



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2010 Volume II: Persuasion in Democratic Politics

Speak up! Presidential Rhetoric in the Modern Era

Guide for Curriculum Unit 10.02.05, published September 2010

by Sonia Henze

The unit *Speak Up! Presidential Rhetoric in the Modern Era* is a compilation of my experience from the Yale National Initiative seminar, *Persuasion in Democratic Politics* led by Bryan Garsten. The seminar encouraged me to further investigate the art of rhetoric from Cicero, Aristotle and the American Founding Fathers. Throughout the seminar, and my own research, I became aware of the need to increase persuasion with my students. Adolescents often engage in arguments. Perhaps hormonal changes push young adults to be more argumentative or their discourse is just more noticed in any case, teachers should adapt. The Pennsylvania State and Pittsburgh school district standards encourage mastering persuasive arguments through oral presentations. This unit will guide students through an examination of presidential rhetoric while highlighting skills they can use for their own communication. The culminating project will challenge students to show their mastery of rhetoric in their own persuasive speech. A.P. U.S. History classes, American History courses or American Government classes may benefit from this Secondary curriculum.

(Developed for AP U.S. History, grade 11, and American Government and Civics, grade 9; recommended for AP American History, grades 8 and 11, and American Government, 9-12)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use