

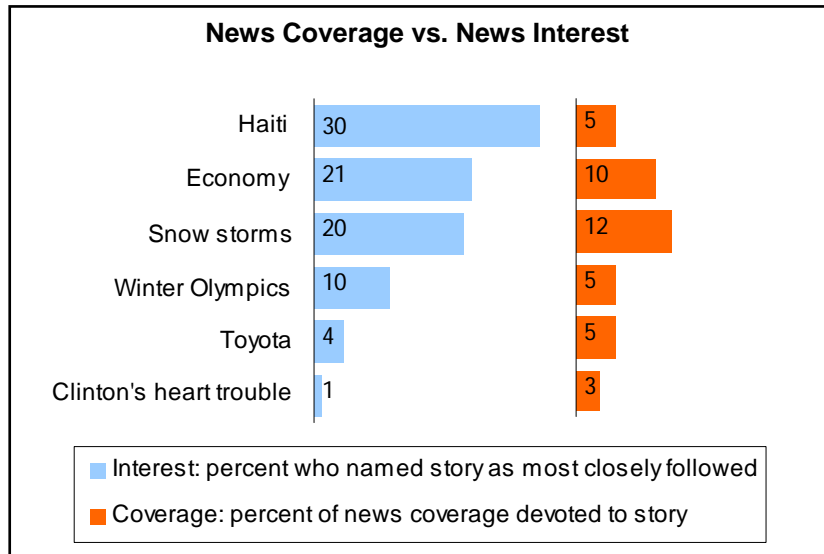


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Amount of Storm Coverage Seen About Right
HAITI, SNOWSTORMS, ECONOMY VIE FOR PUBLIC’S ATTENTION

Americans say they tracked the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti more closely than any other major news story last week, but they also kept a close watch on news about the U.S. economy and the powerful snow storms that hit the nation’s East Coast and South.



Three-in-ten (30%) say they followed news about Haiti most closely, while about two-

in-ten say they followed news about the economy (21%) or the storms (20%) more closely than any other major story. One-in-ten say they followed news about the opening of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada, most closely, while smaller numbers say continuing safety concerns about Toyota vehicles (4%) and former President Clinton’s heart troubles (1%) were their top stories of the week.

And, in a week when stories about the massive snow storms filled more newshole than any other story, most Americans (70%) say the wintry weather received about the right amount of coverage. Just over two-in-ten (22%) say the storms received too much coverage; 5% say they received too little.

In general, majorities say each of the top stories asked about received the right amount of coverage. The exception is the economy. Reflecting Americans’ continuing concerns, only about

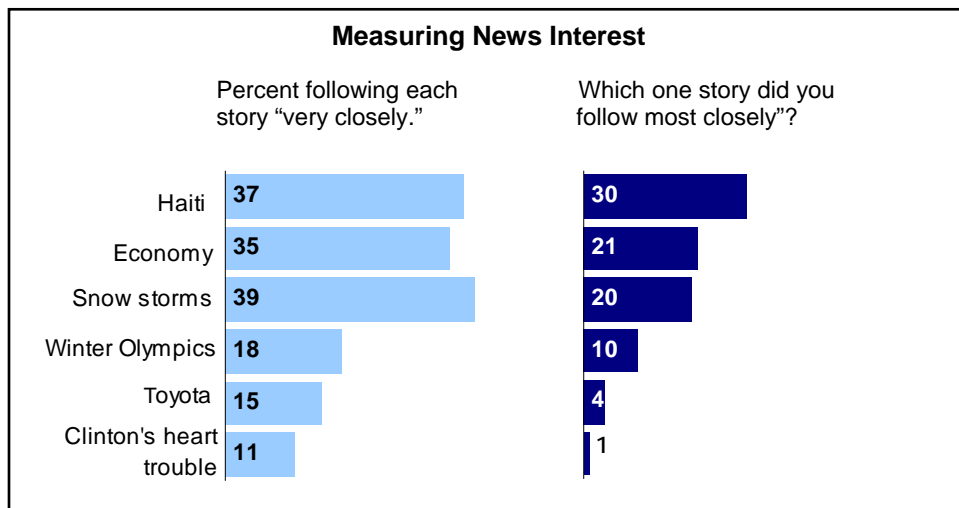
half (46%) say the economy received the right amount of coverage. Many (34%) wanted more, saying news about the U.S. economy received too little coverage. These are among the findings in the latest News Interest Index survey, conducted Feb. 12-15 among 1,029 adults by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

Coverage of the storms – including those on the East Coast and in the South – made up 12% of the newshole, according to a separate analysis by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism. News about the economic crisis made up 10% of coverage. Coverage of the start of the Olympics – including the stunning death of a Georgian athlete during a training run on the luge course – made up 5% of the newshole examined by PEJ. The Haiti aftermath accounted for 5% as coverage continues to decline since the week the earthquake hit in mid-January. That was comparable to the percentage for news about Toyota’s troubles (5%). And former President Clinton’s heart problems made up 3% of coverage.

Public Keeps An Eye on Haiti

More than a month after the deadly earthquake struck Haiti, Americans continue to track its aftermath closely: 37% say they followed this story very closely last week. The percentage tracking the aftermath very closely has trended downward since the temblor first hit on Jan. 12 (60% followed this story very closely in the Jan. 15-18 survey), but it remains high. Three-in-ten say they followed this story more closely than the other major stories, making the earthquake aftermath the most closely followed story of the week.

Close to four-in-ten (39%) say they followed news about the snow storms very closely. Not surprisingly, interest was especially high in the Northeast (56% very closely) and the South (49% very closely), and less so in the Midwest (29%) or the West (16%). One-in-five say they followed last week’s storms more closely than any other story.



Interest in news about the U.S. economy remains strong as well: 35% say they followed this news very closely, down slightly from the previous week (43% very closely). About two-in-ten (21%) say this was the news they followed most closely.

Close to two-in-ten (18%) say they followed the start of the Winter Olympics very closely; 10% say they followed this news more closely than any other major story. The weekend the 2008 Summer Olympics began in China, 24% said they were followed the story very closely. That percentage rose to about 35% each week during the two weeks of the games.

With limited new developments, interest in the safety problems plaguing Toyota slipped slightly: 15% say they followed this news very closely, compared with 21% the previous week. This was the top story for 4%. Coverage was down as well. The story made up 5% of the newshole, compared with 11% one week earlier.

Just 11% say they followed news about Bill Clinton’s heart problems very closely. This story made up 3% of the newshole. The former president was quickly on the mend after a procedure to open up heart valves with two stents. In September 2004, 19% followed news about Clinton’s heart surgery very closely.

Top Stories Seen Getting Right Amount of Coverage

About three-in-ten (29%) say there was too much coverage of Clinton’s heart procedure last week, though more than half (56%) say this story received the right amount of coverage. Just 7% say it received too little coverage. Republicans (31%) and independents (36%) are more likely than Democrats (22%) to say that Clinton’s health problems received too much coverage.

	Amount of Storm Coverage About Right			
	<u>Too much</u> %	<u>Right amount</u> %	<u>Too little</u> %	<u>Don't know</u> %
Clinton heart troubles	29	56	7	7=100
Toyota problems	25	56	13	6=100
Winter storms	22	70	5	3=100
Haiti earthquake	19	65	14	2=100
Economy	16	46	34	4=100
Winter Olympics	12	65	14	9=100

Q3a-f. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Assessments of the amount of Haiti coverage also show a partisan divide. About two-in-ten (19%) Americans say the earthquake aftermath received too much coverage last week, including 27% of Republicans and 11% of Democrats. Independents mirror the population as a whole (19%). Still, close to two-thirds of the public – across partisan lines – say the story received the right amount of coverage.

Seven-in-ten say the media gave the right amount of coverage to the fierce winter snow storms that hit the east coast and the south last week. While two-in-ten overall say the storms received too much coverage, more men (28%) than women (17%) say this. Regionally, those in

the Northeast (29%) and in the Midwest (25%) are most likely to say the storm received too much coverage.

Men and women also have differing views of news about braking and acceleration problems with Toyotas. About a third of men (32%) say this story has gotten too much coverage, compared with 19% of women. Overall, 25% of Americans say the story has gotten too much coverage. More than half (56%) say the story has gotten the right amount of coverage.

Just under half (46%) say economic news received the right amount of coverage. About a third (34%) say it received too little coverage. That's more than double the percentage saying too little coverage for any of the other stories asked about in the survey. Independents are most likely to say the economy received too little coverage (39%), compared with Democrats or Republicans (both 28%). Overall, 16% say economic news received too much coverage.

These findings are based on the most recent installment of the weekly News Interest Index, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The index, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories, examines news interest as it relates to the news media's coverage. The weekly survey is conducted in conjunction with The Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, which monitors the news reported by major newspaper, television, radio and online news outlets on an ongoing basis. In the most recent week, data relating to news coverage were collected from Feb. 8-14, 2010, and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected Feb. 12-15, 2010, from a nationally representative sample of 1,029 adults.

About the News Interest Index

The *News Interest Index* is a weekly survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press aimed at gauging the public's interest in and reaction to major news events.

This project has been undertaken in conjunction with the Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, an ongoing content analysis of the news. The News Coverage Index catalogues the news from top news organizations across five major sectors of the media: newspapers, network television, cable television, radio and the internet. Each week (from Monday through Sunday) PEJ compiles this data to identify the top stories for the week. The News Interest Index survey collects data from Friday through Monday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for the weekly surveys are based on landline telephone interviews among a nationwide sample of approximately 1,000 adults, 18 years of age or older, conducted under the direction of ORC (Opinion Research Corporation). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls, and that results based on subgroups will have larger margins of error.

For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to www.journalism.org.

About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

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For more information about the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press' weekly News Interest Index, go to www.people-press.org.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
February 12-15, 2010 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,029

Q.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY “Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
February 12-15, 2010	35	34	15	16	*
February 5-8, 2010	43	36	13	9	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	45	32	13	10	*
January 22-25, 2010	41	34	14	10	*
January 15-18, 2010	37	38	14	11	*
January 8-11, 2010	39	33	15	12	*
December 18-21, 2009	45	31	14	10	0
December 11-14, 2009	42	31	14	13	*
December 4-7, 2009	41	36	13	9	1
November 13-16, 2009	38	33	14	15	*
October 30-November 2, 2009	34	32	17	16	*
October 23-26, 2009	44	30	15	10	1
October 9-12, 2009	41	29	16	13	*
October 2-5, 2009	44	30	15	11	0
September 25-28, 2009	44	37	10	10	*
September 18-21, 2009	44	34	15	7	*
September 11-14, 2009	45	32	14	9	*
September 3-6, 2009	41	31	15	13	*
August 28-31, 2009	45	30	13	12	1
August 21-24, 2009	50	27	13	10	1
August 14-17, 2009	41	37	11	12	*
August 7-10, 2009	42	34	13	10	*
July 31-August 3, 2009	46	34	11	8	*
July 24-27, 2009	45	35	12	8	*
July 17-20, 2009	43	35	11	11	1
July 10-13, 2009	37	38	13	11	*
July 2-5, 2009	38	35	15	12	*
June 19-22, 2009	42	33	15	10	*
June 12-15, 2009	41	35	12	12	*
June 5-8, 2009	41	34	11	14	*
May 29-June 1, 2009	43	37	11	8	*
May 21-24, 2009	44	35	13	9	*
May 15-18, 2009	44	35	12	8	*
May 8-11, 2009	42	34	12	12	*
May 1-4, 2009	47	36	11	5	1
April 17-20, 2009	52	30	10	7	1
April 9-13, 2009	48	29	13	10	0
March 27-30, 2009	48	32	10	10	*
March 20-23, 2009	52	34	8	6	*
March 13-16, 2009	48	33	9	10	*
February 27-March 2, 2009	56	30	8	6	*
February 13-16, 2009	55	29	10	6	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	52	31	12	5	*

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
January 23-26, 2009	57	30	8	5	0
January 16-19, 2009	43	35	13	9	*
January 2-4, 2009	42	36	15	7	*
December 12-15, 2008	51	33	9	7	*
December 5-8, 2008	42	38	13	7	*
November 21-24, 2008	59	24	9	8	*
November 14-17, 2008	56	29	9	6	*
November 7-10, 2008	54	31	8	7	*
October 31-November 3, 2008	63	27	6	4	*
October 24-27, 2008	52	35	7	5	1
October 17-20, 2008	62	29	6	3	*
October 10-13, 2008	65	25	7	3	*
October 3-6, 2008	69	23	5	3	*
September 26-29, 2008	70	22	5	3	*
September 19-22, 2008	56	27	12	5	*
September 5-8, 2008	44	33	16	7	*
August 29-31, 2008	41	34	13	11	1
August 15-18, 2008	39	36	15	10	*
August 8-11, 2008	39	35	16	10	*
August 1-4, 2008	47	34	11	8	0
July 25-28, 2008	46	32	10	12	*
July 18-21, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
July 11-14, 2008	44	33	12	10	1
June 27-30, 2008	49	31	12	7	1
June 13-16, 2008	42	33	14	11	*
May 9-12, 2008	45	31	13	11	*
May 2-5, 2008	43	31	15	10	1
April 18-21, 2008	41	35	13	10	1
April 4-7, 2008	39	37	12	12	*
March 28-31, 2008	42	36	14	8	*
March 20-24, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
February 29-March 3, 2008	38	35	15	11	1
February 15-18, 2008	37	36	11	16	8
February 1-4, 2008	40	37	14	8	1
January 18-21, 2008	42	31	16	11	*
January 11-14, 2008	36	32	15	16	1
November 2-5, 2007	27	37	16	19	1
October 19-22, 2007	25	34	20	21	*
August 10-13, 2007	28	36	18	18	*
Mid-November, 2006	31	40	17	11	1
December, 2005	35	35	18	11	1
Early November, 2005	35	39	17	9	*
Mid-May, 2005	30	39	19	11	1
January, 2005	35	41	17	7	*
Mid-October, 2004	30	43	16	10	1
Early September, 2004	39	34	15	11	1
Mid-January, 2004	37	41	15	7	*
December, 2003	35	38	14	11	2
November, 2003	40	34	15	10	1
October, 2003	32	39	16	12	1
September, 2003	39	30	18	12	1
March, 2003	40	35	16	8	1
February, 2003	42	33	15	10	*

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
January, 2003	40	35	13	11	1
December, 2002	38	34	17	10	1
February, 2002	35	40	15	9	1
January, 2002	30	44	16	9	1
December, 2001	37	40	13	8	2
Mid-November, 2001	41	36	15	7	1
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1
b. Former President Bill Clinton's heart trouble					
February 12-15, 2010	11	26	31	32	*
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
September 8-13, 2004: <i>Former President Bill Clinton's heart surgery</i>	19	31	25	24	1
c. The aftermath of a major earthquake and relief efforts in Haiti					
February 12-15, 2010	37	37	17	8	*
February 5-8, 2010	42	39	13	6	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	45	38	13	4	*
January 22-25, 2010	50	40	8	3	*
January 15-18, 2010: <i>A major earthquake in Haiti</i>	60	28	8	4	*
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
August 14-17, 2009: <i>A typhoon that caused flooding and mudslides in Taiwan</i>	7	21	30	41	1
April 9-13, 2009: <i>A major earthquake in Italy</i>	18	35	25	22	*

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
May 16-19, 2008: <i>The earthquake in China</i>	30	41	17	12	*
May 9-12, 2008: <i>Reports about the cyclone that hit Burma</i>	23	35	23	19	*
November 2-5, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricane Noel on the Bahamas and Cuba</i>	11	22	31	35	1
September 7-10, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricanes Felix and Henriette on Mexico and Central America</i>	14	29	29	27	1
August 24-27, 2007: <i>The destruction caused by Hurricane Dean in Mexico and the Caribbean</i>	18	39	24	18	1
October, 2005: <i>The earthquake in Pakistan</i>	22	39	23	16	*
January 2005: <i>The earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean</i>	58	32	7	3	*
January 2004: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	16	34	31	19	*
February 2001: <i>The earthquake in India</i>	15	33	31	20	1
March 2000: <i>Flood rescue efforts in Mozambique</i>	10	26	30	34	*
September 1999: <i>The earthquake in Turkey</i>	27	37	23	12	1
November 1998: <i>Hurricane Mitch and the rain and mudslides in Central America</i>	36	36	16	11	1
February 1995: <i>The earthquake in Japan</i>	25	47	20	8	*
May 1991: <i>The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh</i>	23	36	23	17	1
July 1990: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	20	36	28	16	*
d. Concerns about problems with sudden acceleration and braking in Toyotas					
February 12-15, 2010	15	29	28	28	1
February 5-8, 2010	21	39	23	17	*
January 29-February 1, 2010: <i>Toyota's recall and temporary halt of sales of many cars and trucks because of problems with sudden acceleration</i>	21	30	22	26	1
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
Early October, 2000: <i>The recall of defective Firestone tires</i>	42	34	16	8	*
e. The start of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada					
February 12-15, 2010	18	23	23	35	1
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
Aug 22-25, 2008: <i>The Olympic Games in Beijing, China</i>	35	31	19	15	*
August 15-18, 2008	35	31	17	16	1
August 8-11, 2008	24	29	24	23	*
August 1-4, 2008 ¹	13	33	31	23	*
July 25-28, 2008	12	31	29	28	*
April 4-7, 2008	5	18	31	45	1
Early September, 2004: <i>Summer/Athens</i>	25	25	21	29	*
February 12-18, 2002: <i>Winter/Utah</i>	22	30	21	26	1

¹ For August 1-4, 2008 and April 4-7, 2008 the story was listed as "News about the upcoming Olympic games in Beijing, China." For July 25-28, 2008 the story was listed as "News about China as the Beijing Olympic Games approach."

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
Early October, 2000: <i>Summer/Sydney</i>	27	28	24	21	*
Early September, 1996: <i>Summer/Atlanta</i>	32	34	20	14	*
July, 1996: <i>Summer/Atlanta</i>	45	30	13	11	1
February, 1992: <i>Winter/France</i>	33	30	19	17	1
f. Major snow storms affecting the East Coast and the South					
February 12-15, 2010	39	31	16	14	*
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
January 8-11, 2010: <i>Unusually cold winter weather</i>	42	30	17	12	*
January 16-19, 2009: <i>Cold winter weather in much of the country</i>	33	31	21	15	*
December 14-17, 2007: <i>Snow and ice storms in the Midwest and Northeast</i>	30	31	21	18	*
February 16-19, 2007: <i>Cold winter weather and snowstorms in the Northeast and Midwest</i>	30	33	18	18	1
February 9-12, 2007: <i>Cold winter weather</i>	36	36	15	13	*
January 19-22, 2007: <i>Snow and ice storms in some parts of the country</i>	31	32	22	14	1
January 5-8, 2007: <i>Winter snowstorms in the western U.S.</i>	24	30	25	21	*
January, 2001: <i>Cold winter weather and storms in the Northeast and Midwest</i>	42	31	15	11	1
January, 1999: <i>Cold winter weather and storms in the Midwest</i>	37	34	17	12	*
Early December, 1998: <i>Unseasonable weather patterns</i>	39	35	13	12	1
January, 1994: <i>News about cold weather conditions in the Northeast and Midwest</i>	51	30	12	7	*

Q.2 Which ONE of the stories I just mentioned have you followed most closely, or is there another story you've been following MORE closely? **[DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.]**

- 30 The aftermath of a major earthquake and relief efforts in Haiti
- 21 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 20 Major snow storms affecting the East Coast and the South
- 10 The start of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada
- 4 Concerns about problems with sudden acceleration and braking in Toyotas
- 1 Former President Bill Clinton's heart trouble
- 7 Some other story (VOL.)
- 7 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

Q.3 Do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage, too little coverage, or the right amount of coverage to each of the following? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

	<u>Too much coverage</u>	<u>Too little coverage</u>	<u>Right amount of coverage</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy				
February 12-15, 2010	16	34	46	4
January 22-25, 2010	9	38	52	2
October 2-5, 2009	22	32	44	2
July 17-20, 2009	16	30	51	4
March 20-23, 2009	21	26	51	2
January 18-21, 2008	11	32	52	5
February, 2001: <i>Signs of an economic slowdown</i>	21	25	46	8
b. Former President Bill Clinton's heart trouble				
February 12-15, 2010	29	7	56	7
TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
February 14-19, 2001: <i>Bill Clinton's activities as he was leaving office</i>	53	9	31	7
c. The aftermath of a major earthquake and relief efforts in Haiti				
February 12-15, 2010	19	14	65	2
January 22-25, 2010	19	9	71	1
January 15-18, 2010: <i>The earthquake in Haiti</i> ²	19	10	69	2
d. Concerns about problems with sudden acceleration and braking in Toyotas				
February 12-15, 2010	25	13	56	6
e. The start of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada				
February 12-15, 2010	12	14	65	9
f. Major snow storms affecting the East Coast and the South				
February 12-15, 2010	22	5	70	3

² For January 15-18, 2010, this question was asked as a stand-alone question, not as part of a list.