



Election of 2000: The Supreme Court and the Presidency TEACHER GUIDE

Lesson Overview

This lesson uses primary source analysis and exploration to examine the larger constitutional question of how the election of 2000 affected the relationship among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the federal government. It is designed for students currently studying U.S. history or government in the classroom and scaled to the 11th grade TEKS. Lessons can also be used with younger students with some modifications.

The lesson is designed to be completed in a single 45- to 60-minute class period.



Essential Question

How did the outcome of the election of 2000 represent the evolving relationship among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government?

Objectives

- Students will engage with primary sources to understand the changing relationship among the three branches of government.
- Students will use multimodal engagement strategies to develop their historical thinking skills.
- Students will analyze, organize, and use information from a variety of primary sources and communicate that analysis through writing and discussion.

Key Vocabulary

Students will need to have an understanding of the following terms to effectively complete the lesson:

- Electorate
- Equal protection
- Due process



TEKS

113.41.11.C; 113.41.19.B
113.44.7.A–C, E–H; 113.44.9.A,B

Lesson Procedure

Warm-Up

There are two possible components for the lesson warm-up: an election snapshot and a primary source document for the class to analyze together. Depending on your classroom needs, you may choose to complete one or both components. The content for both the snapshot and the warm-up document analysis are available as PDF documents and a teacher slide deck.

1. Using the election snapshot, briefly review the main ideas, issues, and players of the election of 2000.
 - a. Be sure to remind students that while the election was important for many reasons, the main thing that you'll be focusing on today is how the election can be seen as a way to understand the changing relationship among the branches of the federal government.
2. Using the sample primary source, review with your students how to thoroughly analyze and explore primary sources.
 - a. This lesson uses a simplified version of the [National Archives and Records Administration's Document Analysis](#) strategies.
 - b. As a group, use the warm-up exercise to review the cover image from the *New Yorker*. Remind students that it is important to use close reading skills and apply historical context that they have already learned.
 - c. After analyzing the source as a whole, answer the "Checking for Understanding" questions to ensure student comprehension.

Exploring Primary Sources

The purpose of this section is to have students explore primary sources that describe the ways in which the election of 2000 affected the relationship among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.

There are many ways that you can choose to engage with the primary sources with your students. Depending on interest, student level, and classroom goals, you may choose to engage with any or all of the provided primary sources.

Three possible engagement models are suggested here:

Write

Using the worksheets provided, have your students work individually to read and examine the documents and then write their answers to the comprehension questions.

The most important takeaway for this engagement model is determining WHO is writing/speaking and WHAT each primary source is about.

Speak

Divide students into groups and provide one primary source to each group. After reading the source on their own, students should consider the author of the source and their perspective.

The most important takeaway for this engagement model is determining HOW the author is communicating and WHY they are saying what they are saying.

Draw

Have students, working individually or in pairs, design a creative, visual representation of the main argument of one primary source. They may choose to create a Venn diagram, a flow chart, or an identity map.

The most important takeaway for this engagement model is determining WHO is writing/speaking and HOW they are getting their point across.

Discussing Primary Sources

In this section, students will discuss their observations, analysis, and conclusions gleaned from analyzing primary sources about the central issues of the election of 2000.

Lead a discussion of the issues at hand. Students will use the key ideas learned during the warm-up and their analyses of primary sources to answer questions.

1. According to the Constitution how should the federal government settle a presidential election if the outcome is uncertain?
2. Why did this remedy not come into play in the 2000 election?
3. Which branch of government settled the outcome of the election of 2000?
4. Why did this branch's decision not end the controversies surrounding the election of 2000?

Closure

If desired, use the final few minutes of the lesson to write or discuss, or assign as homework, the following prompt, which encourages students to compare the issues in the election of 2000 to contemporary election cycles:

Do you think the Electoral College and its method for determining the winner of a presidential election is a fair and equitable system? Explain.



Election of 2000: The Supreme Court and the Presidency Election Snapshot

Essential Question

How did the outcome of the election of 2000 represent the evolving relationship among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government?

Key Ideas

- The election of 2000 was one of the closest presidential elections in U.S. history, with Bush receiving 271 electoral votes, just one vote more than constitutionally required to be declared the winner.
- Whichever candidate won the popular vote in the state of Florida would win the election. Out of more than five million votes cast there, the difference, and margin of victory, between Bush and Gore was only 537 votes.
- Controversies surrounded the vote in Florida, including contested ballots and inaccurate or incomplete voter registrations. These controversies and the outcome of the election were eventually decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case *Bush v. Gore* (2000). This is the only time that the judicial branch has determined the outcome of a presidential election.

Candidates and Outcome

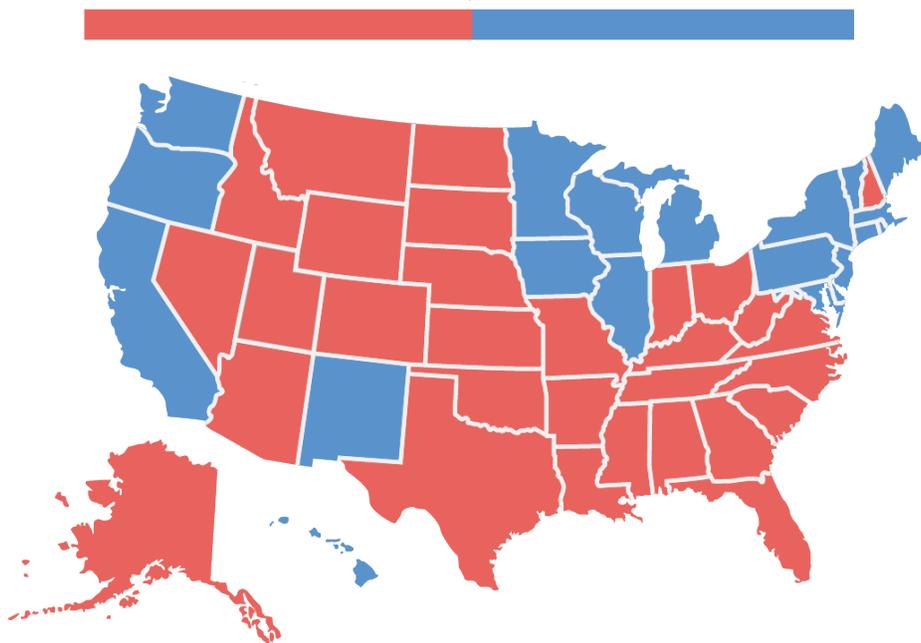
Al Gore
(Democrat)

George W. Bush
(Republican)

Ralph Nader
(Green)

Bush 271

Gore 266





Election of 2000: The Supreme Court and the Presidency Primary Sources and Questions

Warm-Up

Cover Image, *The New Yorker* [visual source], 2000
Peter de Sève

[The New Yorker](#)

Primary Sources

12th Amendment, U.S. Constitution, 1804

Passed in the wake of controversy surrounding the election of 1800, the 12th Amendment clarified how presidents would be elected in the event that one candidate was unable to secure the necessary number of electoral votes. The 12th Amendment changed a portion of the rules of presidential elections outlined in Article II of the Constitution.

[12th Amendment](#)

Republican Party Platform on the Courts and Judicial Reform [excerpt], 2000
Republican Party

Courts have the power to strike down laws passed by legislatures that they believe violate the Constitution. This power can be controversial, and those who disagree with the decision may criticize the judges as “activists,” implying that judges are going beyond the scope of the law and instead imposing their own views on how society should be ordered. The Republican Party, citing disagreement with what it called “liberal decisions” made by the Supreme Court in the 1990s, offered a platform that supported “judicial restraint” over “judicial activism.”

[The American Presidency Project](#)

Bush v. Gore, 531 U.S. 98 (2000) [excerpt], 2000
U.S. Supreme Court

In *Bush v. Gore*, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed a decision by the Florida Supreme Court related to the recount of ballots within the state. The 5–4 decision meant that George W. Bush was awarded Florida’s electoral votes and, therefore, won the election.

[U.S. Reports](#)

Presidential Concession Speech [excerpt] [video source], 2000
Al Gore

Al Gore made this concession speech the day after the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Bush v. Gore*, providing an important voice in support of the peaceful transition of power after a very contentious election cycle.

[American Rhetoric](#)

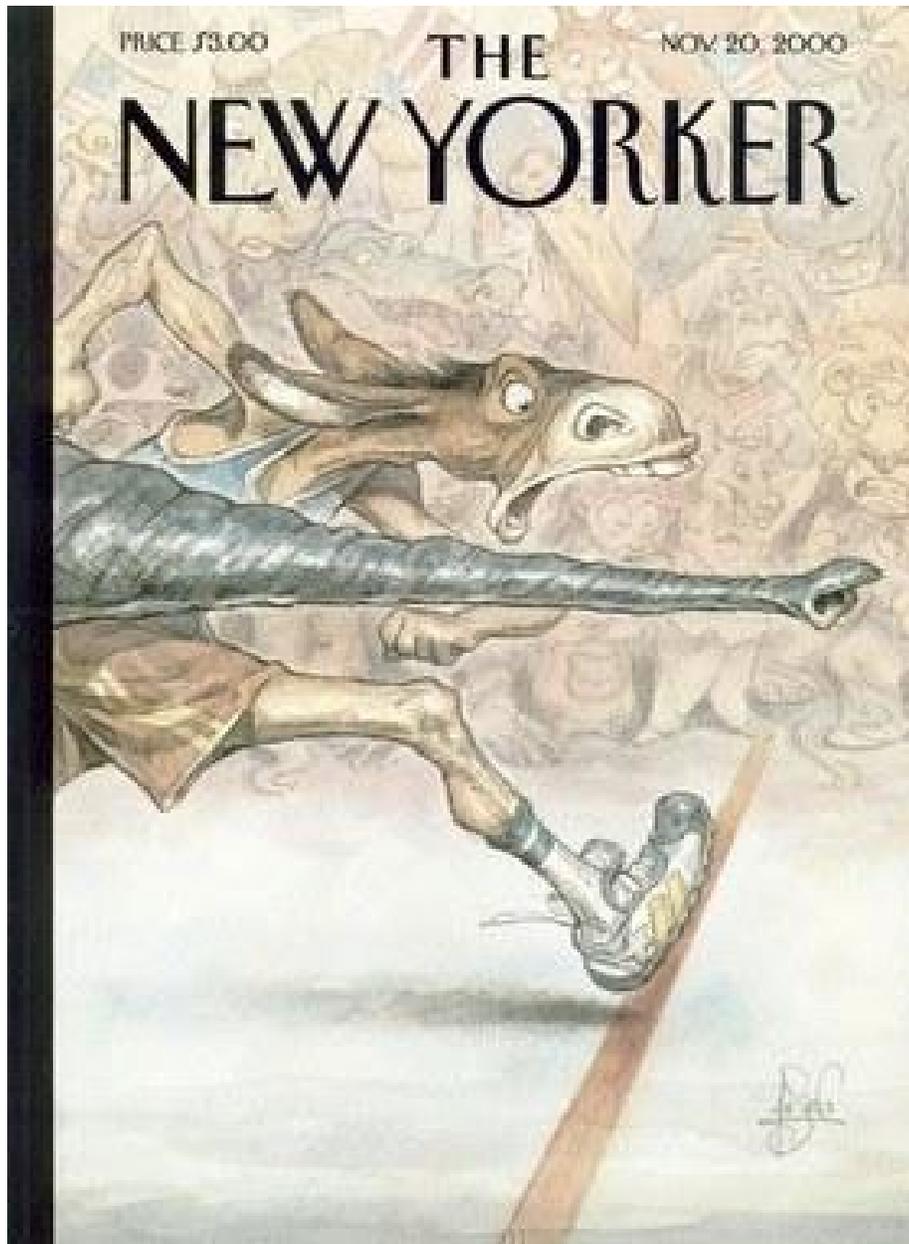
First Inaugural Address [excerpt], 2001
George W. Bush

Just over a month after the resolution of the contested election of 2000, George W. Bush addressed the nation for the first time as president. He used his speech to call for unity and civility from a nation that he knew remained sharply divided.

[The Avalon Project](#)



Warm-Up: Cover Image
Peter de Sève, *The New Yorker*
November 20, 2000



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Warm-Up Exercise: Understanding Perspective
Cover Image, *The New Yorker*

Analyzing a Source: Use the chart below (which is based on the National Archives and Records Administration analysis model) to examine the primary source. Remember that every document is created by a person with a specific point of view that is based on their background, beliefs, and experiences. These questions help you to understand that point of view, or perspective.

Meet the source. What type of source is it? What do you notice first? How would you describe it to someone who hasn't read it?	
Observe its parts. Who created it? Who is the intended audience? When was it created? Where was it created?	
Try to make sense of it. What is it talking about? Why did the maker create it? What was happening at the time in history when this source was created?	
Use it as historical evidence. What did you find out that you might not learn anywhere else? What evidence does the creator present that you should "fact check"? What questions do you have that this source doesn't answer?	

Checking for Understanding: After reviewing the source using the chart above, answer these questions as a class.

- Why is the timing of this cover significant given the date of the election?
- What political party does each animal represent? Who is not represented in the race on the cover?
- Although the election's outcome would not be decided until December 12, 2000, which political party does the *New Yorker* cover suggest will win the election?



12th Amendment
Passed by Congress December 9, 1803. Ratified June 15, 1804.

Context: Passed in the wake of controversy surrounding the election of 1800, the 12th Amendment clarified how presidents would be elected in the event that one candidate was unable to secure the necessary number of electoral votes. The 12th Amendment changed a portion of the rules of presidential elections outlined in Article II of the Constitution.



The Electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.—The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Questions for the 12th Amendment

1. According to the 12th Amendment, if no candidate receives a majority of electoral votes how many possible candidates would be considered when selecting a president?
2. Which body of Congress, the Senate or the House of Representatives, would vote to choose a new president if no candidate receives a majority of electoral votes?
3. According to the 12th Amendment, each state receives how many votes?
4. Did the process to decide the outcome of the election of 2000 follow the procedure outlined in the 12th Amendment? Explain.

ANSWER KEY

Questions for the 12th Amendment

1. According to the 12th Amendment, if no candidate receives a majority of electoral votes how many possible candidates would be considered when selecting a president?

No more than three candidates would be considered.

2. Which body of Congress, the Senate or the House of Representatives, would vote to choose a new president if no candidate receives a majority of electoral votes?

The House of Representatives would vote to choose a new president.

3. According to the 12th Amendment, each state receives how many votes?

Each state receives one vote.

4. Did the process to decide the outcome of the election of 2000 follow the procedure outlined in the 12th Amendment? Explain.

No, the process to decide the election of 2000 was largely decided through the judicial branch, instead of the legislative branch, as outlined in the 12th amendment.



**Excerpt from the 2000 Republican Party Platform
on the Courts and Judicial Reform
Republican Party
July 31, 2000**

Context: Courts have the power to strike down laws passed by legislatures that they believe violate the Constitution. This power can be controversial, and those who disagree with the decision may criticize the judges as “activists,” implying that judges are going beyond the scope of the law and instead imposing their own views on how society should be ordered. The Republican Party, citing disagreement with what it called “liberal decisions” made by the Supreme Court in the 1990s, offered a platform that supported “judicial restraint” over “judicial activism.”



What Is at Stake

In the federal courts, scores of judges with activist backgrounds in the hard-left now have lifetime tenure. Our agenda for judicial reform is laid out elsewhere in this platform, but this is the heart of the matter: Whom do the American people trust to restore the rule of law, not just in our streets and playgrounds, not just in boardrooms and on Wall Street, but in our courts and in the Justice Department itself? The answer is clear. Governor Bush is determined to name only judges who have demonstrated respect for the Constitution and the processes of our republic.

. . .

Judicial Reform: Courts That Work, Laws That Make Sense

Americans have the right to a judicial system they can trust. There is no question that the need for reform extends to the judicial branch of government. Many judges disregard the safety, values, and freedom of law-abiding citizens. At the expense of our children and families, they make up laws, invent new rights, free vicious criminals, and pamper felons in prison. They have arbitrarily overturned state laws enacted by citizen referenda, utterly disregarding the right of the people and the democratic process.

The sound principle of judicial review has turned into an intolerable presumption of judicial supremacy. A Republican Congress, working with a Republican president, will restore the separation of powers and reestablish a government of law. There are different ways to achieve that goal—setting terms for federal judges, for example, or using Article III of the Constitution to limit their appellate jurisdiction—but the most important factor is the appointing power of the presidency. We applaud Governor Bush's pledge to name only judges who have demonstrated that they share his conservative beliefs and respect the Constitution.

Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Questions for Excerpt from the 2000 Republican Party Platform

1. The 2000 Republican Party platform declared that “activist” judges from the “hard-left” now had lifetime tenure to serve in the federal judiciary. The Republican Party Platform suggested that these “activist” judges posed a threat to what?
2. The platform stated that, if elected, George W. Bush would nominate judges who had demonstrated what behaviors and beliefs?
3. The Republican Party platform argued that the separation of powers among the branches of government needed to be re-established, giving two examples of changes that could be made to the judicial branch. Name those two changes.
4. In *Bush v. Gore*, the U.S. Supreme Court voted 5–4 to override the decision of the Florida Supreme Court to continue the recount in Florida, thus deciding the outcome of the election. Do you think this action fit the definition of the platform’s “activist” judges? Explain your answer.

ANSWER KEY

Questions for Excerpt from the 2000 Republican Party Platform

1. The 2000 Republican Party platform declared that “activist” judges from the “hard-left” now had lifetime tenure to serve in the federal judiciary. The Republican Party Platform suggested that these “activist” judges pose a threat to what?

“Activist” judges threatened the rule of law in the country.

2. The platform stated that, if elected, George W. Bush would nominate judges who had demonstrated what behaviors and beliefs?

Bush would nominate judges who have demonstrated respect for the Constitution, conservative beliefs, and the “processes of our republic.”

3. The Republican Party platform argues that the separation of powers among the branches of government needed to be re-established, giving two examples of changes that could be made to the judicial branch. Name those two changes.

The platform argued that term limits could be applied to federal judges or Article III of the Constitution could be used to limit their jurisdiction.

4. In *Bush v. Gore*, the U.S. Supreme Court voted 5–4 to override the decision of the Florida Supreme Court to continue the recount in Florida, thus deciding the outcome of the election. Do you think this action fit the definition of the platform’s “activist” judges? Explain your answer.

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence from the text.



Excerpt from *Bush v. Gore*, 531 U.S. 98 (2000)
U.S. Supreme Court
December 12, 2000

Context: In *Bush v. Gore*, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed a decision by the Florida Supreme Court related to the recount of ballots within the state. The 5–4 decision meant that George W. Bush was awarded Florida’s electoral votes and, therefore, won the election.



... Upon due consideration of the difficulties identified to this point, it is obvious that the recount cannot be conducted in compliance with the requirements of equal protection and due process without substantial additional work. It would require not only the adoption (after opportunity for argument) of adequate statewide standards for determining what is a legal vote, and practicable procedures to implement them, but also orderly judicial review of any disputed matters that might arise. In addition, the Secretary of State has advised that the recount of only a portion of the ballots requires that the vote tabulation equipment be used to screen out undervotes, a function for which the machines were not designed. If a recount of overvotes were also required, perhaps even a second screening would be necessary. Use of the equipment for this purpose, and any new software developed for it, would have to be evaluated for accuracy by the Secretary of State, as required by Fla. Stat. §101.015 (2000).

The Supreme Court of Florida has said that the legislature intended the State's electors to "participat[e] fully in the federal electoral process," as provided in 3 U. S. C. §5. ___ So. 2d, at ___ (slip op. at 27); see also *Palm Beach Canvassing Bd. v. Harris*, 2000 WL 1725434, *13 (Fla. 2000). That statute, in turn, requires that any controversy or contest that is designed to lead to a conclusive selection of electors be completed by December 12. That date is upon us, and there is no recount procedure in place under the State Supreme Court's order that comports with minimal constitutional standards. Because it is evident that any recount seeking to meet the December 12 date will be unconstitutional for the reasons we have discussed, we reverse the judgment of the Supreme Court of Florida ordering a recount to proceed.

...

None are more conscious of the vital limits on judicial authority than are the members of this Court, and none stand more in admiration of the Constitution's design to leave the selection of the President to the people, through their legislatures, and to the political sphere. When contending parties invoke the process of the courts, however, it becomes our unsought responsibility to resolve the federal and constitutional issues the judicial system has been forced to confront.

The judgment of the Supreme Court of Florida is reversed, and the case is remanded for further proceedings not inconsistent with this opinion.

Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Questions for Excerpt from *Bush v. Gore*

1. According to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, continuing the recount would violate what two constitutional principles?
2. According to the Florida Secretary of State, why would recounting votes designated as "overvotes" pose a problem to producing an accurate result?
3. Florida law imposed a deadline "for completing any controversy or contest that is designed to lead to a conclusive selection of electors." What was that deadline? Why was this date important in the U.S. Supreme Court's final decision?
4. The U.S. Supreme Court recognized the Constitution's "design to leave the selection of the President to the people, through their legislatures, and to the political sphere." How did the Court justify their decision to stop the vote recount ordered by the Florida Supreme Court?

ANSWER KEY

Questions for Excerpt from *Bush v. Gore*

1. According to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, continuing the recount would violate what two constitutional principles?

Continuing the recount would violate the principles of equal protection and due process.

2. According to the Florida Secretary of State, why would recounting votes designated as "overvotes" pose a problem to producing an accurate result?

Their system has not been used for that purpose before and would have to be tested for accuracy.

3. Florida law imposed a deadline "for completing any controversy or contest that is designed to lead to a conclusive selection of electors." What was that deadline? Why was this date important in the U.S. Supreme Court's final decision?

The deadline was December 12, and that deadline was important because they had reached it with "no recount procedure in place under the State Supreme Court's order that comports with minimal constitutional standards."

4. The U.S. Supreme Court recognized the Constitution's "design to leave the selection of the President to the people, through their legislatures, and to the political sphere." How did the Court justify their decision to stop the vote recount ordered by the Florida Supreme Court?

They noted that contending parties had both asked to use the process of the courts in selecting the President, so it had become their "unsought responsibility" to resolve the issues.



Excerpt from Presidential Concession Speech
Al Gore
December 13, 2000

Context: Al Gore made this concession speech the day after the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Bush v. Gore*, providing an important voice in support of the peaceful transition of power after a very contentious election cycle.



Good evening.

Just moments ago, I spoke with George W. Bush and congratulated him on becoming the 43rd president of the United States. And I promised him that I wouldn't call him back this time. I offered to meet with him as soon as possible so that we can start to heal the divisions of the campaign and the contest through which we've just passed.

Almost a century and a half ago, Senator Stephen Douglas told Abraham Lincoln, who had just defeated him for the presidency, "Partisan feeling must yield to patriotism. I'm with you, Mr. President, and God bless you." Well, in that same spirit, I say to President-elect Bush that what remains of partisan rancor must now be put aside, and may God bless his stewardship of this country. Neither he nor I anticipated this long and difficult road. Certainly neither of us wanted it to happen. Yet it came, and now it has ended, resolved, as it must be resolved, through the honored institutions of our democracy.

Over the library of one of our great law schools is inscribed the motto, "Not under man but under God and law." That's the ruling principle of American freedom, the source of our democratic liberties. I've tried to make it my guide throughout this contest, as it has guided America's deliberations of all the complex issues of the past five weeks.

Now the U.S. Supreme Court has spoken. Let there be no doubt, while I *strongly* disagree with the court's decision, I accept it. I accept the finality of this outcome which will be ratified next Monday in the Electoral College. And tonight, for the sake of our unity as a people and the strength of our democracy, I offer my concession. I also accept my responsibility, which I will discharge unconditionally, to honor the new President-elect and do everything possible to help him bring Americans together in fulfillment of the great vision that our Declaration of Independence defines and that our Constitution affirms and defends.

Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Questions for Presidential Concession Speech

1. What was the purpose of Al Gore's speech?
2. How did Gore believe that the contested election must be resolved?
3. Why do you think Gore chose to reference the election of Abraham Lincoln in his speech?
4. What was Gore's attitude toward the U.S Supreme Court's decision in this election? Why did he accept their decision as final? Do you think this was the right thing to do? Explain.

ANSWER KEY

Questions for Presidential Concession Speech

1. What was the purpose of Al Gore's speech?

Al Gore officially conceded the election to George W. Bush and pledged his support for a peaceful transition of power. He indicated to his party that it was time to move forward.

2. How did Gore believe that the contested election must be resolved?

Gore believed the contested election must be resolved by honoring the democratic process.

3. Why do you think Gore chose to reference the election of Abraham Lincoln in his speech?

Student must state a claim and support their answer with evidence from the text. Answers should point to the highly partisan nature of the country leading up to the outbreak of civil war.

4. What was Gore's attitude toward the U.S Supreme Court's decision in this election? Why did he accept their decision as final? Do you think this was the right thing to do? Explain.

Gore strongly disagreed with the decision but accepted it "for the sake of our unity as a people and the strength of our democracy."

Student must state a claim and support it with evidence.



**Excerpt from First Inaugural Address
George W. Bush
January 20, 2001**

Context: Just over a month after the resolution of the contested election of 2000, George W. Bush addressed the nation for the first time as president. He used his speech to call for unity and civility from a nation that he knew remained sharply divided.



The peaceful transfer of authority is rare in history, yet common in our country. With a simple oath, we affirm old traditions and make new beginnings.

. . .

We have a place, all of us, in a long story—a story we continue, but whose end we will not see. It is the story of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old, a story of a slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom, the story of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend but not to conquer. It is the American story—a story of flawed and fallible people, united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals. The grandest of these ideals is an unfolding American promise that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no insignificant person was ever born. Americans are called to enact this promise in our lives and in our laws. And though our nation has sometimes halted, and sometimes delayed, we must follow no other course.

. . .

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice, of our own country. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent, but not a country. We do not accept this, and we will not allow it. Our unity, our union, is the serious work of leaders and citizens in every generation. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. . . .

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests and teach us what it means to be citizens. Every child must be taught these principles. Every citizen must uphold them. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less, American.

Today, we affirm a new commitment to live out our nation's promise through civility, courage, compassion and character. . . .

. . . .

The most important tasks of a democracy are done by everyone. I will live and lead by these principles, "to advance my convictions with civility, to pursue the public interest with courage, to speak for greater justice and compassion, to call for responsibility and try to live it as well." In all of these ways, I will bring the values of our history to the care of our times.

What you do is as important as anything government does. I ask you to seek a common good beyond your comfort; to defend needed reforms against easy attacks; to serve your nation, beginning with your neighbor. I ask you to be citizens. Citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character.

Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Questions for Excerpt from First Inaugural Address

1. Bush began his inaugural address by pointing out the uniqueness of a peaceful transition of power between leaders in world history. Why do you think he chose to begin this way?
2. Bush provided a description of the “American story.” What did it include?
3. Bush noted that Americans are not united “by blood or birth or soil.” What *does* unite them?
4. Bush noted that “what you do is as important as anything the government does.” What did Bush ask of the American people at the end of his speech?

ANSWER KEY

Questions for Excerpt from First Inaugural Address

1. Bush begins his inaugural address by pointing out the uniqueness of a peaceful transition of power between leaders in world history. Why do you think he chose to begin this way?

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence. Answers should bring in context from the rest of the lesson regarding the spirited fight for the presidency and how it still ended in a peaceful transition of power.

2. Bush provided a description of the “American story.” What did it include?

Bush’s American story included flawed people who make mistakes but can overcome them to create a stronger nation, particularly when they come together. He made historical references to previous moments in U.S. history to support his claims.

3. Bush noted that Americans are not united “by blood or birth or soil.” What *does* unite them?

Americans are united by ideals.

4. Bush noted that “what you do is as important as anything the government does.” What did Bush ask of the American people at the end of his speech?

Bush asked Americans to support the common good, defend needed reforms, and serve the nation. Throughout this address, Bush asked citizens to come together in spite of differences, knowing that there were still many strong feelings about the election results. He was likely referring to behaviors that would support this kind of renewed unity.