

Student Worksheet

DIRECTIONS

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

STORY

Five Years In, Iraq War Pushes On, 03/19/08

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/jan-june08/iraq_3-19.html

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the state of security in Iraq now?

2. How many Americans have died in the war? How many Iraqis are estimated to have died?

3. What was the U.S. justification for invading Iraq?

4. Did the military find weapons of mass destruction? Why or why not?

5. What groups started attacking U.S. military after the initial combat mission was over?

6. What event drove Sunnis and Shiites to the brink of civil war?

7. What was the surge?

8. Has violence decreased in Iraq?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Do you agree with the quote by Jon Alterman that "this is a war that most Americans continue to feel they don't have to make sacrifices for?" Why or why not?

2. How have the goals of the war changed since it began? Do you think the United States made the right decision by invading? Why or why not?

3. Pick one of the following key players found on the Iraq in Transition site (http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/middle_east/iraq/keyplayers/index.html):

**Interim President Jalal Talabani
Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani
Shiite Cleric Muqtada al-Sadr
U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad
Army Lt. Gen. David Petraeus**

Research your person, then write 3 paragraphs about what your key player would say he wants to see happen over the next year in Iraq.

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.