

*George W. Bush in his Inaugural Address on 20 January 2001:*

“We have a place, all of us, in a long story—a story we continue, but whose end we will not see. It is the story of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old, a story of a slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom, the story of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend but not to conquer.

5 It is the American story—a story of flawed and fallible people, united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals. The grandest of these ideals is an unfolding American promise that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no insignificant person was ever born. [...]

Through much of the last century, America’s faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations.

10 Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country, it is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. And even after nearly 225 years, we have a long way yet to travel. [...]

What you do is as important as anything government does. I ask you to seek a common good beyond your comfort; to defend needed reforms against easy attacks; to serve your nation, beginning with

15 your neighbor. I ask you to be citizens: citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character.

Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves, but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no government program can replace it. When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it. [...]

20 Much time has passed since Jefferson[’s] inauguration. The years and changes accumulate. But the themes of this day he would know: our nation’s grand story of courage and its simple dream of dignity.

We are not this story’s author, who fills time and eternity with his purpose. Yet his purpose is achieved in our duty, and our duty is fulfilled in service to one another.”

---

*For full text see:*

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/inaugural-address.html>

### **Comprehension**

1 What synonym does Bush use for the “American Dream”?

### **Analysis**

2 Explain in your own words how Bush sees the United States’ role in the world.

3 One of the most famous quotations in American political history is the following sentence from John F. Kennedy’s Inauguration Address of 1961: “My fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country”. – Where in his speech does Bush echo this idea of citizenship?

---

More tasks: Refer to *Viewfinder Special*, p. 183.