

SKILL: Analyze and Infer Author's Point of View and Purpose**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.

Directions: 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

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

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

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.

5. Answers will vary, students should choose a part that is inspiring.

SKILL: Analyze and Infer Author's Point of View and Purpose

The Lost Dog

6th Grade Fiction

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One particularly cold Saturday in January, I was supposed to take our dog out for a walk, but it was so cold that I didn't want to go outside. Instead, I just opened the door and let the dog out by himself. I kept an eye on him to make sure he would come back inside.

However, another neighborhood dog quickly ran past our house, and our dog sped after to catch him. I hurriedly went to grab my coat so I could follow my dog, and then I rushed outside. Unfortunately, I was already too late, and my dog was nowhere in sight. I walked a few blocks, but I was unable to find him.

Distressed, I returned home. My mother was standing at the door waiting, and she asked me what had happened. "I know I was supposed to walk our dog," I confessed, "but I thought he would be able to go outside and come back by himself. Now he's gone and I can't find him anywhere."

My mother was very angry with me; she said I should have been more responsible. She decided to help by making some signs. The signs read, "Lost: A big black dog. Please call us right away" and she printed our phone number on the bottom. "Okay, Darrell," she said, as she handed over the stack of signs, "now go post these fliers on all the street posts."

My sister and I grabbed the signs and we posted them along our street as well as along the surrounding streets. The whole time, I was incredibly sad and worried about our dog. All I could think about was how cold it was and how cold our dog must be. My sister wanted to go home, so I told her I'd walk her home, but then keep looking for the dog myself. I took her home and resumed my search.

I continued circling the neighborhood, looking for our dog, but I didn't see him anywhere. I called out his name, and I looked in all the alleys. I got more and more upset. I had made such a huge mistake. All I wanted was to stay warm, but now I was extremely cold—and so was my dog.

Finally, I gave up and sulked home. When I returned, my mother was waiting for me and smiling broadly. She told me, "Our dog came back home all by himself. So, you were right—he did come back—but you were wrong, too. You should have done your job this morning."

"You're right, mom. I was wrong, and, as a result, I have learned a very important lesson today. What seems easy initially may turn out to be difficult in the end. This was a very difficult morning for everyone."

Ever since that morning, I have remembered that important lesson I learned.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question.

6. Why do you think the writer wrote this story?

- a. It is a true story that happened to him.
- b. To teach children to be more responsible.
- c. To help people be more careful about dogs.
- d. To show parents how to raise children.

7. How do you think the writer felt about what happened?

- a. It should not happen; children should be more careful.
- b. It is how children are.
- c. It was a problem for the dog.
- d. It was a good way to learn.

8. Why did the writer put the story in winter?

- a. to make it more serious
- b. because many dogs get lost then
- c. so people would feel sorry for the boy
- d. to tell what season it was

9. Why did the writer have the story end with Darrell's sentence?

- a. to make sure the ideas were clear
- b. so people would know everything was fine
- c. to help people feel better
- d. to show how things turned out

10. *Write your own answer to this question.*

What do you think the writer hopes people would learn from this story?

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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	6	7	8	9
Answer	b	a	a	a

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. That children should be responsible.