

Student Worksheet

DIRECTIONS

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

STORY

Obama Chooses Basketball Buddy to Shape Education Policy, 12/19/08

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/july-dec08/edsec_12-19.html

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is Arne Duncan?

2. What are some highlights of Duncan's career as chief of Chicago public schools?

3. Why does Mr. Obama think that the secretary of education is important?

4. What does the secretary of education do?

5. What is the legacy of the Bush appointed Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings?

6. When is the law up for renewal? Why is this important?

7. What is the reform movement and what is a teacher union?

8. If the secretary of education is not in charge of funding schools what is his or her role?

9. How are schools funded?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Create a list of things you'd like to improve about your school. What could Arne Duncan and Barack Obama do to help with these issues?

2. After learning a little about Arne Duncan, do you think that he is a good choice for secretary of education? Why or why not?

3. Why are good schools important? Research the quality of schools in the United States compared with the quality in other countries?

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.