

## Speech 01: Steve Jobs - Stanford Commencement Address (Part1) -

### Practice 1 | Vocabulary

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**Directions:** Listen and repeat.

- **commencement** - a ceremony at which students receive their academic degrees or diplomas;  
graduation
- **biological** - genetically related
- **adoption** - to willingly take one into a relationship
- **naive** - lacking knowledge, experience of life, or good judgment, and willing to believe that  
people always tell you the truth
- **deposit** - a sum of money that is given as the first part of a payment
- **stumble** - to hit your foot against something while you are walking or running, and almost fall
- **curiosity** - a strong desire to know or learn something
- **intuition** - the ability to know something by using your feelings rather than considering the facts
- **priceless** - so precious that its value cannot be determined

- **calligraphy** - beautiful handwriting that you do with a special pen or brush
- **serif typefaces** - a font style with a slight projection finishing off a stroke of letter
- **sans serif typefaces** - a typeface without serif
- **typography** - the art or work of preparing books, etc. for printing, especially of designing how the text will appear when it is printed
- **subtle** - not very noticeable or obvious
- **fascinating** - extremely interesting and attractive

## Practice 2 | Speech

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**Directions:** Read the speech aloud with your teacher.

*This is a prepared text of the commencement address delivered by **Steve Jobs**, CEO of Apple Computer and of Pixar Animation Studios, on 12 June, 2005 (Part 1)*

"I am honored to be with you today at your **commencement** from one of the finest universities in the world. Truth be told, I never graduated from college. 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.

The first story is about connecting the dots.

I dropped out of Reed College [Portland, Oregon] after the first six 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?

It started before I was born. My **biological** mother was a young, unwed college 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 have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that 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 someday go to college.

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 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 classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

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 seven 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 to be **priceless** later on. Let me give you one example:

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**.

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.

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. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

## Practice 3 | Questions

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**Directions:** Answer the following questions.

1. Do you know Steve Jobs? If yes, can you tell anything about him?
2. On what occasion did Steve Jobs deliver his speech?
3. Why was Steve Jobs given up for adoption?
4. Describe how he went through his college life.
5. What did he learn from his calligraphy class?
6. How did he apply what he learned?
7. What attitude did Steve Jobs have as a person?
8. Do you think he is a good role model for young people?