

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS  
OCTOBER 2009 POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE UPDATE SURVEY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
OCTOBER 1-4, 2009  
N=1,002**

**READ TO ALL:** Next I'd like to ask about some things that have been in the news. Please answer as best you can. If you don't know the answer just tell me and we'll move to the next question.

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.1 Do you happen to know which political party has a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
October 1-4, 2009	<b>75</b>	13	12
Mid-June, 2009	<b>76</b>	12	12
March 26-29, 2009	<b>86</b>	12	2
December 4-7, 2008	<b>82</b>	11	7
February 28-March 2, 2008	<b>70</b>	26	4
August 16-19, 2007	<b>78</b>	19	3
February, 2007	<b>76</b>	10	14
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:<sup>1</sup></b>			
May, 2008	<b>53</b>	15	32
Late October, 2006	4	<b>58</b>	38
April, 2006	6	<b>64</b>	30
April, 2004	8	<b>56</b>	36
June, 2001	34	<b>31</b>	35
August, 1999	8	<b>55</b>	37
December, 1998	11	<b>56</b>	33
June, 1997	6	<b>50</b>	44
April, 1996	8	<b>70</b>	22
June, 1995	5	<b>73</b>	22
July, 1994	<b>60</b>	18	22
February, 1994	<b>58</b>	42	n/a
September, 1992	<b>46</b>	9	45
June, 1992	<b>44</b>	12	44
May, 1992	<b>49</b>	12	39
May, 1989 <i>Political Knowledge Survey</i>	<b>68</b>	16	16

**\*Correct answers for each trend in bold**

<sup>1</sup> In May 2008, and from May 1992 through Late October 2006 this was asked as an open-ended question, without offering response options for Democrats and Republicans. In May 1989 the question was worded "As a result of the election last year which party now has the most members in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington?"

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.2 Do you happen to know if Iran and Israel do or do not share a border?

- 27 Yes, they do
- 42 No, they do not (*Correct*)
- 30 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

**TREND FOR COMPARISON:**

Do you happen to know if Pakistan and Afghanistan do or do not share a border?

	<u>March 26-29, 2009</u>
Yes, they do ( <i>Correct</i> )	69
No, they do not	15
Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL. DO NOT READ</b> )	16

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.3 Do you happen to know if the Dow Jones Industrial Average is currently closer to **[READ IN ORDER]**?

		<u>March 26-29, 2009</u>		<u>Dec 4-7, 2008</u>		<u>Feb 28- Mar 2, 2008</u>	
7	3,000	20	3,000	18	2,000	16	4,000
5	6,000	14	5,000	8	4,000	9	5,000
<b>33</b>	<b>10,000 [OR]</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8,000 [OR]</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>8,000 [OR]</b>	16	10,000 [OR]
2	16,000	4	11,000	5	13,000	<b>31</b>	<b>12,000</b>
52	DK/Ref ( <b>VOL.</b> )	22	DK/Ref ( <b>VOL.</b> )	24	DK/Ref ( <b>VOL.</b> )	28	DK/Ref ( <b>VOL.</b> )
		<u>May 2000<sup>2</sup></u>					
16	2,000	5	3,000				
14	4,000	4	5,000				
13	8,000 [OR]	<b>28</b>	<b>10,000 [OR]</b>				
<b>41</b>	<b>13,000</b>	1	20,000				
16	DK/Ref ( <b>VOL.</b> )	62	DK/Ref ( <b>VOL.</b> )				

**Correct answers for each trend highlighted in bold**

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.4 Does the so-called “cap and trade” legislation being discussed in Congress deal with... **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

- 23 Energy and environment (*Correct*)
- 11 Health care
- 13 Banking reform
- 5 Unemployment
- 48 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

<sup>2</sup> In May, 2000 the question was worded: “Do you happen to know at what level the Dow Jones Industrial average is currently trading? Is it about...”

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.5 Does the so-called “public option” legislation being discussed in Congress deal with... [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

- 3 Energy and environment
- 56 Health care (*Correct*)
- 2 Banking reform
- 6 Unemployment
- 33 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.6 About how many U.S. military personnel are currently in Afghanistan [READ IN ORDER]?

- 17 Around 20,000
- 28 Around 70,000 (*Correct*)
- 18 Around 150,000 [OR]
- 7 Around 200,000
- 29 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.7 Do you happen to know if the national unemployment rate is currently closer to [READ IN ORDER]?

		<u>March</u> <u>26-29, 2009</u>	
4	5%	3	4%
53	10% ( <i>Correct</i> )	53	8% ( <i>Correct</i> )
15	15%	24	12%
18	20%	18	16%
10	Don't know/Ref. ( <b>VOL. DO NOT READ</b> )	2	Don't know/Ref. ( <b>VOL. DO NOT READ</b> )

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.8 Do you happen to know who is chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve Board? Is it... [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

		<u>Mar 26-29,</u> <u>2009</u>	<u>Feb. 28-Mar 2,</u> <u>2008</u>
33	Ben Bernanke ( <i>Correct</i> )	45	35
15	Alan Greenspan	16	27
3	Paul Volcker	7	8
4	Henry Paulson	12	5
45	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL. DO NOT READ</b> )	20	25

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.9 Do you happen to know who Glenn Beck is? Is he... [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

- 40 A television and radio talk show host (*Correct*)
- 6 A member of the Federal Reserve Board
- 5 The Secretary of Defense
- 1 A Hip Hop artist
- 48 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.10 Can you tell me who is the newest justice to join the Supreme Court? Is it... [READ IN RANDOMIZE]?

- 65 Sonia Sotomayor (*Correct*)
- 3 Ruth Bader Ginsburg
- 1 Eric Holder [OR]
- 2 Antonin Scalia
- 29 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.11 Can you tell me who is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which is working on a bill to reform the health care system? Is it... [READ AND RANDOMIZE]

- 18 Max Baucus (*Correct*)
- 8 Kathleen Sebelius
- 11 Dianne Feinstein [OR]
- 7 John McCain
- 56 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)

**RANDOMIZE Q.1-Q.12 (DO NOT RANDOMIZE BY FORM)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.12 Is health care spending per person in the U.S. higher, lower, or about the same as in most major European nations? [READ AND RANDOMIZE "HIGHER AND "LOWER]

- 61 Higher in U.S. (*Correct*)
- 15 Lower in U.S.
- 4 About the same
- 20 Don't know/Refused (**VOL. DO NOT READ**)