



# A Simple “Craft Your Credo” Classroom Activity

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## Text Set

1. Steve Jobs: Imitated, Never Duplicated
2. The Personal Credo of Jorge Mario Bergoglio
  3. Be Cool to the Pizza Dude
  4. Google’s Take on “Credo”
5. The Story of Johnson & Johnson
  6. Student Sample Credos

## **Steve Jobs: Imitated, Never Duplicated** by David Pogue for *The New York Times*, 10/6/11

Wednesday evening, Apple broke the news that Steve Jobs had died.

Since that moment, tributes, eulogies and retrospectives have poured over the world like rain. He changed industries, redefined business models, fused technology and art. People are comparing him to Thomas Edison, Walt Disney, Leonardo da Vinci. And they're saying that it will be a very long time before the world sees the likes of Steve Jobs again.

Probably true. But why not, do you suppose?

After all, there are other brilliant marketers, designers and business executives. They're all over Silicon Valley — all over the world. Many of them, maybe most of them, have studied Steve Jobs, tried to absorb his methods and his philosophy. Surely if they pore over the Steve Jobs playbook long enough, they can What re-create some of his success.

But nobody ever does, even when they copy Mr. Jobs's moves down to the last eyebrow twitch. Why not?

Here's a guy who never finished college, never went to business school, never worked for anyone else a day in his adult life. So how did he become the visionary who changed every business he touched? Actually, he's given us clues all along. Remember the "Think Different" ad campaign he introduced upon his return to Apple in 1997?

"Here's to the crazy ones. The rebels. The troublemakers. The ones who see things differently. While some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius."

In other words, the story of Steve Jobs boils down to this: Don't go with the flow.

Steve Jobs refused to go with the flow. If he saw something that could be made better, smarter or more beautiful, nothing else mattered. Not internal politics, not economic convention, not social graces.

Apple has attained its current astonishing levels of influence and success because it's nimble. It's incredibly focused. It's had stunningly few flops.

And that's because Mr. Jobs didn't buy into focus groups, groupthink or decision by committee. At its core, Apple existed to execute the visions in his brain. He oversaw every button, every corner, every chime. He lost sleep over the fonts in the menus, the cardboard of the packaging, the color of the power cord.

That's just not how things are done.

Often, his laser focus flew in the face of screamingly obvious common sense. He wanted to open a chain of retail stores — after the failure of Gateway's chain had clearly demonstrated that the concept was doomed.

He wanted to sell a smartphone that had no keyboard, when physical keys were precisely what had made the BlackBerry the most popular smartphone at the time.

Over and over again, he took away our comfy blankets. He took away our floppy drives, our dial-up modems, our camcorder jacks, our non-glossy screens, our Flash, our DVD drives, our removable laptop batteries.

How could he do that? You're supposed to add features, not take them away, Steve! That's just not done!

(Often, I was one of the bellyachers. And often, I'd hear from Mr. Jobs. He'd call me at home, or when I was out to dinner, or when I was vacationing with my family. And he'd berate me for not seeing his bigger picture. On the other hand, sometimes he'd call to praise me for appreciating what he was going for. A C.E.O. calling a reviewer at home? That's just not done.)

Eventually, of course, most people realized that he was just doing that Steve Jobs thing again: being ahead

of his time.

Eventually, in fact, society adopted a cycle of reaction to Apple that became so predictable, it could have been a “Saturday Night Live” skit.

Phase 1: Steve Jobs takes the stage to introduce a new product.

Phase 2: The tech bloggers savage it. (“The iPad has no mouse, no keyboard, no GPS, no USB, no card slot, no camera, no Flash!? It’s dead on arrival!”)

Phase 3: The product comes out, the public goes nuts for it, the naysayers seem to disappear into the earth.

Phase 4: The rest of the industry leaps into high gear trying to do just what Apple did.

And so yes, there are other geniuses. There are other brilliant marketers, designers and business executives. Maybe, once or twice in a million, those skills even coincide in the same person.

But will that person also have the vision? The name “Steve Jobs” may appear on 300 patents, but his gift wasn’t invention. It was seeing the promise in some early, clunky technology — and polishing it, refining it and simplifying it until it becomes a standard component. Like the mouse, menus, windows, the CD-ROM or Wi-Fi.

Even at Apple, is there anyone with the imagination to pluck brilliant, previously unthinkable visions out of the air — and the conviction to see them through with monomaniacal attention to detail?

Suppose there were. Suppose, by some miracle, that some kid in a garage somewhere at this moment possesses the marketing, invention, business and design skills of a Steve Jobs. What are the odds that that same person will be comfortable enough — or maybe uncomfortable enough — to swim upstream, against the currents of social, economic and technological norms, all in pursuit of an unshakable vision?

Zero. The odds are zero.

Mr. Jobs is gone. Everyone who knew him feels that sorrow. But the ripples of that loss will widen in the days, weeks and years to come: to the people in the industries he changed. To his hundreds of millions of customers. And to the billions of people touched more indirectly by the greater changes that Steve Jobs brought about, even if they’re unaware of it.

In 2005, Steve Jobs gave the commencement address to the graduating students at Stanford. He told them the secret that defined him in every action, every decision, every creation of his tragically unfinished life:

“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.”

### **Possible Response Options:**

1. What do you hope that you’ll be remembered for after you die? How does that line up with the way you’re currently living your life?
2. What are your core beliefs? What would you say is your personal credo? How does that credo guide you in life?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is part of the prompt taken from Holly Epstein Ojalvo’s “What Is Your Personal Credo?”, found at <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/07/what-is-your-personal-credo/>

**The Personal Credo<sup>2</sup> of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the future Pope Francis,** as found in *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* by Austen Ivereigh

I want to believe in God the Father who loves me like a child, and in Jesus The Lord who infused my life with. His Spirit, to make me smile and so carry me to the eternal Kingdom of life.

I believe in the Church.

I believe in my life story, which was pierced by God's loving gaze, who on that spring day of 21st September, came out to meet me to invite me to follow him.

I believe in my pain, made fruitless by the egotism in which I take refuge.

I believe in the stinginess of my soul, which seeks to take without giving.

I believe in the goodness of others, and that I must love them without fear and without betraying them, never seeking my own security.

I believe in the religious life.

I believe I wish to love a lot.

I believe in the burning death of each day, from which I flee but which smiles at me, inviting me to accept her.

I believe in God's patience, as good and as welcoming as a summer's night.

I believe that Dad is with the Lord in heaven.

I believe that Fr. Duterte is there, too, interceding for my priesthood.

I believe in Mary, my Mother, who, loves me and will never leave me alone.

And I believe in the surprise of each day, in which will be manifest love, strength, betrayal, and sin, which will be always with me until that definitive encounter with that marvelous face which I do not know, which always escapes me, but which I wish to know and love. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> The word credo literally means "I believe" in Latin.

## **Be Cool to the Pizza Dude**, by Sarah Adams, as heard on the *This I Believe* podcast 12/28/15

If I have one operating philosophy about life it is this: “Be cool to the pizza delivery dude; it’s good luck.” Four principles guide the pizza dude philosophy.

Principle 1: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in humility and forgiveness. I let him cut me off in traffic, let him safely hit the exit ramp from the left lane, let him forget to use his blinker without extending any of my **digits** out the window or towards my horn because there should be one moment in my harried life when a car may encroach or cut off or pass and I let it go. Sometimes when I have become so certain of my ownership of my lane, daring anyone to challenge me, the pizza dude speeds by me in his rusted Chevette. His pizza light atop his car glowing like a beacon reminds me to check myself as I flow through the world. After all, the dude is delivering pizza to young and old, families and singletons, gays and straights, blacks, whites and browns, rich and poor, vegetarians and meat lovers alike. As he journeys, I give safe passage, practice restraint, show courtesy, and contain my anger.

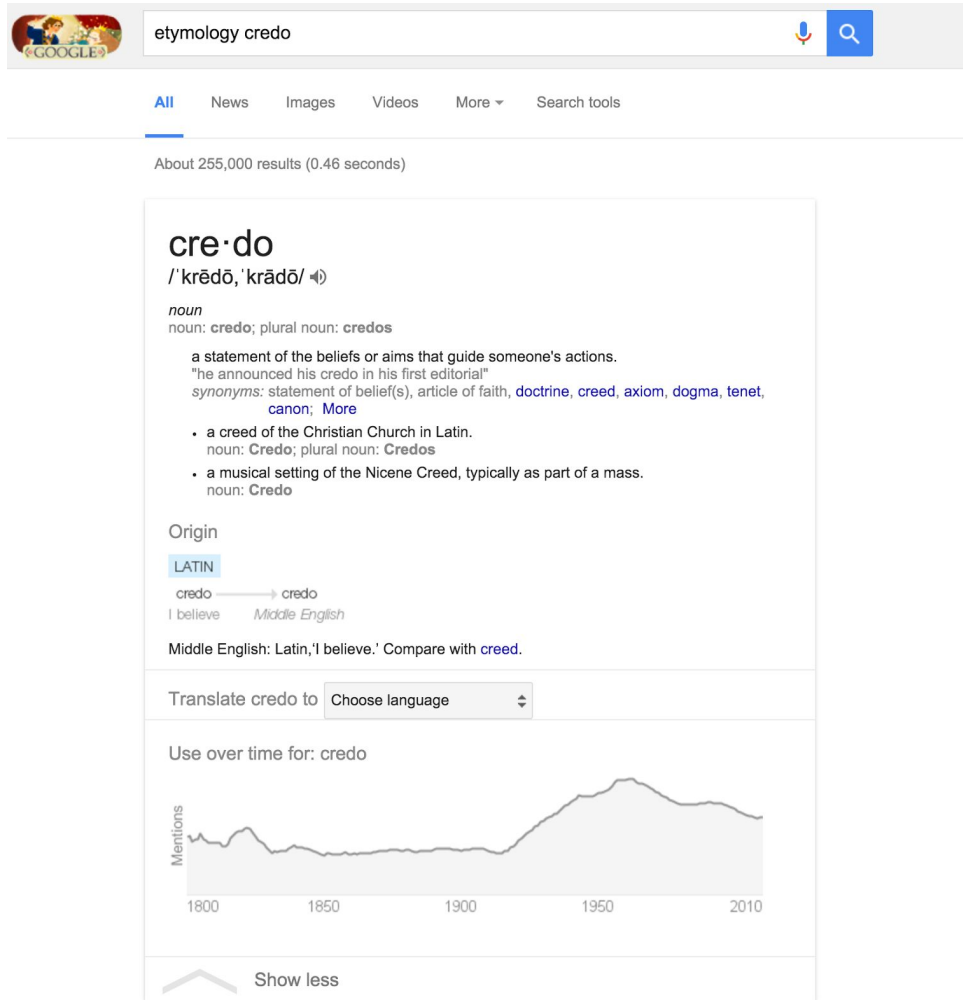
Principle 2: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in empathy. Let’s face it: We’ve all taken jobs just to have a job because some money is better than none. I’ve held an assortment of these jobs and was grateful for the paycheck that meant I didn’t have to share my Cheerios with my cats. In the big pizza wheel of life, sometimes you’re the hot bubbly cheese and sometimes you’re the burnt crust. It’s good to remember the fickle spinning of that wheel.

Principle 3: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in honor and it reminds me to honor honest work. Let me tell you something about these dudes: They never took over a company and, as CEO, artificially inflated the value of the stock and cashed out their own shares, bringing the company to the brink of bankruptcy, resulting in 20,000 people losing their jobs while the CEO builds a home the size of a luxury hotel. Rather, the dudes sleep the sleep of the just.

Principle 4: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in equality. My measurement as a human being, my worth, is the pride I take in performing my job — any job — and the respect with which I treat others. I am the equal of the world not because of the car I drive, the size of the TV I own, the weight I can bench press, or the calculus equations I can solve. I am the equal to all I meet because of the kindness in my heart. And it all starts here — with the pizza delivery dude.

Tip him well, friends and brethren, for that which you bestow freely and willingly will bring you all the happy luck that a grateful universe knows how to return.

# What's the meaning of the word "credo?"<sup>3</sup>



The screenshot shows a Google search interface with the search term "etymology credo" in the search bar. Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for "All", "News", "Images", "Videos", "More", and "Search tools". The search results indicate "About 255,000 results (0.46 seconds)".

The main result is for the word "cre-do", with the phonetic transcription /'krēdō, 'krādō/. It is identified as a noun with the plural form "credos". The definition is "a statement of the beliefs or aims that guide someone's actions." An example sentence is "he announced his credo in his first editorial". Synonyms listed include "statement of belief(s)", "article of faith", "doctrine", "creed", "axiom", "dogma", "tenet", "canon", and "More".

There are two bullet points: "a creed of the Christian Church in Latin. noun: Credo; plural noun: Credos" and "a musical setting of the Nicene Creed, typically as part of a mass. noun: Credo".

The "Origin" section is labeled "LATIN" and shows a flow from "credo" (Latin) to "credo" (Middle English) to "I believe" (Middle English). A note states: "Middle English: Latin, 'I believe.' Compare with *creed*."

Below the origin is a "Translate credo to" section with a dropdown menu set to "Choose language".

The "Use over time for: credo" section features a line graph showing "Mentions" from 1800 to 2010. The graph shows a relatively flat line until around 1900, followed by a significant rise peaking around 1950, and then a gradual decline.

At the bottom of the result box is a "Show less" button.

<sup>3</sup> Google search conducted on 1/12/16. Note that the word "etymology" (part of the search term) means "the study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history. Etymology searches are a great "hidden secret" of Google.

## An Excerpt from *Essentialism*, by Greg McKeown

[In the early 1980s], Johnson & Johnson owned 37 percent of the market and Tylenol was their most profitable product. Then reports surfaced that seven people had died after taking Tylenol. It was later discovered that these bottles had been tampered with. How should Johnson & Johnson respond?

The question was a complicated one. Was their primary responsibility to ensure the safety of their customers by immediately pulling all Tylenol products off drugstore shelves? Was their first priority to do PR damage control to keep shareholders from dumping their stock? Or was it their duty to console and compensate the families of the victims first and foremost?

Fortunately for them they had the Credo: a statement written in 1943 by then chairman Robert Wood Johnson that is literally carved in stone [see Figure 1] at Johnson & Johnson headquarters. Unlike most corporate mission statements, the Credo actually lists the constituents of the company in priority order. Customers are first; shareholders are last.

As a result, Johnson & Johnson swiftly decided to recall all Tylenol, even though it would have a massive impact (to the tune of \$100 million, according to some reports) on their bottom line. The safety of customers or \$100 million? Not an easy decision. But the Credo enabled a clearer sense of what was most essential. It enabled the tough trade-off to be made.

## Credo statements from real ninth grade students<sup>4</sup>

I believe that...

- The small things mean more than the big things. -SB
- The best kinds of moments in life are moments where you are with all people you love and are surrounded by positivity. -ND
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- Life gets harder but it also gets better. -MH
- Silence is not weakness. -SB
- Only the weak feel the need to belittle, hurt, and shut down other people. -DP
- Everyone can do hard things. -MH
- My greatest weaknesses are sin and fear, and my greatest strengths are faith and love. -PF
- Life is a test you must take and eventually teach. -AV
- Traveling makes my life make sense. -NJ
- Stress is something you can overcome. -DC
- The best moments in life are when you forget to wonder who you are. -BVDC
- If you refuse your own intelligence, others will too. -DP
- I will someday find my voice, find the story I need to tell. -BVDC
- The best moments are the ones I make happen. -DB
- The highest thing a person can achieve is being a mini-superhero, with love and compassion. -AT
- My future is bright and full of the right people. -CB
- Everyone deserves respect. -JK
- I can become the best mechanic ever. -CT
- The point of living is to find what God put you on the Earth to do. -JC
- You will become what you surround yourself with. -PB
- There is no highest point of achievement. You can always do better, go higher. -SH
- I can achieve greatness. -JK
- Money should not be at the top of your priorities list. -AVG
- My greatest fear won't be realized, and I won't be forgotten. -BR
- The best way to live is to be yourself and watch a lot of Youtube videos. -DM
- I will impact my younger brother's life the way only a sister could -MI
- I believe in being a gentleman. -ZK
- I don't believe hard things are impossible. -TVSA
- My greatest strength is my kindness. -AM
- Someone should be kind at least once a day. -AH
- Everyone can relate to you in some way and because of that you need to be kind to them. -AM
- I will finally enjoy something about Algebra. -EH
- Music is a teacher in life. -DC
- All hate will be reciprocated. You can't dish out hate without getting it right back. -SM
- Everything has a message: every word, every lyric. -DC
- To hold on to the thin light rather than curse the darkness. -DC
- Others are before me, all other people deserve more respect than me. If I know them or not, I will show respect and love for them. If others are ganging up on them I will be there, if the only one so be it, to stand up for them. Everyone needs respect, and I will be the one to give it. -DaC
- The goal in life is to have a figurative version of a barnful of yams. -TE

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<sup>4</sup> This is a list of excerpts; all student credos were longer than the samples shown on this page.