

Text D

We Are What We Choose

As a kid, I spent my summers with my grandparents on their ranch in Texas. I helped fix windmills, vaccinate cattle, and do other chores. My grandparents belonged to a Caravan Club, a group of Airstream trailer owners who travel together around the U.S. and Canada. And every few summers we'd join the caravan. We'd hitch up the Airstream trailer to my grandfather's car, and off we'd go. I loved and worshipped my grandparents and I really looked forward to these trips. On one particular trip I was about 10 years old. I was rolling around in the big bench seat in the back of the car. My grandfather was driving, and my grandmother had the passenger seat. She smoked throughout these trips, and I hated the smell.

At that age, I'd take any excuse to make estimates and do minor arithmetic. I'd been hearing an ad campaign about smoking. I can't remember the details, but basically the ad said every puff of a cigarette takes some number of minutes off of your life: I think it might have been two minutes per puff. At any rate, I decided to do the math for my grandmother. When I was satisfied that I'd come up with a reasonable number, I poked my head into the front of the car, tapped my grandmother on the shoulder and proudly proclaimed, "At two minutes per puff, you've taken nine years off your life!"

I have a vivid memory of what happened. I expected to be applauded for my cleverness and arithmetic skills. That's not what happened. Instead, my grandmother burst into tears. I sat in the backseat and did not know what to do. While my grandmother sat crying, my grandfather pulled over onto the shoulder of the highway. He got out of the car and came around and opened my door and waited for me to follow. My grandfather was a highly intelligent, quiet man. He had never said a harsh word to me, and maybe this was to be the first time? We stopped beside the trailer. My grandfather looked at me, and after a bit of silence, he gently and calmly said, "Jeff, one day you'll understand that it's harder to be kind than clever."

What I want talk to you about today is the difference between gifts and choices. Cleverness is a gift; kindness is a choice. Gifts are easy — they're given after all. Choices can be hard. You can seduce yourself with your gifts if you're not careful, and if you do, it'll probably be to the detriment of your choices.

This is a group of many gifts. I'm sure one of your gifts is the gift of a smart and capable brain. I'm confident that's the case because admission is competitive and if there weren't some signs that you're clever, the dean of admission wouldn't have let you in.

Your smarts will come in handy because you will travel in a land of marvels. We humans — plodding as we are — will astonish ourselves. We'll invent ways to generate clean energy and a lot of it. Atom by atom, we'll assemble tiny machines that will enter cell walls and make repairs. As a civilization, we will have so many gifts, just as you as individuals have so many individual gifts as you sit before me.

How will you use these gifts? And will you take pride in your gifts or pride in your choices?

I got the idea to start Amazon 16 years ago. I came across the fact that Web usage was growing at 2,300 percent per year. I'd never seen or heard of anything that grew that fast, and the idea of

building an online bookstore with millions of titles — something that simply couldn't exist in the physical world — was very exciting to me. I had just turned 30 years old, and I'd been married for a year. I told my wife MacKenzie that I wanted to quit my job and go do this crazy thing that probably wouldn't work since most start-ups don't, and I wasn't sure what would happen after that. MacKenzie told me I should go for it.

I was working at a financial firm in New York City with a bunch of very smart people, and I had a brilliant boss that I much admired. I went to my boss and told him I wanted to start a company selling books on the Internet. He took me on a long walk in Central Park, listened carefully to me, and finally said, "That sounds like a really good idea, but it would be an even better idea for someone who didn't already have a good job." That logic made some sense to me, and he convinced me to think about it for 48 hours before making a final decision. Seen in that light, it really was a difficult choice; but ultimately, I decided I had to give it a shot.

I didn't think I'd regret trying and failing. And I suspected I would always be haunted by a decision to not try at all. After much consideration, I took the less safe path to follow my passion, and I'm proud of that choice.

Tomorrow, in very real sense, your life the life you author from scratch on your own — begins.

How will you use your gifts? What choices will you make? Will inertia be your guide, or will you follow your passions? Will you follow dogma, or will you be original? Will you choose a life of ease, or a life of service and adventure? Will you wilt under criticism, or will you follow your convictions? Will you bluff it out when you're wrong, or will you apologize? Will you guard your heart against rejection, or will you act when you fall in love? Will you play it safe, or will you be a little bit swashbuckling? When it's tough, will you give up, or will you be relentless? Will you be a cynic, or will you be a builder? Will you be clever at the expense of others, or will you be kind?

I will hazard a prediction. When you are 80 years old, and in a quiet moment of reflection narrating for only yourself the most personal version of your life story, the telling that will be most compact and meaningful will be the series of choices you have made. In the end, we are our choices. Build yourself a great story. Thank you and good luck!

I. Do the following statements agree with the information given in the passage? Are they true, false or not given?

1. The author and his grandparents traveled around America every year.
2. It is your choices rather than gift that make you.
3. Amazon sells wider collection of books than stores could carry.
4. Every stage of the startup journey is likely to hinge on several important decisions.
5. Taking an occupation means owning nothing at first.

II. Choose the correct answers.

1. What does "ranch" refer to in the first paragraph?
A. an extensive farm B. an intensive farm C. a mixed farm D. a specialized farm
2. Where did the author's grandma sit on the particular trip?
A. in the back of the car B. in the front of the car
C. beside the author D. beside the driver

3. Why did the author count his grandma's puff of smoking?
- A. He seized the chance to practise math.
 - B. He hated the smell and decided to tease her.
 - C. He was trying to impress her grandparents.
 - D. He was trying to enliven the atmosphere.
4. What's the logic of the reply that the author's boss gave when asked about the idea of building an online bookstore?
- A. This is a high-risk entrepreneurial vision though it sounds attractive.
 - B. This idea is socially responsible because it could increase the employment.
 - C. Investment is all about running risks, so give it a go.
 - D. This plan is suitable for a novice to build up their skills and experience.
5. Who is the audience of this speech?
- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. University alumni | B. University Graduates |
| C. Freshmen in a university | D. Transient Students in a university |

Keys:

I.

- 1. False
- 2. True
- 3. True
- 4. Not given
- 5. Not given

II. 1. A 2. D 3. C 4. A 5. B

Text E

The Swiss Secret to Jump-Starting Your Career

On a recent sunny summer morning, Ben Roueche pulled into the parking lot at the corporate headquarters of HomeAdvisor, in a suburban office park near Denver. Once inside, Roueche, wearing jeans and a T-shirt, sat down at a desk, logged on to his computer, and started resolving support tickets submitted by HomeAdvisor employees seeking help for everything from password resets to problems accessing the company's internal phone system. At one point, Roueche paused to chat with his supervisor about establishing a setup procedure for a new video prototype that some executives will soon begin using.

Ben Roueche is 17; he just finished his junior year of high school. For the past year, he has spent three days a week attending classes at a charter high school and two days a week working on the desktop-support team at HomeAdvisor. Earlier this summer, Roueche started working at HomeAdvisor three days a week, a schedule he'll maintain throughout his senior year.

Roueche belongs to the inaugural class of apprentices in a Colorado program, started last summer, called CareerWise. It represents Colorado's attempt to create unusual, statewide youth-apprenticeship system. "This program has more scale than almost any other broad apprenticeship that I know of," Harry Holzer, a public-policy professor at Georgetown University, told me. Its goals are ambitious: CareerWise's founders are trying to both prepare today's youth for well-paid jobs in the industries of the future and to change a culture that insists every 18-year-old should graduate high school and go straight to college.

CareerWise is the brainchild of Noel Ginsburg, the founder of a Colorado-based advanced manufacturing company called Intertech Plastics. Ginsburg visited Switzerland, which has a widely admired youth-apprenticeship program, while serving as the chairman of the Denver public School College and Career Pathways council. "What I didn't expect is that apprenticeship isn't just for construction — they have over 250 pathways there, everything from manufacturing to banking," Ginsburg told me. "Seventy percent of kids there enroll in apprenticeships instead of going directly to college."

Switzerland's not the only developed country with a robust apprenticeship program; the model has long been prevalent in Germany and Austria, and both Australia and the United Kingdom have launched initiatives in recent years to increase apprenticeship. Studies of programs in these countries have documented substantial economic benefits for both apprentices and their employees. However, the model remains rare in the United States. Ginsburg was convinced that a statewide apprenticeship program could both help address Colorado's workforce challenges and widen access to well-paying jobs across a variety of industries not typically associated with apprenticeship.

He sold Colorado's governor, John Hickenlooper, on the idea, and the two of them returned to Switzerland in 2015, along with 50 others — CEOs of local companies, leaders of school districts and community colleges, and philanthropists — to study the model more closely.

Ashley Carter, CareerWise's chief operating officer, says the program was designed to duplicate several important components of the Swiss model. The first is that CareerWise's business partners should receive a return on their investment in apprentices during the course of the

apprenticeship. Also, CareerWise's apprenticeships should increase students' career options, not narrow them.

"The Swiss have created a youth-apprenticeship system that's very permeable," Carter tells me. "And by that we mean that students who start an apprenticeship in Switzerland follow any number of paths. They can get a PH.D., they can go straight into the workforce... So participating in apprenticeship isn't a dead end."

The push for education programs that pay people as they learn.

What this means in practice is that if all goes well, at the end of his three-year apprenticeship, Ben Roueche, like all CareerWise apprentices, will have earned: a high-school diploma (on time); up to a year's worth of college credit (at no cost); and thousands of dollars worth of wages (\$30,000, on average, among CareerWise apprentices). Roueche, who wants to ultimately work in cybersecurity, may employee (with eligibility for tuition reimbursement for college), or perhaps go to work elsewhere.

"The program's not intended to say 'You don't need a four-year degree' to everyone," explains Ginsburg. "At the same time, there are other jobs where you don't need a four-year degree to be successful. The ultimate goal is to make sure that kids are looking at their educational and career options and asking if that pathway puts them into a career that takes them into the middle class and beyond."

Expanding apprenticeship in the United States is the rare policy proposal that garners bipartisan support. There's good reason for this broad support. While apprenticeship remains quite rare in the United State, evaluations of existing programs have documented impressive results. One evaluation of registered apprenticeship programs will earn about \$240,000 more than non-participants over the course of a career. Studies conducted in the U.S. and elsewhere have found meaningful benefits for employers, as well.

There are, however, limitations to apprenticeship. The most common critique of apprenticeship-and work-based and vocational learning in general — concerns what's known as "skill portability," or whether the specialized expertise learning in a given apprenticeship is applicable in other industries or with other employers. If Roueche choose to forgo college and later wants to leave HomeAdvisor, or move to a different state, will his apprenticeship experience be valued by employers?

"In a world where the sectors are dynamic, and a sector that's in high demand today might not even be around tomorrow, there's danger in specializing," Holzer, the Georgetown professor, said. "What you really hope for is that whatever sub-B.A. credentials people get, that they are portable... at a minimum across firms, and ideally even across sectors and industries."

CareerWise's advocates note they are aware of these concerns and have incorporated a number of elements — namely, debt-free college credit and an industry-recognized credential — that researchers believe can help mitigate these effects.

CareerWise's creators and advocates hope the program, which will be evaluated by an independent research firm, will serve as a replicable model for other states; Holzer, Hanks, and other researchers are watching the program closely. "This is more of an attempt to build a system, to really try to reach out to a lot of employers with some scale," Holzer said. "We should be able to learn a lot from this attempt."

I. Choose the correct answers.

1. Which of the following is true about Ben Roueche?
 - A. He is a part-timer of HomeAdvisor, working as an intern.
 - B. He has graduated from high school and started his career.
 - C. He is one of the first students in CareerWise.
 - D. He still studies in a college prep school.

2. Before Noel Ginsburg went to Switzerland, he _____.
 - A. owned a company in manufacturing industry
 - B. was a public official in Denver higher education
 - C. offered part-time jobs for students
 - D. considered apprenticeship effective in construction

3. Which of the following description is not true about the apprenticeship program?
 - A. It is popular in developed countries.
 - B. It develops well in Switzerland.
 - C. It's a nascent project in the UK.
 - D. It is proved to be beneficial for the labor market.

4. Which of the following excludes from the consideration of the apprenticeship in the US?
 - A. This program should be beneficial for both the apprentices and employees.
 - B. This program should provide various choices for students' career course.
 - C. This program should supply apprentices with handsome income.
 - D. This program should increase the possibility of earning high incomes.

5. The debate on "skill portability" in the apprentice program argues _____.
 - A. whether or not the credentials recognized in one industry are valued in others
 - B. whether or not specialized knowledge and experience in apprenticeship is widely accepted
 - C. that obtained skills could be applied in other fields or states
 - D. that the apprentice experience might be rejected if apprentices go to college

II. Complete the table below by using the words from the passage.

Name	_____ Schedule in CareerWise	Expected achievements	Possible Choices
Ben Roueche	Classes at a _____ high school three days a week. Work at HomeAdvisor two days a week.	A high school diploma recognized _____ industry A year's worth of college credit.	To work in _____. A (full-fledged) employee at HomeAdvisor.

Keys:**I.** 1. C 2. D 3. A 4. A 5. B**II.**

Name	<u>(Apprenticeship)</u> Schedule in CareerWise	Expected achievements	Possible Choices
Ben Roueche	Classes at a <u>(charter)</u> high school three days a week. Work at HomeAdvisor two days a week.	A high school diploma Recognized industry <u>(credentials)</u> A year's worth of college credit.	To work in <u>(cybersecurity)</u> . A <u>(full-fledged)</u> employee at HomeAdvisor.