

Good morning. It's good to be home on this Father's Day with my girls, and with my wife, and it's an honor to spend some time with all of you today in the house of our Lord.

5 Church reminds me on this Father's Day that of all the rocks upon which we build our lives, we are most dependent on the family. The family is that most important foundation. And we are called to recognize and honor how critical every father is to that foundation. They are teachers and coaches. They are mentors and role models. They are examples of success and the men who constantly push us toward success.

10 But if we are honest with ourselves, we'll admit that too many fathers are also missing. Too many fathers are MIA. Too many fathers are AWOL, missing from too many lives and too many homes. They have abandoned their responsibilities. They are acting like boys instead of men. And the foundations of our families have suffered because of it.

15 You and I know this is true everywhere, but nowhere is it more true than in the African-American community. We know that more than half of all black children live in single-parent households. Half, a number that has doubled since we were children. We know the statistics that children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely
20 to drop out of schools and twenty times more likely to end up in prison. They are more likely to have behavioral problems, or run away from home, or become teenage parents because the father wasn't in the home. And the foundations of our community and our country are weaker because of this.

We can't simply write these problems off to past injustices. Those injustices are
25 real. There's a reason why our families are in disrepair. And some of it has to do with a tragic history. But we can't keep using that as an excuse. Some of it has to do with the failures of our government and those failures are real. But we can't keep using that as an excuse. Yes, we need fewer guns in the hands of people who shouldn't have them. Yes, we need more money for our schools, and more
30 outstanding teachers in the classroom, and more afterschool programs for our children. Yes, we need more jobs and job training and more opportunity in our

35 communities. We know all of them. That's why I'm running for President of the United States of America. We know we need to bring about change in America. We know that. But the change we need is not just going to come from a government. It's not just going to come from a president. It's going to come from us. It's going to come from each and everyone of us.

40 We need families to raise our children. We need fathers to recognize that responsibility does not just end at conception. That doesn't just make you a father. What makes you a man is not the ability to have a child. Any fool can have a child. That doesn't make you a father. It's the courage to raise a child that makes you a father . . .

Excerpt from "Our Responsibility as Fathers,"
presidential candidate Barack Obama's Father's Day speech, June 15, 2008

Guiding questions:

- What is the purpose of the text, and how is it shaped by the culture and context in which it exists?
- How is language used to appeal to the reader's ethos, pathos and/or logos?