**Barack Obama’s victory speech 2008 (abridged version)**

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| **Text of speech** |
| If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| It’s the answer told by lines that stretched around schools and churches in numbers this nation has never seen, by people who waited three hours and four hours, many for the  very first time in their lives, because they believed that this time must be different; that their  voice could be that difference. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| It’s the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled — Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of red states and blue states: we are, and always will be, the United States of America. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| It’s the answer that led those who have been told for so long by so many to be cynical, and fearful, and doubtful of what we can achieve to put their hands on the arc of history and bend it once more toward the hope of a better day. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| It’s been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this  election, at this defining moment, change has come to America. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| So let us summon a new spirit of patriotism; of service and responsibility where each of us resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other. Let us remember that if this financial crisis taught us anything, it’s that we cannot have  a thriving Wall Street while Main Street suffers — in this country, we rise or fall as one  nation; as one people. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| And to all those watching tonight from beyond our shores, from parliaments and palaces  to those who are huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of our world — our stories are singular, but our destiny is shared, and a new dawn of American leadership is at hand. To those who would tear this world down — we will defeat you. To those who seek peace and security — we support you. And to all those who have wondered if America’s beacon still burns as bright — tonight we proved once more that the true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity, and unyielding hope. |
| *Language features* |
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| **Text of speech** |
| This election had many firsts and many stories that will be told for generations. But one that’s on my mind tonight is about a woman who cast her ballot in Atlanta. She’s a lot like the millions of others who stood in line to make their voice heard in this election except for one thing — Ann Nixon Cooper is 106 years old. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| She was born just a generation past slavery; a time when there were no cars on the road or planes in the sky; when someone like her couldn’t vote for two reasons — because she was a woman and because of the colour of her skin. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| And tonight, I think about all that she’s seen throughout her century in America — the heartache and the hope; the struggle and the progress; the times we were told that we can’t, and the people who pressed on with that American creed: Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| At a time when women’s voices were silenced and their hopes dismissed, she lived to see them stand up and speak out and reach for the ballot. Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| When there was despair in the Dust Bowl and depression across the land, she saw a  nation conquer fear itself with a New Deal, new jobs and a new sense of common purpose. Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| When the bombs fell on our harbour and tyranny threatened the world, she was there to witness a generation rise to greatness and a democracy was saved. Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| She was there for the buses in Montgomery, the hoses in Birmingham, a bridge in Selma,  and a preacher from Atlanta who told a people that We Shall Overcome. Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| A man touched down on the moon, a wall came down in Berlin, a world was connected by our own science and imagination. And this year, in this election, she touched her finger to  a screen, and cast her vote, because after 106 years in America, through the best of times and the darkest of hours, she knows how America can change. Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| America, we have come so far. We have seen so much. But there is so much more to do. So tonight, let us ask ourselves — if our children should live to see the next century; if my daughters should be so lucky to live as long as Ann Nixon Cooper, what change will they see? What progress will we have made? |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

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| **Text of speech** |
| This is our chance to answer that call. This is our moment. This is our time — to put our people back to work and open doors of opportunity for our kids; to restore prosperity and promote the cause of peace; to reclaim the American Dream and reaffirm that fundamental truth — that out of many, we are one; that while we breathe, we hope, and where we are met with cynicism and doubt, and those who tell us that we can’t, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people: Yes we can. |
| *Language features* |
| *Structural features* |

Barack Obama, *Barack Obama’s 2008 election victory speech*, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Barack\_Obama%27s\_2008\_election\_victory\_speech