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Believe in Yourself

Summary

The poem “Believe in Yourself” by Robert Langley encourages individuals to face life’s challenges with courage and self-confidence. It highlights that in life, important decisions must be made independently, without relying on others. The poet describes how the future depends on the choices we make—whether we allow fear to hold us back or let determination push us forward.

The poem also explains that although staying in a comfort zone feels easy, it does not lead to growth. True progress comes when we take risks and step out of our comfort zone. The poet emphasizes that the first step toward success is always the most difficult, but once taken, there is no turning back. Ultimately, success depends on believing in oneself and moving ahead with confidence.

- **Message:** Self-belief and courage are the keys to success. We must step out of our comfort zones, face challenges bravely, and trust ourselves to achieve our goals.

New Terms

- **Challenge** – A difficult task or situation that tests one’s ability
- **Future** – The time that is yet to come
- **Pull forward** – To encourage or move ahead towards success
- **Push back** – To stop progress or hold someone back
- **Fear** – A feeling of being afraid
- **Choices** – Decisions between two or more options
- **Comfort** – A state of ease and relaxation
- **Status quo** – The existing state of things; no change
- **Grow** – To develop or improve over time
- **Step up** – To take action or face a challenge bravely
- **Track** – The right path or direction
- **Believe in yourself** – To have confidence in your own abilities

Reflect and Respond

I. Imagine that you are the person in the image.

1. What emotions do you feel standing at the base of a difficult task?

Ans. I feel nervous and a little afraid, as the task seems challenging. At the same time, I also feel excited and hopeful about achieving something new.

2. What might make you take the first step?

Ans. My determination to succeed and belief in my abilities would encourage me to take the first step. Support from others and thinking about my goal would also help me move forward.

II. Think about a time when you had to face a challenge.

1. What was it, and how did you feel at the start of the journey?

Ans. I once had to speak in front of the class during an assembly. At the start, I felt very nervous and lacked confidence.

2. How did you feel once you made the decision to move forward?

Ans. After deciding to go ahead, I felt more confident and proud of myself. I also felt relieved and happy after completing it.

III. What does the phrase 'believe in yourself' mean to you? Write some words or phrases you associate with believing in yourself.

Ans. "Believe in yourself" means having confidence in my abilities and trusting that I can achieve my goals even in difficult situations. It means not giving up easily and staying positive.

- **Words/phrases associated with it:** Confidence, courage, self-trust, determination, positivity, inner strength, hope, motivation

IV. Select the correct meaning of 'status quo' based on the given sentence.

- Even though some kids wanted to try new activities, most of them were happy with the status quo and didn't want any changes.
 1. A plan to make things more exciting.
 2. A situation to keep things the same.
 3. A decision where everything is completely different.
 4. A choice to change things quickly without thinking.

Ans. 2. A situation to keep things the same.

Check your Understanding

I. Based on your understanding of the poem, select the correct central idea for each stanza from the options given.

• Stanza 1

- (i) Facing challenges requires personal responsibility and a clear focus on one's future.
- (ii) Facing challenges is a journey best taken with support and guidance from others.

Ans. (i) Facing challenges requires personal responsibility and a clear focus on one's future.

• Stanza 2

- (i) Fear and uncertainty make it difficult to make choices as the future approaches.
- (ii) Facing the future with confidence makes choices easier and more straightforward.

Ans. (i) Fear and uncertainty make it difficult to make choices as the future approaches.

- Stanza 3

(i) Personal growth involves finding balance between comfort and change.

(ii) Personal growth requires leaving behind comfort and embracing change.

Ans. (ii) Personal growth requires leaving behind comfort and embracing change.

- Stanza 4

(i) The first step towards change may feel easy if you place your trust in others to guide you and provide support.

(ii) The first step towards change is difficult, but having self-belief and confidence helps you stay on track.

Ans. (ii) The first step towards change is difficult, but having self-belief and confidence helps you stay on track.

II. Rhyme Scheme: Fill in the blank to complete the following sentence.

- The poem follows a simple, yet effective rhyme scheme _____ that flows steadily through each stanza.

Ans. The poem follows a simple, yet effective rhyme scheme ABCB that flows steadily through each stanza.

III. Tone: State whether the following statements are true or false.

- The overall tone of the poem is motivational and encouraging. → True
- The tone shifts from thoughtful in the beginning to one of determination by the end of the poem. → True

IV. Speaker: Fill in the blanks with the correct options from those given in the brackets.

- The speaker in this poem is not distant; rather, he/ she comes across as a _____ (stranger/ guide) who understands the struggle and is encouraging the reader to take _____ (interest in/control of) his/her own future.
- The use of direct address 'You' creates a close connection, as though the speaker is _____. (talking directly to the reader/addressing the reader from a distance)

Ans.

- The speaker in this poem is not distant; rather, he/she comes across as a guide who understands the struggle and is encouraging the reader to take control of his/her own future.
- The use of direct address 'You' creates a close connection, as though the speaker is talking directly to the reader.

V. Imagery: Match the phrases from the poem in Column 1 with the imagery they represent in Column 2. An extra representation is given.

Column 1	Column 2
1. There is no crowd to see...	(i) Represents the difficulty of beginning a new challenge or change.
2. push you back in fear?	(ii) Suggests a solitary journey, stressing individual effort.
	(iii) Evokes the mental barrier that prevents growth.

Ans.

- There is no crowd to see... → (ii) Suggests a solitary journey, stressing individual effort.
- push you back in fear? → (iii) Evokes the mental barrier that prevents growth.

VI. Symbolism: Select the words/phrases from the box below to complete the given sentences.

unknown	self-improvement	courage
leap of faith	stagnation	

1. Comfort and the status quo represent _____ and fear of change, symbolising the comfort zone that holds one back.
2. The future symbolises the _____, the potential for change and success that lies ahead but requires _____ to step into.
3. The first step symbolises the initial _____ required to begin the journey of _____ or personal development.

Ans.

1. stagnation
2. unknown, courage
3. leap of faith, self-improvement

VII. Metaphor

- The poet uses a metaphor in the line, 'The first step is the hardest'. Explain why this is metaphorical.

Ans. The line "The first step is the hardest" is metaphorical because it does not refer to a literal step. It means that starting something new or making a decision is the most difficult part.

VIII. The poem uses antithesis in a couple of lines.

Antithesis is a rhetorical device that pairs contrasting or opposite ideas in a parallel grammatical structure to highlight differences or create emphasis. It simplifies complex ideas through contrast, making them easier for readers or listeners to understand.

Consider the famous quote from Neil Armstrong when he stepped onto the moon:

"Setting foot on the moon may be a small step for a man, but a giant leap for mankind."

Here, the antithesis lies in contrasting the 'small step' for an individual with the 'giant leap' for all humanity. The parallel structure of the two phrases highlights the incredible significance of this event, presenting it as both a personal and massive achievement.

Other examples:

- Speech is silver, but silence is gold.
- Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit.
- Man proposes, God disposes.

- Identify the lines from the poem that show antithesis and explain why it is so.

Ans.

- **Lines showing antithesis:** "Will it pull you forward / Or push you back in fear?"
- **Explanation:** These lines show antithesis because they present opposite ideas—moving forward (progress) and being pushed back (fear). This contrast highlights how choices can lead either to success or failure.

Critical Reflection

I. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow.

1. Step up to the challenge

There is no crowd to see,
It's just you and the future
And where you want to be.

(i) What does the line, 'There is no crowd to see' suggest about facing challenges?

Ans. It suggests that challenges must be faced alone, without depending on others.

(ii) Complete the following suitably.

- The line 'It's just you and the future' suggests that _____.

Ans. The line 'It's just you and the future' suggests that one is responsible for shaping one's own future.

(iii) Fill in the blank with the appropriate word/ phrase from the extract.

- Latha will _____ her efforts to improve her vocal performance by practicing harder each day.

Ans. step up to the challenge

(iv) Select the most suitable title for the extract.

A. The Struggles of Change

B. Facing the Future Alone

C. A Journey of Growth

D. The Power of Fear

Ans. B. Facing the Future Alone

(v) Complete the analogy by using a word from the extract.

- achieve : goal :: face : _____

Ans. achieve : goal :: face : challenge

II. Answer the following questions.

1. What is the significance of the metaphor, 'The first step is the hardest' in the context of personal growth?

Ans. The metaphor means that starting something new is the most difficult part of personal growth, as it requires courage and confidence to begin.

2. What message does the antithesis in the poem convey about the nature of personal development?

Ans. The antithesis conveys that personal development involves choices between opposite paths—moving forward with confidence or being held back by fear.

3. Do you think the poet's message is realistic in the context of real-world struggles? (Clue: Evaluate whether simply 'believing in yourself' is enough to overcome obstacles or other factors are also necessary.)

Ans. Yes, the message is realistic to some extent. Believing in oneself is important, but hard work, support, and perseverance are also necessary to overcome real-life challenges.

4. Consider a situation where you or someone you know had to take a difficult first step towards a goal. How does the poem's message about the importance of self-belief apply to this situation?

Ans. When I had to speak on stage, I felt nervous at first. But once I believed in myself and took the first step, I gained confidence. The poem shows that self-belief helps us overcome fear and move towards success.

Vocabulary in Context

- I. The phrase 'status quo' is a Latin expression that translates to 'the state in which' or 'the existing state of affairs.' Over time, it has become a popular term used in English to refer to the current situation or condition, especially when things remain unchanged.

There are other Latin terms commonly used in English. Read a few given below along with their meanings.

Latin expression	Meaning
1. et cetera (etc.)	And other things; and so on
2. exempli gratia (e.g.)	For example
3. ad hoc	For a specific purpose or situation, often temporary
4. in media res	Into the middle of things; starting at a crucial point of the story or situation
5. per se	By itself; fundamentally
6. quid pro quo	A favour or advantage given in return for something

Now, fill in the blanks in the given sentences with the Latin expressions used in English from the table.

- (i) I enjoy reading fantasy books, _____ Harry Potter and Magical Paint Brush.
 (ii) After helping Tanya with the homework, Ritu asked for a _____ to borrow her notes next time.
 (iii) I love all kinds of outdoor activities, such as trekking, hiking, biking, _____.
 (iv) The park is not very special _____; it becomes more fun when you visit with friends.
 (v) We created an _____ team to organise the school festival.
 (vi) The movie started _____, with the hero already fighting the villain in a huge battle.

Ans.

- (i) e.g. (ii) quid pro quo (iii) etc. (iv) per se (v) ad hoc
 (vi) in media res

- II. The line , 'Will it pull you forward/or push you back in fear?' is a rhetorical question.

A **rhetorical question** is a question that doesn't require an answer because it is used to make the reader think or reflect on a particular idea.

1. Read the following rhetorical questions and state what they intend to achieve.

- (i) Isn't it obvious that we must act now? Don't we all have a responsibility to make a change?

Ans. To emphasise urgency and responsibility to act.

- (ii) Will we let fear control us, or will we rise above it?

Ans. To encourage overcoming fear and making a strong choice.

2. Match the situations in Column 1 to the rhetorical questions in Column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
(i) Deciding whether to stand up for what is right	A. How can we ever grow if we never try anything new?
(ii) Owning up to a mistake made in a group project	B. Isn't it better to admit our mistakes than to let them define us?
(iii) Deciding whether to try something challenging, like public speaking	C. If I don't take responsibility now, when will I?
(iv) Choosing between two career paths	D. Can I really move forward without knowing which path to take?
(v) Deciding whether to apologise for a mistake	E. What's the point of playing it safe if it means staying stuck?
(vi) Trying something new and stepping out of your comfort zone	F. How can we stay silent when we know what is right?

Ans.

Column 1 (Situation)	Column 2 (Rhetorical Question with Sentence)
i. Deciding whether to stand up for what is right	– F. How can we stay silent when we know what is right?
ii. Owning up to a mistake made in a group project	– C. If I don't take responsibility now, when will I?
iii. Deciding whether to try something challenging	– A. How can we ever grow if we never try anything new?
iv. Choosing between two career paths	– D. Can I really move forward without knowing which path to take?
v. Deciding whether to apologise for a mistake	– B. Isn't it better to admit our mistakes than to let them define us?
vi. Trying something new and stepping out of your comfort zone	– E. What's the point of playing it safe if it means staying stuck?

Listen and Respond

I. You will listen to a conversation between two friends.

- As you listen, answer the following questions in one to three exact words that you hear. (Transcript for teacher on page 275)

1. How did the boy feel before the play ?

Ans. so nervous

2. According to the girl, where does confidence come from?

Ans. taking action

3. What was the girl finally sure about regarding the boy?

Ans. you'll shine

II. You will once again listen to the conversation. As you listen, select the four true statements from 1–7 given below.

- The boy feels confident but is worried about freezing on stage.
- The girl encourages the boy to push through his doubts by trusting in his preparation.
- The boy thinks that the audience will be supportive regardless of his performance.
- The girl believes that self-doubt is a normal part of preparing for a big performance.
- The boy feels that his preparation is not enough and doubts his abilities, even though he has practiced.
- The girl suggests that the boy should avoid feeling nervous and perform perfectly.
- The girl believes that pushing through nervousness will help the boy grow and build confidence.

Ans. The four true statements are:

- The girl encourages the boy to push through his doubts by trusting in his preparation.
- The girl believes that self-doubt is a normal part of preparing for a big performance.
- The boy feels that his preparation is not enough and doubts his abilities, even though he has practiced.
- The girl believes that pushing through nervousness will help the boy grow and build confidence.

Speaking Activity

I. Work in pairs. Read the three Sayings/Proverbs given below. For each one, think of a real-life situation where it could apply. Do the suggested role play and use the Saying/Proverb.

- Remember:**
 - Before diving into a real-life situation, briefly explain the meaning of the saying.
 - Describe the situation in the following way—
 - Introduction:** Briefly explain the saying.
 - Situation/Example:** Share a personal story or relate the saying to something familiar.
 - Conclusion:** Reflect on what the saying teaches or what you learned from the experience.
 - For the role-play, work in pairs to create the dialogues first and then enact. Take turns to choose your sayings/proverbs.
- Sayings/Proverbs**
 - Don't judge a book by its cover.**
 - Situation to consider:** Have you ever misjudged someone based on their appearance or first impression? What happened?
 - Role-play:** One student acts as someone who judges others based on their looks or first impressions. The other student plays someone who shows the true personality after a deeper conversation, proving that appearances can be deceptive.

2. Actions speak louder than words.

- **Situation to consider:** Think of a time when someone's actions proved more valuable than their words.
- **Role-play:** One student talks about how they will improve their grades, and the other shows how they actually put in the effort. Compare the impact of talking versus doing.

3. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

- **Situation to consider:** Can you think of a time when you faced a difficult challenge but didn't give up?
- **Role-play:** One student plays someone who is giving up on a tough school project, while the other encourages that student to keep going. Show how perseverance leads to success despite difficulties.

Ans. Here are simple role-play examples for each proverb, following the structure:

1. Don't judge a book by its cover

- **Introduction:** This saying means we should not judge people based on their appearance or first impression.
- **Situation/Example:** A student thinks a quiet classmate is unfriendly, but later discovers they are kind and helpful.
- **Conclusion:** We should take time to know people before forming opinions.
- **Role-play:**
 - Student A: I don't think Riya is nice. She never talks.
 - Student B: I thought the same, but I worked with her yesterday.
 - Student A: Really? What happened?
 - Student B: She helped me understand maths and was very kind.
 - Student A: Oh! I guess I judged her too quickly.
 - Student B: Exactly—don't judge a book by its cover!

2. Actions speak louder than words

- **Introduction:** This means what we do is more important than what we say.
- **Situation:** A student keeps saying they will study, while another actually studies regularly.
- **Conclusion:** Success comes from effort, not just promises.
- **Role-play:**
 - Student A: I will top the class this time, just wait and see!
 - Student B: That's great, but are you studying regularly?
 - Student A: Not really... I'll start soon.
 - Student B: I've been studying every day and finishing my work.
 - Student A: Maybe I should do the same.
 - Student B: Yes, because actions speak louder than words.

3. When the going gets tough, the tough get going

- **Introduction:** This means strong people don't give up when things become difficult.
- **Situation/Example:** A student wants to quit a difficult project, but a friend motivates them to continue.
- **Conclusion:** Hard work and perseverance help us succeed.
- **Role-play:**
 - Student A: This project is too hard. I'm giving up.
 - Student B: Don't quit now! You've come so far.
 - Student A: But I don't think I can do it.
 - Student B: Try again. I'll help you.
 - Student A: Okay, I'll give it one more try.
 - Student B: That's the spirit! When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

Writing Task

- I. Your class is conducting the morning assembly. You have been asked to deliver a speech on the topic, 'Turning Challenges into Opportunities'. Draft this speech by following the guidelines given below.
- **Opening paragraph:** Greet the audience and introduce yourself. Begin with a quotation, a question or a surprising fact. State the purpose of your speech and provide an overview of what you will be talking about.
 - **Paragraphs 2 and 3—Body of the speech:** Divide the body of your speech into two paragraphs, each focusing on a different main point or idea. Use transition words, anecdotes, statistics, and other supporting evidence to strengthen your points.
 - **Concluding paragraph:** Summarise the main points of your speech. End with a statement that leaves a lasting impression on the audience and convey your thanks.
 - Use formal language to present ideas clearly
 - Use persuasive tone—don't you agree.../..., isn't it?

Refer to the guidelines given below.

- Consider how challenges can lead to new learning experiences, growth, or unexpected benefits.
- Why do you think people often feel scared or anxious when faced with change?
- How can change open doors to new opportunities? Can you think of an example from your own life or someone you know?
- What are some strategies or attitudes you can adopt to approach change with a positive mindset?
- Think about how facing challenges builds skills, determination, and confidence, all of which are essential for success.

Ans. Here is a well-structured speech following all the given guidelines:

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

Good morning respected Principal, teachers, and my dear friends.

My name is _____, and today I will speak on "Turning Challenges into Opportunities."

Have you ever felt scared when facing something new? It is natural, isn't it? But every challenge gives us a chance to grow. Challenges push us out of our comfort zones and help us learn new skills. For example, I once felt nervous speaking in front of the class, but with practice, I became more confident.

People fear challenges because of uncertainty, but they often lead to new opportunities. Many successful people faced failures before achieving success. Don't you agree that success feels more meaningful when we work hard for it? With a positive attitude and determination, we can turn difficulties into success.

In conclusion, challenges are not obstacles but opportunities in disguise. So, face them with courage and keep moving forward.

Thank you and have a nice day!