

I'm providing you with a written example of the mini-speech I just gave so that you can use it as a SAMPLE for how you might structure YOUR commentary speech. Remember, this speech is about responding to IDEAS given in a TED talk...not "reporting" on the TED talk or speaker. Use the notes to the right for better understanding!

- Have a strong HOOK! (Don't start with "I watched a speech by...") Hook your audience!
- Give CONTEXT for your audience's understanding of the information you will share about the talk.
- Give the POINT of the TED Talk so your audience (who have not seen the speech) UNDERSTANDS why the TED Talk was given. (essentially a "thesis")
- Provides set-up for your clip.
- Make sure your clip is precisely CUED before beginning your speech. All clips should be 90 seconds or less AND in most cases should NOT be shown right at the beginning or right at the end of your speech, but rather IN your speech.
- Give an idea of the speaker/ style in case others want to watch.
- Provide your OWN opinions/ commentary and expand on ideas shared by the speaker. Remember, this is NOT a "book-report speech!" - we're interested in YOUR ideas also, and not just the speaker's.

Growing up, I learned quickly that "same" was good. My family, my church, my school...in each arena, everyone seemed to act the same. And to fit in and ultimately shine, I just had to do the "same"...to a higher level than everyone else. And I was good at excelling at "same". It may sound like an oxymoron, but I was. I earned great grades at school, outstanding awards at church, and my parent's ultimate trust at home, by being great at doing "same". It wasn't until adulthood, however, that I discovered that not everyone felt valued in our "same" environment. In fact, my sister grew up with a very different experience than I did, although we were raised by the same parents, in the same church, with the same education, and in the same home. Her outlook on who she was in light of the "same" around her is very different from mine. You see, my sister was an artist. She excelled at visual imagery, art, design, singing, and acting. She was the star actress in every High School musical, and the prized artist during her four years of high school. But she felt stupid. She didn't tell me this until we were adults and I was shocked. "Melissa...stupid?!" I couldn't believe it. She was one of the most talented and brightest people I knew, and I had always looked up to her.

What Melissa experienced was the devaluing and stigmatizing of her talents during her academic education. Sir Ken Robinson, who challenges the radical rethinking of our school systems, puts it like this: (show clip from 11:12-13:00 - start with "the whole system")

Through artful storytelling and a humorous style, Sir Ken Robinson builds a strong case for why our entire education system needs to be restructured. I agree. Without teaching to the WHOLE person, education becomes nothing but a memorization of facts and statistics which, for the digital generation, is unnecessary, b/c that same information can be acquired in an instant from the devices we all carry in our pockets (hold up cell phone). Therefore, we need to look to the future to see where the world is headed. What skills will students of tomorrow need? In my opinion, there is only one answer to this question: Transferrable ones (skills that can be used in many different arenas). You see, without a spirit of invention, innovation, and creativity, our education is doing nothing but cranking out functionally unemployable individuals whose education did not prepare them for a world that is changing at break-neck speeds. For every generation until now, the educational and employment landscape remained relatively the same. Now, with new technological advances happening daily, and many of the top paying jobs being acquired by those most adept in innovation and creativity, our schools need to catch up and change quickly if they are to survive. Not more high-stakes tests! More higher-level thinking.

Ken Robinson proposes such change, and with a little bit of paradigm shifting, and a lot of buy-in from today's (and tomorrow's) educators, hopefully that shift will happen soon. It's too late for my sister, but for the future of America, I agree with this Brit, that it must happen now.