

Listening Activity : Life Stories of Inspiring Leaders*

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Objectives : To enable the listeners/viewers to understand the struggles of those who have succeeded from being ordinary to become extraordinary and to get inspired by their life stories.

Text : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfAhTtB1b2Q>
Jeff Bezos Revealed: Building Amazon One Box at a Time

Duration : About 25 minutes.

Preparation : Watch/listen to as many videos as possible to learn about life from the greats and follow closely the narration for the linguistic improvement.

Procedure : Setting the context and the task:

Jeffrey Preston Bezos is an American internet entrepreneur, industrialist, media proprietor, and investor. He is best known as the founder, CEO, and president of the multi-national technology company Amazon. - Wikipedia.

Bezos owns The Washington Post and Blue Origin, an aerospace company that is developing rockets for commercial use.

He studied Computer Science and Electrical Engineering at Princeton University.

Task : Identify whether the statements given below are correct or incorrect.

Process : Watch the video without any break and jot down the key ideas using key expressions. (Worksheet distribution soon after watching it)

If a statement is correct, put a tick mark [✓] and if incorrect, cross it [x]:

- ★ Jeff Bezos dubbed as audacious, understood the potential of the retail market and rewrote its rules.
- ★ Bezos' initial strategies paid off for the growth of his company.
- ★ He never budged an inch from the ethical means for the developed of his company.
- ★ His biological father is a Cuban immigrant and who is a petroleum engineer.
- ★ Bezos' understood the potential of the internet and sensed that technological tsunami has arrived which can be tapped for online marketing.
- ★ When he started his company it was his friends who invested in it as his parents did not trust that he would succeed.
- ★ It was his mother who suggested to him that his company can be dubbed as Amazon.com after the name of the South American perennial river.
- ★ Bezos invested a huge sum of money for advertising his company as he thought word-of-mouth would not bring in customers.
- ★ As Amazon was not doing so well initially he established his company in 45 other countries to expand the business turn over.

- ★ Amazon was able to boost its sale by adopting strategies such as tax free shopping to the online customers.
- ★ When Amazon became successful, Bezos has decided to rest on his laurel and be complacent.
- ★ One of the reasons attributed to the success of Bezos is that he was always direct with his employees and never hidden anything from them.
- ★ He decided to acquire many retail companies, even if he did not want some of them, mainly to block his potential competitors.
- ★ When he launched his Blue Origin, a technological company, he kept its purpose secretive unlike Elon Musk and several others.
- ★ When he started to roll out Kindle, the e-reader, initially it met with resistance from the book readers who were unwilling to transform their reading habit.
- ★ Book publishers did not take the threat from Kindle seriously as they felt book lovers would never desert them.
- ★ When Bezos approached Zappos for the second time they were still hesitant to partner with Amazon.
- ★ When Apple launched iPad gradually Kindle lost it ground as Amazon was not able to add any new features to it.
- ★ Amazon started video streaming much before Netflix and continues to remain as the market leader in the domain.
- ★ NASA has invested 22 million dollars in Blue Origin to develop space vehicles, thus, Bezos has his pie in several areas.

Learning outcomes:

1. Learners realize that to get motivated and to sustain their motivation they need credible life stories, (which teaches them not only about life but also the language to describe them).
2. Learners recognize the fact that most achievers overcame almost insurmountable problems to scent any success and had they wilted under pressure, their story would have been different. Watch them or listen to them as frequently as possible.

Further practice:

Many video and audio materials are available about the life stories of the successful people. Watch/ listen to them frequently.

***Inspiring leaders:** In a growing up age, icons are required to get inspired and their qualities to act as guiding stars. To mention a few among of them - Bill Gates, Nelson Mandela, Abdul Kalam, Ratan Tata and so on. They embodied features such as choosing to lead others rather than follow others, providing a vision for the future, being compassionate and ethical, enabling others to grow and so on.