



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2014 Volume IV: Eloquence

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## **Rhetoric in My World: Engaging Students in Rhetorical Analysis Through Political Speechwriting**

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This unit focuses on using political speeches as an entry point to help students learn the structure of argumentative writing and elements of effective rhetoric. Students will analyze rhetorical strategies employed in a series of political speeches covering a wide range of speakers and topics, research contemporary issues, and then compose and deliver a speech about one that's relevant and important to them.

Activities emphasize collaborative group work and are designed to help students connect with issues and speechwriting in a way that makes the study of rhetoric more engaging and relevant. They will engage in group discussion, close reading and research activities, and writing exercises. The ultimate goal is that they recognize how current issues and politics affect their world and become empowered through forming opinions and developing a voice to express them.

This unit was created for students taking 11<sup>th</sup> grade Advanced Placement Language and Composition, but would be well suited for any 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade American Literature or American Studies class.

(Developed for English Language and Composition, grade 11; recommended for English Language and Composition, and English III, grade 11; English IV, grade 12; and American Studies, grades 11-12)

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