

*The President.* Someday all of you will know more about me than I do. [Laughter]

*Hillary Clinton.* I know. We wanted to be sure if you had any questions for us, you'd have a chance to ask, okay? My goodness! We won't be able to answer every question. [Laughter]

*The President.* Let's take—shall we start in grades, going backwards? A sixth-grader. Go ahead.

Q. How do you deal with criticism?

*The President.* How do I deal with criticism? Better on some days than others. [Laughter] I think the important thing about criticism is to try to take it very seriously; that is, can we learn from criticism? Benjamin Franklin, one of our Founding Fathers, said, "Our critics are our friends for they show us our faults." And since no one is perfect, your critics can help you learn to do better. But it's important not to take criticism personally. That is, a lot of times people try to hurt you personally, and you can't let that happen.

So if someone criticizes you, ask yourself, "Is it true what they're saying?" And if it's true, then say, "Well, I'm going to try to improve. I'm going to try to do better." Don't let anybody put you down as a person. Too much criticism today is designed to hurt people personally and to hurt them in the eyes of other people. That's wrong. But criticism itself can be very good.

*Hillary Clinton.* That's a good question, because I would bet that as all of you who are on the student council and are ambassadors make decisions, you will get some criticism. You'll have friends who will say, "Why did you do that?" or "I don't like you anymore," or "I don't agree with that." So that was a very good question to ask.

Of course, the best way to handle criticism is to remember the Golden Rule. You all remember the Golden Rule?

*Students.* Yes.

*Hillary Clinton.* From church and Sunday school? If you can treat other people the way you want to be treated, then you can learn from criticism but not get pulled down by it, not be upset by it.

*The President.* And you should think about that, too, not only how you deal with criticism but if you're going to criticize. If you want to be a critic, that is, if you see something in school you don't like or you see someone doing something you don't like, think about how you're

going to say that so they will be able to listen and hear you, but you won't be hurting them.

So you go up and say, "You're doing something I disagree with. I think you're a good person, but I don't agree with what you're doing. Here is what I think you should do." Do it like that, instead of saying, "I don't like you anymore. You're not a good person. Good-bye." [Laughter] You see what I mean? So you can do it. It's important to receive criticism, but it's also important to give it in a good spirit.

Is there a fifth-grader with a question? Let's see, go ahead.

Q. Why is it important to swear in when you become President?

*The President.* To swear in?

Q. Yes.

*Hillary Clinton.* When you become President.

*The President.* That's a very good question. Because when the President swears the Oath of Office, when he puts his hand on the Bible and swears before God and all the American people to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States, that increases the obligation the President feels inside, in his heart, to do the job. All the American people see the President making that promise, and they then, no matter who they voted for—whom they voted for—come together as a people and see that the President is now the President. And that seals the decision of the election and makes it more than an election, it makes it a matter of law and also makes it a matter of conviction to the American people. It's a very important symbolic thing.

Is there a fourth-grader with a question?

Q. Why didn't you let your goal down of being President?

*Hillary Clinton.* I'm sorry, we couldn't hear you.

Q. Why didn't you let your goal down of being President?

*The President.* I didn't. What do you mean? I don't understand the question, I'm sorry. Say it again.

Q. Why didn't you let your goal down of being President?

*Hillary Clinton.* Oh, how did he have the goal of being President all the time he was growing up, and why didn't he give up or why didn't he quit?

*The President.* Oh, why didn't I give up on my goal of being President? Is that what you're asking? That's a very good question. There are