

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

U.S., China Redefine Relationship During Obama's Asia Tour, 11/17/2009

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/july-dec09/china_11-17.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. What is global trade?

2. Why is trade important to the United States?

3. What are the historic super-powers? Who are the growing super powers?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – [Student Worksheet](#)

1. What did President Obama call a source of strength and not weakness this week?

ANSWER

While visiting China and other parts of Asia this week, President Barack Obama made a pitch for greater access to the Internet calling freedom a source of strength and not weakness.

2. What does President Obama hope to do on his tour of Asia?

ANSWER

President Obama's trip is intended to focus largely on the economy, the environment and trade tensions between the U.S. and China, the largest country in the world with 1.3 billion people, compared to 300 million in the U.S.

3. Name the 4 countries the president will visit.

ANSWER

He visits Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and China.

4. Where was the president's speech broadcast? Where was it censored?

ANSWER

The Chinese government censored coverage of President Obama's comments. While the town hall was streamed and archived on the White House's Web site, it wasn't broadcast on CCTV, the state-run national television in China nor on Xinhua.

5. What country holds the most U.S. debt?

ANSWER

In recent years, China has become the United States' largest trading partner, an important global power and the No. 1 debt holder for the United States. In fact, China owns more of the United States debt than any country ever has in history.

6. What is the central message that the White House is trying to send on the Asian tour?

ANSWER

As Sheila Smith of the Council of Foreign Relations told the NewsHour in a recent interview, expect the president to stick to a central theme.

"The administration has its agenda quite clearly laid out. The big-picture message is America is engaged in Asia; Asia is our future."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Why do you think President Obama first spoke to students?

2. What do you think President Hu would say if he came to talk to your school?

3. After hearing about the United States and China would you like to live in China? Why or why not?

4. Why might this administration think that "Asia is our future"? Do you agree?

5. Listen to or watch the video of Obama taking questions from students, what questions would you ask Obama if you could ask him anything? What would you ask President Hu?

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.