

## **Attachment II: - Potential Topics for Study Guide**

### **1. Relating Education and Democracy**

What is the purpose of education? What is the value of a broad education, an integrated curriculum, a curriculum which honors the arts? What kind of education strengthens citizens; confers “agency” on them? How should civics be taught? In what way is education a privilege? How is education related to the inequality of wealth? What special responsibilities to society do those who receive an education have; how should they fulfill them

### **2. Education and Immigration**

How is education related to the assimilation of immigrants? Should education be a magnet for immigrants? Should those educated in America engage in outreach to other countries as the Peace Corps suggested?

### **3. Role of Dissent**

What is the appropriate role of dissent in a democracy? What role does poetry and art play in awakening the public to fresh points of view? When is the line between discussion and action breached by those offering dissent?

### **4. Role of “interest” in a democracy**

What does it mean to have a disinterested perspective on public policy? Is this good? What is the appropriate role of a representative in our democracy? Should the representative reflect the opinions of constituents, act in the public interest as a trustee of the nation, defend powerful interests in a district, and/or follow political party cues? Be disinterested?

### **5. Spirit of the Nation**

What is the spirit or soul of a nation? How does this spirit moderate power? What ties a nation together: inheritance, geography, or shared beliefs? What is our National character?

### **6. Leadership**

What kind of leader was Jack Kennedy and how does he demonstrate leadership in his rhetoric? What kind of education should leaders have?

### **7. The Culture of the Times**

How might the impact of Kennedy’s speech have differed if the audience had been more diverse? How has the growing diversity of America impacted the significance of his speech? What of lasting value was expressed here? Does the appreciation of the speech change with social class or ethnic identity?

### **Current issues that might be incorporated into discussions:**

The role of liberal arts in preparation for citizenship

The significance of truth in political rhetoric  
Defining the obligations of citizenship  
Cultivation of compromise and civility in political debate  
Inequality of wealth among citizens  
The nature of civic education  
Incorporating diverse opinions within the political system