

# Dreams of a philanthropist

Bill Gates, the co-founder of Microsoft, announces that he is stepping down to focus on his charitable work.

1 Check you know the meaning of the following words. Create sentences using each word.

philanthropy philanthropist charity charitable  
donate donation foundation wealth

2 Read the paragraph headings (a–d). Then match them to the correct paragraphs (1–4) in the article below.

- (a) Microsoft  (b) Private wealth  (c) Charity Foundation  (d) Gate’s announcement

## Bill Gates’ announcement

[1] Bill Gates has announced that he plans to withdraw from day-to-day duties at *Microsoft*. He has decided to focus instead on running his charitable foundation. He intends to transfer his Microsoft responsibilities to his team of senior executives over a two year period. Gates, who is often called the richest man in the world, has an estimated wealth of about \$50 billion. He is well-known for donating large amounts of money to various charities and scientific research. Gates is credited for changing attitudes to philanthropy, which is now considered a norm for the very rich.

[2] With his wife, he started the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000. The foundation aims to reduce inequality and extreme poverty, improve health-care in developing countries, and increase access to technology. Working out ways to improve education or to eradicate diseases such as malaria and AIDS is a long way from the corporate boardroom.

[3] Gates was the co-founder of *Microsoft* in 1975. He intends to remain the company’s biggest shareholder. In 2000, Steve Ballmer took over as CEO, and it is Ballmer who will be responsible for the company’s day-to-day operations and overall business strategy. Those within the company believe it has a strong leadership team, which aims to increase its investment in research and development. However, times are not easy at *Microsoft*, with the delay of Vista, the new version of its Windows operating system. On the web, it is struggling to compete with Internet giants *Yahoo!* and *Google*.

[4] Gates himself has a huge house, gardens, an art collection, a yacht and even a private island. Other billionaires have used their wealth in more ostentatious ways, buying multiple homes or owning sports teams. Not so Gates. The co-founder of *Microsoft* has a different dream. He helped to change the world once by making personal computing easy and affordable for millions of people in the industrialised world; he now wants to do it again by helping millions in the developing world onto the road away from poverty.

3 Read the whole article. What are Bill Gates’ plans for the future?

4 Complete the vowels in the following words and expressions from the article. Create sentences about your own company using some of these expressions.

(a) r sp ns bl f r	(b) sh r h ld r	(c) b s n ss str t gy	(d) f nd r	(e) d y-t -d y p r t ns
(f) r s rch nd d v l pm nt	(g) t c mp t w th	(h) l d rsh p t m	(i) nv stm nt	(j) b rdr m

4 Work in small groups. Discuss the following questions. Be ready to report your ideas to the class.

- (a) Does your own company support a charity in any way? If so, how?
- (b) If you were a CEO with the opportunity to donate money to a charitable cause, which would you choose? Justify your choice: *reducing poverty / medicine / education / technology / scientific research / other*
- (c) If you had unlimited wealth, what would you do with it at a personal level?