SPEAKING FOCUS

Famous speeches — Severn Suzuki.

"Hello, I'm Severn Suzuki (…). We are a group of 12 and 13 year-olds trying to make a difference: Vanessa Suttie, Morgan Geisler, Michelle Quigg, and me. We've raised all the _____ miles to tell you adults you must change your ways. (…) I am fighting for my future. I am here to speak for _____ _____. (…) I am here to speak -- speak on behalf of the _____ whose cries go unheard. I am here to speak for the countless animals dying across this planet, because they _____ _____ go. I am afraid to go out in the sun now, because of the holes in our ozone. I am afraid to breathe the air, because I don't know _____. I used to go fishing in Vancouver, my home, with my Dad until, just a few years ago, we found the fish full of cancers. And now we hear of animals and plants going extinct every day, **vanishing** forever. (…) Did you have to worry of these things when you were my age? All this is happening before our eyes and yet we _____ we want and all the solutions. I'm only a child and I don't have all the solutions. I don't -- I want you to realize, neither do you."

(Address to the UN Earth Summit, Severn Suzuki, 1992)

1. How old is the speaker?
2. How did she get the money to go speak at the UN Summit?
3. What is she afraid of?
4. She implies that her life is more difficult than the lives of her audience when they were children. Why?
5. Do you worry about the same issues as the speaker?



Developing vocabulary

1. raised

2. countless

3. dying

4. holes

5. vanishing

LIVEWORKSHEETS

SPEAKING FOCUS



Parts of speech

*Write a **developing paragraph** to follow this **thesis statement**: "The most important message that I would like to convey to you today is that we live in the best time in history. We have available to us the best discoveries in science, medicine and technology to make this a better world in which to live in."*



Fluency

Did they have a child only after they had bought a house?

***As far as I remember**, only after they had bought a house did they have a child.*

1. Will she come over only after she finishes her homework?
2. Can he watch the movie only after he reads the book?
3. Haven't we had guests over since Christmas?
4. Had they never been to China before?
5. Does the company often require employees to work overtime?
6. Will they get a massage only after they fill out the form?
7. Hadn't she driven a car since the accident?
8. Did he seldom buy her gifts?



Listen and discuss

MY PLANET

1. What are common fears children have, according to the speaker?
2. What does his daughter fear? Why, in your opinion, does she have these fears?
3. In his opinion, her fears are real. Do you agree?
4. What in the father's opinion is the problem?
5. What governmental programs in your area protect the environment?

Public Speaking Hints

Vary the volume, intensity and tone of your voice.

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SPEAKING FOCUS

Transcript

📓 Text: *My Planet*

My Planet

When I was a child, I feared ghosts and darkness. My daughter fears earthquakes, oil spills, and losing marine life. Her fears are different — and, sadly, real. She knows that plastic isn't biodegradable, that consumerism makes people buy disposable things, and that the ozone layer is fragile. Sometimes I wish she didn't know so much.

I agree her fears make sense. The planet is warming, storms are more destructive, and wildlife struggles to survive. Yet the real problem, I think, isn't fear — it's indifference. Adults adapt to disaster too easily, ignoring our growing carbon footprint as if the atmosphere could handle it forever.

In our area, some renewable energy projects and recycling programs try to protect nature, but they are scarcely enough. Change moves too slowly. My daughter says, "Dad, the planet is my friend." I used to smile; now I understand. Her love for the Earth is what might save it — if we listen.

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Hello, I'm Severn Suzuki speaking for "ECO" -- the Environmental Children's Organization.

We are a group of 12 and 13 year-olds trying to make a difference: Vanessa Suttie, Morgan Geisler, Michelle Quigg, and me. We've raised all the money to come here ourselves -- to come 5,000 miles to tell you adults you must change your ways.

Coming up here today, I have no hidden agenda. I am fighting for my future. Losing my future is not like losing an election, or a few points on the stock market.

I am here to speak for all generations to come. I am here to speak -- speak on behalf of the starving children around the world whose cries go unheard. I am here to speak for the countless animals dying across this planet, because they have nowhere left to go. I am afraid to go out in the sun now, because of the holes in our ozone. I am afraid to breathe the air, because I don't know what chemicals are in it.

I used to go in -- I used to go fishing in Vancouver, my home, with my Dad until, just a few years ago, we found the fish full of cancers. And now we hear of animals and plants going extinct every day, vanishing forever. In my life, I have dreamt of seeing the great herds of wild animals, jungles, and rainforests full of birds and butterflies, but now I wonder if they will even exist for my children to see.

Did you have to worry of these things when you were my age? All this is happening before our eyes and yet we act as if we have all the time we want and all the solutions. I'm only a child and I don't have all the solutions. I don't -- I want you to realize, neither do you. You don't know how to fix the holes in our ozone layer. You don't know how to bring the salmon back up in a dead stream. You don't know how to bring back an animal now extinct. And you can't bring back the forests that once grew where there is now a desert. If you don't know how to fix it, please stop breaking it.

Here, you may be delegates of your governments, business people, organizers, reporters, or politicians. But, really, you are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles -- and all of you are someone's child.

I'm only a child, yet I know we are all part of a family -- five billion strong; in fact 30 million species strong -- and borders and governments will never change that. I'm only a child, yet I know we are all in this together and should act as one single world towards one single goal.

In -- In my anger, I'm not blind; and in my fear, I'm not afraid of telling the world how I feel. In my country we make so much waste, we buy and throw away, buy and throw away, buy and throw away and yet Northern countries will not share with the needy. Even when we have more than enough we are afraid to share; we are afraid to let go of some of our wealth.

In Canada, we live the privileged life. We've plenty of food, water, and shelter. We have watches, bicycles, computers, and television sets. The list could go on for two days. Two days ago, here in Brazil, we were shocked when we spent time with some children living on the streets. This is what one child told us: "I wish I was rich and if I were, I would give all the street children food, clothes, medicines, shelter, and love and affection."

If a child on the streets who has nothing is willing to share, why are we who have everything still so greedy? I can't stop thinking that these are children my own age, that it makes a tremendous difference where you are born; that I could be one of those children living in the favelas of Rio. I could be a child starving in Somalia, or a victim of war in the Middle East, or a beggar in India. I am only a child, yet I know if all the money spent on war was spent on finding environmental answers ending poverty and in finding treaties, what a wonderful place this Earth would be.

At school, even in kindergarten, you teach us how to behave in the world. You teach us to not to fight with others, to work things out, to respect others, to clean up our mess, not to hurt other creatures, to share, not be greedy. Then, why do you go out and do -- do the things you tell us not to do? Do not forget why you are attending these conferences -- who you're doing this for. We are your own children. You are deciding what kind of a world we are growing up in.

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Parents should be able to comfort their children by saying, "Everything's going to be all right; it's not the end of the world, and we're -- and we're doing the best we can." But I don't think you can say that to us anymore. Are we even on your list of priorities?

My dad always says, "You are what you do, not what you say." Well, what you do makes me cry at night. You grown-ups say you love us. But I challenge you, please, make your actions reflect your words.

Thank you.

https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/severnsuzukiunearthsummit.htm

LIVEWORKSHEETS