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Speeches in Action

PERSUASIVE SPEECH TRANSCRIPT

Poverty

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Notice how this attention getter grabs the audience by using an interesting story.

Bohn Fawkes was a B-17 pilot during World War II who flew a number of missions over Germany. On one such occasion, his fuel tank was hit by an enemy missile, and he was forced to land the plane. Miraculously, he survived, upon which he discovered the missile had not detonated. If it had, his plane and he would have exploded immediately. Upon returning to the United States, Fawkes asked to keep the unexploded missile as a souvenir, a sign of goodwill toward him. However, upon further investigation it was found that not one but eleven missiles had hit his fuel tank. They were immediately sent off to intelligence for further investigation where it was revealed that all eleven missiles were empty, save one. The one missile contained a note, written in the Czech language, that said, "This is all we can do, for now." A courageous Czechoslovakian factory worker had disarmed the missiles and written the note. He realized he couldn't end the war, but he could save one plane, and it made a difference.

Joy introduces the topic and shows the importance in this section.

There are fewer stories that better summarize the problem of poverty. It's been an issue, and how to end it has been debated since the beginning of time, and the argument has left many frustrated, discouraged, or cynical. Yet ending poverty begins with a change within ourselves. If we each decided to take action out of a personal conviction, the world that we live in would look drastically different, for the better.

The speaker gives a simple but effective preview of the main points to be covered in the speech using Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

Today I will discuss the problem of poverty, the vision I have for a poverty-free world, and some simple steps for action that you can take to be the change that you wish to see in your world.

In this section, Joy cites recent and credible evidence to support her claims.

Poverty is generational. It's a cycle. The first step is summarized well in the words of Confucius, where he states, "If your plan is for one year, plant rice; if your plan is for five years, plant trees; and if your plan is for one hundred years, educate your people." The cycle of poverty and educating others about it was first introduced in the *New York Times* in a fantastic article in 2008, where it outlined that today's youth have the odds stacked against them to obtain an education and, therefore, hope for a successful future. This is not good. Children are directly affected, leaving future generations in dire circumstances.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released in 2009 new research that showed an increase in preventable childhood diseases. These diseases are just that: preventable. Yet they're still increasing. Many children receive only one full meal during the school lunch hour, while others have to go hungry during the cafeteria time. The stressors of poverty also negatively affect the children's ability to take standardized testing, in an article published in *Current Issues in Education* in 2003.

In addition, because of the increased levels of poverty in our nation, many shelters and food pantries are over capacity, as discovered by the *Boston Globe* in 2011.

Michigan Live in 2010 discovered that the largest homeless shelter in our nation is now having to limit the amount of time that a person can stay due to an increase in demand. This is adding to our homeless statistics around the nation, leaving few options for those faced with absolute poverty, unstable housing, and eviction.

The crime rates in our nation have increased as a direct result of poverty increasing as well. According to Patterson in a study done in 2006, community crime rates have a correlation with absolute poverty with poverty defined as not having the basic necessities to go on with daily life and survive. Hsieh and Pue in 2011 developed further upon that with a meta-analysis that showed a relationship between homicide, assault, and poverty.

Poverty is a rough reality to face, but fortunately, it doesn't have to end there. While it is easy to feel overwhelmed, we need to remember that our actions do make a difference. The key to winning the war is focusing on individual battles. If we all choose to open our eyes and make a difference, change will happen. By choosing to give financially, volunteer your time, or write a letter to Congress, you are effectively making the statement, "I choose to end poverty."

The first action you can take is donating to your local food pantry. This can be with food items or financially. Both are needed. If everyone gave just one food item per week, the national food shortage would be reversed. Volunteer your time to give to shelters, whether by volunteering your time at a local soup kitchen serving food, or by changing sheets in a homeless shelter, or by delivering meals. By giving your time, you are saying to the people you are serving, "You are worth my time, and I choose to put a face on poverty as well." The third thing you can do is write letters to members of Congress urging them to make poverty solution a priority. Why handwritten letters? Simply put, because they work. There's something about the handwritten. According to the global poverty awareness organization, Bread for the World, 96% of Capitol Hill staff reported in a survey that if their member of Congress had not reached a decision on an issue, handwritten letters would make a difference.

In this sentence, Joy uses an internal transition to help the flow the speech.

The speaker transitions to potential solutions to help alleviate poverty.

Joy gives easy but concrete solutions for the audience to immediately engage in.

In this section, the speaker gives numerous advantages that could happen if the audience helped out.

Joy details for the audience members the personal benefits that they can expect from help. This is a great persuasive strategy.

This sentence is a good transition to the conclusion.

The speaker closes with a review of the main points discussed, actions for the audience to do, and a strong concluding device.

Choosing to take action even in the smallest of ways will create immense benefits. By giving financially, volunteering time, or choosing to write a letter to Congress, you are taking a momentous step in creating a poverty-free nation. By donating food, we move one step closer to ending absolute poverty. In 2011, Bread for the World outlined its nutrition program, designed to help children learn how to buy, cook, and get the necessary ingredients for good nutrition, and to have the brainpower to focus in school and to get good grades. Additionally, children who have positive role models are much less likely to become involved in crime. This was done with the Boyes, Hornick, and Ogden study in 2010. By writing a letter to Congress, you are putting pressure on those in positions of power to enact change on a scale of great magnitude. Other communication media such as email are too large in volume and often pass under the radar. By giving handwritten letters, it's mandatory that they are read and logged, which guarantees that your voice will be heard.

Lastly, by choosing to be involved in ending poverty by participating in one or all of the above-mentioned ways, you yourself will directly experience the benefit. When you choose to reach out of your immediate comfort zone by participating in such programs, you are constantly reminded of how blessed you are. These experiences will help keep your priorities in check, benefiting you and those around you. Second, by taking action, you are actively demonstrating compassion, one of the threads that unites all of humanity, and it reminds those who are struggling that they are not alone in life. By choosing to invest you are effectively saying to those in need, "You are worth my time." To give and receive this kind of acknowledgement provides virtue that is difficult to put words to.

Today I've discussed the problem of poverty and some simple steps for action that you can take to create a poverty-free nation.

You never know when you yourself might be in need one day. Today more than 49 million North Americans are living in poverty as we speak, and we have the chance to be part of the solution. Coming around the room right now is a sheet of paper with some of the web addresses for the organizations you can choose to donate to or be involved with, along with a sample letter to Congress. I urge you to take some time and think about what I've shared with you today. Together we can make a difference. Like the Czechoslovakian factory worker, we can choose to do something with what we have, for right now.

