

Lesson Name : 19

Lesson Title : Address to the Students as Moscow State University

Course Name : English 2 Part 1 [Honors]

Task Id : 50298206

Course Id : 15019



Essential Instruction

Read Ronald Reagan's "[Address to the students at Moscow State University](#)", which will open in a new window.



Cultural and Historical Significance

Ronald Reagan's speech to the students at the University of Moscow had a major impact on the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. For years, the two nations had been bitter enemies with one another, and the speech gave Reagan an opportunity to speak openly to the Russian citizens. Reagan clearly outlined two objectives in his speech. First, his speech assured the Soviet Union that a friendly relationship existed between the two nations. Second, he argued against the rule of Communism and urged the citizens to change their government.

Analyzing Rhetoric

Let's take a closer look at how Reagan's speech strengthened the relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States. The speech is a work of **rhetoric**, something that is written or spoken and intended to appeal to the emotions, morals, and values of the reader or audience. Read the following passage and pay attention to how Reagan describes the relationship between the two nations:

Americans seek always to make friends of old antagonists. After a colonial revolution with Britain we have cemented for all ages the ties of kinship between our nations. After a terrible civil war between North and South, we healed our wounds and found true unity as a nation. We fought two world wars in my lifetime against Germany and one with Japan, but now the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan are two of our closest allies and friends.

Reagan assures the Russian citizens that the two nations will work well together in the future and that the fighting between the two nations will soon be forgotten.

Reagan continues his speech by explaining to the students at Moscow State University the problems that exist within Communism. He believes that liberty and economic freedom are essential rights that citizens of any nation must have. Read the following passage as Reagan explains the benefits of living in a society with free enterprise:

But freedom is more even than this: Freedom is the right to question, and change the established way of doing things. It is the continuing revolution of the marketplace. It is the understanding that allows us to recognize shortcomings and seek solutions.

Reagan believes that innovation is only possible through competition in the marketplace and a desire to continually make better products. Reagan continues to explain what he thinks are the real benefits of a capitalist society. He describes the advantages that United States citizens have in making their own choices and creating their own businesses.

Reagan concludes, or ends, the speech by appealing to the students of Moscow State University to change their culture and to question the role of their government. Read the following passage as Reagan presents a direct challenge to the youth of the Soviet culture:

Your generation is living in one of the most exciting, hopeful times in Soviet history. It is a time when the first breath of freedom stirs the air and the heart beats to the accelerated rhythm of hope, when the accumulated spiritual energies of a long silence yearn to break free.

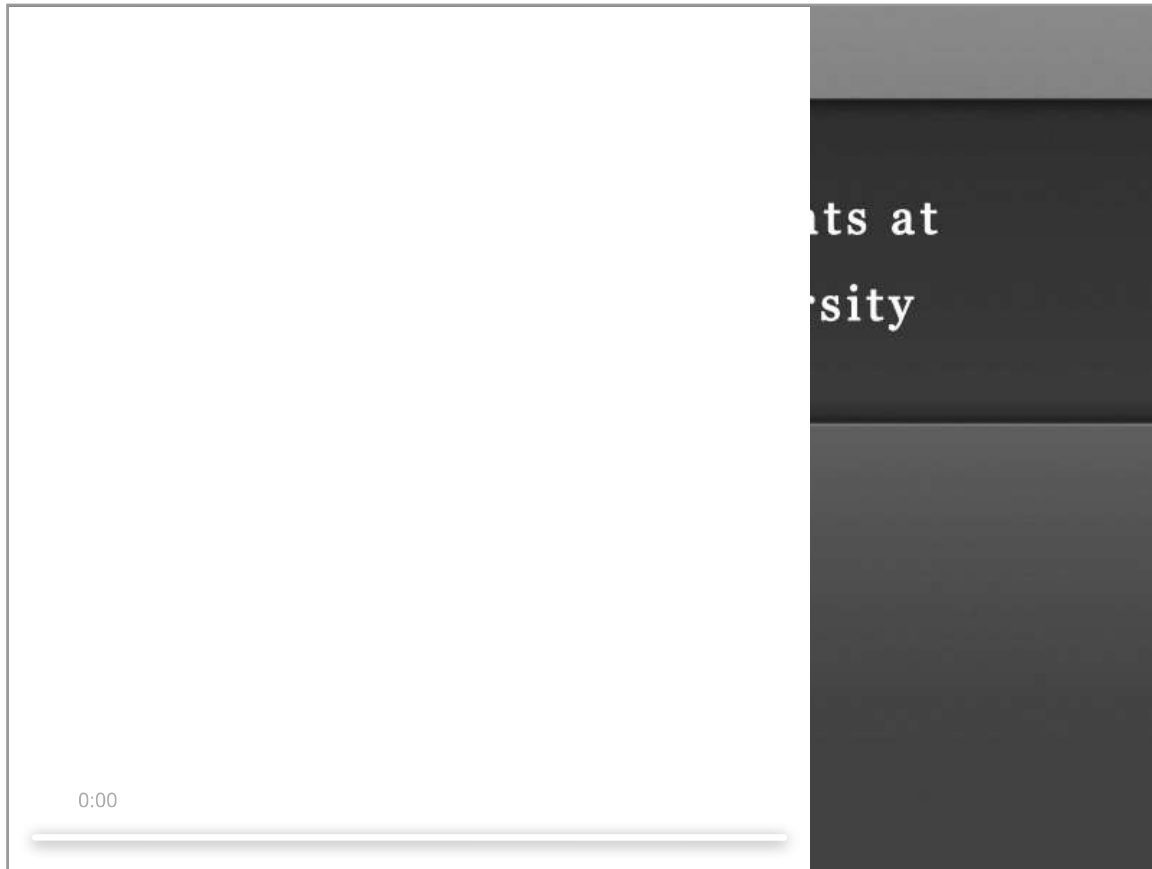
Reagan urges the students to exercise their freedoms, and he challenges their current way of thinking. He encourages them to engage in conversation with their government. He wants the citizens of Russia to create an environment of freedom where each citizen is granted basic liberties and rights. Reagan leaves the students with the hope that they will one day be able to enjoy the same freedoms that the citizens in the United States have.

Context Clues

Ronald Reagan's speech may contain some words that you are unfamiliar with. We can use **context clues** to help us figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words. **Context clues** are the "helper" words that give meaning to other, unknown words in the text. Read the following passage and try to figure out the meaning of the word *boisterous*.

Some people point to the trade disputes between us as a sign of strain, but they're the frictions of all families, and the family of free nations is a big and vital and sometimes *boisterous* one.

Some of the clues that can help you understand the meaning of *boisterous* are: "big" and "vital." Based on the context clues, we can guess that "boisterous" probably means big or out of control. Reagan describes a family of free nations and the trade disputes as being a welcome problem to free enterprise. He admits that the trade may be large and out of control, but he remains positive on the outlook of the free market. In fact, *boisterous* means "big, noisy, and unrestrained."



[Open Video in New Tab](#)



Vocabulary

Ronald Reagan's speech was delivered to the students at Moscow State University and may contain some words that you are unfamiliar with. Here are some vocabulary words from this lesson:

1. **entrepreneur** – noun – a person who organizes or starts a business
2. **endowed** – verb – provided with a quality, ability, or asset
3. **beholden** – adj. – obligated or attached to
4. **peer** – noun – a person who is equal in social status
5. **legislation** – noun – a set of laws used to govern a society
6. **monopoly** – noun – complete ownership or control of something
7. **evocative** – adj. – tending to evoke an emotional response
8. **boisterous** – adj. – noisy, rowdy, or out of control
9. **preside** – verb – to have control or authority over a meeting