Read this excerpt from a back-to-school speech. Then answer the questions that follow.

from “The President’s Speech to Students”

by President Barack Obama

1. You're this country's future. You're young leaders. And whether we fall behind or race ahead as a nation is going to depend in large part on you. So I want to talk to you a little bit about meeting that responsibility.

2. It starts, obviously, with being the best student that you can be. Now, that doesn't always mean that you have to have a perfect score on every assignment. It doesn't mean that you've got to get straight As all the time—although that's not a bad goal to have. It means that you have to stay at it. You have to be determined and you have to persevere. It means you've got to work as hard as you know how to work. And it means that you've got to take some risks once in a while. You can't avoid the class that you think might be hard because you're worried about getting the best grade if that's a subject that you think you need to prepare you for your future. You've got to wonder. You've got to question. You've got to explore. And every once in a while, you need to color outside of the lines.

3. That's what school is for: discovering new passions, acquiring new skills, making use of this incredible time that you have to prepare yourself and give yourself the skills that you're going to need to pursue the kind of careers that you want. And that's why when you're still a student you can explore a wide range of possibilities. One hour you can be an artist; the next, an author; the next, a scientist, or a historian, or a carpenter. This is the time where you can try out new interests and test new ideas. And the more you do, the sooner you'll figure out what makes you come alive, what stirs you, what makes you excited—the career that you want to pursue.

4. So that's a big part of your responsibility, to test things out. Take risks. Try new things. Work hard. Don't be embarrassed if you're not good at something right away. You're not supposed to be good at everything right away. That's why you're in school. The idea, though, is that you keep on expanding your horizons and your sense of possibility. Now is the time for you to do that. And those are also, by the way, the things that will make school more fun.

5. Down the road, those will be the traits that will help you succeed, as well—the traits that will lead you to invent a device that makes an iPad look like a stone tablet. Or what will help you figure out a way to use the sun and the wind to power a city and give us new energy sources that are less polluting. Or maybe you'll write the next great American novel.

6. But I also want to emphasize this: With all the challenges that our country is facing right now, we don’t just need you for the future; we actually need you now. America needs young people’s passion and their ideas. We need your energy right now. I know you’re up to it because I’ve seen it. Nothing inspires me more than knowing that young people all across the country are already making their marks. They’re not waiting. They’re making a difference now.
There are students like Will Kim from Fremont, California, who launched a nonprofit that gives loans to students from low-income schools who want to start their own business. Think about that. So he's giving loans to other students. He set up a not-for-profit. He's raising the money doing what he loves—through dodgeball tournaments and capture-the-flag games. But he's creative. He took initiative. And now he's helping other young people be able to afford the schooling that they need.

The point is you don't have to wait to make a difference. Your first obligation is to do well in school. Your first obligation is to make sure that you're preparing yourself for college and career. But you can also start making your mark right now. A lot of times young people may have better ideas than us old people do anyway. We just need those ideas out in the open, in and out of the classroom.

When I meet young people like yourselves, when I sit and talk to [a student at this school], I have no doubt that America's best days are still ahead of us, because I know the potential that lies in each of you. Soon enough, you will be the ones leading our businesses and leading our government. You will be the one who are making sure that the next generation gets what they need to succeed. You will be the ones that are charting the course of our unwritten history. And all that starts right now—starts this year.

---

Which of these statements is **not** supported by the remarks made in President Obama’s speech?

A. Work hard in school and try out new possibilities.
B. While in school, acquire a variety of skills and interests.
C. Figure out different ways to become energetic leaders.
D. Explore a wide range of ideas and career options.

What evidence from the speech **best** shows how students can prepare themselves for the future?

A. Students need to act responsibly during their time in school.
B. Students should focus on courses that will help them earn good grades.
C. Students should realize that they will not excel at everything that they try.
D. Students need to try new possibilities to discover what excites them.
3. Which sentence from the passage best supports the idea that President Obama thinks students must take responsibility for their own futures?

A. “Now, that doesn’t always mean that you have to have a perfect score on every assignment.”

B. “Down the road, those will be the traits that will help you succeed, as well—the traits that will lead you to invent a device that makes an iPad look like a stone tablet.”

C. “Your first obligation is to make sure that you’re preparing yourself for college and career.”

D. “Soon enough, you will be the ones leading our businesses and leading our government.”

4. Read the statement below, and then answer the question that follows it.

President Obama believes that creativity is a valuable trait for people to have.

Explain how you can tell that the above statement is true. Write a paragraph responding to this question. Use at least two details from the passage to support your response.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Self Check  Go back and see what you can check off on the Self Check on page 1.