

Status in Iraq

Student Handout: Timeline for Iraqi Democracy

Background: Regime change and promoting democracy in Iraq was part of U.S. foreign policy as early as 1998. A \$97 million law passed by Congress and signed by President Bill Clinton authorized military assistance to Iraqi opposition forces expressly for those purposes. Though the initial focus of the current war with Iraq was to seek out and destroy all weapons of mass destruction, it was understood that this could probably only be accomplished through regime change. Thus, another element of the war strategy was to work with Iraqi opposition leaders to help build a democratic Iraq, including the preparation of a new constitution. A further objective was to establish a broad-based democratic government that would respect basic rights of all Iraqis, including women and minorities, and adhere to the rule of law, including freedom of speech and worship.

In this activity you will be working with other small groups to review the steps taken to create a democracy in Iraq. You will examine discussions held between guest panelists on the *Washington Week* program and analyze how process has gone and what else was or is needed to ensure success.

Directions:

1. Review the steps toward democracy timeline below.
2. Identify where democratic elements you listed in the opening activity are found in any of the steps in the timeline.
3. In your small group research the timeline step you were assigned (see below) by going to the Washington Week website at <http://www.pbs.org/weta/washingtonweek>. Follow these steps to locate the related program segment:
 - a. At the home page click “Transcripts” link at the top of the page.
 - b. Browse by airdate by going to the year of your segment and making a selection for the correct date and clicking “Go.”
 - c. Review the program’s transcript by scrolling to find the segment you are looking for. This is listed on the program step just after the date.
 - d. You can also review the segment on video stream by clicking “Watch This Week’s Show” at the top of the page and then selection the appropriate program segment.
 - e. Take notes following the research questions below as you review the transcript.
4. After your group has researched the material, develop a brief presentation following the research questions and prepare to present to the class.

Steps Towards Iraqi Democracy Timeline

- July 12, 2003 - The Iraqi Governing Council is formed with the power to direct policy, nominate and dismiss ministers. *WW program segment dates: 11-14-03;12-04-03*

- March 1, 2004 - The Iraqi Governing Council approves an interim constitution providing a legal framework until a permanent constitution can be ratified. *WW program segment date: 3-1-04*
- May 28th – Prime Minister Iyad Allawi is chosen to appoint cabinet and other government officials, he is to lead the government once power is transferred from the U.S. *WW program segment date: 5-28-04*
- June 28, 2004 - Sovereignty is transferred from U.S.-led coalition to the Interim Iraqi Government. *WW program segment dates: 6-25-04; 7-2-04*
- January 30, 2005 - Election Day. National Assembly is elected and will write a new and permanent Constitution and exercise legislative functions until the constitution is ratified. (*WW program segment dates: 1-28-05; 2-4-05; 2-25-05 and 3-25-05 constitution building amongst ethnic tensions;*)
- May 3, 2005 - Iraq's first elected government takes office. Shiite Arab Ibrahim al-Fafari was sworn in as Prime Minister. *WW program segment dates: 4-8-05; 5-06-05*
- August 15, 2005 – Shia and Kurd delegates finalize a constitution and skip approval by the Parliament due to Sunni protests. Draft of Constitution goes to ratification October 12. *WW program segment dates 8-26-05; 9-2-05*

At this point, students should review future programs as they come up.

- October 15, 2005 - Date by which a national vote is to be held regarding the ratification of the proposed constitution.
- December 15, 2005 - Date that elections for a permanent government take place if the constitution is ratified. If the constitution is not ratified, this is the date by which elections for a new national assembly are to be held.

Adopted from the U.S. Department of State <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/inaqelect/timeline.htm>

Research questions for WW segments:

1. Briefly explain what the timeline event means.
2. How does the event you researched on the timeline contain an element of democracy you brainstormed in the opening activity?
3. Examine the comments made by the *Washington Week* panel members as to how effective the actions taken are to what needs to be accomplished to promote democracy in Iraq. Assess whether the actions taken are effective and what problems might be encountered in the process. Provide examples to support your assessment.
4. What more needs to be done or should be done in the event you examined to promote democracy in Iraq?