

# obamas back to school speech essay sample

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School is an important part of life, whether it is a short or long education is irrelevant. However, today's youth has a hard time understanding that, and they do not quite understand what they can use this education for. So how does one make it clear to all students, that an education is not just for show, but can also be used later in life? How does one evoke a feeling in all students, that they must take their education seriously, and that they are the future of their country? The president addressed this problem in his speech "Back to School", where he spoke to every single student at once. The speech, which the president of the United States gave to Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia, was written on September 8th, 2009. The speech consists of three parts: The intro, the body and the conclusion, which is very convenient for the students who is going to analyse the speech later on.

The intro is well-built up. He starts by greeting people, and applauding the school for being an outstanding host. He proceeds to talk about the day, which is the first day of the semester, and talk about how some of the students wished it was still summer. He tries to relate to them by telling them of his childhood, and of how he survived school back when he was a youth. Then comes the body, which is the main part of the speech. The body is where all of the content is, and the theme is usually found here. In the body of the text, he talks for ex. about the different opportunities they will miss, or the hidden talents that would remain hidden because they never actually took school seriously, they never actually tried something they did not like. In the end, he concludes the speech in a few sentences. When the

President walks in, the first thing he does is greeting everybody. “ Hello, everybody! Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you, everybody. All right, everybody go ahead and have a seat. How is everybody doing today?” 1 He is starting by greeting everyone, and asking them how they are doing. He is trying to connect with the audience. This is creating a nice and warm environment for the audience, to make them feel comfortable and listen to what he has to say. The audience is students, and if he were not rhetorical in his way of delivering the speech, he would have lost them. If he would have come in and begin with the speech straight away, without even saying anything else, the whole thing would seem impersonal and cold. He would not have connected the same way with the audience, as he did originally. As the audience is quite young, it can be hard for them to relate to the president, who is quite older than they are. That is why he uses examples, to make it more accessible for the audience to relate. “ That’s what young people like you are doing every day, all across America.

Young people like Jazmin Perez, from Roma, Texas...” “... And Jazmin, Andoni, and Shantell aren’t any different from any of you.” 2 He uses these kids from different backgrounds, to make it easier for all kids to relate. He is also using his own ethos, by telling about his own childhood. About how his mother would wake him up at 4: 30 and home school him. That makes the audience think, that if the president can go through the same thing, and still become successful, so can they. That makes it easier for the audience to

connect with him, and relate to him. Obama uses a great deal of pathos in his speech.

In the United States, patriotism is highly praised, and Obama knows that. He uses pathos to persuade the viewers and kids to do what he says. " You cannot drop out of school and just drop into a good job. You've got to train for it and work for it and learn for it. And this isn't just important for your own life and your own future. What you make of your education will decide nothing less than the future of this country. The future of America depends on you. What you're learning in school today will determine whether we as a nation can meet our greatest challenges in the future."

This quote shows how much he uses the patriotism to his advantage; he tries to induce strong feelings in his audience, hence making them more likely to agree to what he is saying. He is saying that if you do not study, and do not take your education seriously, you will not make it in the world. You will not get a job, and you will become a burden to the rest of the country. What he is saying is, that if you do not study and do not get an education, the country will not be able to face the great challenges the future holds.

Using pathos, ethos and creating a bond with the audience, he addresses a serious problem quite convincingly, and comes with a good argument for why they should study hard. His own backstory connects with the audience, and makes the audience relate to him. He has figured out, how to speak with kids and make them do what you say, quite well.