

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt- Inaugural Address- March 4, 1933

1 I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will
2 address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. [*See*
3 *APP note, below.*] This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and
4 boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great
5 Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert
6 my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning,
7 unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark
8 hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and
9 support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again
10 give that support to leadership in these critical days.

11 In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank
12 God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability
13 to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means
14 of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on
15 every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of
16 families are gone.

17 More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an
18 equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of
19 the moment.

20 Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts.
21 Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not
22 afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts
23 have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight
24 of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed
25 through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and
26 have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of
27 public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

28 True they have tried, but their efforts have been cast in the pattern of an outworn tradition. Faced
29 by failure of credit they have proposed only the lending of more money. Stripped of the lure of
30 profit by which to induce our people to follow their false leadership, they have resorted to
31 exhortations, pleading tearfully for restored confidence. They know only the rules of a
32 generation of self-seekers. They have no vision, and when there is no vision the people perish.

33 The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may
34 now restore that temple to the ancient truths. The measure of the restoration lies in the extent to
35 which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit.

36 Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill
37 of creative effort. The joy and moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad

38 chase of evanescent profits. These dark days will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that
39 our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow men.

40 Recognition of the falsity of material wealth as the standard of success goes hand in hand with
41 the abandonment of the false belief that public office and high political position are to be valued
42 only by the standards of pride of place and personal profit; and there must be an end to a conduct
43 in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and
44 selfish wrongdoing. Small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on
45 honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance; without
46 them it cannot live. Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation asks
47 for action, and action now.

48 Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it
49 wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government
50 itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through
51 this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of
52 our natural resources.

53 Hand in hand with this we must frankly recognize the overbalance of population in our industrial
54 centers and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavor to provide a better use
55 of the land for those best fitted for the land. The task can be helped by definite efforts to raise the
56 values of agricultural products and with this the power to purchase the output of our cities. It can
57 be helped by preventing realistically the tragedy of the growing loss through foreclosure of our
58 small homes and our farms. It can be helped by insistence that the Federal, State, and local
59 governments act forthwith on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped
60 by the unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical, and unequal. It
61 can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of
62 communications and other utilities which have a definitely public character. There are many
63 ways in which it can be helped, but it can never be helped merely by talking about it. We must
64 act and act quickly.

65 Finally, in our progress toward a resumption of work we require two safeguards against a return
66 of the evils of the old order: there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and
67 investments, so that there will be an end to speculation with other people's money; and there
68 must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

69 These are the lines of attack. I shall presently urge upon a new Congress, in special session,
70 detailed measures for their fulfillment, and I shall seek the immediate assistance of the several
71 States.

72 Through this program of action we address ourselves to putting our own national house in order
73 and making income balance outgo. Our international trade relations, though vastly important, are
74 in point of time and necessity secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy. I
75 favor as a practical policy the putting of first things first. I shall spare no effort to restore world
76 trade by international economic readjustment, but the emergency at home cannot wait on that
77 accomplishment.

78 The basic thought that guides these specific means of national recovery is not narrowly
79 nationalistic. It is the insistence, as a first considerations, upon the interdependence of the
80 various elements in and parts of the United States—a recognition of the old and permanently
81 important manifestation of the American spirit of the pioneer. It is the way to recovery. It is the
82 immediate way. It is the strongest assurance that the recovery will endure.

83 In the field of world policy I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the
84 neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others—
85 the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with
86 a world of neighbors.

87 If I read the temper of our people correctly, we now realize as we have never realized before our
88 interdependence on each other; that we cannot merely take but we must give as well; that if we
89 are to go forward, we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a
90 common discipline, because without such discipline no progress is made, no leadership becomes
91 effective. We are, I know, ready and willing to submit our lives and property to such discipline,
92 because it makes possible a leadership which aims at a larger good. This I propose to offer,
93 pledging that the larger purposes will bind upon us all as a sacred obligation with a unity of duty
94 hitherto evoked only in time of armed strife.

95 With this pledge taken, I assume unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people
96 dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems.

97 Action in this image and to this end is feasible under the form of government which we have
98 inherited from our ancestors. Our Constitution is so simple and practical that it is possible always
99 to meet extraordinary needs by changes in emphasis and arrangement without loss of essential
100 form. That is why our constitutional system has proved itself the most superbly enduring
101 political mechanism the modern world has produced. It has met every stress of vast expansion of
102 territory, of foreign wars, of bitter internal strife, of world relations.

103 It is to be hoped that the normal balance of Executive and legislative authority may be wholly
104 adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But it may be that an unprecedented demand
105 and need for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from that normal balance of
106 public procedure.

107 I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken Nation in
108 the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures, or such other measures as the
109 Congress may build out of its experience and wisdom, I shall seek, within my constitutional
110 authority, to bring to speedy adoption.

111 But in the event that the Congress shall fail to take one of these two courses, and in the event that
112 the national emergency is still critical, I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then
113 confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis—broad
114 Executive power to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power that would be given
115 to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.

116 For the trust reposed in me I will return the courage and the devotion that befit the time. I can do
117 no less.

118 We face the arduous days that lie before us in the warm courage of national unity; with the clear
119 consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clean satisfaction that comes
120 from the stern performance of duty by old and young alike. We aim at the assurance of a rounded
121 and permanent national life.

122 We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not
123 failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct, vigorous action. They
124 have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present
125 instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it.

126 In this dedication of a Nation we humbly ask the blessing of God. May He protect each and
127 every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come.

Introduction

Mention of SOAPS (who, what, where, when, why): _____

Effect of context on meaning of speech: _____

Thesis Statement: _____

SOAPSTone Analysis

Title:	
<i>Element</i>	<i>Textual Notes and Commentary</i>
Speaker – Whose voice is telling the story? What assumptions can you make about this person?	
Occasion – What is the time, place, current situation, or context in which the author is writing?	
Audience – Who is the intended audience for the piece? What assumptions can you make about the audience?	
Purpose – What is the speaker’s purpose? In what ways does the speaker convey the message?	
Subject – What is the subject of the piece? How do you know this?	
Tone – What is the author’s attitude towards the subject? How is the writer’s attitude revealed through specific words and phrases?	

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Style Four Square Analysis

Structure (Organization & Syntax)	Argument (Appeals, Fallacies, other devices)
Language (Imagery, figurative)	So what- Final thoughts on the speech and its effectiveness.