

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

Financial Crisis Tests Notions of the President's Role in the Economy

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http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/july-dec08/economy_9-23.html

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the government doing in response to the most recent financial crisis?

2. Who was the first president to re-shape the president's involvement in the economy?

3. Prior to the Depression, what was the president's role in the economy?

4. What was the New Deal and what did it accomplish?

5. How did Republican President Ronald Reagan change the policy towards the economy?

6. What are the major tools presidents can use to help the economy?

7. Why is the Chairman of the Federal Reserve important?

8. How could the Wall Street bailout affect Obama and McCain if they become president?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. How has U.S. government involvement in the economy evolved, starting with the Great Depression? How did certain presidents shape it?

2. When historians talk about this current financial crisis 50 years down the road, what do you think they will say? How do you think it will fit into the cycle of changes in government involvement in the economy?

3. Based on what you read, how much direct control does the president have over the health of the U.S. economy? Do you think the president should have more or less freedom to pass laws that he or she thinks would be beneficial?

4. If you were the next president, what would you do to try to grow the economy? How would the economy rank against other issues you think are important for the president to deal with?

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.