

## The Golden Opportunities of Youth (sample speech)

The golden opportunities of youth - most dictionaries describe opportunity as a convenience of time or place for doing a thing. The great writer and historian Sir Francis Bacon made the statement, "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." His view is now being shared by youth all over the world who are just beginning to realize the opportunity, which they as future citizens have been given.

Young people today are being offered more freedom and opportunity than was ever dreamt of in the twentieth century. During the early part of this century, the general feeling of adults toward teenagers was that they were to be "seen and not heard". In the latter part of the century, however, they began to speak out against what they felt was wrong. Today their new ideas and concepts are being embraced and are opening the eyes of many adults, making them aware that young people are the future.

In the early twentieth century, a choice of occupation was not offered to the teenager. The boys would often follow in the steps of their father, and the girls in that of their mother. If you were the son of a farmer, the chances were you would grow up to be a farmer and you would only take the amount of education required for farming.

However, today's teenager is surrounded with opportunity. Most young people today have the opportunity to become prime minister or president. All they have to do is be the best that they can possibly be and plan their education accordingly. The world today is so filled with opportunity that the big question facing the teenager now is "What will I be?" High schools all over the world are planning their courses to suit the student's future needs and governments are providing grants and scholarships to help reduce the cost of such an education. The opportunity of bilingualism is now offered to young people through the introduction of foreign exchange programs. This system allows the student to learn the language and customs of foreign countries by total immersion, outside the crowded classrooms of many of today's schools.

The increase in mass communication and mass media, particularly television and the Internet has greatly affected the opportunities provided for youth. A few decades ago, people were not aware of the opportunities that they did have, and it was very seldom that they ever found out. Today, business firms, libraries, and the

Internet offer valuable information on what jobs are available and how to attain them.

Young people have been given a prominent position in today's society and a great responsibility rests upon their shoulders. The question is "Can they accept this responsibility?" Most can, as young people are being offered the chance to participate in youth organizations governed by laws made by youth themselves. The greatest challenge of young people today is to be responsible, and become responsible is to be given opportunity.

"A wise man makes more opportunities than he finds." This statement, as with many historic statements, is now being applied by the youth of today. Young people are modern day Sir Francis Bacons, trying to make more opportunities than they find. The great philosopher Sophocles stated that "Opportunity is the best captain of all endeavor," and that "small opportunities are often the beginnings of great enterprises."

Opportunity is all around us. It's challenging me, and it's challenging you. I sincerely hope that we, as the youth of today, will take up this challenge, and eventually realize that "Opportunity knocks!"