



**NSDAR Educational Resources Committee**  
"Executive Rhetoric and the American Presidency"  
Lesson Plan

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**State:** Tennessee

**Topic:** American History

**Grade Level:** 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Time Allocation:** 2 hours (with possible extension)

- 1. Identify the standards to be addressed:** Advanced Placement Exams and the SAT require students to read, analyze, interpret and synthesis knowledge gained from primary source documents. In addition, state standards mandate the use of primary source documents as a necessary instructional tool. Two specific standards are readily addressed by this lesson module:

**SSP.02** - Critically examine a primary of secondary source in order to: Extract and paraphrase significant ideas. Discern differences between evidence and assertion. Draw inferences and conclusions. Recognize author's purpose, point of view, and potential bias. Assess the strengths and limitations of arguments.

**SSP 03** - Synthesize data from a variety of sources in order to: Establish accuracy and validity by comparing sources to each other. Recognize disparities among multiple accounts. Frame appropriate questions for further investigation.

**Links for Instruction:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhtuMrMVJDk>: This is FDR's "A Day that will Live in Infamy" speech.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>: This site contains the full text of FDR's speech.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsSq6tY1F8>: This is Truman's July 1950 Korean address.

Boller, Paul F. Jr., and Ronald Story. *A More Perfect Union: Documents in U.S. History, Vol. 2*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.: This text contains Truman's July 1950 Korean address.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEC1C4p0k3E>: This link is to JFK's 1961 inaugural address.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8032>: This is the full text of JFK's 1961 inaugural address from The American Presidency Project.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4484644/lbjs-peace-without-conquest>: This link is for LBJ's "Why Vietnam?" speech from C-Span.

<http://web.utk.edu/~mfitzge1/docs/374/SOV1965.pdf>: This is an excerpt from LBJ's "Why Vietnam?" speech from a University of Tennessee faculty page.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K9mG7Eluyo>: This link is for G. W. Bush's September 11, 2001, evening address on YouTube.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911addresstothenation.htm>: This is the full text of Bush's address from American Rhetoric.

- 2. Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:** This module was developed and utilized for an eleventh- to twelfth-grade advanced placement United States Government and Politics class to address the AP syllabus topic "Presidential Powers." However, the module could easily be adapted or used in a standard or AP United States history class, U.S. foreign policy class, or twentieth-century U.S. history class. Current high school juniors and seniors were born post-2000 and have little or no memory of a political world without social media postings on Twitter and Instagram. The nature of today's social media and the immediacy of the varied news media's responses, analyses, and evaluations are vastly different from the past media coverage provided by newspapers, other print media, radio, and early television. Although political speeches today are still carefully scripted, twenty-first-century presidents and other elected officials are often asked to comment on issues in an unscripted and media-controlled forum and, at times (see the final example in the module), provide instant commentary in ways that are different than the past. Still, in some ways, presidential use of rhetoric as a political tool has not changed.

This module is designed to introduce students to four (and an optional fifth) important historical speeches and provide a method for analyzing word choice and the subtle messages in each speech. As Johann Wolfgang von Goethe so ably noted, "If you wish to know the mind of a man, listen to his words." Even with rapid media coverage today, presidential use of rhetoric to achieve political objectives remains highly important and worthy of attention in civic and history classrooms. Students will:

Learn the classical meaning of the term "rhetoric" through application and analysis of select presidential addresses.

Identify the key statements in the following historical speeches: Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Infamy Speech," Harry S. Truman's Speech on Korea, John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, Lyndon B. Johnson's "Why Vietnam?" speech, and George W. Bush's Evening Address, September 11, 2001.

Analyze each speech to determine specific phrases that conveyed to U.S. citizens and to the "enemy" or potential aggressor the proposed course of action, and the fundamental principles governing the U.S. response in the particular situations that constituted the causes of the presidential addresses.

Discuss and critique why specific phrases were carefully constructed for each speech and how a substantially different meaning might have been conveyed through different word usage.

- 3. Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:** All materials are either provided as a part of the Instructional module or accessible FREE via the Internet. Web links are included within the instructional guidelines.
- 4. Introduction of the topic:** The introduction of the topic, Executive Rhetoric', is included as a part of the Instructional Module provided below. However, the significance of word and phrase choice when addressing individual or national crisis issues is evident as we reflect on our personal communications and as we analyze contemporary speeches or written initiatives from members of Congress or the Executive Branch. For those teachers who include an analysis of significant Court decisions in their instructional syllabus, the choice of language is vital for understanding the underlying Constitutional principles.

## 5. Procedure for instruction:

Editor's note: This activity is recommended before both instructors who teach a self-contained version of the module and teachers who integrate specific speeches and accompanying rhetorical analyses into chronologically organized history classes utilize any presidential primary source materials.

Immediately after entering class, provide students with a definition of the term "rhetoric": The art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the exploitation of figures of speech and other compositional techniques (from Oxford Living Dictionaries).

Then, ask students to respond to the following situation: Imagine that you have been elected president.

What is your first priority in responding to current challenges posed against the United States? Articulate that priority in no more than two sentences.

Subsequent discussion questions:

How did you select your first priority?

Did you choose your priority based on a perceived threat against the United States? Internal or external threat?

What words or phrases did you select in an attempt to communicate clearly that priority?

Did you attempt to use an emotionally based connection? Purely reason? A combination?

As you developed your statement, did you reflect on speeches you have studied or have personally observed?

Did you develop your statement to be delivered for television or print media? Did you consider both options? How might your choice of words have been different for these two distinctly different forms of communication with the general public?

Students will be grouped into small discussion forums and asked to discuss the questions. After five to eight minutes, a spokesperson from each group will share the major points of discussion.

The instructor will then show a short scene from the movie Independence Day ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t1IK\\_9apWs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t1IK_9apWs)). In the two-minute, forty-one-second-long scene, actor Bill Pullman as the U.S. president reacts to an alien threat by addressing the assembled military and civilians charged with thwarting an immediate threat to international security and survival.

Bill Pullman as fictional U.S. President Thomas J. Whitmore in the film Independence Day delivering a speech to assembled troops before a battle. Source: Technology Tell at <https://tinyurl.com/y7svxv6o>.

Ask students to identify the verbal and nonverbal components of the speech and the response garnered from the audience.

How did the president "connect" himself with the assembled multitude?

What specific words or phrases were used to create a desired outcome/response from the audience?

How did tone and nonverbal elements impact the desired outcome?

Would the speech have had the same effect had it been printed and distributed instead of delivered orally?

Students will then be divided into four (or five) groups, with each group assigned (if the complete module is taught in consecutive class periods) an American presidential speech to analyze, through first reading, and then (as a homework assignment) reading, viewing, and listening again. Instructors should first provide brief contextual background information for all assigned speeches.

Aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. Roosevelt's "Infamy Speech" occurred one day later. Source: History.com at <https://tinyurl.com/ybw6rvd7>.

If five or six speeches are introduced in one class period, the class should end with each student having the opportunity to have read the speech and briefly discussed it with other small group members.

Instructors should have individual group members watch and listen to the specific speech they are assigned and analyze the speech using the "Speech Analysis Guide" (attachment 6), responding to the questions in the guide.

Day two: Words and Policy—Connecting the Presidency with the People

Students will reassemble in groups upon entering the classroom. All students will be provided with online access to all four or five speeches.

FDR: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhtuMrMVJDk> (full speech)

Truman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsSq6tY1F8> (excerpt of speech)

JFK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEC1C4p0k3E> (full speech)

LBJ: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4484644/lbjs-peace-without-conquest> (excerpt of speech)

G.W. Bush: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K9mG7Eluyo> (full speech)

After seven or eight minutes of group discussions for members to reach consensus or near-consensus, a spokesperson for each group (different from day one) will summarize the most significant phrases in each assigned speech.

Then, each group will provide either a video or audio excerpt of the key segment of the speech from a website such as [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) or <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/>.

Groups should limit the time for each critical speech excerpt to three to five minutes.

After a discussion of key questions focused on the specific president's desired outcome, the class will evaluate the effectiveness of the speech (on a scale of 1–10).

President John F. Kennedy delivering his inaugural address on January 20, 1961. Source: YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEC1C4p0k3E>.

In the final activity, students will be asked to respond to each of these two questions with a well-written paragraph of six–eight sentences:

Using at least two examples from the U.S. historical record, how important is the use of rhetoric in conveying the goals and objectives of the modern American presidency?

How has the immediacy of twenty-first-century media and/or social media impacted the importance of presidential communication of goals and objectives?

The instructor will then ask each student to create a Twitter feed identifying the takeaway knowledge from this assignment. Tweets will be written and displayed on a board for analysis.

Attachment 1: President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Infamy Speech," December 8, 1941

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhtuMrMVJDk>

Clip Length: 7 minutes, 42 seconds

Video clip and transcript are the full speech.

*Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:*

*Yesterday, December 7th, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.*

*The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.*

*Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in the American island of Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to our Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. And while this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or of armed attack.*

*It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.*

*The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.*

*Yesterday, the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya.*

*Last night, Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.*

*Last night, Japanese forces attacked Guam.*

*Last night, Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.*

*Last night, the Japanese attacked Wake Island.*

*And this morning, the Japanese attacked Midway Island.*

*Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.*

*As Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. But always will our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught against us.*

*No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.*

*I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.*

*Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.*

*With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God.*

*I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7th, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese empire.*

Source: American Rhetoric at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm/>.

Attachment 2: President Harry S. Truman's Speech on Korea, July 19, 1950

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsSqj6tY1F8>

Clip Length: 5 minutes, 7 seconds

Video clip and transcript are excerpts from full speech.

*At noon today I sent a message to the Congress about the situation in Korea. I want to talk to you tonight about that situation, and about what it means to the security of the United States and to our hopes for peace in the world.*

*Korea is a small country, thousands of miles away, but what is happening there is important to every American.*

*On Sunday, June 25th, Communist forces attacked the Republic of Korea.*

*This attack has made it clear, beyond all doubt, that the international Communist movement is willing to use armed invasion to conquer independent nations. An act of aggression such as this creates a very real danger to the security of all free nations.*

*The attack upon Korea was an outright breach of the peace and a violation of the Charter of the United Nations. By their actions in Korea, Communist leaders have demonstrated their contempt for the basic moral principles on which the United Nations is founded. This is a direct challenge to the efforts of the free nations to build the kind of world in which men can live in freedom and peace.*

*This challenge has been presented squarely. We must meet it squarely. . . .*

*The Communist invasion was launched in great force, with planes, tanks, and artillery. The size of the attack, and the speed with which it was followed up, make it perfectly plain that it had been plotted long in advance.*

*As soon as word of the attack was received, Secretary of State [Dean] Acheson called me at Independence, Mo., and informed me that, with my approval, he would ask for an immediate meeting of the United Nations Security Council. The Security Council met just 24 hours after the Communist invasion began.*

*One of the main reasons the Security Council was set up was to act in such cases as this—to stop outbreaks of aggression in a hurry before they develop into general conflicts. In this case the Council passed a resolution which called for the invaders of Korea to stop fighting, and to withdraw. The Council called on all members of the United Nations to help*

*carry out this resolution. The Communist invaders ignored the action of the Security Council and kept right on with their attack.*

*The Security Council then met again. It recommended that members of the United Nations help the Republic of Korea repel the attack and help restore peace and security in that area.*

*Fifty-two of the 59 countries which are members of the United Nations have given their support to the action taken by the Security Council to restore peace in Korea.*

*These actions by the United Nations and its members are of great importance. The free nations have now made it clear that lawless aggression will be met with force. The free nations have learned the fateful lesson of the 1930's. That lesson is that aggression must be met firmly. Appeasement leads only to further aggression and ultimately to war.*

*The principal effort to help the Koreans preserve their independence, and to help the United Nations restore peace, has been made by the United States. We have sent land, sea, and air forces to assist in these operations. We have done this because we know that what is at stake here is nothing less than our own national security and the peace of the world.*

*So far, two other nations—Australia and Great Britain—have sent planes to Korea; and six other nations—Australia, Canada, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and New Zealand—have made naval forces available.*

*Under the flag of the United Nations a unified command has been established for all forces of the members of the United Nations fighting in Korea. Gen. Douglas MacArthur is the commander of this combined force.*

*The prompt action of the United Nations to put down lawless aggression, and the prompt response to this action by free peoples all over the world, will stand as a landmark in mankind's long search for a rule of law among nations.*

*Only a few countries have failed to endorse the efforts of the United Nations to stop the fighting in Korea. The most important of these is the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has boycotted the meetings of the United Nations Security Council. It has refused to support the actions of the United Nations with respect to Korea.*

*The United States requested the Soviet Government, 2 days after the fighting started, to use its influence with the North Koreans to have them withdraw. The Soviet Government refused.*

*The Soviet Government has said many times that it wants peace in the world, but its attitude toward this act of aggression against the Republic of Korea is in direct contradiction of its statements.*

*For our part, we shall continue to support the United Nations action to restore peace in the world.*

*We know that it will take a hard, tough fight to halt the invasion, and to drive the Communists back. The invaders have been provided with enough equipment and supplies for a long campaign. They overwhelmed the lightly armed defense forces of the Korean Republic in the first few days and drove southward.*

*Now, however, the Korean defenders have reorganized and are making a brave fight for their liberty, and an increasing number of American troops have joined them. Our forces have fought a skillful, rearguard delaying action, pending the arrival of reinforcements. Some of these reinforcements are now arriving; others are on the way from the United States.*

*...*

*Furthermore, the fact that Communist forces have invaded Korea is a warning that there may be similar acts of aggression in other parts of the world. The free nations must be on their guard, more than ever before, against this kind of sneak attack . . . .*

*When we have worked out with other free countries an increased program for our common defense, I shall recommend to the Congress that additional funds be provided for this purpose. This is of great importance. The free nations face a worldwide threat. It must be met with a worldwide defense. The United States and other free nations can multiply their strength by joining with one another in a common effort to provide this defense. This is our best hope for peace.*

*The things we need to do to build up our military defense will require considerable adjustment in our domestic economy. We have a tremendously rich and productive economy, and it is expanding every year.*

*Our job now is to divert to defense purposes more of that tremendous productive capacity—more steel, more aluminum, more of a good many things.*

*Some of the additional production for military purposes can come from making fuller use of plants which are not operating at capacity. But many of our industries are already going full tilt, and until we can add new capacity, some of the resources we need for the national defense will have to be taken from civilian uses.*

*This requires us to take certain steps to make sure that we obtain the things we need for national defense, and at the same time guard against inflationary price rises.*

*The steps that are needed now must be taken promptly.*

*In the message which I sent to the Congress today, I described the economic measures which are required at this time.*

*First, we need laws which will insure prompt and adequate supplies for military and essential civilian use. I have therefore recommended that the Congress give the Government power to guide the flow of materials into essential uses, to restrict their use for nonessential purposes, and to prevent the accumulation of unnecessary inventories.*

*Second, we must adopt measures to prevent inflation and to keep our Government in a sound financial condition. One of the major causes of inflation is the excessive use of credit. I have recommended that the Congress authorize the Government to set limits on installment buying and to curb speculation in agricultural commodities. In the housing field, where Government credit is an important factor, I have already directed that credit restraints be applied, and I have recommended that the Congress authorize further controls.*

*As an additional safeguard against inflation, and to help finance our defense needs, it will be necessary to make substantial increases in taxes. This is a contribution to our national security that every one of us should stand ready to make. As soon as a balanced and fair tax program can be worked out, I shall lay it before the Congress. This tax program will have as a major aim the elimination of profiteering.*

*Third, we should increase the production of goods needed for national defense. We must plan to enlarge our defense production, not just for the immediate future, but for the next several years. This will be primarily a task for our businessmen and workers. However, to help obtain the necessary increases, the Government should be authorized to provide certain types of financial assistance to private industry to increase defense production.*

*Our military needs are large, and to meet them will require hard work and steady effort. I know that we can produce what we need if each of us does his part—each man, each woman, each soldier, each civilian. This is a time for all of us to pitch in and work together. . . .*

*We have the resources to meet our needs. Far more important, the American people are unified in their belief in democratic freedom. We are united in detesting Communist slavery.*

*We know that the cost of freedom is high. But we are determined to preserve our freedom-no matter what the cost.*

*I know that our people are willing to do their part to support our soldiers and sailors and airmen who are fighting in Korea. I know that our fighting men can count on each and every one of you.*

*Our country stands before the world as an example of how free men, under God, can build a community of neighbors, working together for the good of all.*

*That is the goal we seek not only for ourselves, but for all people. We believe that freedom and peace are essential if men are to live as our Creator intended us to live. It is this faith that has guided us in the past, and it is this faith that will fortify us in the stern days ahead.*

Source: Paul F. Boller Jr., and Ronald Story, *A More Perfect Union: Documents in U.S. History*, Vol. 2, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984).

Attachment 3: President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEC1C4p0k3E>

Clip Length: 15 minutes, 36 seconds

Video clip and transcript are the full speech.

*Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, fellow citizens:*

*We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom--symbolizing an end as well as a beginning--signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago.*

*The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe--the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.*

*We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans--born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.*

*Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.*

*This much we pledge--and more.*

*To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United, there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided, there is little we can do--for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.*

*To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.*

*To those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.*

*To our sister republics south of our border, we offer a special pledge--to convert our good words into good deeds--in a new alliance for progress--to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this Hemisphere intends to remain the master of its own house.*

*To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support--to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak--and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.*

*Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.*

*We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.*

*But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.*

*So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.*

*Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.*

*Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.*

*Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths and encourage the arts and commerce.*

*Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens . . . (and) let the oppressed go free."*

*And if a beach-head of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion, let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved.*

*All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.*

*In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.*

*Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle, though embattled we are--but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.*

*Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?*

*In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility--I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it--and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.*

*And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.*

*My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.*

*Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.*

Editor's note: The president spoke at 12:52 p.m. from a platform erected at the east front of the Capitol. Immediately before the address, the oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Earl Warren.

The president's opening words "Reverend Clergy" referred to His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing, archbishop of Boston; His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, head of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America; the Reverend Dr. John Barclay, pastor of the Central Christian Church, Austin, Texas; and Rabbi Dr. Nelson Glueck, president of the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Source: The American Presidency Project at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8032>.

Attachment 4: President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Why Vietnam?" speech, April 7, 1965

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4484644/lbjs-peace-without-conquest>

Clip Length: 10 minutes, 23 seconds

Video clip and transcript are excerpts from full speech.

*. . . Over this war [Vietnam], and all Asia, is the deepening shadow of Communist China. The rulers in Hanoi are urged on by Peking.*

*This is a regime which has destroyed freedom in Tibet, attacked India, and been condemned by the United Nations for aggression in Korea. It is a nation which is helping the forces of violence in almost every continent. The contest in Vietnam is part of a wider pattern of aggressive purpose.*

*Why are these realities our concern? Why are we in South Vietnam?*

*We are there because we have a promise to keep. Since 1954 every American President has offered support to the people of South Vietnam. We have helped to build, and we have helped to defend. Thus, over many years, we have made a national pledge to help South Vietnam defend its independence. And I intend to keep our promise.*

*To dishonor that pledge, to abandon this small and brave nation to its enemy, and to the terror that must follow, would be an unforgivable wrong. We are also there to strengthen world order. Around the globe, from Berlin to Thailand, are people whose well-being rests, in part, on the belief that they can count on us if they are attacked. To leave Vietnam to its fate would shake the confidence of all these people in the value of American commitment, the value of America's word. The result would be increased unrest and instability, and even wider war.*

*We are also there because there are great stakes in the balance. Let no one think for a moment that retreat from Vietnam would bring an end to conflict. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another.*

*The central lesson of our time is that the appetite of aggression is never satisfied. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next.*

*We must say in Southeast Asia, as we did in Europe, in the words of the Bible: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." There are those who say that all our effort there will be futile, that China's power is such it is bound to dominate all Southeast Asia. But there is no end to that argument until all the nations of Asia are swallowed up.*

*There are those who wonder why we have a responsibility there. We have it for the same reason we have a responsibility for the defense of freedom in Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defense of freedom.*

*Our objective is the independence of South Vietnam, and its freedom from attack. We want nothing for ourselves, only that the people of South Vietnam be allowed to guide their own country in their own way. We will do everything necessary to reach that objective. And we will do only what is absolutely necessary.*

*In recent months, attacks on South Vietnam were stepped up. Thus it became necessary to increase our response and to make attacks by air.*

*This is not a change of purpose.*

*It is a change in what we believe that purpose requires.*

*We do this in order to slow down aggression.*

*We do this to increase the confidence of the brave people of South Vietnam who have bravely borne this brutal battle for so many years and with so many casualties.*

*And we do this to convince the leaders of North Vietnam, and all who seek to share their conquest, of a very simple fact: We will not be defeated.*

*We will not grow tired.*

*We will not withdraw, either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement. . . .*

*Once this is clear, then it should also be clear that the only path for reasonable men is the path of peaceful settlement.*

*Such peace demands an independent South Vietnam securely guaranteed and able to shape its own relationships to all others, free from outside interference, tied to no alliance, a military base for no other country.*

*These are the essentials of any final settlement. We will never be second in the search for such a peaceful settlement in Vietnam.*

*There may be many ways to this kind of peace: in discussion or negotiation with the governments concerned; in large groups or in small ones; in the reaffirmation of old agreements or their strengthening with new ones. We have stated this position over and over again fifty times and more, to friend and foe alike. And we remain ready, with this purpose, for unconditional discussions.*

*And until that bright and necessary day of peace we will try to keep conflict from spreading.*

*We have no desire to see thousands die in battle, Asians or Americans.*

*We have no desire to devastate that which the people of North Vietnam have built with toil and sacrifice.*

*We will use our power with restraint and with all the wisdom we can command.*

*But we will use it. . . .*

*We will always oppose the effort of one nation to conquer another nation. We will do this because our own security is at stake.*

*But there is more to it than that.*

*For our generation has a dream. It is a very old dream. But we have the power and now we have the opportunity to make it come true. For centuries, nations have struggled among each other.*

*But we dream of a world where disputes are settled by law and reason. And we will try to make it so.*

*For most of history men have hated and killed one another in battle. But we dream of an end to war. And we will try to make it so.*

*For all existence most men have lived in poverty, threatened by hunger. But we dream of a world where all are fed and charged with hope. And we will help to make it so.*

*The ordinary men and women of North Vietnam and South Vietnam—of China and India—of Russia and America—are brave people. They are filled with the same proportions of hate and fear, of love and hope.*

*Most of them want the same things for themselves and their families.*

*Most of them do not want their sons ever to die in battle, or see the homes of others destroyed. . . .*

*Every night before I turn out the lights to sleep, I ask myself this question;*

*Have I done everything that I can do to unite this country? Have I done everything I can to help unite the world, to try to bring peace and hope to all the peoples of the world? Have I done enough?*

*Ask yourself that question in your homes and in this hall tonight.*

*Have we done all we could?*

*Have we done enough? . . .*

Source: University of Tennessee at <http://web.utk.edu/~mfitzge1/docs/374/SOV1965.pdf>.

Attachment 5: President George W. Bush's Evening Address, September 11, 2001

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K9mG7Eluyo>

Clip Length: 4 minutes, 42 seconds

Video clip and transcript are the full speech

*Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes or in their offices: secretaries, business men and women, military and federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror. The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge -- huge structures collapsing have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed. Our country is strong.*

*A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining. Today, our nation saw evil -- the very worst of human nature -- and we responded with the best of America. With the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.*

*Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington D.C. to help with local rescue efforts. Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks. The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business as well.*

*The search is underway for those who were behind these evil acts. I have directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.*

*I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.*

*America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.*

*Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a Power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23:*

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for you are with me.*

*This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.*

*Thank you. Good night. And God bless America.*

Source: American Rhetoric at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911addresstothetation.htm>.

#### Attachment 6: Speech Analysis Guide

1. Identify the speech and speaker:

2. Create a quick bullet list of facts you know about this individual:

3. After having read the speech, how would you summarize the speaker's theme in no more than two sentences?

4. How does the speaker use rhetorical devices to communicate his ideas?

For example, does the speaker use a repetition of phrase to enhance his message, e.g., a time for sadness, a time for gladness, a time for reconciliation . . . ?

Does he use contrasting pairs, e.g., love and joy, today and tomorrow, past and present . . . ?

Does he repeat words or grammatical structure, e.g., we stand on the line . . . we stand on the line . . . ? Does he ask rhetorical questions, e.g., why do we do what we do?, and then answer the question?

Does he use metaphors to create images that transcend just words, e.g., "shining city on the hill," "morning in America" . . . ?

5. What do you think was the most effective rhetorical device used in the speech? Why?

6. What do you think is the most effective phrase or phrases in the speech? Why?

7. Are there elements of the speech that you find difficult to understand in a historical context?

8. How might you obtain more information about the significance of this speech?

Any final thoughts?

#### Resources

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t1IK\\_9apWs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t1IK_9apWs): This is the scene of the president's speech from the movie Independence Day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhtuMrMVJDk>: This is FDR's "A Day that will Live in Infamy" speech.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>: This site contains the full text of FDR's speech.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsSq6tY1F8>: This is Truman's July 1950 Korean address.

Boller, Paul F. Jr., and Ronald Story. *A More Perfect Union: Documents in U.S. History*, Vol. 2. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.: This text contains Truman's July 1950 Korean address.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEC1C4p0k3E>: This link is to JFK's 1961 inaugural address.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8032>: This is the full text of JFK's 1961 inaugural address from The American Presidency Project.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4484644/lbjs-peace-without-conquest>: This link is for LBJ's "Why Vietnam?" speech from C-Span.

<http://web.utk.edu/~mfitzge1/docs/374/SOV1965.pdf>: This is an excerpt from LBJ's "Why Vietnam?" speech from a University of Tennessee faculty page.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K9mG7Eluyo>: This link is for G. W. Bush's September 11, 2001, evening address on YouTube.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911addresstothetnation.htm>: This is the full text of Bush's address from American Rhetoric.

6. **Lesson closure:** A natural extension of this lesson, a written response to the module asking students to reflect on the use of rhetoric in contemporary political situations, would also create a natural environment for a discussion of individual words, class interactions, student leadership, etc.
7. **Assessment of student understanding:** While students will frequently respond to the four [or five] presidents' use of rhetoric to unite U. S. citizens, advance political ideology, etc., the final connection suggested as the lesson closure transfers knowledge regarding historical situations to current 'real world' situations encountered by students.