

Graduation Speech

Why did the chicken cross the road?

Hang on, I started in wrong place.

Greetings and congratulations to the class of 2011. I would like to thank Dr. Donow, our teachers, and our parents for helping us get to this momentous day.

Right now, I can read all of your minds. You are thinking , "Oh great, this is another valedictorian speech about how our efforts and struggles shaped the way we are today for the challenges that lie ahead. He probably downloaded that introduction from the Internet."

I'm sorry to tell you that this is going to be a pretty bland speech, but if you want to put your head down and nod off for a while, I'll tell you when to clap, so you won't offend me.

We have now just completed our final year of high-school Hopefully we have remember a few things we learned along the way. More importantly than what we learned from teachers, I hope we have all learned from ourselves and each other. When we look back at the time when we took our first steps into pre-school or kindergarten, it is obvious what our goal was. Twelve years of happiness, tears, laughter, drama, and tragedy later, we will now evaluate whether we are able to answer that question which has haunted us since we could hear.

"Why did the chicken cross the road?"

Seven words. Eight syllables. Eight of the most important syllables in the English language.

To get to the other side? Everyone says that. From the moment our ears are exposed to the sound of those words, we have pondered this question constantly. Perhaps not consciously, but in the back of our brains there is always a small whisper, something egging (no pun intended) us to find out what would possibly motivate that almost-flightless bird to transverse that piece of concrete. Tonight, I will attempt to dissect this riddle and extract the life lesson.

To get to the other side? That is no answer. What is on the other side? Do all chickens have an intrinsic desire to get to the other side? Do all humans have to get to the other side? There is nothing that makes one side of the road more desirable than the other I'm pretty sure that the chicken would be perfectly happy on the side it's on if it just stopped at the other side.

To get to the other side? No, that cannot be the reason. In life, we don't cross roads just to get to the other side. We didn't just complete twelve years or more of school just to be on the other side of it, looking back. We don't apply to college just to be on the other side of the process, saying that we got through the misery and bureaucracy. There is a better answer to that riddle. Please secure yourselves because what I am about to say will radically alter your life.

Why did the chicken cross the road? My answer is "to cross the road".

I have just proved that the chicken's main motivation in crossing the road is not to get on the other side. The only other reason is to cross the road. Nobody here suffered through school for the sole purpose of being here tonight. Nobody here suffered through school to be able to say that they got through it. We went to school so that we went to school.

You can't get more profound than that.

Fellow classmates, we are all chickens. We must get to the other side. What is the other side? We have to cross the road to find out.