experiments. Did you know that? I didn’t know that because the one thousand and first was the light bulb.

15 [4] Fall forward. Every failed experiment is one step closer to success. You’ve got to take risks. I’m sure you’ve probably heard that before, but I want to talk about why that’s so important. I’ve got three reasons.

20 [5] First, you will fail at some point in your life. Accept it. You will lose. You will embarrass yourself. You will be bad at something. There’s no doubt about it. And I know that’s probably not a traditional message for a graduation ceremony, but hey, I’m telling you—embrace it because it’s inevitable. And I should know, in the acting business, you fail all the time. Early on in my career, I auditioned for a part in a Broadway musical. A perfect role for me, I thought—except for the fact that I can’t sing. So, I was in the wings. I was about to go on stage but the guy in front of me was singing like Pavarotti and he was just going on and on and on. And I was just shrinking, getting smaller and smaller ... So I came out with my little sheet music and it was “Just My Imagination” by the Temptations. That’s what I came up with. So I handed it to the accompanist, and she looked at it and looked at me and looked at the director and was like, “All right”. So I started to sing. I was like, “It’s just my imagination once again, coming away with me.” And they were not saying anything, so I was thinking I was getting better. I started getting into it. But after the first verse, the director cut me off, “Thank you.

25 Thank you very much, Mr Washington. Thank you.” I assumed I didn’t get the job. The next part of the audition was the acting part. I was like “Hey, okay. Maybe I can’t sing, but I know

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I can act”. But the guy I was paired with to do the scene couldn’t be more dramatic and over the top. Suffice to say, I didn’t get the job.

35 **[6]** But here’s the thing: I didn’t quit. I didn’t fall back. I walked out of there to prepare for the next audition, and the next audition, and the next audition. I prayed, I prayed and I prayed, but I continued to fail, and fail, and fail. But it didn’t matter. Because you know what? You hang around a barbershop long enough—sooner or later you will get a haircut. You will catch a break and I did catch a break. Last year I did a play called *Fences* on Broadway and I won a Tony Award. And I didn’t have to sing for it, by the way. And here’s the kicker—it was at the  
40 Court Theatre, the same theatre where I failed that first audition 30 years prior. The point is, every graduate here today has the training and the talent to succeed. But do you have guts to fail?

**[7]** Here’s my second point about failure: If you don’t fail, you’re not even trying. I’ll say it again. If you don’t fail, you’re not even trying. My wife told me this expression—“To get  
45 something you never had, you have to do something you never did.” Les Brown, a motivational speaker, made an analogy about this. He said, “Imagine you’re on your deathbed and standing around your deathbed are the ghosts representing your unfulfilled potential, the ghosts of the ideas you never acted on, the ghosts of the talents you didn’t use. And they’re standing around your bed, angry, disappointed and upset. They say, ‘We came to you because  
50 you could have brought us to life.’ They say, ‘Now we go to the grave together.’” So I ask you today: How many ghosts are going to be around your bed when your time comes?

**[8]** You’ve invested a lot in your education, and people have invested in you. And let me tell you, the world needs your talents. I just got back from Africa two days ago, so if I’m rambling on it’s because I’m jet lagged. I just got back from South Africa. It’s a beautiful country, but  
55 there are places with terrible poverty that need help. And Africa is just the tip of the iceberg. The Middle East needs your help. Japan needs your help. Alabama needs your help. Tennessee needs your help. Louisiana needs your help. Philadelphia needs your help. The world needs a lot, and we need it from you. We really do. We need it from you young people. I’m not speaking for the rest of us up here, but I know I’m getting a little grayer. We need it from you,  
60 the young people. Remember this. So get out there. Give it everything you’ve got—whether it’s your time, your talent, your prayers, or your treasures. Because remember this: You’ll never see a U-Haul behind a hearse. I’ll say it again. You’ll never see a U-Haul behind a hearse. You can’t take it with you. The Ancient Egyptians tried it—and all they got was robbed!

**[9]** So the question is—what are you going to do with what you have? I’m not talking about  
65 how much you have. Some of you are business majors. Some of you are theologians, nurses,

sociologists. Some of you have money. Some of you have patience. Some of you have kindness. Some of you have love. Some of you have the gift of long-suffering. Whatever it is , whatever your gift is, what are you going to do with what you have?

70 [10] Now, here's my last point about failure: Sometimes it's the best way to figure out where you're going. Your life will never be a straight path. I began at Fordham University as a pre-med student. I took a course called cardiac ..., I still can't say it, "cardiac morphogenesis". I couldn't read it. I couldn't say it. I sure couldn't pass it. Then I decided to go into pre-la, then journalism. With no academic focus, my grades took off in their own direction. Yeah, down. I was a 1.8 GPA one semester, and the university very politely suggested it might be better to  
75 take some time off. I was 20 years old. I was at my lowest point.

[11] And then one day—and I remember the exact day: March 27, 1975—I was helping out in the beauty shop. My mother owned a beauty shop up in Mount Vernon. And there was this older woman who was considered one of the elders in the town. And I didn't know her personally, but I was looking in a mirror and every time I looked at the mirror, I could see her  
80 behind me. She was staring at me. She kept giving me these strange looks. She finally took the drier off her head and said something I'll never forget: "Young boy," she said, "I have a spiritual prophecy—You are going to travel the world and speak to millions of people." I was thinking to myself: maybe she's got something in that crystal ball about me getting back into school next fall. But maybe she was onto something. Because later that summer, while  
85 working as a counsellor at a YMCA camp in Connecticut, we put on a talent show for the campers. After the show, another counsellor came up to me and asked, "Have you ever thought of acting? You're good at that."

[12] When I got back to Fordham that fall I changed my major once again—for the last time. And in the years that followed, just as that woman prophesied, I have travelled the world, and  
90 I have spoken to millions of people through my movies. Millions who, up till this day, I couldn't see while I was talking to them and they couldn't see me. They could only see the movie. They couldn't see the real me. But I see you today. And I'm encouraged by what I see. And I'm strengthened by what I see. And I love what I see.

[13] Let me conclude with one final point. Many years ago, I did a movie called *Philadelphia*.  
95 We actually filmed some scenes right here on campus. *Philadelphia* came out in 1993. It's about a man, played by Tom Hanks, who's fired from his law firm because he has AIDS. He wants to sue the firm, but no one's willing to represent him until a homophobic, ambulance-chasing lawyer—played by yours truly—takes on the case. In a way, if you watch the movie, you'll see everything I'm talking about today. You'll see what I mean about taking risks or

100 being willing to fail because taking risks is not just about going for a job. It's also about knowing what you know and what you don't know. It's also about being open to people and ideas. Over the course of the film, the character I play begins to take small steps, small risks. He very, very, very slowly begins to overcome his fears. I feel, ultimately, his heart becomes flooded with love.

105 [14] And I can't think of a better message as we send you off today. To not only take risks, but to be open to life, accept new views and to be open to new opinions, to be willing to speak at a commencement at one of the country's best universities even though you're scared stiff. While it may be frightening, it will also be rewarding. Because the chances you take, the people you meet, the people you love, the faith you have—that's what's going to define you.

110 [15] So members of the class of 2011, this is your mission: When you leave the friendly confines of Philly, never be discouraged. Never hold back. Give everything you've got. And when you fall throughout life, and maybe even tonight after a few too many glasses of champagne, remember this: *fall forward*.

[16] Congratulations. I love you. God bless you. I respect you.

1. Identify the rhetorical devices used in the following lines of the speech and the effects achieved. Fill in the letters in the appropriate boxes.

Rhetorical device	Effect created
A. antithesis	E. to create a pattern and rhythm with phrases of the same grammatical structure
B. anaphora	F. to reinforce the repeated trials and failures
C. parallelism	G. to create emphasis and artistic effects with the repeated use of words at the beginning of successive sentences
D. repetition	H. to put two opposing ideas together to catch attention

	Lines	Rhetorical device	Effect created
(i)	I walked out of there to prepare for <u>the next audition, and the next audition, and the next audition. I prayed, I prayed and I prayed</u> , but I continued <u>to fail, and fail, and fail</u> . (lines 35-36)		
(ii)	If I'm going to fall, I don't want to <u>fall back</u> on anything, except my faith. I want to <u>fall forward</u> . (lines 6-7)		
(iii)	<u>Some of you have money. Some of you have patience. Some of you have kindness. Some of you have love. Some of you have the gift of long-suffering.</u> Whatever it is...what are you going to do with what you have? (lines 66-67)		
(iv)	Because <u>the chances you take, the people you meet, the people you love, the faith you have</u> —that's what's going to define you. (lines 108-109)		

2. Identify the meaning of the underlined idiomatic expressions. Write the letters in the boxes provided.

Idiomatic expression		Meaning
(i) A perfect role for me, I thought—except for the fact that I can't sing. So I was <u>in the wings</u> , about to go on stage but ... (line 22)	<input type="checkbox"/>	A. A small part of something larger and more complex yet to be seen
(ii) And Africa is just <u>the tip of the iceberg</u> . The Middle East needs your help. Japan needs your help. Alabama needs your help. (line 55)	<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Material possessions do not matter after one dies
(iii) <u>You'll never see a U-Haul behind a hearse</u> . (lines 61-63)	<input type="checkbox"/>	C. Ready to perform

3. (i) The following quotes are taken from Denzel Washington's speech. Match the adjectives (A - H) with the quotes by writing the appropriate letters in the brackets provided. There are TWO answers to each question.

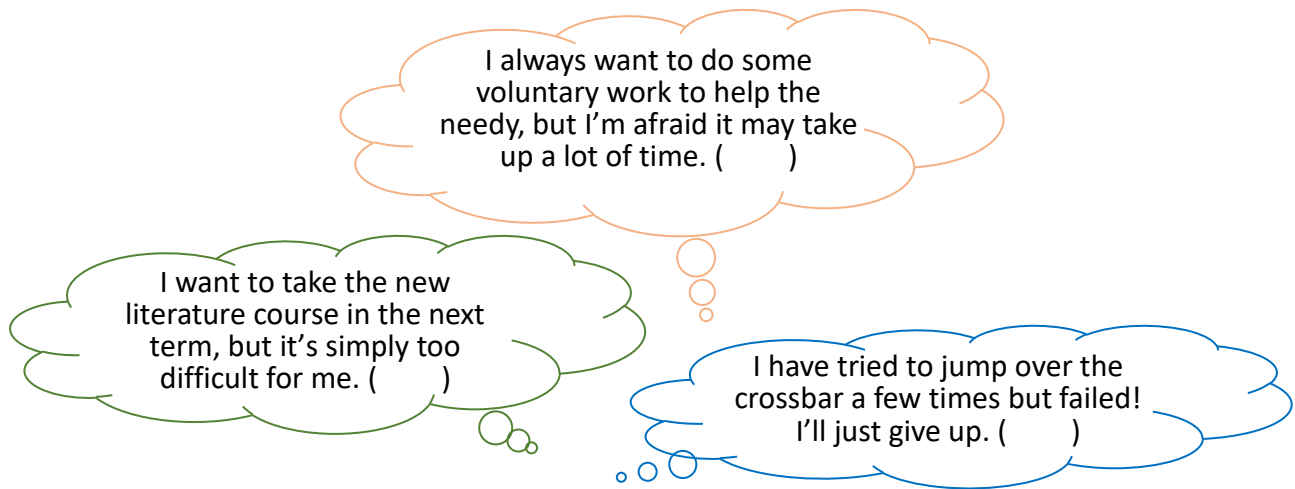
- |                |               |               |               |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| A. resilient   | B. benevolent | C. diligent   | D. courageous |
| E. risk-taking | F. caring     | G. persistent | H. respectful |

(2) To get something you never had, you have to do something you never did.  
(                      )

(1) If I'm going to fall, I don't want to fall back on anything ... I want to fall forward.  
(                      )

(3) Give it everything you've got—whether it's your time, your talent, your prayers, or your treasures. Because remember this: You'll never see a U-Haul behind a hearse.  
(                      )

- (ii) Which quote would you use to offer advice to your friends who have the following problems in life? Choose the appropriate quotes and write the numbers in the brackets.



- (iii) Which of the three quotes is the most inspiring to you? Think of an incident or experience in your life when you find the quote useful and relevant.

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**Steve Jobs**

## Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW)

### SOW Speech Series –

**Featured SOW: “Stay hungry, stay foolish”**

**from the speech by Steve Jobs<sup>5</sup> delivered at Stanford University**

A. Watch the speech delivered by Steve Jobs and answer the following questions. You may use these keywords: Steve Jobs, Stanford Commencement Address 2005 to find a video of the speech on YouTube.

1. (i) How many stories in his life did Steve Jobs share in his speech?

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(ii) What is each story about? Write the appropriate letters in the boxes.

Story 1

a. death

Story 2

b. connecting the dots

Story 3

c. love and loss

2. What is the overall tone of the speech? You can choose more than one answer.

A. sarcastic

B. reflective

C. nostalgic

D. encouraging

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Why does the speaker ask the students to “Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.” at the end of his speech?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>5</sup> Steve Jobs (1955 – 2011) was the CEO and co-founder of Apple and Pixar and one of the most successful entrepreneurs in history. This commencement address with Jobs’ own life stories is one of the most watched speeches worldwide.

4. Which of the following public speaking techniques did Steve Jobs use in his speech to engage and appeal to the audience? You can choose more than one answer.

A. quoting from famous and authoritative figures using

B. personal stories and anecdotes

C. humour (e.g. self-deprecation)

D. ending with an inspiring and memorable line

A

B

C

D

☐

☐

☐

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B. Read the script of the Steve Jobs' speech to answer the questions that follow:

**[1]** I am honored to be with you today for your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. Truth be told, I never graduated from college and this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That's it. No big deal. Just three stories.

5 **[2]** The first story is about connecting the dots.

**[3]** I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

10 **[4]** It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: "We've got an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother found out later that my mother had never graduated from college and that  
15 my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would go to college. This was the start in my life.

**[5]** And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents' savings were being spent on my  
20 college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required  
25 classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

**[6]** It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned Coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out  
30 to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

[7] Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

[8] None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But 10 years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards 10 years later.

[9] Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. Because believing that the dots will connect down the road will give you the confidence to follow your heart. Even when it leads you off the well-worn path, and that will make all the difference.

[10] My second story is about love and loss.

[11] I was lucky—I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents' garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4,000 employees. We had just released our finest creation—the Macintosh—a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him, and so at 30, I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

[12] I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous

generation of entrepreneurs down—that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me.

65 I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me—I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

70 **[13]** I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

**[14]** During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named  
75 Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

80 **[15]** I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be  
85 truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking and don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking. Don't settle.

**[16]** My third story is about death.

90 **[17]** When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change  
95 something.

**[18]** Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I  
100 know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

**[19]** About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to  
105 live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try and tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

**[20]** I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the  
115 surgery and thankfully I'm fine now.

**[21]** This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

**[22]** No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there.  
120 And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because death is very likely the single best invention of life. It is life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

**[23]** Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become.

Everything else is secondary.

130 [24] When I was young, there was an amazing publication called *The Whole Earth Catalog*,  
which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand  
not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in  
the late 1960s, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with  
typewriters, scissors and Polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35  
135 years before Google came along. It was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great  
notions.

[25] Stewart and his team put out several issues of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and then when  
it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On  
the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind  
140 you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words:  
“Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.” It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry.  
Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin  
anew, I wish that for you.

[26] Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.

1. What did Steve Jobs mean when he used the phrase “connecting the dots” in his first story?

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2. Identify the rhetorical devices used in the following lines of the second story and the effects achieved. Fill in the letters in the appropriate boxes. One letter is not used.

Rhetorical device	Effect created
A. contrast	F. to highlight the features of something through comparing it to another object with similar characteristics
B. metaphor	G. to reinforce a message
C. simile	H. to create humour and comical effects and engage the audience
D. repetition	I. to emphasise the differences of two ideas/things
E. rhetorical question	

	Lines	Rhetorical device	Effect created
(i)	And then I got fired. <u>How can you get fired from a company you started?</u> (lines 56-57)		
(ii)	The <u>heaviness of being successful</u> was replaced by the <u>lightness of being a beginner</u> again. (lines 71-72)		
(iii)	It was <u>awful tasting medicine</u> , but I guess the patient needed it. (lines 80-81)		
(iv)	And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. <u>If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle.</u> As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it... So <u>keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.</u> (lines 85-88)		

3. (i) In which story [i.e. (1) connecting the dots (2) love and loss (3) death] did Steve Jobs say the following lines?

(a) It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. ( )

(b) Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma. Don't let the noise of others' opinion drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. ( )

(c) You have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. ( )

- (ii) Which quote would you use to offer advice to your friends who have the following problems in life:

I don't know what I want in my life, which subject to study in university and what career to pursue. My mum thinks I can be a doctor, my best friend is going to law school but all I love is music. ( )

I have always wanted to start my online business, but now I find that it is easier said than done. Having been a YouTuber trying to produce videos to promote my products for 6 months, I don't seem to see any growth in the traffic and number of subscribers. I lose heart! ( )

- (iii) Which of the three quotes above is the most inspiring to you? Think of an incident or experience in your life when you find the quote useful and relevant.

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4. Each of Steve Jobs' stories illustrates some positive qualities, values and attitudes. Choose the story that touches you the most and explain the positive values you have learnt from it. Some examples of values and attitudes are provided in the table below:

gratitude/appreciation	hope and optimism	resilience	perseverance
courage	resourcefulness	proactivity	passion and love for life

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