
Yvonne: This is '6 Minute English', I'm Yvonne Archer - and thanks to Callum for joining me today.

Callum: Hello Yvonne!

Yvonne: Hi Callum. As the world knows, recently, the United States of America got its very first African American President. And today, we find out how one French-Londoner decided to mark this historic event. But first, I've a question for you Callum!

Callum: OK – go on Yvonne.

Yvonne: Right! In 1881, Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, went to the White House to find something for President James Garfield. Was it

- a) gold
- b) hidden bottles of wine OR
- c) a bullet

Callum: I have to say, I have absolutely no idea on this one. Err – I'm just going to go for hidden bottles of wine. That's my answer.

Yvonne: It's a good, but we'll find out whether you're right or wrong later on. Now Alice Gbelia is the editor of an internet listings site. So she tells people who visit the website about the most interesting plays, clubs, films and other events in and around London. So of course, Alice knew the best places for people in London to watch the new American president being 'sworn in'. Callum, could you explain what being 'sworn in' means please?

Callum: Certainly. When someone is 'sworn in', it means that they take an oath – which is a serious, sincere promise. For example, at the beginning of a court trial, a witness is 'sworn in' - to promise to tell the truth. And politicians are 'sworn in' when they take office – when they start their new job – to show that they will do everything their new job requires.

Yvonne: Thanks Callum. Now Alice uses the word 'inauguration' which is the special name for a swearing-in ceremony – in this case, making it official that Barack Obama is now the President. But Alice also mentions 'promoters'. What are they Callum?

Callum: 'Promoters' are people who help organise public events such as films, concerts, parties and trips. And 'promoters' use their own money for the events – so they also make money from them.

Yvonne: They certainly do! And what's 'a cocktail party'?

Callum: Oh 'a cocktail party' is a party where 'cocktails' are served! And they're drinks which are made from two or more ingredients and usually include some alcohol, but they don't have to. So for example – a cocktail could be made from pineapple, coconut, fresh mint, cabbage, lemon and rum.

Yvonne: Callum, is that a real cocktail?!

Callum: No, I made that one up! But some cocktails are made from very unusual ingredients – so their names are often unusual and even entertaining.

Yvonne: A bit like you really, Callum! Anyway, now as we hear from Alice Gbelia, try to find out why she decided to mark the historic inauguration of President Obama at the event where I met her.

ALICE GBELIA

Because all the events, you have all these promoters doing something around it, you know, and throwing some cocktail parties and some DJ parties and I just wanted to watch the inauguration with like-minded people.

Yvonne: Callum, why did Alice choose to go to one particular event rather than any of the others she knew about?

Callum: Well, she wasn't interested in watching the inauguration at a cocktail party or at a DJ party – where someone was playing recorded music. Alice just wanted to watch the inauguration.

Yvonne: And you may have noticed that she also wanted to watch it with who she calls 'like-minded people'. Callum, who are they?

Callum: People who are 'like-minded' have similar views or interests to us – so we usually get on with them very well. Their minds often work in a similar way to our own, so we can call them 'like-minded people'.

Yvonne: Well I asked Alice to explain who she means by 'like-minded people'...

ALICE GBELIA

...People who are for Obama – who support Obama and who are happy to have a Black president of the United States of America.

Yvonne: Now as someone who is happy that President Obama is in the White House, I wondered what Alice expects from him...

ALICE GBELIA

Well, I think that people are putting too many expectations on Obama. Personally, all I'm asking is that he's a good president for the United States first because most people think that he's going to be the president for all Black people around the world but that's not the case.

Callum: So at this point, Alice only asks that President Obama does his job well for his own country.

Yvonne: Hmm – but she also thinks that people expect too much of him – they want him to do more than he'll be able to do. Do you think she has a point there, Callum?

Callum: I think she does. There are such high expectations that I think it will be nearly impossible for him to live up to everybody's dreams.

Yvonne: I agree. Well, it's time now for the answer to today's big question. Callum, what was Alexander Bell looking for in the White House back in 1881?

Callum: Well, I thought it was some wine. Was I right?

Yvonne: No - for a change, you were wrong! Yes, he was looking for a bullet. President Garfield had been shot and the bullet was still in his body.

Callum: Oh, I see.

Yvonne: Anyway, that's it for today's '6 Minute English' from BBC Learning English.

C/Y: Goodbye!