

## Student Worksheet

### DIRECTIONS

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

### STORY

## **Obama Cabinet Picks Create Open Senate Seats, and Controversy,**

12/16/08

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/july-dec08/senate\\_12-16.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/july-dec08/senate_12-16.html)

### READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

**1. Who is Rod Blagojevich?**

**2. How do states fill their open Senate seats?**

**3. Why are there open Senate seats in Illinois, New York, Delaware and Colorado?**

**4. How were senators chosen before 1913?**

**5. Who is Caroline Kennedy?**

**6. What does Thomas Mann think will happen because of the Blagojevich scandal?**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

**1. Do you think Caroline Kennedy should replace Hillary Clinton?**

**2. Do you think Rod Blagojevich knew what he was doing was wrong or did he see it as politics as usual? Why do you think Illinois has such a problem with political corruption? Do you think corruption breeds corruption? What does it take to break a cycle of political corruption?**

**3. Do you think governors should choose who should fill an open Senate seat? If not, how should open Senate seats be filled?**

**4. What experiences or qualifications make a good senator? Why?**

**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.