

NEWS BREAK

Sunday's News Break selects an article from Sunday, January 15, 2017 of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

***Please remember to always preview the content of the article before sharing with your students.**

Article: Obama delivered big on change, less so on hope (MAIN, A14)

Pre-Reading & Vocabulary

- How do you feel about President Obama and what he accomplished in his eight years in office? Did he deliver on his promises? Why or why not?
- Do you respect him? Why or why not?
- Would you have voted for him again, if he could've held office another term? Why or why not? How do you think your parents feel?

Vocabulary: Match the words to the numbered definitions in the chart below.

A. ascension	1. pertaining to, of the nature of, or serving as an emblem; symbolic.
B. consequential	2. to activate, set in motion, or take up again; renew
C. emblematic	3. to produce in large number.
D. revive	4. moving upward; rising.
E. robust	5. outstanding or immense
F. spawn	6. following as an effect, result, or outcome; resultant; consequent.
G. stellar	7. strong and healthy; hardy; vigorous

Comprehension:

1. President Obama led the U.S. out of its worst economic crisis since the Depression, provided health-care coverage to millions and revived the auto industry, but how is he leaving our nation?

2. Barack Obama promised what two things when he became the nation's 44th president eight years ago?
3. He departs office after leading the United States out of its worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, and as the country enjoys its most robust economy in years. How has his policies helped our nation?
4. Yet Obama leaves not with a country united and eager for what comes next, but one divided. Who is divided?
5. The Republican-led Congress and President-elect Donald Trump see Obamacare as emblematic of much that's gone wrong. How do they describe the program?
6. The most notable change during Obama's years involved the _____. In January 2009, the nation was hemorrhaging jobs. In the previous year alone, the number of unemployed people had increased by _____ million.
7. Hodges stated economic opportunity is driven by what two factors?
8. Yet the fact remains: Twenty million more people today have health-care coverage than did when Obama took office. So, combined with an economy full of momentum, why is Obama not ending his presidency on the same upswing as Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton, who also left during prosperous times? What did a Pew Research survey suggest?

Discussion Questions or Extension Essay Questions:

“He saw himself as a transformational president. In some ways that was defined simply by who he is,” added Michael Siegel, author of “The President as Leader.”

Same-sex marriage became legal. Diplomatic relations with Cuba were restored for the first time since 1961. Nearly everyone was required to get health-care coverage, and the government is making a strong effort to help pay the cost. Millions of immigrants in the U.S. illegally who came to this country as children have been allowed to stay.

- Do you see President Obama as transformational? Why or why not?

“Economic opportunity is still driven by educational opportunity and where you live,” Hodges said.

- Do you agree or disagree with the above statement? Why or why not?
- How does education and where you live make a difference in regards to your economic opportunity?

He was a historic champion for people who throughout history have been out of the American political mainstream. To many, Obama is “seen as ‘the other’ in so many ways. He’s African American, went to an elitist institution and is seen as a liberal,” said Scott Huffmon, poll director.

- In what ways was Obama a historic champion? Please give several examples from the article.
- Do you think he was viewed as “the other?” Why or why not?

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Newsbreak Answer Key: January 15, 2017

Vocabulary

- A. 4
- B. 6
- C. 1
- D. 2
- E. 7
- F. 3
- G. 5

Comprehension Questions

1. Divided
2. Hope and change
3. They helped to revive the auto industry, clamp down on financial-industry abuses and provide health insurance coverage to millions. His very ascension to the White House “sent a strong signal about America as the land of opportunity,” said former South Carolina Gov. James Hodges, a Democrat.
4. Divisions are between rural and urban, left and right, lower skilled workers and the more educated. Huge numbers of people are not confident about their financial futures. They’re deeply concerned about whether the government can keep them safe. Overwhelming numbers of Republicans continue to dismiss Obama as too liberal and out of touch.
5. They describe as a costly big-government disaster spawning higher premiums and less high-quality care.
6. Economy; 4.1 million
7. “Economic opportunity is still driven by educational opportunity and where you live,” Hodges said.
8. A Pew Research Center survey suggests part of the reason is national security. “Americans also became less confident in the ability of their government to handle threats,” said Michael Dimock, president of the center. Any sense of security triggered by the 2011 killing of Sept. 11 terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden proved fleeting. Pew found that after the 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, Calif., the public’s positive ratings of the government’s handling of terrorism sank to their lowest point since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.