

# Inauguration Day Bingo 2009

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## About this Lesson

Inauguration Day Bingo is an activity designed to engage students in the Presidential Inauguration through critical listening and analysis of political rhetoric. The lesson begins prior to the ceremony with the teacher providing historical background about inaugurations and how specific traditions have taken root. The lesson will continue after the ceremony when students will create bingo cards with key words they expect to hear in the President's inaugural address, based on their study of the themes likely to emerge during the speech. Students will play bingo using their cards as a listening guide while they watch the inauguration in class or at home. The key words heard in the inaugural will serve as a discussion starter as well as a tool to analyze the tone the President has set for his forthcoming administration and its priorities.

## Background

**Grade(s) Level**

7-12

**Classroom Time:**

Two full 50 minute class periods or one full extended block (divided in half over two meetings)

**Materials:**

United States  
Constitution:

<http://www.constitutioncenter.org/constitution>

Inaugural History and Firsts:

<http://inaugural.senate.gov/history/actsandfirsts/index.cfm>

Inauguration footage and photographs:

<http://www.archives.gov/>

or

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/pihtml/>

**Constitution Connections**

Article II Section I

Amendment XX Section I

According to Article II, Section I of the United States Constitution, before taking charge of the office, the President-Elect must swear an oath to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." The constraints, however, end there. The remaining details have been left up to the Presidents and their administrations and the festivities surrounding these historic events have evolved over the years.

On April 30, 1789 in New York City, the temporary seat of government, after extensive delays due to inclement weather, George Washington took the oath as the first president of the United States. The ceremony was presided over by Robert R. Livingston, the Chancellor of New York, on a balcony of Federal Hall, above a crowd assembled in the streets to witness the culminating event in the birth of a nation.

Since that historic day, each president taking the oath of office has added his own personal element to the ceremony which reflected his lifestyle and the times in which he lived. For example, in 1921, Warren G. Harding was the first president to ride to and from his inauguration in an automobile; FDR was the first president to attend morning worship the day of his ceremony, a tradition of every president succeeding him. JFK was the first to include a poet in his ceremony, and Bill Clinton was the first to have his inauguration broadcast over the internet.

The presidential inauguration ceremony provides the public with a unique first glimpse into an administration and its style. It sets the tone for an administration, and is a statement regarding the next four years left to the public to interpret as they see fit.

## Objectives

Students will:

- Understand the Constitutional requirement for the Oath of Office
- Evaluate the choices the President makes in his inauguration
- Make informed predictions about the President's priorities based on his address

## Pennsylvania Standards

### Civics and Government

5.1.12.E Evaluate the principles and ideals that shape the United States and compare them to documents of government.

5.1.12.M Evaluate and analyze the importance of significant political speeches and writings in civic life.

5.2.12.B Evaluate citizens' participation in government and civic life.

5.3.12.J Evaluate the role of media in political life in the United States and explain the role of the media in setting the public agenda.

### History

8.1.12.A Evaluate chronological thinking.

8.1.12.B Synthesize and evaluate historical sources.

8.1.12.C Evaluate historical interpretation of events.

## Activity

### Class session before the Inauguration:

1. Warm Up: Write the following prompt on the board, allowing students five minutes to free write in response:

“Write down everything you know about presidential inaugurations, including, in your opinion, their purpose, any memories you may have of one you have seen, or information you have heard about the upcoming inauguration of President-Elect Barack Obama.”

Ask students to share what they have written and lead a short discussion.

2. Take this time to then share with students the actual history of inaugurations.
  - Examine Article II Section I of the Constitution and what it specifically requires of the President.
  - If the current traditions and requirements are not in this section of the Constitution, where have they come from?
  - The progression of inaugural traditions and examples:
    1. **Washington:** First Inauguration, precedents set include the phrase, "So help me God," and kissing the Bible after taking the oath.
    2. **Lincoln:** Cavalry escort to the Capitol was heavily armed, providing unprecedented protection for the President-elect. March 4, 1865 [Abraham Lincoln](#) African Americans participated in the [Inaugural parade](#) for the first time.
    3. **FDR:** He and Eleanor begin tradition of [morning worship service](#) by attending St. John's Church. January 20, 1937 [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) First President Inaugurated on January 20th, a change made by the 20th Amendment to the Constitution; first time the [Vice President was Inaugurated](#) outdoors on the same platform with the President. January 20, 1945 [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) First and only President sworn in for a fourth term; had simple Inaugural ceremony at the White House.
    4. **Reagan:** January 20th fell on Sunday, so Reagan was privately sworn in that day at the White House; public Inauguration on January 21st took place in the Capitol Rotunda, due to freezing weather; coldest Inauguration day on record, with a noon temperature of 7°F.
  - Show students actual footage or photographs of the inaugurations you choose to explore in detail.
3. Instruct students that now that they know a little bit more about inaugurations , they are going to synthesize this new knowledge with what they learned following the Presidential Election and predict what President-Elect Obama will say during his inaugural address to the nation.

- Divide students into mixed-ability groups of four or five and give each student an *Inauguration Day Bingo Card*.
  - Instruct students to deliberate as a group and come up with 24 key words that they think President Obama will say during his address. Provide them with examples such as hope, or change—two words on which his entire campaign was based.
  - Instruct students that they will then watch the Inauguration, keeping track of their group's success in predicting what the President would say by marking off the words as they hear them on their *Inauguration Day Bingo Card*.
4. Provide students with information on when and where the address will be available to view should it not be broadcast during the class time in which they meet.

\*2009 Presidential Inauguration will be broadcast on all major networks and cable news channels on Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 12pm Eastern time as well as on the web.

### Class Time after Presidential Inauguration

1. After the students have watched the inauguration, allow them to reconvene with their groups and compare results on their *Inauguration Day Bingo Cards* to ensure that all group members have marked off the same squares.
2. Ask the first group to select a representative to read all of the words on their bingo cards that President-Elect Obama actually said during his speech, while another member of that group writes those words on the board.
3. The remaining groups should be marking any words in common with this group *off* of their cards, and be ready to only read any different words they may have on their cards when it comes their turn.
4. Continue this process until all groups have shared their unique words from their cards, and there is a comprehensive list of words on the board from all groups that President-Elect Obama said during his speech.
5. Ask the students to return to their normal seating to write down their general feelings on the inauguration. Did they enjoy it? Was it what they expected? (They may refer to their original warm up writing to compare what they knew before the lesson to what they think now.) What sort of energy or tone do they feel was set by the festivities?
6. Briefly discuss what students have written by allowing some students to share.
7. Ask students to then return to the list on the board, and take a comprehensive look at this list, and to use the words on that list to collaboratively analyze and predict what President-Obama's priorities will be during his presidency. Create a list of 5-10 of these priorities as agreed upon by the entire class.
8. Encourage students to support their opinions with examples from the address and information gathered in their group discussions.
9. Once the students have come to a consensus as to the 5-10 priorities for the list, have students note them on a large sheet of paper and hang it in the classroom for the remainder of the school year so they may constantly compare their predictions with what is actually taking place in current politics as the year progresses.

### Alternative Procedures

*If the students are unable to watch the address in class, they will be able to access it online on such sites as youtube.com, cnn.com, or other similar websites. You may also complete the activity by having students read a transcript of the address after it has aired.*

## Assessment-Options

1. Each student must write a 10-15 line poem summarizing the events of the inauguration, their opinion on it, and their predictions for the next four years based on what they saw and heard during the address and festivities.
2. Each student must write their own version of the inaugural address including the issues that Barack Obama addressed during his campaign that they would have liked to have seen mentioned in his inaugural address, but did not.
3. Each student must submit an original plan for inauguration activities. If they were planning Barack's day. For example, would Barack still go to morning service? Whom would they ask to participate, in what order. Students must provide explanation as to why their choices are relevant and significant to Obama's platform.

# 2009 Inauguration Day Bingo

**Directions:**

1. Watch the Inaugural Address.
2. Listen carefully to President-Elect Obama's speech.
3. When he says one of the key words you and your group have placed on your card, mark it.
4. When you have marked off all of the words in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, declare bingo! The Free Space counts as a marked off square in your line. Continue playing until the end of the speech to get as many bingos as possible.

		<b>FREE SPACE</b>		