

# LESSON 8 - BARACK OBAMA

# BARACK OBAMA

November 4, 2008, was a day of celebration for many Americans. There were parties all across the United States. In Chicago, nearly a million people poured onto the streets. For them, it did not matter that it was cold, nor that it was late. They had something big to celebrate. Some of them waved flags. Some blew party horns and danced in the streets. Some cried for joy. And many chanted three words: "Yes, we can!" This was indeed an unforgettable day because these people were celebrating the election of Barack Obama as the forty-fourth president of the United States.



# BARACK OBAMA

*What do you see in this picture?*

Of course, there are always parties on election night. But the celebrations in honor of Barack Obama were different. People were not just celebrating his election. They were also celebrating the fact that the United States had just elected an African- American man as the next president, which had never been done before. This was an incredible achievement for a young man from a humble background, and he had worked very hard to get there. *The word humble means not fancy or important. Humble is used to describe things that are simple or modest.*





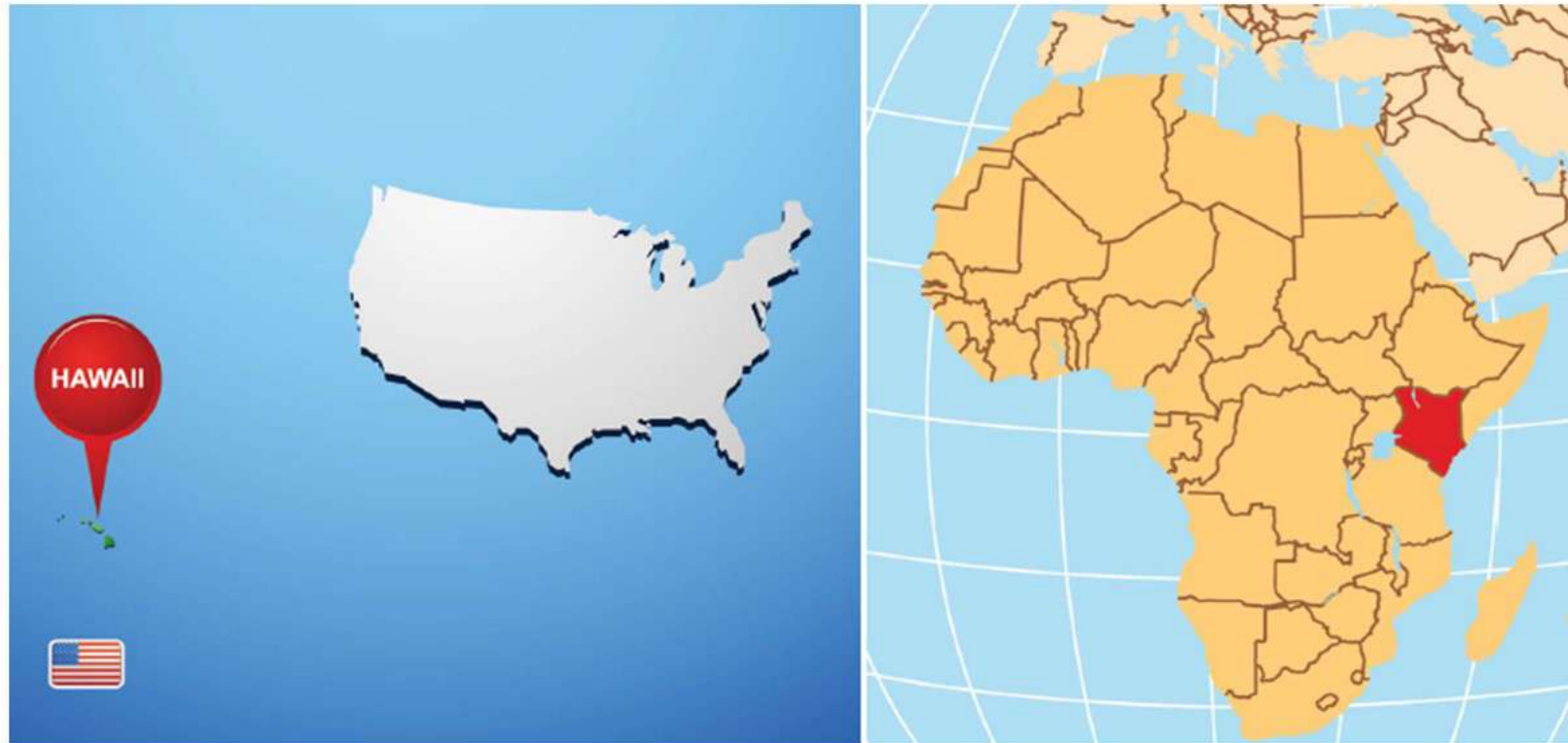
# BARACK OBAMA

Barack Obama was born on August 4, 1961, in Honolulu, Hawaii. *[Point to the island of Hawaii on the map.] Hawaii is one of the fifty United States, but it is not connected to any of the other states. It is an island in the Pacific Ocean.* His mother was from Kansas, and his father was from Kenya. *[Point to the country of Kenya, highlighted on the map of Africa.] Kenya is a country in Africa.* His parents met at the University of Hawaii. Shortly after they were married, they had a son and named him Barack Hussein Obama.



# BARACK OBAMA

When Barack was a baby, his father left Hawaii to study at Harvard University, in Massachusetts. When Barack was two years old, his parents divorced. Not long after that, Barack's father moved back to Kenya. Barack was raised by his mother and his grandparents, who loved him very much. As a young boy, Barack missed his father very much and thought about him often.





# BARACK OBAMA

While Barack Obama was a child growing up in Hawaii, he loved to go to the beach. *What is Hawaii?* He loved to play with his friends, many of whom were from different parts of the world. For a while, he and his mom moved to Indonesia. *[Point to the country of Indonesia on a world map or globe, and show its relationship to Hawaii.] Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia. It is a group of islands like Hawaii.* Although this was an exciting time for young Barack, he also saw how hard life could be for some people. He began to wonder about how to make the world a fairer place. He began to dream about a better future for everyone.



# BARACK OBAMA

All his life, Barack had been told by his family that education was the most precious gift. Barack listened to these words and worked very hard in school. Barack received good grades and eventually went on to study at Columbia University and Harvard Law School.





# BARACK OBAMA

When Barack was twenty-one years old, his father died. Barack was sad that he never really got to know his father. He went on a trip to Africa to meet some of his family members and learn about the land his ancestors called home. *Ancestors are members of someone's family from long ago.* It was during this visit that he dreamed about a better future for all Americans. He would work very hard to make this dream a reality.





# BARACK OBAMA

While Barack was attending Harvard Law School, he met Michelle Robinson. Barack and Michelle were married in 1992 and later had two daughters, Malia and Sasha. Barack Obama became a lawyer and, eventually, went on to teach law in Chicago, Illinois.



# BARACK OBAMA

During that time in America, it was sometimes difficult for African-Americans to go to college or to get jobs. Barack became a community leader in Chicago. He helped many people who were poor or who needed help. He encouraged young people to stay in school. He became interested in politics, and he began to work very hard to get more people to vote in elections. *Politics is the work of people who are part of the government.*





# BARACK OBAMA

Barack Obama believed that if enough people voted for change, then change would happen. He became a U.S. senator, representing the state of Illinois, in Washington, D.C. *A senator is an important person in the government who helps make laws.* Now his voice was being heard.



# BARACK OBAMA

In 2007, Barack Obama decided to run for president. He worked very hard to win the election, and he won it. It was a great accomplishment for President Obama. *An accomplishment is something that was done well or successfully.* But it was also a great accomplishment for the United States. Barack Obama became the first African-American president of the United States.





# BARACK OBAMA

President Obama wanted to make sure everyone had the chance to get the type of good education he had been able to receive. He once said, “[N]othing is more important than giving everyone the best education possible—from the day they start preschool to the day they start their career.”



# BARACK OBAMA

Being the president of the United States is a very important job. President Obama worked very hard. He traveled to many different countries and was always very busy helping to run the government of the United States. Nevertheless, he tried to spend as much time as he could with his wife and daughters. *[Point to the image of the Obama family.]* Whenever possible, they ate dinner together, watched movies and sports, and played with the family dog, Bo. *[Point to the image of Bo.]*

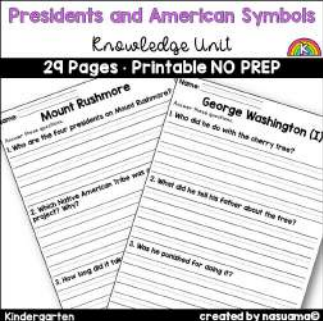




# BARACK OBAMA

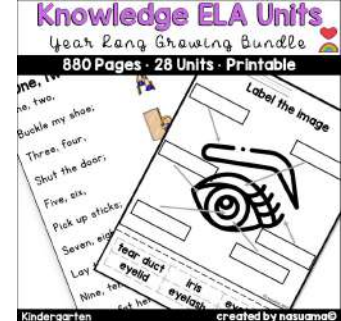
On November 7, 2012, Barack Obama was re-elected president. *This means that many, many Americans thought President Obama should be the president of the United States for another four years.* Once again, many people celebrated long into the night. And once again, they chanted the words "Yes, we can!"





# PRESIDENTS AND AMERICAN SYMBOLS

## BUNDLE



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Barack Obama**

Answer these questions.

**1. What were the three words people chanted?**

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**2. Why was the celebration different?**

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## DO YOU NEED EXTRA ACTIVITIES?

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