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# Finding Quotes for Speeches: Fact Sheet

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Reference Librarian

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**Congressional Research Service**

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A well-chosen quote can strengthen a speech by emphasizing and reinforcing a point, tapping into the audience's memories and associations, and bolstering the speaker's credibility. The right quote can capture the listener's attention, add poignancy, and infuse drama or poetic flair.

The following resources will help the user find quotes for speeches and other communications. The resources are divided into three categories: (1) General Quotations, (2) Americana, and (3) Religion. There is some overlap among the categories.

Congressional staffers who need assistance finding or verifying a quote, or who need additional information, may place a request via CRS.gov.

## General Quotations

### Bartleby.com's Quotations

Search this online compilation of major quotation collections in the public domain by keyword or browse each publication's index individually. Collections include

- *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (1919 edition),
- *Respectfully Quoted: A Dictionary of Quotations Requested from the Congressional Research Service* (1989), and
- *The Oxford Shakespeare*

### Today in History

Enliven a speech by citing a significant event that happened on the same day in the past. Use the "Today in History" Archive's page (part of the Library of Congress's American Memory project) to search by topic or day. "This Day in History" (from the History Channel website) also supplies brief historical information for any date.

## Americana

### American Rhetoric: Top 100 Speeches

This site provides the full text of famous speeches from American history, such as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech.

### Chronology of U.S. Historical Documents

This University of Oklahoma College of Law website provides the full text of major American documents and speeches, arranged chronologically from pre-Colonial times to the present. Documents and speeches include the First Thanksgiving Proclamation, Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death," and presidential inaugural and State of the Union addresses.

### Democracy in America

The University of Virginia hosts Alexis de Tocqueville's seminal *Democracy in America*, a political and social analysis of American democracy in the 1830s.

## **Federalist Papers**

Browse or search the full text of the Federalist Papers (from the Library of Congress's online service at congress.gov).

## **Presidential Inaugural Addresses**

This site provides a complete collection of presidential inaugural speeches (from the Bartleby Library site).

## **Religion**

### **Bible, Koran, and Book of Mormon**

Search the full text of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Koran, among other religious texts, from the University of Michigan's Digital Collections. (Under "Filter by Secondary Subject" on the left, select "Religious Studies.")

### **BibleGateway.com**

This website includes options to search multiple versions of the Bible in English and dozens of other languages. It also provides a topical index.

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