**Exemplars for** **Speeches on How to Achieve Success**

**Steve Jobs gave a speech to Stanford University graduates and President Obama to public school students in Washington DC. Identify the key theme in each of the speeches. Then explain how the theme of Obama’s speech was more appropriate for a Kindergarten-Grade 12 student audience and how the theme of Jobs’ speech was more well suited for already successful students graduating from a competitive university. Be sure to use specific evidence from each of the speeches to support your response.**

**Exemplar A:**

Two speeches given to DC public school students and Stanford University graduates, aimed to shape their futures, yet gave different messages. Barak Obama’s, former USA president, and Steve Jobs’, former Apple CEO, speeches share related themes of overcoming failure. However, Obama stressed hard work which is more appropriate for children who have not yet proven themselves, while Jobs emphasized loving what you do which is more appropriate for competitive college graduates who already had to work hard to get in and through this college.

A theme in Obama’s speech is that students should work hard and not give up. The USA is not a story about quitters, explained Obama. At the end, he urged them, “Do not let yourself down.” A likely reason Obama may have pressed this advice is that he may have failed but then overcame this himself with hard work. If Obama is correct in drawing this advice from his own experience, then impressionable young students may believe you can get through life without working hard, jeopardizing the security of their futures, and the chance to make a difference in the world, even to change history. Obama is appropriate to encourage this audience to realize the importance of hard work.

In contrast, Jobs emphasized doing what you love and not settling. This was so important to him that he said, “Don’t settle” twice is a short speech. He explained that the “only way to do great work is to love what you do.” His life example shows that he lived this when he continued to work at what he loved even when the world turned against him. Jobs’ claim that you should do what you love and never settle, overlooks and almost disregards the importance of hard work in success. People will not always love their work every day, but they must work hard every day to succeed no matter what. Even more, Jobs says the “only” way to do great work is to love what you do. Yet, good work can still be achieved if people work hard enough, even if they don’t love what they do. Therefore, this advice, even though given to students who are likely already hard working, may cause them to fail nevertheless if they stop working hard.

Two speeches with one goal – to shape futures. While Jobs’ speech directed successful graduates to follow their dreams, Obama’s guided students, who have not yet proven themselves, to work hard. Both offer valuable advice. However, hard work is a safer bet to lead to long term happiness for everyone, even if it may not feel joyful at the time. Doing what you love may make us feel happy in the moment, but the probability of finding success may be substantially lower, if people don’t keep up hard work too. Ideally, people should pursue a harmony of both because neither hard work nor doing what you love guarantee to true success. If people must choose, they are more likely to achieve happiness through hard work than the other way around. Do you want to dread your life -- Because you only get one.

**Exemplar B:**

While two accomplished men, Steve Jobs and President Obama, both emphasized the importance of bouncing back from failure in their speeches to students at Stanford and the DC public schools, the importance they gave to giving best effort versus finding what you love show that students may need different guidance as they succeed and grow older.

Both speakers agree on the importance of bouncing back after adversity. When Jobs got fired, he felt terrible but then realized this freed him “to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.” In the same way, our former president shared that failures don’t need to define you, but they should “teach you.” However, Barak Obama asked students to reflect on what contribution they will make, and how they can put in their “best effort” to make that. On the other hand, Jobs’ story was about finding “what you love”.

All through school, there will always be times when students fail, and will always need to be resilient. However, when students are younger, they need to put in great effort before they find what they love. They need to be open minded to learning about different areas, and give each area their best before they can decide which area they love best. If they make a choice too soon, such as to become a rapper or basketball player, Obama worries they may not end up succeeding at what they love and may miss many other important opportunities. On the other hand, once students are grown and ready to go get specialized jobs and they have already worked hard enough to graduate from a competitive college, only then should they start thinking about they love.

People need different advice at different times in their life. Racing to choose one menu item before looking at all the choices and give them all a fair chance, might cause one to miss out on something better. It is important to make the best contribution we can in life. We may not know what that is until we have given our best in different areas. Obama recommends we do that. However, after working hard, we must also find happiness. Jobs’ speech sets on the next step in this journey toward finding this.