

Words On Our Pages

Adam Klimek, Saint Xavier High School

High school began with a collective eager, awkward speechlessness. We walked in as a quiet, uncoordinated mob of freshmen. We heard great stories about what Saint X was, what kind of men it created, and we dreamed of what our own stories would be some day. Some already envisioned themselves as the star quarterback; some predicted themselves to be the kid who would ace the ACT, and some fantasized that they would be the man to consume the most superfries in school history. However, all these aspirations were not yet reality; they were merely dreams, formed by the words of others. We had not found *our* words yet, so we remained speechless on that first day.

Over the next four years, we forged our own tale. The words of every subject formed the underlying plot of the book of the Class of 2019. Each new vocabulary definition, history lecture, and mathematical proof entered our minds and our lives, forming a shared identity word by word. But like every good story, we wrote more than just a simple plot. Our motivating teachers and coaches provided excellent character foils. Our athletes became beautiful synecdoches, with such sports as cross country and track being our legs, and powerlifting forming our torso. Our artists, actors, and writers polished our story with enchanting metaphors and symbolism. Finally, our acts of service displayed the primary theme of our narrative, functioning as the reason the story exists at all, and highlighting that which truly matters: active, compassionate love. Each experience added new words to the story that we started writing as freshmen, and the end result is a masterpiece.

However, no matter how brilliantly eloquent the tale is, every artistically crafted word in this chapter of our lives ultimately leads to the simple, one-word climax. In the mind of a high school student, this one word holds power over all others. One word is simultaneously capable of bringing us to applause and to tears. One word is the goal of every other word that has been spoken or heard over the past four years. One word drags us all the way back to the speechlessness that we felt on the first day at Saint X. The storybook that high school has been always leads to one word: graduation.

This word is so powerful because so many see it as the end. They think that graduation is the final turning point, with nothing but a brief resolution left to come in the story they have been working so diligently to write. They can only view graduation as their entire story's climax.

Graduation is only the climax in this chapter, however, and we've so much more story to write. All of our experiences shaped us, molded the very essence that defines who we are. As such, we can easily hold onto that essence and use it to guide us toward our future words. We can look into ourselves and what we have enjoyed over our past four years and see what we

want to become. We are able to see words like engineer, doctor, author, husband, and father. With the chapter finished and its climax in our hearts, we can shape our true, complete story.