

1. Mark your confusion.
2. Show evidence of a close reading on the page.
3. Write a one-page reflection in your WN

President Obama's State of the Union Address

Source: whitehouse.gov

On Tuesday, January 25, President Obama delivered his State of the Union address. Here are some excerpts from his speech:

On the economy: Many people watching tonight can probably remember a time when finding a good job meant showing up at a nearby factory or a business downtown. You didn't always need a degree, and your competition was pretty much limited to your neighbors. If you worked hard, chances are you'd have a job for life, with a decent paycheck, good benefits, and the occasional promotion. Maybe you'd even have the pride of seeing your kids work at the same company. That world has changed. And for many, the change has been painful. I've seen it in the shuttered windows of once booming factories, and the vacant storefronts of once busy Main Streets. I've heard it in the frustrations of Americans who've seen their paychecks dwindle or their jobs disappear - proud men and women who feel like the rules have been changed in the middle of the game. They're right. The rules have changed. In a single generation, revolutions in technology have transformed the way we live, work and do business. Steel mills that once needed 1,000 workers can now do the same work with 100. Today, just about any company can set up shop, hire workers, and sell their products wherever there's an Internet connection. Meanwhile, nations like China and India realized that with some changes of their own, they could compete in this new world. And so they started educating their children earlier and longer, with greater emphasis on math and science. They're investing in research and new technologies. Just recently, China became home to the world's largest private solar research facility, and the world's fastest computer. So yes, the world has changed. The competition for jobs is real. But this shouldn't discourage us. It should challenge us.

We're issuing a challenge. We're telling America's scientists and engineers that if they assemble teams of the best minds in their fields, and focus on the hardest problems in clean energy, we'll fund the Apollo Projects of our time. At the California Institute of Technology, they're developing a way to turn sunlight and water into fuel for our cars. At Oak Ridge National Laboratory, they're using supercomputers to get a lot more power out of our nuclear facilities. With more research and incentives, we can break our dependence on oil with biofuels, and become the first country to have 1 million electric vehicles on the road by 2015. We need to get behind this innovation.

On education: Over the next ten years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school degree. And yet, as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. America has fallen to 9th in the proportion of young people with a college degree... We need to teach our kids that it's not just the winner of the Super Bowl who deserves to be celebrated, but the winner of the science fair.

On immigration: Today, there are hundreds of thousands of students excelling in our schools who are not American citizens. Some are the children of undocumented workers, who had nothing to do with the actions of their parents. They grew up as Americans and pledge allegiance to our flag, and yet live every day with the threat of deportation. Others come here from abroad to study in our colleges and universities. But as soon as they obtain advanced degrees, we send them back home to compete against us. It makes no sense. Now, I strongly believe that we should take on, once and for all, the issue of illegal immigration. I am prepared to work with Republicans and Democrats to protect our borders, enforce our laws and address the millions of undocumented workers who are now living in the shadows. I know that debate will be difficult and take time. But tonight, let's agree to make that effort. And let's stop expelling talented, responsible young people who can staff our research labs, start new businesses, and further enrich this nation. The third step in winning the future is rebuilding America.

On the future: It is time to move forward as one nation. We should have no illusions about the work ahead of us. Reforming our schools; changing the way we use energy; reducing our deficit - none of this is easy. All of it will take time. And it will be harder because we will argue about everything. The cost. The details. The letter of every law. Of course, some countries don't have this problem. If the central government wants a railroad, they get a railroad - no matter how many homes are bulldozed. If they don't want a bad story in the newspaper, it doesn't get written. And yet, as contentious and frustrating and messy as our democracy can sometimes be, I know there isn't a person here who would trade places with any other nation on Earth. We may have differences in policy, but we all believe in the rights enshrined in our Constitution. We may have different opinions, but we believe in the same promise that says this is a place where you can make it if you try. We may have different backgrounds, but we believe in the same dream that says this is a country where anything's possible. No matter who you are. No matter where you come from. That dream is why I can stand here before you tonight

Possible WN topics:

- Find a “hot spot” in the president’s speech and respond to it.
- Where do you agree with the president? Where do you disagree with the president? Explain.