

## Maggie's Civics Corner

### Special Lesson – The Inauguration



#### Maggie says ...

*After the president and vice president are elected, the country holds an important ceremony to officially make them the new leaders of our country. I think big ceremonies are exciting, and this one is especially important!*

**Today's lesson is about the INAUGURATION.** The Inauguration is more than just a big party to celebrate the election of a new president. The Constitution requires the

President to make a very serious promise called the [Oath of Office](#) during the [Inauguration](#). The Oath of Office says that the new president promises to do the best they can at being president and to promise to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. The vice president also makes this promise, and the new president usually gives a speech afterward to tell the country what they plan to do for us while they are president.

**Sticky Situation:** Imagine that you chose someone to lead you and your friends through a maze that is filled with all kinds of distractions, surprises, scary traps, toys, and prizes. You are relying on your leader to help you get out. Unfortunately, before you entered the maze, you didn't make this leader promise that they would try to get everyone out of it instead of looking for toys and prizes. Do you think this leader could get distracted by the toys and prizes and forget to help everyone get out of the maze? Have you ever become distracted and forgotten to do something? What happened in that situation? Do you think government leaders can get distracted and forget their responsibilities to keep all citizens safe? If they do get distracted, what do you think citizens could do to help them to get back on course?

**The Purpose of the Inauguration:** The *Inauguration* of the new U.S. President and Vice President takes place every four years following the election and it is always held on January 20th. The Constitution – the supreme law of our land – says that the president must take the *oath of office* at the *Inauguration* and before becoming president, but the rest of the ceremony is based on traditions. Usually, the president who is leaving office will walk with the new president to the front of the U.S. Capitol, where the ceremony will be held. The [Chief Justice of the Supreme Court](#) traditionally leads the president through the *oath of office*. Once that is completed, the new president delivers a speech to the nation advising how they plan to lead us for the next 4 years.

**Activity:** Think about when you have had to make a promise to someone in the past. How many people were involved in this promise? Did you have to make the promise in front of other people? Do you think that making a promise before millions of people and the rest of the world would make you more likely to keep it? This helps you understand why we have the president make a very serious promise in front of the country before they start their new job.

**Civics Resources:** Check out the [EducationWorld](#) website to learn more about the *Inauguration*.