

## The Constitution and the Inauguration

### OBJECTIVE

Students learn how the constitution outlines the basis for the presidential inauguration.

### MATERIALS

Access to a live broadcast of the inauguration or online video of the inauguration.

### BACKGROUND

The 20th Amendment of the Constitution sets the end of a current president's term at noon on January 20, which is why a new president is always sworn in at 12 p.m. EST. As of 11:59 a.m. EST, Barack Obama will no longer be the sitting President of the United States and as of 12 p.m. EST, Donald Trump will be the President of the United States.

The Constitution also states in Article II, Section 1, Clause 8 the oath for an in-coming president: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Review with students what Article II and the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment say about inaugurating a new president.
- ✓ Watch examples of president's stating the Oath of Office:
  - [Video – Barack Obama 2013](#)
  - [Video – George W. Bush 2001](#)
- ✓ Watch a live broadcast or videotape of the inauguration and watch for evidence of the Constitutional elements. Most local TV stations will be broadcasting the swearing in ceremony at 11am CST as well as the following online news sites:

ABC.com

CBS.com

MSNBC.com

Fox.com

CNN.com

NYTimes.com

WashingtonPost.com

NPR.org

### ACTIVITIES

- Write a thank you card to President Obama. These can be mailed to the White House, 1900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington D.C., 20500.
- Write a letter to President Trump, including the goals they would like to see achieved by the new president and good wishes to the president and his family. These can be mailed to the White House, 1900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington D.C., 20500.
- Write a poem suitable for the inaugural ceremony, or make a list of published poems one might incorporate into such a ceremony.