

## Barack Obama's inauguration speech Washington, D.C., (held on 20 January 2009)

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[...] Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath[1]. The words have been spoken during rising tides[2] of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging[3] storms.

At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because we, the people, have remained faithful to the ideals of our forbearers[4], and true to our founding documents. So it has been. So it must be with this generation of Americans.

That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some [...]. Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries[5] and threaten our planet. These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics.

Less measurable but no less profound is a sapping[6] of confidence across our land - a nagging fear that America's decline[7] is inevitable[8], and that the next generation must lower its sights[9]. [...].

As for everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The state of the economy calls for action, bold[10] and swift[11], and we will act [...]. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We will [...] wield[12] technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. We will harness[13] the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories [...]. All this we can do. All this we will do. [...].

God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

[1] *presidential oath: Antseid eines Präsidenten*

[2] *tide: a regular rise and fall in the level of the sea, caused by the pull of the moon and sun*

[3] *raging: aufziehenden*

[4] *forbearer: a person who you are descended from, especially one who lived a long time ago*

[5] *adversary: a person that sb. is opposed to and competing with in an argument or a battle*

[6][6] *to sap: to make sth./ sb. weaker; to destroy sth.*

[7] *decline: a continuous decrease in the number, value, quality etc. of sth.*

[8] *inevitable: that you cannot prevent or avoid*

[9] *to lower one's sights: kleinere Brötchen backen*

[10] *bold: brave and confident*

[11] *swift: doing sth. quickly*

[12] *to wield: to hold sth. ready to use it as a weapon or tool*

[13] *to harness: to control and use the force to produce power*

- ① **Summarize** the content of Obama's inauguration speech.  
(comprehension)
- ② **Analyse** the language and stylistic devices Obama uses to refer to the American economy and society.  
(analysis)

## Stylistic devices

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- ③ Prepare a speech. You are part of an organization.  
-about 250 words

Useful phrases (use at least 5):

Taking action:

We have to ensure..

We are prepared to, determined to..

Looking into the future:

In the short term, long term..

We are hopeful, confident that...

We should take on new roles.

Dealing with problems:

..to face, solve a problem (conflict)

..to overcome difficulties.

..to make a compromise..

..to negotiate an agreement../

Examples of rhetorical devices:

rhetorical questions, contrasts, metaphors, anaphoras, appeal to the audience (an das Publikum appellieren)

For example:

- Let Girls Learn:  
-supports and enables access to education
- Welthungerhilfe
- ConnectED:  
-enriches the education by enabling broadband and high-speed wireless connections in schools and libraries  
-support and training in using education technology tools that can improve student learning
- Oxfam