

Student Worksheet

DIRECTIONS

Read the following news story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions. Use additional paper if necessary.

STORY

President Obama Encourages 'Civil Debate' on Abortion, 05/19/2009

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june09/abortion_05-19.html

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What did President Obama speak about in his speech to graduating seniors from Notre Dame?

2. Who is Norman McCorvey?

3. Why did Notre Dame invite Mr. Obama?

4. What is Roe v. Wade?

5. Name two ways Mr. Obama has reversed Bush administration policies on stem cell research and abortion.

6. Why is the Catholic Church against abortion and stem cell research?

7. What did the Gallup poll say about the number of people that identify as “pro-life”?

8. What did the data from the American National Election Studies say about opinions regarding abortion?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Do you think Mr. Obama should have been invited to speak at Notre Dame? Why or why not? Should he have spoken about abortion?

2. Do you agree with the president that it is important to listen to people who do not agree with you and to find some common ground? Why or why not?

3. Gallup and American Election Studies have really different readings about public opinion on abortion in this country, why is this? Do you think this happens with other issues?

4. How do the different sides of the abortion debate use the words “pro” or “anti”, “choice” or “life” to depict themselves and the opposing viewpoints?

Extension Activity

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.