

Inspirational Speeches in Times of Crisis

Social Science Grades 9-12

Week of 4/27

Compelling Question: How do speeches provide inspiration and hope during times of crisis?

Background: Throughout history, leaders have made speeches that have inspired the world and changed the course of history. While history is no stranger to crises, there are always leaders who emerge to usher in more hopeful times by crafting and delivering powerful speeches. What makes a speech good? Is it the speaker, the delivery, the words, the message?

Below are examples of powerful speeches delivered during key moments in history:

- ★ Abraham Lincoln's "*Gettysburg Address*"
- ★ Mahatma Gandhi's "*Quit India*"
- ★ Martin Luther King's "*I Have a Dream*"
- ★ Harvey Milk's "*The Hope Speech*"
- ★ Maya Angelou's "*Wellesley College Commencement Speech*"
- ★ President Obama's "*Boston Marathon Bombing Speech*"
- ★ Greta Thunberg's "*UN Climate Speech*"

Task(s):

1. Watch and/or actively read at least two of the speeches. Think about what makes them special, important, or memorable.
2. Find your own example of a great speech. Think about why this speech is important to you.

Extension Option(s):

1. Research a famous speech that directly relates to your Social Science course. Explain why this speech is impactful to you, citing textual evidence from the speech.
2. Imagine you are tasked with generating a speech to address your school, city, or country following the conclusion of the Covid-19 crisis. What tone do you think would be most important to convey? What messaging would you include in your speech? Keep in mind what you learned in the above speeches as you write your own. Draft your speech.

Famous Speeches: Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

By Adapted by Newsela staff on 03.29.16

Word Count **366**

Level **1040L**



President Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, at the dedication of the National Cemetery of Gettysburg in 1863. David Bachrach/Library of Congress

Editor's Note: In November 1863, President Abraham Lincoln was invited to deliver a speech at the official dedication ceremony for the National Cemetery of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. The speech later became known as the Gettysburg Address. It was given in the same place as one of the bloodiest, hard-fought battles of the Civil War. In the Battle of Gettysburg, more than 50,000 Americans were either killed or injured.

Eighty-seven years ago, our fathers created on this continent a new nation. The country was born from Liberty, and dedicated to the idea that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war. The fighting between the North and South is testing whether this nation, or any nation born out of Liberty like us and dedicated to equality like us, can last. Now we stand on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of this field as a final resting place for the soldiers who gave their lives here so this nation might continue to live. It is appropriate that we do this here.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate these grounds as holy or divine. The brave men who fought here — those who lived and those who died — have already made this land holy. These soldiers did much more than we are able to do today.

The world will not write or talk much about what we say here, nor will the world remember what was said for long. However, the world can never forget what the soldiers did here.

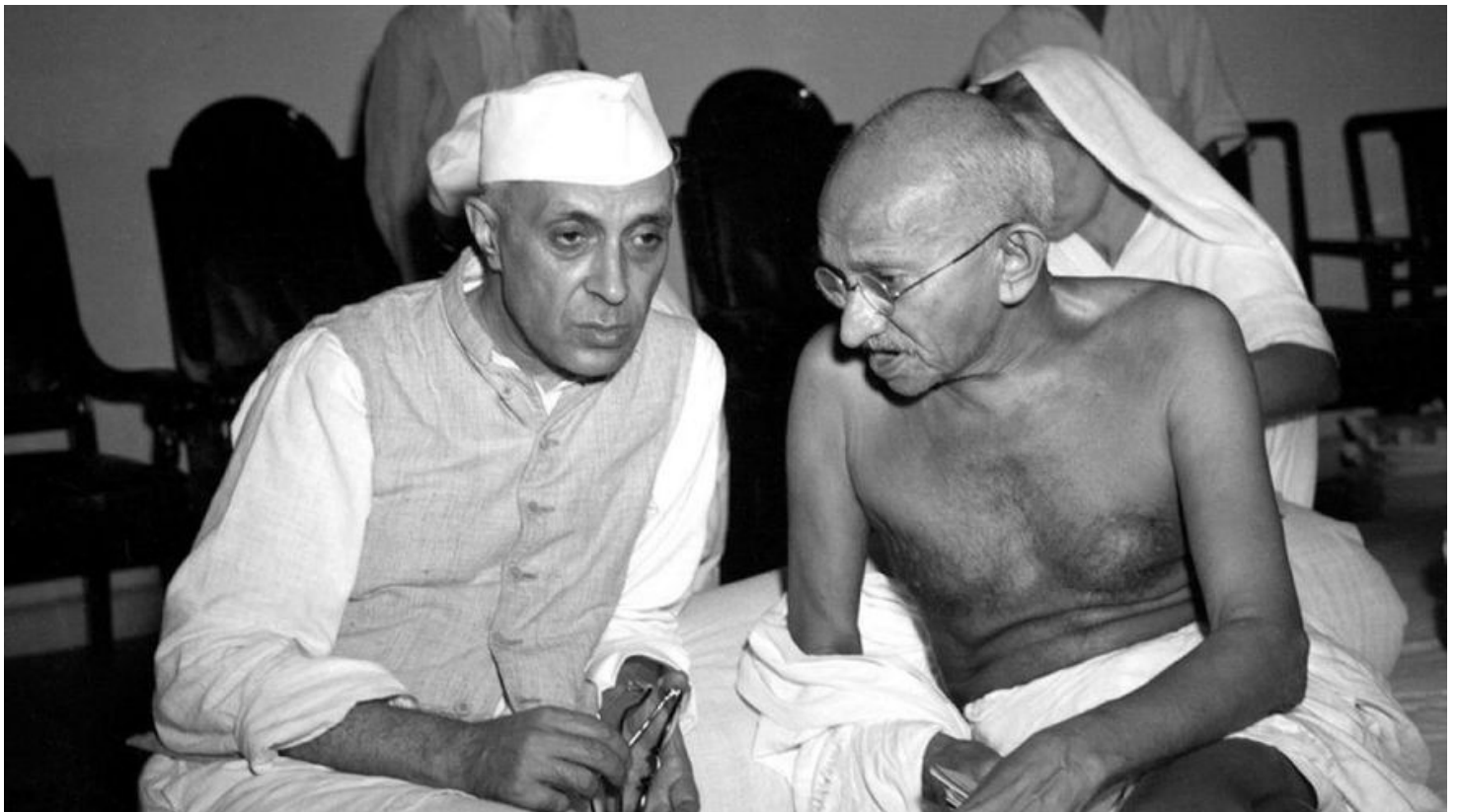
It is for us, the living, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which our soldiers have begun so nobly. It is us who must be dedicated to the great work we have ahead of us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause that they died for. We must ensure that these dead shall not have died in vain, so that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom. We must dedicate ourselves so that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Famous Speeches: Mahatma Gandhi's "Quit India"

By Adapted by Newsela staff on 03.29.16

Word Count **1,205**

Level **990L**



Mahatma Gandhi (right) with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru during a meeting of the All-India Congress in Bombay, now Mumbai, India. Dave Davis, Acme Newspictures Inc./Wikimedia Commons

Editor's Note: Mahatma Gandhi delivered this speech in August 1942 to the All-India Congress session in Bombay, now Mumbai, on the eve of the Quit India movement and was arrested with his fellow leaders the next day. The controversial movement, which Gandhi started, took place during World War II and encouraged the people of India to passively resist the British colonial government. Five years after the speech, India won its independence.

Before you discuss the resolution, let me place before you one or two things. I want you to understand two things very clearly. I want you to consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. I ask you to consider it from my point of view, because if you approve of it, you will be obliged to carry out all I say. It will be a great responsibility. There are people who ask me whether I am the same man that I was in 1920, or whether there has been any change in me. You are right in asking that question.

Let me, however, hasten to assure you that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to nonviolence that I did then. If anything, my commitment to it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances.

Occasions like the present do not happen in everybody's life. They rarely happen in anybody's life. I want you to know and feel that there is nothing but the purest Ahimsa in all that I am saying and doing today. That belief in not harming any living being is extremely important to me. The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on Ahimsa, the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in Ahimsa. If, therefore, any of you have lost faith in Ahimsa or is wearied of it, you should not vote for this resolution. Let me explain my position clearly. God has graciously granted to me a priceless gift in the weapon of Ahimsa. I and my Ahimsa are on trail today. If in the present crisis, when the earth is being scorched by the violent flames of Himsa and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God-given talent, God will not forgive me. I shall be judged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now. I must not hesitate and merely look on, when Russia and China are threatened.

Ours is not a drive for power, but purely a nonviolent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle, a successful general has been often known to bring about a military takeover and to set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress's plan, essentially nonviolent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A nonviolent soldier of freedom will want nothing for himself. He fights only for the freedom of his country. The Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule, when freedom is achieved. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom they will entrust that power. Maybe the reins will be placed in the hands of the Parsis, for instance, as I would love to see happen, or they may be handed to some others whose names are not heard in the Congress today. It will not be for you then to object saying, "This community is microscopic. That party did not play its due part in freedom's struggle; why should it have all the power?" Ever since its beginning the Congress has kept itself perfectly clean and not contaminated by the dirt of unfairness. It has thought always in terms of the whole nation and has acted accordingly. I know how imperfect our Ahimsa is and how far away we are still from the ideal, but in Ahimsa there is no final failure or defeat. I have faith, therefore, that if, in spite of our shortcomings, the big thing does happen, it will be because God wanted to help us. It will be because He wanted to crown our silent, committed worship, our Sadhana, for the last 22 years with success. We would be rewarded for working long to conquer our sense of pride.

I believe that in the history of the world, there has not been a purer democratic struggle for freedom than ours. I read Carlyle's French Revolution while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian Revolution. But it is my firm belief that since these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to live up to the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisioned, a democracy established by nonviolence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims, and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence.

Then, there is the question of your attitude toward the British. I have noticed that there is hatred toward the British among the people. The people say they are disgusted with the behavior of the British. The people make no distinction between British imperialism and the British people. To

them, the two are one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. It is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part during the present critical point in time. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot call forth the true spirit of sacrifice and valor, so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us, when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must, therefore, clean ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself, I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact, I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are today in distress. My very friendship, therefore, demands that I should try to save them from their mistakes. As I view the situation, they are on the brink of a bottomless pit. It, therefore, becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh, nevertheless that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbor hatred against anybody.

Famous Speeches: Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream"

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., adapted by Newsela staff on 09.01.18

Word Count 1,789

Level 1010L



On Aug. 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, addresses marchers during his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. (AP Photo/File)

Editor's Note: This speech is often thought of as one of the greatest in American history. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave the speech to more than 200,000 civil rights supporters during the March on Washington. It was a march for jobs and freedom. The huge rally was held in support of civil and economic rights for black Americans. The march was an important moment for the civil rights movement and is thought to have helped pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the speech, King begins by talking of President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and continues to describe the rights that black Americans were still not given, even 100 years later.

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American president, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This remarkable decree came as a great light of hope to

millions of Negro slaves who had been burned by the flames of injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of slavery.

But 100 years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by handcuffs of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty surrounded by a vast ocean of material wealth. One hundred years later, the Negro is still wasting away in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.

So we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a check that every American was able to cash. This check was a promise to all men. Yes, black men, as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this check when it comes to her citizens of color. Instead of honoring this promise, America has given the Negro people a bad check. The check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is broke and we refuse to believe that there are no funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and justice.

"We Seek The Sunlit Path Of Racial Justice"

We have also come to this holy spot to remind America of the importance of now. This is no time for cooling off or to take the calming drug of going slowly. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark valley of segregation. We seek the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children. It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's desire for more will not pass until there is refreshing autumn of freedom and equality.

The year 1963 is not an end. It is but a beginning. Some have hoped that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content. They will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor peace in America until the Negro is given his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation. We seek the bright day when justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand in the warm doorway which leads into the palace of justice. In seeking our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to be changed by physical violence. Again and again we must rise to great heights meeting physical force with soul force. A marvelous new militancy has engulfed the Negro community. This must not lead us to a distrust of all white people. For many of our white brothers, as seen by their presence here today, have come to realize that their future is tied up with our future. They have come to realize that their freedom is most surely bound to our freedom. We

cannot walk alone. As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking those pledged to civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied. As long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality, we can never be satisfied. As long as our bodies, tired from travel, cannot get rooms in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities, we cannot be satisfied. We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is merely moved from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their pride. We can never be satisfied when we are robbed of our dignity by signs stating "For Whites Only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes there's nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied. We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

"You Have Been The Veterans Of Great Suffering"

I know that some of you have come here from great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of great suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unfair suffering makes one stronger. Go back to Mississippi. Go back to Alabama. Go back to South Carolina. Go back to Georgia. Go back to Louisiana. Go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities. Know that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of cruelty, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words that block and try to cancel our rights; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley down low shall be exalted and every hill and mountain up high shall be made low. The rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to mold from the mountain of sadness, a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to change the upsetting sounds of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will

be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring." And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

So let freedom ring from the wonderful hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California! But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

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Famous Speeches: Harvey Milk, "The Hope Speech"

By Harvey Milk on 11.07.19

Word Count **1,310**

Level **MAX**



Image 1. Harvey Milk (far left) was a politician and gay rights activist from California. He was openly gay and devoted most of his life to creating and supporting legislation to protect the rights of LGBTQ people. Photo from: Wikimedia Commons/Ted Sahl, Kat Fitzgerald, Patrick Phonsakwa, Lawrence McCrorey, Darryl Pelletier.

Editor's Note: Harvey Milk was a gay activist in the 1970s. In 1977, he was the first openly gay elected official in the United States. Milk delivered this speech on the steps of San Francisco City Hall during a mass rally to celebrate California Gay Freedom Day, June 25, 1978.

About six months ago, Anita Bryant in her speaking to God said that the drought in California was because of the gay people. On November 9, the day after I got elected, it started to rain. On the day I got sworn in, we walked to City Hall and it was kind of nice, and as soon as I said the words "I do," it started to rain again. It's been raining since then and the people of San Francisco figure the only way to stop it is to do a recall petition.

So much for that. Why are we here? Why are gay people here? And what's happening?

Let's look at 1977. In 1977, gay people had their rights taken away from them in Miami. But you must remember that in the week before Miami and the week after that, the word "homosexual" or

"gay" appeared in every single newspaper in this nation in articles both pro and con. In every radio station, in every TV station and every household. For the first time in the history of the world, everybody was talking about it, good or bad. Unless you have dialogue, unless you open the walls of dialogue, you can never reach to change people's opinion. Once you have dialogue starting, you know you can break down prejudice. In 1977 we saw a dialogue start. In 1977, we saw a gay person elected in San Francisco.

What that is, is a record of what happened last year. What we must do is make sure that 1978 continues the movement.

I know we are pressed for time so I'm going to cover just one more little point. That is to understand why it is important that gay people run for office and that gay people get elected. I know there are many people in this room who are running for Central Committee who are gay. I encourage you. There's a major reason why. If my non-gay friends and supporters in this room understand it, they'll probably understand why I've run so often before I finally made it.

You see, there is a major difference — and it remains a vital difference — between a friend and a gay person, a friend in office and a gay person in office. Gay people have been slandered nationwide. We've been tarred and we've been brushed with the picture of pornography. In Dade County, we were accused of child molestation. It's not enough anymore just to have friends represent us. No matter how good that friend may be.

The black community made up its mind to that a long time ago. That the myths against blacks can only be dispelled by electing black leaders, so the black community could be judged by the leaders and not by the myths or black criminals. The Spanish community must not be judged by Latin criminals or myths. The Asian community must not be judged by Asian criminals or myths. The Italian community must not be judged by the mafia, myths. And the time has come when the gay community must not be judged by our criminals and myths.

Like every other group, we must be judged by our leaders and by those who are themselves gay, those who are visible. For invisible, we remain in limbo — a myth, a person with no parents, no brothers, no sisters, no friends who are straight, no important positions in employment. A 10th of the nation supposedly composed of stereotypes and would-be seducers of children — and no offense meant to the stereotypes. But today, the black community is not judged by its friends, but by its black legislators and leaders. And we must give people the chance to judge us by our leaders and legislators. A gay person in office can set a tone, can command respect not only from the larger community, but from the young people in our own community who need both examples and hope.

The first gay people we elect must be strong. They must not be content to sit in the back of the bus. They must not be content to accept pabulum. They must be above wheeling and dealing. They must be — for the good of all of us — independent, unbought. The anger and the frustrations that some of us feel is because we are misunderstood, and friends can't feel the anger and frustration. They can sense it in us, but they can't feel it. Because a friend has never gone through what is known as coming out. I will never forget what it was like coming out and having nobody to look up toward. I remember the lack of hope — and our friends can't fulfill it.

I can't forget the looks on the faces of people who've lost hope. Be they gay, be they seniors, be they blacks looking for an almost-impossible job, be they Latins trying to explain their problems and

aspirations in a tongue that's foreign to them. I personally will never forget that people are more important than buildings. I use the word "I" because I'm proud. I stand here tonight in front of my gay sisters, brothers and friends because I'm proud of you. I think it's time that we have many legislators who are gay and proud of that fact and do not have to remain in the closet. I think that a gay person, up-front, will not walk away from a responsibility and be afraid of being tossed out of office. After Dade County, I walked among the angry and the frustrated night after night and I looked at their faces. And in San Francisco, three days before Gay Pride Day, a person was killed just because he was gay. And that night, I walked among the sad and the frustrated at City Hall in San Francisco and later that night as they lit candles on Castro Street and stood in silence, reaching out for some symbolic thing that would give them hope. These were strong people, whose faces I knew from the shop, the streets, meetings and people who I never saw before but I knew. They were strong, but even they needed hope.



And the young gay people who are coming out and hear Anita Bryant on television and her story. The only thing they have to look forward to is hope. And you have to give them hope. Hope for a better world, hope for a better tomorrow, hope for a better place to come to if the pressures at home are too great. Hope that all will be all right. Without hope, not only gays, but the blacks, the seniors, the handicapped, the "us"es — the "us"es — will give up. And if you help elect to the Central Committee and other offices, more gay people, that gives a green light to all who feel disenfranchised, a green light to move forward. It means hope to a nation that has given up, because if a gay person makes it, the doors are open to everyone.

So if there is a message I have to give, it is that I've found one overriding thing about my personal election. It's the fact that if a gay person can be elected, it's a green light. And you and you and you, you have to give people hope.

Excerpts from the speech delivered by Maya Angelou to the class of 1982 at Wellesley College in Wellesley, Mass.

June 4, 1982

Graduates,

Now the joy begins. Now the work begins. The years of preparation, of tedious study and exciting learning at least begin to make sense. The jumble of words and the tangle of small and great thoughts begin to take order, and this morning you can see a small portion, an infinitesimal portion, of the map of your future...

...you have still had to develop an outstanding courage to invent this moment, for you have invented it. Of all your attributes—your youth, your beauty, your wit, your kindnesses, your money—courage is indeed your greatest achievement. It is the greatest of all your virtues, for without courage you cannot practice any other virtue with consistency.

And now that you have shown that you are capable of manufacturing that important and wondrous virtue, you must be asking yourselves what you will do with it. Be assured that that question is in the minds of your parents, of your instructors, of people whose names you will never know, of the group of women who will sit in those very seats next year. That is the question. There is an African statement which is, “The trouble for the thief is not how to steal the bugle, but where to blow it.”

Since you have worked this hard, since you have also been greatly blessed, since you are here, you have developed a marvelous level of courage, and the question then which you must ask yourself, I think, is will you really do the job which is to be done: Make this country more than it is today, more than what James Baldwin called “these yet to be United States”...

...It takes a phenomenal amount of courage. For around this world, your world, my world, there are conflicts, brutalities, humiliations, terrors, murders, around this world. You can almost take any Rand McNally map and close your eyes and just point, and you will find there are injustices, but in your country, particularly in your country, young women, you have, as the old folks say, your work cut out for you. For fascism is on the rise, and be assured of it, sexism, racism, ageism, every vulgarity against the human spirit is on the rise. And this is what you have inherited.

However, on the other hand, what you have first is your courage. You may lean against it, it will hold you up, you have that. And the joy of achievement, the ecstasy of achievement. It enlightens and lightens at the same time. It is a marvelous thing. Today, your joy begins, today your work begins. You are phenomenal. I believe that women are phenomenal. I know us to be.

This is a poem called “Phenomenal Woman”. I wrote the poem for black women and white women and Asian and Hispanic women, Native American woman...I wrote it for fat women, women who may have posed for the before pictures in Weight Watchers. I wrote it for anorexics. I wrote it for all of us, for women in kibbutzim and burgher women, women on the pages and the front covers of Vogue and Essence magazine and Ebony magazine. For we are phenomenal.

Now, I know that men are phenomenal too, because I, like you, have been told that 98% of all the species which have lived on this little blob of spit and sand are now extinct. And I know nature afforded them balance, so Gentlemen, I accept your phenomenal nature. But I will tell you this—you will have to write your own poem. This is for you, Graduates:

Phenomenal Woman

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.
I say, It's in the reach of my arms
The span of my hips, The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips, I'm a woman
Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman,
That's me. I walk into a room
Just as cool as you please,
And to a man, The fellows stand or
Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around me,
A hive of honey bees.
I say, It's the fire in my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth,
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.
I'm a woman, Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman, That's me.
Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me. They try so much
But they can't touch My inner mystery.
When I try to show them
They say they still can't see.
I say, It's in the arch of my back,
The sun of my smile, The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style. I'm a woman
Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman,
That's me. Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed. I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud. When you see me passing
It ought to make you proud. I say,
It's in the click of my heels, The bend of my hair,
the palm of my hand, The need of my care,
'Cause I'm a woman Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman, That's me.

It is upon you to increase your virtue, the virtue of courage—it is upon you. You will be challenged mightily, and you will fall many times.

It is upon you to increase your virtue, the virtue of courage—it is upon you. You will be challenged mightily, and you will fall many times. But it is important to remember that it may be necessary to encounter defeat, I don't know. But I do

know that a diamond, one of the most precious elements in this planet, certainly one in many ways the hardest, is the result of extreme pressure, and time. Under less pressure, it's crystal. Less pressure than that, its coal, less than that, its fossilized leaves are just plain dirt.

You must encounter, confront life. Life loves the liver of it, ladies. It is for you to increase your virtues. There is that in the human spirit which will not be gunned down even by death. There is no person here who is over one year old who hasn't slept with fear, or pain or loss or grief, or terror, and yet we have all arisen, have made whatever absolutions we were able to, or chose to, dressed, and said to other human beings, "Good morning. How are you? Fine, thanks."

Therein lies our chance toward nobleness—not nobility—but nobleness, the best of a human being is in that ability to overcome.

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.
Does my sassiness upset you? Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.
Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.
Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.
Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.
You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.
Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?
Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

Transcript of Obama's speech on Boston Marathon bombings

April 18, 2013

On Monday morning, the sun rose over Boston. The sunlight glistened off the State House Dome. In the commons, in the public garden, spring was in bloom. On this Patriot's Day, like so many before, fans jumped onto the T to see the Sox at Fenway. In Hopkinton, runners laced up their shoes and set out on a 26.2-mile test of dedication and grit and the human spirit.

And across this city, hundreds of thousands Bostonians lined the streets to hand the runners cups of water, to cheer them on. It was a beautiful day to be in Boston, a day that explains why a poet once wrote that this town is not just a capital, not just a place. Boston, he said, is the perfect state of grace.

And then, in an instant, the day's beauty was shattered. A celebration became a tragedy. And so we come together to pray and mourn and measure our loss. But we also come together today to reclaim that state of grace, to reaffirm that the spirit of this city is undaunted and the spirit of the country shall remain undimmed.

To Governor Patrick, Mayor Menino, Cardinal O'Malley and all the faith leaders who are here, governors Romney, Swift, Weld and Dukakis, members of Congress, and most of all, the people of Boston and the families who've lost a piece of your heart, we thank you for your leadership. We thank you for your courage. We thank you for your grace.

I'm here today on behalf of the American people with a simple message.

Every one of us has been touched by this attack on your beloved city. Every one of us stands with you. Because, after all, it's our beloved city, too.

Boston may be your hometown but we claim it, too. It's one of America's iconic cities. It's one of the world's great cities. And one of the reason(s), the world knows Boston so well is that Boston opens its heart to the world.

Over successive generations, you've welcomed again and again new arrivals to our shores; immigrants who constantly reinvigorated this city and this commonwealth and our nation. Every fall, you welcome students from all across America and all across the globe. And every spring, you graduate them back into the world - a Boston diaspora that excels in every field of human endeavor.

Year after year, you welcome the greatest talents in the arts, in science, research. You welcome them to your concert halls and your hospitals and your laboratories to exchange ideas and insights that draw this world together.

And every third Monday in April, you welcome people from all around the world to the hub for friendship and fellowship and healthy competition - a gathering of men and women of every race and every religion, every shape and every size - a multitude represented by all those flags that flew over the finish line.

So whether folks come here to Boston for just a day, or they stay here for years, they leave with a piece of this town tucked firmly into their hearts. So Boston's your home town, but we claim it a little bit too. I know this - I know this because there's a piece of Boston in me. You welcomed me as a young law student across the river -

welcomed Michelle too. You welcomed me - you welcomed me during a convention when I was still a state senator and very few people could pronounce my name right.

Like you, Michelle and I have walked these streets. Like you, we know these neighborhoods. And like you, in this moment of grief, we join you in saying: Boston, you're my home. For millions of us, what happened in Monday is personal. It's personal.

Today our prayers are with the Campbell family of Medford. They're here today. Their daughter Krystle was always smiling. Those who knew her said that with her red hair and her freckles and her ever-eager willingness to speak her mind, she was beautiful, sometimes she could be a little noisy, and everybody loved her for it. She would have turned 30 next month. As her mother said, through her tears, this doesn't make any sense.

Our prayers are with the Lu family of China, who sent their daughter Lingzi to BU so that she could experience all that this city has to offer.

She was a 23-year-old student, far from home. And in the heartache of her family and friends on both sides of the great ocean, we're reminded of the humanity that we all share.

Our prayers are with the Richard family of Dorchester, to Denise and the young daughter Jane, as they fight to recover.

And our hearts are broken for 8-year-old Martin, with his big smile and bright eyes. His last hours were as perfect as an 8-year-old boy could hope for, with his family, eating ice cream at a sporting event. And we're left with two enduring images of this little boy, forever smiling for his beloved Bruins and forever expressing a wish he made on a blue poster board: No more hurting people. Peace. No more hurting people. Peace.

Our prayers are with the injured, so many wounded, some gravely. From their beds, some are surely watching us gather here today. And if you are, know this: As you begin this long journey of recovery, your city is with you. Your commonwealth is with you. Your country is with you. We will all be with you as you learn to stand and walk and, yes, run again. Of that I have no doubt. You will run again. You will run again because that's what the people of Boston are made of.

Your resolve is the greatest rebuke to whoever committed this heinous act.

If they sought to intimidate us, to terrorise us, to shake us from those values that Deval described, the values that make us who we are as Americans, well, it should be pretty clear by now that they picked the wrong city to do it. Not here in Boston. Not here in Boston.

You showed us, Boston, that in the face of evil, Americans will lift up what's good. In the face of cruelty, we will choose compassion. In the face of those who would visit death upon innocents, we will choose to save and to comfort and to heal. We'll choose friendship. We'll choose love. Because Scripture teaches us God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline.

And that's the spirit you've displayed in recent days. When doctors and nurses, police and firefighters and EMTs and guardsmen run towards explosions to treat the wounded, that's discipline. When exhausted runners, including our troops and veterans, who never expected to see such carnage on the streets back home, become first responders themselves, tending to the injured, that's real power. When Bostonians carry victims in their arms, deliver water and blankets, line up to give blood, open their homes to total strangers, give them rides back to reunite with their families, that's love.

That's the message we send to those who carried this out and anyone who would do harm to our people. Yes, we will find you. And yes, you will face justice. We will find you. We will hold you accountable. But more than that, our fidelity to our way of life, for a free and open society, will only grow stronger, for God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but one of power and love and self-discipline.

Like Bill Ifrig, 78 years old - the runner in the orange tank top who we all saw get knocked down by the blast, we may be momentarily knocked off our feet - but we'll pick ourselves up. We'll keep going. We will finish the race.

In the words of Dick Hoyt, who has pushed his disabled son Rick in 31 Boston marathons, we can't let something like this stop us.

This doesn't stop us. And that's what you've taught us, Boston.

That's what you've reminded us, to push on, to persevere, to not grow weary, to not get faint even when it hurts.

Even when our heart aches, we summon the strength that maybe we didn't even know we had, and we carry on; we finish the race. We finish the race, and we do that because of who we are, and we do that because we know that somewhere around the bend, a stranger has a cup of water. Around the bend, somebody's there to boost our spirits. On that toughest mile, just when we think that we've hit a wall, someone will be there to cheer us on and pick us up if we fall. We know that.

And that's what the perpetrators of such senseless violence, these small, stunted individuals who would destroy instead of build and think somehow that makes them important - that's what they don't understand.

Our faith in each other, our love for each other, our love for country, our common creed that cuts across whatever superficial differences there may be, that is our power. That's our strength. That's why a bomb can't beat us. That's why we don't hunker down. That's why we don't cower in fear.

We carry on. We race. We strive. We build and we work and we love and we raise our kids to do the same. And we come together to celebrate life and to walk our cities and to cheer for our teams when the Sox, then Celtics, then Patriots or Bruins are champions again, to the chagrin of New York and Chicago fans. The crowds will gather and watch a parade go down Boylston Street. And this time next year on the third Monday in April, the world will return to this great American city to run harder than ever and to cheer even louder for the 118th Boston Marathon.

Bet on it.

Tomorrow the sun will rise over Boston. Tomorrow the sun will rise over the - this country that we love, this special place, this state of grace.

Scripture tells us to run with endurance the race that is set before us. As we do, may God hold close those who've been taken from us too soon, may he comfort their families and may he continue to watch over these United States of America.

Greta Thunberg's Speech At The U.N. Climate Action Summit

September 23, 2019

Climate activist Greta Thunberg, 16, addressed the U.N.'s Climate Action Summit in New York City on Monday. Here's the full transcript of Thunberg's speech, beginning with her response to a question about the message she has for world leaders.

"My message is that we'll be watching you.

"This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you!

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!



"For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear. How dare you continue to look away and come here saying that you're doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight.

"You say you hear us and that you understand the urgency. But no matter how sad and angry I am, I do not want to believe that. Because if you really understood the situation and still kept on failing to act, then you would be evil. And that I refuse to believe.

"The popular idea of cutting our emissions in half in 10 years only gives us a 50% chance of staying below 1.5 degrees [Celsius], and the risk of setting off irreversible chain reactions beyond human control.

"Fifty percent may be acceptable to you. But those numbers do not include tipping points, most feedback loops, additional warming hidden by toxic air pollution or the aspects of equity and climate justice. They also rely on my generation sucking hundreds of billions of tons of your CO₂ out of the air with technologies that barely exist.

"So a 50% risk is simply not acceptable to us — we who have to live with the consequences.

"To have a 67% chance of staying below a 1.5 degrees global temperature rise — the best odds given by the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] — the world had 420 gigatons of CO₂ left to emit back on Jan. 1st, 2018. Today that figure is already down to less than 350 gigatons.

"How dare you pretend that this can be solved with just 'business as usual' and some technical solutions? With today's emissions levels, that remaining CO₂ budget will be entirely gone within less than 8 1/2 years.

"There will not be any solutions or plans presented in line with these figures here today, because these numbers are too uncomfortable. And you are still not mature enough to tell it like it is.

"You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say: We will never forgive you.

"We will not let you get away with this. Right here, right now is where we draw the line. The world is waking up. And change is coming, whether you like it or not.

"Thank you."