

Success Stories

Fill in the yellow gaps with the words from the box and the green gaps with the words in the correct form from the in-class activity:

climbed raw broken inclined established turn took defeated
best-selling foundations attention rein storm flaw failed

1. Oprah Winfrey

One of America's most powerful women, Oprah Winfrey had to o_____ a myriad of o_____ throughout her life. Growing up in a _____ home, Winfrey lived in poverty and e_____ sexual abuse from male family members for many years. But after moving in with her father,



she managed to o_____ this trauma and went on to become an honors student with a full scholarship ride to college.

Her **career** _____ off while she was still in her sophomore year, working for CBS in Nashville as a news anchor. This was merely the beginning of Winfrey's successful career, as she _____ her way up the television industry and became America's favorite TV persona.

Today, she is the founder and CEO of Harpo Productions, a multimedia production company, as well as a _____ author and philanthropist, all while **maintaining** her _____ on daytime television.

2. Sara Blakely

From a young age, Sara Blakely wanted to f_____ in her father's f_____ and become a lawyer. But despite her best efforts and _____ ambition, she failed the LSAT exam twice, getting an even lower grade the second time around. **Feeling** _____, she got a job at Disney World and eventually moved back home with her mother.



Blakely spent the next seven years selling fax machines before she had her “E_____!” m_____. After cutting off the feet of her pantyhose to fit into a pair of white jeans, she saw a new product opportunity. But even after developing the first Spanx prototype, it took months for her to find a manufacturer willing to take on the project. Fast forward to today, Blakely has _____ herself as a powerful **entrepreneur** who built a multibillion-dollar shapewear company based on a simple idea.

3. James Dyson

As British richest man, James Dyson has **taken the world by** _____ with his inventions. However, his schooling is not what you'd expect from a world-renowned inventor. Indeed, Dyson was _____ **towards the arts** as a student and studied furniture design at the Royal College of Art in London.



But his career path would **take a** _____ one day after becoming frustrated with his home vacuum. After breaking it apart and **identifying a design** _____ in the product, Dyson set out to create what would **become a market-changing invention**: the first bagless vacuum cleaner.

It took him 5 years and 5,126 _____ **prototypes** before he made one that worked. But after being unable to find a manufacturer that would produce it, Dyson **p_____ his house on the l_____** to become a manufacturer himself. Even then, getting sellers and shops to stock his vacuum cleaner was a struggle, and being a one-man operation, he acted as the sole designer, engineer, manufacturer and salesperson of his product.

Although it took a while for his invention to **get any** _____ **from consumers**, once it did, it inevitably became a billion-dollar idea that **set the** _____ **for** Dyson's empire.