Unit 1 Access to Success

1. Read the following quotes. What do they tell you about success?

1) The difference between failure and success is doing a thing nearly right and doing it exactly right. — Edward Simmons

To achieve success, we should spare no effort to seek perfection for the simple reason that a small mistake may lead to a great failure or disaster.

2) Success doesn’t come to you ... you go to it. — Marva Collins

Success is something you get after working hard with great determination and good preparations.

3) The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes.

— Benjamin Disraeli

The opportunity is only reserved for those who are ready. Only by making good preparations can you seize the opportunity when it comes.

4) Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome. — Booker T. Washington

Success isn’t how far you get in life; it’s what you do to get there.

2. How do you feel about trying new things?

 I like trying new things because it enables me to experience more and learn more about others, by which I can become more liberal and less biased.

// I don’t like trying new things because they often let me down. Trying new things sometimes means venture or even danger, so I don’t like trying new things and would like to stick to the familiar.

3. What stops you from trying new things?

Trying new things may have too much demand on me. Furthermore, trying new things may bring me disappointment or even failure.

4. What have you achieved in your life that makes you feel proud?

I take great pride in winning first place in the speech contest held in my university.

5. Who do you admire for their achievements and why?

I admire Winston Churchill, who led his country from the verge of defeat to victory.

6. Do you believe that a good memory is critical to success? Why or why not?

Yes, I firmly believe that a good memory determines a person’s success. Firstly, a good memory is a great help in the process of learning. Secondly, a good memory can help you build relationships, which is also a decisive factor for success. Thirdly and most importantly, a good memory can provide you with quick, reliable access to essential thinking tools.

//No, I don’t think a good memory is critical to success. In my opinion, it is diligence[ˈdɪlɪdʒəns], creativity and persistence that eventually determine one’s success.

7. Have you ever tried any method to improve your memory? Do you think that useful?

Yes, I have tried some methods to improve my memory. For example, I learned the method of location from a book and I liked it very much.

Yes, I once believed that there might be some special shortcuts to improving my memory. But when I tried a couple of methods, I felt it was inconvenient to apply them and it is a waste of time. I think I would never try any method again.

8. Generally speaking, do you have a good memory? Which are you better at remembering: faces, names, or numbers? Do you use any special strategies to remember certain things?

Generally speaking, I have a good memory, and I am particularly good with my short-term memory. I am better at remembering birthdays. It’s probably because I have to memorize a lot of numbers and formulas in my academic study. But for other things I have a really bad memory. I can hardly remember names and dates. I usually mistake this person for that person or this date for that date. I have tried various special strategies to remember things. For example, I often use rhymes to help me remember numbers. I use some special strategies such as repetition, chunking, and word association in language learning to remember certain words. Occasionally I would use mental pictures or colors to remember faces or names. But unfortunately I find that it rarely works.

9. Do you enjoy sports? Which ones?

 Yes, I like sports very much. Personally I like football and basketball. I play them a lot in school and I am even a member of the school football team. At weekends, I enjoy climbing mountains because that brings me a closer chance to come into contact with and learn more about Mother Nature.

10. Have you ever tried to learn a new sport? How successful were you? Why?

 Yes, I have tried to learn swimming. I even took part in a swimming competition last month.

//No. Playing Ping-Pong is very suitable for me, so I am not interested in trying any other new sports at all. Besides, I am too busy to afford a lot of time to learn a new sport.

11. Talk about one of your challenges/achievements that you had.

The most impressive challenge/achievement that I had is climbing to the top of Huangshan Mountain. On one Sunday afternoon, my father and I went to climb Huangshan Mountain. Huangshan Mountain rises high up into the sky and has won worldwide recognition as a tourist attraction. At first, I found it really easy. I even joked with my father that I could get to the top effortlessly. But when I was halfway up the mountain, with the air becoming thinner and my strength continually consumed, I felt quite tired. At this point, it took great effort to even perform a single move. As I looked up, the flights of steps disappeared into the sky. I got very frustrated. I wanted to give up and head for the cable car. “Young man, you mustn’t lose the game to an old man! Come on, you can do it,” my father said. Greatly encouraged by his words, I pulled up all my strength and decided to give it one last go. At last, I managed to get to the top of the mountain. I was so glad. I felt I could achieve anything as long as I was determined and worked toward my goal firmly. For me, it was quite an achievement.