

Labor Day Address

6th Grade SPEECH

Barack Obama gave this speech on August 24th, 2008 in Billings, Montana.

The text of this speech is in the public domain.

Hello Everybody. This Labor Day weekend, we don't just celebrate the end of summer. We also honor the hardworking men and women who have made this country what it is. And, the American labor movement that has fought tirelessly to improve their wages, benefits, and working conditions. America was built by its laborers, but today our workers are struggling just to get by, in an economy that no longer works for them. That's why we can't afford four more years of the failed George Bush economic policies. Policies that Senator McCain has proudly embraced and promises to continue.

It's time we had a President who will stand up for working men and women, by building an economy that rewards not just wealth, but work, and the workers who created it. It's time you had a partner in the White House, who knows that the struggles facing working families can't be solved by spending billions of dollars on more tax breaks for big corporations and wealthy CEOs. And, that hardworking families need immediate relief.

That's why, as President, I'll end tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas and give them to companies that create good-paying jobs, here at home. And, while Senator McCain is proposing \$4 billion in new tax breaks for oil companies that are making record profits, I'll put a \$1,000 tax cut into the pockets of 95% of workers and their families.

It's time you had a President who honors organized labor, who's walked on picket lines, who doesn't choke on the word "union," who lets our unions do what they do best and organize our workers, and who will finally make the "Employee Free Choice Act" the law of the land. That is the choice in this election. We can choose to remain on the path that has abandoned workers and gotten our economy in so much trouble. Or we can re-claim the idea that in America, opportunity is open to anyone who is willing to work for it.

I've spent my entire career fighting for working men and women. And so has my running mate, Joe Biden – a man whose heart and values are rooted firmly in the middle class. With him by my side, I am confident that we can take this country in a new direction, and restore that fair shot at your dreams that is the core of what Joe Biden and I stand for, and what America stands for, as a nation.

Analyze and Infer Author's Point of View and Purpose - Speech

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

Choose the best answer for each question.

1. What does Barack Obama want his listeners to understand?

- a. that there are problems
- b. that he has solutions to problems
- c. that it is time to vote
- d. that workers are good

3. Why does Barack Obama say he will make a tax cut?

- a. because it will be good for the middle class
- b. because it will be a change in how things are
- c. because it will give people money they need
- d. because oil companies need it

2. What is the idea he explains in the last paragraph?

- a. that Joe Biden is a good candidate
- b. that he and Joe Biden want workers to have a better chance
- c. that the United States is an old nation
- d. that the middle class is important

4. What is Barack Obama's view of what the President should do?

- a. win the election
- b. organize workers
- c. make sure that people have a better life
- d. stay on the path

5. *Write your own answer to this question. Barack Obama inspired people. What do you think the most inspiring part of his speech is?*

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	b	b	c	c

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.
Answers will vary; students should choose a part that is inspiring.