

## Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

### STORY

#### **Iraqis, U.S. Military Negotiate Future of American Troop Presence** 10/28/08

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/july-dec08/iraq\\_10-28.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/july-dec08/iraq_10-28.html)

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

[Student Worksheet](#) (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

### PROCEDURE

#### **1. WARM UP**

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

#### **2. MAIN ACTIVITY**

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

#### **3. DISCUSSION**

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.

### INITIATING QUESTIONS

**1. How long have U.S. forces been in Iraq?**

**2. Why does the United States have troops in Iraq?**

**3. Who decides when the U.S. troops will come home from Iraq?**

### READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – [Student Worksheet](#)

**1. What will happen if the Iraqi government does not agree on a plan for U.S. troops?**

#### ANSWER

The U.S. military is warning Iraq that if it doesn't come to an agreement on the terms allowing U.S. troops to stay in the country for three years, military operations and services — including education, economic support and protection of oil exports -- could be shut down on Jan. 1.

**2. When would all U.S. troops need to be out of Iraq under the agreement?**

#### ANSWER

After months of negotiations, President George Bush agreed to a "date goal" of final U.S. troop withdrawal by 2011.

**3. Name one of the ways the agreement would affect what actions soldiers can take?**

#### ANSWER

Iraq would have some legal jurisdiction over American soldiers and contractors, who are currently immune from trial in Iraqi courts. Under the agreement, troops would also need an Iraqi warrant before searching houses or detaining people, unless they were engaged in active combat.

**4. What does the U.N. mandate allow U.S. forces to do and when does it expire?**

#### ANSWER

The U.S. military and allied forces are currently in Iraq under a United Nations mandate that will expire at the end of this year. The mandate allows the multi-national forces to "take all necessary measures to preserve peace and security" in Iraq.

## **5. What is Barack Obama's plan for troops in Iraq?**

### **ANSWER**

Obama has called for a phased withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq by the summer of 2010 and has set a goal of ending the war. He would leave a residual force in the country to carry out counter-terrorism missions, but would not have permanent bases.

## **6. What is John McCain's plan for troops in Iraq?**

### **ANSWER**

McCain has staunchly opposed setting a deadline for U.S. troop withdrawal, saying it is akin to scheduling a defeat. In January he said that it would not matter if American troops were in Iraq for 50 or even 100 years if the country was stable and the American military was not suffering casualties.

More recently he said the war could be won by 2013, but maintains that a premature withdrawal could have "calamitous consequences to the Iraqi people."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

**1. Imagine you are an Iraqi citizen how do you feel about the agreement? Would you be in favor of it or against it? Why?**

**2. Some of the Iraqi political groups have come out against the pact, why do you think they are against it?**

**3. Why do you think that the Iraqi government is seeking to regain some of its sovereignty?**

### **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](mailto:extra@newshour.org)). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.