

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX**  
**DECEMBER 15-18, 2011**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,004**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.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<br/>closely</u> | <u>Fairly<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not too<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not at all<br/>closely</u> | <b>(VOL.)<br/>DK/Ref</b> |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy |                         |                           |                            |                               |                          |
| December 15-18, 2011                               | 36                      | 32                        | 14                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| December 8-11, 2011                                | 41                      | 29                        | 13                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| December 1-4, 2011                                 | 40                      | 33                        | 13                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| November 17-20, 2011                               | 35                      | 33                        | 16                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| November 10-13, 2011                               | 39                      | 31                        | 15                         | 14                            | *                        |
| November 3-6, 2011                                 | 37                      | 31                        | 15                         | 17                            | 1                        |
| October 27-30, 2011                                | 38                      | 33                        | 14                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| October 20-23, 2011                                | 38                      | 32                        | 14                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| October 13-16, 2011                                | 39                      | 32                        | 14                         | 14                            | *                        |
| October 6-9, 2011                                  | 43                      | 28                        | 14                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| September 29-October 2, 2011                       | 46                      | 26                        | 14                         | 14                            | *                        |
| September 22-25, 2011                              | 44                      | 33                        | 11                         | 11                            | *                        |
| September 8-11, 2011                               | 40                      | 30                        | 15                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| September 1-4, 2011                                | 44                      | 30                        | 11                         | 15                            | *                        |
| August 25-28, 2011                                 | 44                      | 28                        | 14                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| August 18-21, 2011                                 | 44                      | 29                        | 12                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| August 4-7, 2011                                   | 46                      | 30                        | 11                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| July 28-31, 2011                                   | 43                      | 30                        | 13                         | 13                            | *                        |
| July 21-24, 2011                                   | 41                      | 32                        | 13                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| July 14-17, 2011                                   | 41                      | 30                        | 14                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| July 7-10, 2011                                    | 36                      | 30                        | 15                         | 18                            | 1                        |
| June 30-July 3, 2011                               | 38                      | 32                        | 13                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| June 23-26, 2011                                   | 37                      | 29                        | 15                         | 19                            | *                        |
| June 16-19, 2011                                   | 39                      | 33                        | 14                         | 13                            | *                        |
| June 9-12, 2011                                    | 39                      | 30                        | 15                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| June 2-5, 2011                                     | 35                      | 34                        | 17                         | 14                            | *                        |
| May 19-22, 2011                                    | 33                      | 34                        | 17                         | 16                            | *                        |
| May 12-15, 2011                                    | 32                      | 32                        | 17                         | 18                            | 2                        |
| May 5-8, 2011                                      | 40                      | 35                        | 15                         | 9                             | 1                        |
| April 21-25, 2011                                  | 41                      | 33                        | 12                         | 14                            | *                        |
| April 14-17, 2011                                  | 44                      | 30                        | 14                         | 12                            | 1                        |
| April 7-10, 2011                                   | 46                      | 30                        | 14                         | 10                            | *                        |
| March 31-April 3, 2011                             | 42                      | 31                        | 16                         | 11                            | 0                        |
| March 24-27, 2011                                  | 36                      | 32                        | 17                         | 15                            | *                        |
| March 17-20, 2011                                  | 38                      | 32                        | 17                         | 13                            | *                        |
| March 10-13, 2011                                  | 40                      | 30                        | 16                         | 13                            | *                        |
| March 3-6, 2011                                    | 37                      | 31                        | 17                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| February 24-27, 2011                               | 49                      | 29                        | 11                         | 10                            | *                        |
| February 17-20, 2011                               | 35                      | 33                        | 14                         | 17                            | *                        |
| February 10-13, 2011                               | 36                      | 34                        | 13                         | 16                            | *                        |
| February 3-6, 2011                                 | 35                      | 37                        | 14                         | 14                            | *                        |
| January 20-23, 2011                                | 37                      | 33                        | 14                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| January 13-16, 2011                                | 37                      | 29                        | 15                         | 18                            | 1                        |
| January 6-9, 2011                                  | 39                      | 37                        | 11                         | 12                            | 1                        |

[SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS](#)

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|   | Very<br><u>closely</u> | Fairly<br><u>closely</u> | Not too<br><u>closely</u> | Not at all<br><u>closely</u> | (VOL.)<br>DK/Ref |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| b. Political protests in Russia   |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| December 15-18, 2011  | 6                      | 12                       | 24                        | 57                           | 1                |
| <b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>   |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| July 31-August 3, 2009: <i>The Iranian government's crackdown on opposition protestors</i>                              | 18                     | 23                       | 26                        | 31                           | 2                |
| July 2-5, 2009: <i>News about controversy surrounding the recent Iranian election</i>                                   | 22                     | 31                       | 23                        | 23                           | *                |
| June 26-29, 2009: <i>The Iranian government's crackdown on election protestors</i>                                      | 31                     | 27                       | 18                        | 23                           | 1                |
| June 19-22, 2009: <i>Protests in Iran over disputed elections</i>   | 28                     | 28                       | 21                        | 22                           | 1                |
| June 12-15, 2009: <i>The presidential election in Iran</i>  | 18                     | 26                       | 23                        | 34                           | *                |
| March 7-10, 2008: <i>The election of a new president in Russia</i>  | 7                      | 18                       | 23                        | 51                           | 1                |
| December 7-10, 2007: <i>Recent parliamentary elections in Russia</i>  | 5                      | 14                       | 22                        | 58                           | 1                |
| January 2000: <i>The resignation of Russian President Boris Yeltsin</i>   | 11                     | 32                       | 33                        | 22                           | 2                |
| September 1999: <i>Political instability in Russia</i>  | 9                      | 23                       | 34                        | 33                           | 1                |
| September 1998: <i>Economic and political instability in Russia</i>   | 18                     | 30                       | 28                        | 24                           | *                |
| Late August 1998: <i>Economic problems in Russia</i>  | 8                      | 22                       | 29                        | 41                           | *                |
| July 1996: <i>The Russian presidential elections</i>  | 7                      | 25                       | 31                        | 37                           | *                |
| January 1994: <i>The Russian elections</i>  | 11                     | 32                       | 31                        | 26                           | *                |
| October 1993: <i>Boris Yeltsin's conflict with the Russian parliament</i>   | 19                     | 36                       | 24                        | 20                           | 1                |
| September 1993: <i>Boris Yeltsin's decision to dissolve the Russian parliament</i>                                      | 18                     | 32                       | 27                        | 22                           | 1                |
| September 1993: <i>The political and economic changes going on in Russia</i>  | 12                     | 36                       | 29                        | 22                           | *                |
| April 1993: <i>The voter referendum in Russia</i>   | 10                     | 20                       | 36                        | 32                           | 2                |
| January 1992: <i>Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end</i>                        | 31                     | 42                       | 20                        | 7                            | *                |
| December 1991: <i>The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the Soviet Union</i> | 30                     | 36                       | 19                        | 15                           | *                |
| October 1991: <i>The breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose Mikhail Gorbachev</i>              | 47                     | 32                       | 12                        | 8                            | 1                |
| July 1991: <i>Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S.</i>                              | 12                     | 28                       | 33                        | 26                           | 1                |
| c. Congress working on a budget agreement to avoid a government shutdown  |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| December 15-18, 2011  | 27                     | 23                       | 21                        | 29                           | 1                |
| <b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>   |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| November 10-13, 2011: <i>A "super committee" whose goal is to significantly reduce the federal budget deficit</i>       | 19                     | 21                       | 24                        | 36                           | 1                |
| November 3-6, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>  | 24                     | 31                       | 21                        | 24                           | 1                |

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|   | Very<br><u>closely</u> | Fairly<br><u>closely</u> | Not too<br><u>closely</u> | Not at all<br><u>closely</u> | (VOL.)<br>DK/Ref |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| October 27-30, 2011   | 25                     | 28                       | 21                        | 25                           | 1                |
| October 13-16, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over jobs and the deficit</i>  | 29                     | 32                       | 15                        | 24                           | 1                |
| September 29-October 2, 2011: <i>Congress working on a budget extension to avoid a government shutdown</i>                    | 31                     | 26                       | 20                        | 22                           | *                |
| September 22-25, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over jobs and the deficit</i>  | 35                     | 26                       | 19                        | 19                           | 1                |
| September 15-18, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over President Obama's jobs legislation</i>                                | 31                     | 28                       | 19                        | 21                           | 2                |
| September 8-11, 2011: <i>Barack Obama's speech about jobs to a joint session of Congress</i>                                  | 28                     | 18                       | 17                        | 36                           | 1                |
| July 28-31, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>          | 41                     | 27                       | 15                        | 17                           | *                |
| July 21-24, 2011  | 38                     | 28                       | 17                        | 17                           | *                |
| July 14-17, 2011  | 34                     | 29                       | 18                        | 19                           | *                |
| June 16-19, 2011: <i>Debate in Washington over whether to raise the federal debt limit</i>                                    | 24                     | 26                       | 22                        | 28                           | *                |
| June 2-5, 2011  | 23                     | 24                       | 22                        | 31                           | *                |
| May 26-29, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit</i>                             | 25                     | 26                       | 20                        | 29                           | *                |
| May 12-15, 2011   | 21                     | 26                       | 24                        | 28                           | 1                |
| May 5-8, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>             | 29                     | 28                       | 22                        | 20                           | 1                |
| April 21-25, 2011   | 30                     | 31                       | 18                        | 21                           | *                |
| April 14-17, 2011   | 36                     | 27                       | 18                        | 19                           | 1                |
| April 7-10, 2011: <i>The threat of a government shutdown because of budget disagreements in Washington</i>                    | 47                     | 26                       | 15                        | 12                           | *                |
| March 31-April 3, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit</i>                      | 30                     | 27                       | 21                        | 22                           | *                |
| March 17-20, 2011   | 24                     | 25                       | 24                        | 26                           | 1                |
| March 3-6, 2011   | 26                     | 29                       | 19                        | 26                           | 1                |
| February 17-20, 2011  | 27                     | 30                       | 17                        | 25                           | 1                |
| December 2-5, 2010  | 35                     | 25                       | 21                        | 17                           | 2                |
| December 2-5, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal income tax cuts passed when George W. Bush was president</i> | 39                     | 26                       | 17                        | 17                           | 1                |
| November 11-14, 2010: <i>Proposals made by leaders of the federal budget deficit commission</i>                               | 15                     | 21                       | 21                        | 41                           | 1                |
| September 16-19, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over competing Democratic and Republican tax plans</i>                     | 21                     | 24                       | 21                        | 34                           | *                |
| September 9-12, 2010  | 16                     | 19                       | 22                        | 42                           | 1                |
| May 8-11, 2009: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal budget</i>   | 22                     | 28                       | 19                        | 31                           | *                |
| March 27-30, 2009: <i>Debate over Barack Obama's budget proposal</i>  | 28                     | 34                       | 18                        | 19                           | 1                |
| March 6-9, 2009: <i>Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling health care</i>                                      | 41                     | 32                       | 13                        | 14                           | *                |

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|   | <u>Very<br/>closely</u> | <u>Fairly<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not too<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not at all<br/>closely</u> | <b>(VOL.)<br/>DK/Ref</b> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's budget proposal for next year that raises taxes on wealthy Americans and increases spending on health care, education and other programs</i> | 47                      | 34                        | 9                          | 10                            | *                        |
| February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>The Obama administration's plan to help homeowners facing foreclosure which could cost as much as \$275 billion dollars</i>                                 | 31                      | 36                        | 19                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| February 20-23, 2009: <i>The \$780 billion economic stimulus legislation approved by Congress and signed into law by President Obama</i>  | 41                      | 37                        | 14                         | 8                             | *                        |
| February 13-16, 2009: <i>Congress passing Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan</i>   | 50                      | 32                        | 13                         | 5                             | *                        |
| February 6-9, 2009: <i>The debate in Congress over Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan</i>  | 41                      | 33                        | 15                         | 11                            | *                        |
| January 30-February 2, 2009   | 36                      | 29                        | 22                         | 13                            | *                        |
| January 16-19, 2009: <i>Debate in Washington over what the government should do about the nation's economic problems</i>  | 35                      | 33                        | 17                         | 15                            | *                        |
| January 9-12, 2009: <i>Projections of a record high federal budget deficit this year</i>  | 35                      | 30                        | 19                         | 16                            | *                        |
| December 19-22, 2008: <i>The Bush administration's plan to provide billions in emergency loans to U.S. automakers</i>   | 37                      | 33                        | 16                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| December 12-15, 2008: <i>The debate over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry</i>  | 40                      | 33                        | 18                         | 9                             | *                        |
| December 5-8, 2008: <i>The debate in Congress over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry</i>  | 34                      | 38                        | 17                         | 11                            | *                        |
| November 21-24, 2008  | 41                      | 26                        | 17                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| October 3-6, 2008: <i>The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets</i>   | 62                      | 26                        | 7                          | 5                             | *                        |
| September 26-29, 2008   | 60                      | 22                        | 10                         | 8                             | *                        |
| September 12-15, 2008: <i>The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac</i>  | 28                      | 35                        | 19                         | 17                            | 1                        |
| March 20-24, 2008: <i>The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns</i>  | 21                      | 26                        | 21                         | 32                            | *                        |
| February 8-11, 2008: <i>President Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic Stimulus plan</i>   | 22                      | 33                        | 23                         | 21                            | 1                        |
| January 25-28, 2008   | 24                      | 36                        | 19                         | 21                            | *                        |
| February, 2003: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut and economic stimulus plan</i>  | 26                      | 33                        | 23                         | 16                            | 2                        |
| February, 2003  | 26                      | 33                        | 23                         | 16                            | 2                        |
| January, 2003   | 28                      | 34                        | 21                         | 15                            | 2                        |
| February, 2002: <i>The debate in Congress over George W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan</i>   | 17                      | 31                        | 28                         | 23                            | 1                        |
| April, 2001   | 24                      | 38                        | 20                         | 18                            | *                        |
| February, 2001: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut plan</i>  | 31                      | 35                        | 19                         | 14                            | 1                        |

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|  | Very<br><u>closely</u> | Fairly<br><u>closely</u> | Not too<br><u>closely</u> | Not at all<br><u>closely</u> | (VOL.)<br>DK/Ref |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| August, 1997: <i>The debate in Washington about the federal budget</i>   | 14                     | 34                       | 25                        | 26                           | 1                |
| May, 1997  | 16                     | 38                       | 23                        | 22                           | 1                |
| February, 1997   | 19                     | 28                       | 22                        | 29                           | 2                |
| March, 1996  | 24                     | 35                       | 23                        | 18                           | *                |
| January, 1996  | 32                     | 42                       | 17                        | 9                            | *                |
| September, 1995  | 20                     | 35                       | 27                        | 18                           | *                |
| August, 1995: <i>The debate in Congress over the federal budget</i>  | 18                     | 34                       | 27                        | 20                           | 1                |
| February, 1995: <i>The debate in Congress over the Balanced Budget Amendment</i>   | 12                     | 31                       | 28                        | 28                           | 1                |
| August, 1993: <i>The debate in Congress over Bill Clinton's budget bill</i>  | 30                     | 36                       | 21                        | 13                           | *                |
| June, 1993   | 12                     | 38                       | 31                        | 18                           | 1                |
| February, 1993: <i>Bill Clinton's economic plan</i>  | 49                     | 36                       | 10                        | 5                            | *                |
| September, 1992 (RV): <i>George Bush's plan to improve the economy by cutting government spending and cutting taxes</i>  | 28                     | 44                       | 18                        | 9                            | 1                |
| November, 1990: <i>Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement</i>                      | 34                     | 33                       | 20                        | 11                           | 2                |
| October, 1990: <i>Attempts by Congress and the administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit</i>              | 34                     | 37                       | 17                        | 12                           | *                |
| August, 1989: <i>Passage of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions</i>                                   | 26                     | 30                       | 20                        | 23                           | 1                |
| d. The complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq  |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| December 15-18, 2011   | 34                     | 32                       | 18                        | 14                           | 2                |
| <b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>  |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| October 21-23, 2011: <i>President Obama announcing a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq by the end of 2011</i> | 30                     | 30                       | 19                        | 20                           | 1                |
| December 16-19, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>  | 19                     | 30                       | 27                        | 24                           | *                |
| September 2-6, 2010: <i>The withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Iraq</i>   | 36                     | 37                       | 15                        | 11                           | *                |
| August 26-29, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>  | 25                     | 36                       | 24                        | 15                           | 1                |
| August 19-22, 2010: <i>The withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Iraq</i>  | 31                     | 33                       | 19                        | 17                           | 1                |
| August 5-8, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>  | 23                     | 35                       | 22                        | 18                           | 1                |
| May 13-16, 2010  | 31                     | 34                       | 21                        | 13                           | 2                |
| March 12-15, 2010  | 22                     | 36                       | 28                        | 14                           | *                |
| March 5-8, 2010  | 26                     | 34                       | 20                        | 20                           | *                |
| January 29-February 1, 2010  | 23                     | 33                       | 27                        | 17                           | *                |
| January 15-18, 2010  | 20                     | 35                       | 28                        | 17                           | *                |
| October 16-19, 2009  | 23                     | 30                       | 24                        | 23                           | *                |
| September 11-14, 2009  | 21                     | 33                       | 30                        | 16                           | *                |
| August 21-24, 2009   | 25                     | 35                       | 22                        | 18                           | 1                |
| August 14-17, 2009   | 19                     | 38                       | 23                        | 18                           | *                |
| July 2-5, 2009: <i>U.S. troops withdrawing from Iraqi cities</i>   | 25                     | 34                       | 20                        | 21                           | 0                |
| April 24-27, 2009: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>   | 21                     | 35                       | 25                        | 19                           | *                |
| March 20-23, 2009  | 25                     | 37                       | 21                        | 17                           | *                |

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|   | <u>Very<br/>closely</u> | <u>Fairly<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not too<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not at all<br/>closely</u> | <b>(VOL.)<br/>DK/Ref</b> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's plan to withdraw most U.S. troops from Iraq by August 2010</i> | 40                      | 37                        | 13                         | 9                             | 1                        |
| December 12-15, 2008: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>                                       | 24                      | 35                        | 25                         | 16                            | *                        |
| November 21-24, 2008  | 32                      | 31                        | 24                         | 13                            | 0                        |
| November 14-17, 2008  | 24                      | 33                        | 27                         | 16                            | *                        |
| October 31-November 3, 2008   | 30                      | 35                        | 22                         | 12                            | 1                        |
| October 24-27, 2008   | 29                      | 35                        | 25                         | 11                            | *                        |
| October 10-13, 2008   | 23                      | 34                        | 30                         | 13                            | *                        |
| October 3-6, 2008   | 29                      | 33                        | 28                         | 10                            | *                        |
| September 5-8, 2008   | 24                      | 37                        | 26                         | 13                            | *                        |
| August 29-31, 2008  | 22                      | 32                        | 29                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| August 22-25, 2008  | 26                      | 31                        | 27                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| August 1-4, 2008  | 27                      | 40                        | 23                         | 10                            | *                        |
| July 25-28, 2008  | 28                      | 33                        | 22                         | 17                            | *                        |
| July 18-21, 2008  | 33                      | 35                        | 20                         | 12                            | *                        |
| July 11-14, 2008  | 24                      | 35                        | 24                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| July 3-7, 2008  | 25                      | 35                        | 25                         | 15                            | *                        |
| June 20-23, 2008  | 25                      | 36                        | 24                         | 15                            | *                        |
| May 9-12, 2008  | 29                      | 35                        | 21                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| May 2-5, 2008   | 26                      | 35                        | 25                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| April 25-28, 2008   | 29                      | 35                        | 23                         | 12                            | 1                        |
| April 18-21, 2008   | 29                      | 39                        | 20                         | 11                            | 1                        |
| April 11-14, 2008   | 25                      | 39                        | 20                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| April 4-7, 2008   | 25                      | 37                        | 23                         | 15                            | *                        |
| March 28-31, 2008   | 29                      | 40                        | 19                         | 11                            | 1                        |
| March 20-24, 2008   | 30                      | 38                        | 19                         | 13                            | *                        |
| March 14-17, 2008   | 29                      | 38                        | 23                         | 10                            | *                        |
| March 7-10, 2008  | 28                      | 39                        | 18                         | 15                            | *                        |
| February 29-March 3, 2008   | 28                      | 40                        | 19                         | 13                            | *                        |
| February 8-11, 2008   | 24                      | 35                        | 25                         | 16                            | *                        |
| February 1-4, 2008  | 28                      | 39                        | 22                         | 11                            | *                        |
| January 25-28, 2008   | 23                      | 35                        | 26                         | 16                            | *                        |
| January 18-21, 2008   | 31                      | 33                        | 20                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| January 11-14, 2008   | 25                      | 38                        | 21                         | 16                            | *                        |
| January 4-7, 2008   | 27                      | 38                        | 20                         | 15                            | *                        |
| December 14-17, 2007  | 26                      | 32                        | 24                         | 18                            | *                        |
| December 7-10, 2007   | 28                      | 37                        | 21                         | 14                            | *                        |
| November 23-26, 2007  | 25                      | 37                        | 21                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| November 16-19, 2007  | 31                      | 37                        | 19                         | 12                            | 1                        |
| November 9-12, 2007   | 29                      | 38                        | 19                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| November 2-5, 2007  | 31                      | 35                        | 18                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| October 26-29, 2007   | 28                      | 37                        | 21                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| October 19-22, 2007   | 28                      | 37                        | 20                         | 15                            | *                        |
| October 12-15, 2007   | 26                      | 36                        | 18                         | 19                            | 1                        |
| October 5-8, 2007   | 29                      | 33                        | 22                         | 16                            | *                        |
| September 28 – October 1, 2007  | 30                      | 41                        | 18                         | 11                            | *                        |
| September 21-24, 2007   | 32                      | 38                        | 17                         | 13                            | *                        |
| September 14-17, 2007   | 31                      | 36                        | 18                         | 15                            | 0                        |
| September 7-10, 2007  | 32                      | 34                        | 20                         | 14                            | *                        |
| August 30 – September 2, 2007   | 31                      | 34                        | 18                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| August 24-27, 2007  | 34                      | 36                        | 18                         | 12                            | *                        |
| August 17-20, 2007  | 33                      | 34                        | 18                         | 15                            | *                        |
| August 10-13, 2007  | 36                      | 37                        | 14                         | 13                            | *                        |
| August 3-6, 2007  | 29                      | 40                        | 19                         | 12                            | *                        |
| July 27-30, 2007  | 28                      | 36                        | 19                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| July 20-23, 2007  | 28                      | 34                        | 21                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| July 13-16, 2007  | 25                      | 41                        | 17                         | 16                            | 1                        |

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|  | <u>Very<br/>closely</u> | <u>Fairly<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not too<br/>closely</u> | <u>Not at all<br/>closely</u> | <b>(VOL.)<br/>DK/Ref</b> |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| July 6-9, 2007   | 36                      | 34                        | 18                         | 12                            | *                        |
| June 29-July 2, 2007   | 32                      | 35                        | 19                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| June 22-25, 2007   | 30                      | 36                        | 18                         | 15                            | 1                        |
| June 15-18, 2007   | 30                      | 37                        | 20                         | 13                            | *                        |
| June 8-11, 2007  | 32                      | 38                        | 15                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| June 1-4, 2007   | 30                      | 36                        | 20                         | 13                            | 1                        |
| May 24-27, 2007  | 33                      | 36                        | 18                         | 12                            | 1                        |
| May 18-21, 2007  | 36                      | 34                        | 15                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| May 11-14, 2007  | 30                      | 34                        | 18                         | 17                            | 1                        |
| May 4-7, 2007  | 38                      | 37                        | 15                         | 10                            | *                        |
| April 27-30, 2007  | 27                      | 35                        | 21                         | 16                            | 1                        |
| April 20-23, 2007  | 28                      | 35                        | 22                         | 15                            | *                        |
| April 12-16, 2007  | 34                      | 33                        | 20                         | 13                            | *                        |
| April 5-9, 2007  | 33                      | 39                        | 16                         | 11                            | 1                        |
| March 30-April 2, 2007   | 34                      | 37                        | 16                         | 13                            | *                        |
| March 23-March 26, 2007: <i>News about the<br/>current situation in Iraq</i> | 31                      | 38                        | 18                         | 12                            | 1                        |
| March 16-19, 2007  | 34                      | 34                        | 17                         | 15                            | *                        |
| March 9-12, 2007   | 34                      | 37                        | 16                         | 13                            | *                        |
| March 2-5, 2007  | 37                      | 37                        | 16                         | 9                             | 1                        |
| February 23-26, 2007   | 36                      | 36                        | 15                         | 13                            | *                        |
| February 16-19, 2007   | 30                      | 36                        | 19                         | 14                            | 1                        |
| February 9-12, 2007  | 37                      | 34                        | 18                         | 11                            | *                        |
| February 2-5, 2007   | 38                      | 38                        | 17                         | 7                             | *                        |
| January 26-29, 2007  | 36                      | 38                        | 15                         | 11                            | *                        |
| January 19-22, 2007  | 37                      | 34                        | 18                         | 10                            | 1                        |
| January 12-15, 2007  | 38                      | 36                        | 17                         | 8                             | 1                        |
| January, 2007  | 46                      | 40                        | 8                          | 5                             | 1                        |
| January 5-8, 2007  | 40                      | 32                        | 16                         | 12                            | 0                        |
| December, 2006   | 42                      | 39                        | 12                         | 7                             | *                        |
| November 30-December 3, 2006   | 40                      | 36                        | 13                         | 11                            | *                        |
| Mid-November, 2006   | 44                      | 38                        | 12                         | 6                             | *                        |
| September, 2006  | 33                      | 43                        | 14                         | 8                             | 2                        |
| August, 2006   | 41                      | 39                        | 12                         | 7                             | 1                        |
| June, 2006   | 37                      | 43                        | 13                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| May, 2006  | 42                      | 35                        | 15                         | 7                             | 1                        |
| April, 2006  | 43                      | 36                        | 13                         | 7                             | 1                        |
| March, 2006  | 43                      | 38                        | 12                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| February, 2006   | 39                      | 42                        | 12                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| January, 2006  | 40                      | 40                        | 12                         | 7                             | 1                        |
| December, 2005   | 45                      | 38                        | 11                         | 5                             | 1                        |
| Early November, 2005   | 41                      | 40                        | 13                         | 6                             | *                        |
| Early October, 2005  | 43                      | 36                        | 15                         | 6                             | *                        |
| Early September, 2005  | 32                      | 40                        | 20                         | 7                             | 1                        |
| July, 2005   | 43                      | 37                        | 13                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| Mid-May, 2005  | 42                      | 42                        | 11                         | 5                             | *                        |
| Mid-March, 2005  | 40                      | 39                        | 14                         | 5                             | 2                        |
| February, 2005   | 38                      | 45                        | 13                         | 4                             | *                        |
| January, 2005  | 48                      | 37                        | 11                         | 4                             | *                        |
| December, 2004   | 34                      | 44                        | 15                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| Mid-October, 2004  | 42                      | 38                        | 11                         | 8                             | 1                        |
| Early September, 2004  | 47                      | 37                        | 9                          | 6                             | 1                        |
| August, 2004   | 39                      | 42                        | 12                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| July, 2004   | 43                      | 40                        | 11                         | 6                             | *                        |
| June, 2004   | 39                      | 42                        | 12                         | 6                             | 1                        |
| April, 2004  | 54                      | 33                        | 8                          | 5                             | *                        |
| Mid-March, 2004  | 47                      | 36                        | 12                         | 4                             | 1                        |
| Early February, 2004   | 47                      | 38                        | 10                         | 4                             | 1                        |

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|  | Very<br><u>closely</u> | Fairly<br><u>closely</u> | Not too<br><u>closely</u> | Not at all<br><u>closely</u> | (VOL.)<br>DK/Ref |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Mid-January, 2004  | 48                     | 39                       | 9                         | 4                            | *                |
| December, 2003   | 44                     | 38                       | 11                        | 6                            | 1                |
| November, 2003   | 52                     | 33                       | 9                         | 5                            | 1                |
| September, 2003  | 50                     | 33                       | 10                        | 6                            | 1                |
| Mid-August, 2003   | 45                     | 39                       | 10                        | 5                            | 1                |
| Early July, 2003   | 37                     | 41                       | 13                        | 8                            | 1                |
| June, 2003   | 46                     | 35                       | 13                        | 6                            | *                |
| May, 2003  | 63                     | 29                       | 6                         | 2                            | *                |
| April 11-16, 2003: <i>News about the war in Iraq</i>   | 47                     | 40                       | 10                        | 2                            | 1                |
| April 2-7, 2003  | 54                     | 34                       | 9                         | 2                            | 1                |
| March 20-24, 2003  | 57                     | 33                       | 7                         | 2                            | 1                |
| March 13-16, 2003: <i>Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq</i>  | 62                     | 27                       | 6                         | 4                            | 1                |
| February, 2003   | 62                     | 25                       | 8                         | 4                            | 1                |
| January, 2003  | 55                     | 29                       | 10                        | 4                            | 2                |
| December, 2002   | 51                     | 32                       | 10                        | 6                            | 1                |
| Late October, 2002   | 53                     | 33                       | 8                         | 5                            | 1                |
| Early October, 2002  | 60                     | 28                       | 6                         | 5                            | 1                |
| Early September, 2002: <i>Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq</i>   | 48                     | 29                       | 15                        | 6                            | 2                |
| e. A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University  |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| December 15-18, 2011   | 22                     | 29                       | 23                        | 25                           | 1                |
| December 8-11, 2011  | 24                     | 29                       | 24                        | 22                           | 1                |
| November 17-20, 2011: <i>A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University</i>  | 28                     | 31                       | 21                        | 18                           | 1                |
| November 10-13, 2011: <i>A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University resulting in the firing of the school's president and football coach Joe Paterno</i> | 34                     | 29                       | 19                        | 18                           | 1                |
| <b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>  |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| August 18-21, 2011: <i>Recent scandals in college football</i>   | 10                     | 12                       | 17                        | 61                           | *                |
| September 16-19, 2010: <i>Pope Benedict's visit to Great Britain and his comments on the Catholic Church's handling of sex-abuse scandals</i>              | 10                     | 16                       | 26                        | 47                           | 1                |
| April 23-26, 2010: <i>Reports about the Vatican's handling of sex-abuse scandals in the Catholic Church</i>  | 14                     | 28                       | 29                        | 29                           | *                |
| March 26-29, 2010  | 17                     | 24                       | 28                        | 30                           | *                |
| March 19-22, 2010  | 8                      | 18                       | 31                        | 42                           | 1                |
| June, 2002: <i>Reports of sexual abuses by Catholic priests</i>  | 38                     | 36                       | 17                        | 8                            | 1                |
| May, 2002: <i>The Pope and American cardinals meeting in Rome about sexual abuse by Catholic priests</i>   | 27                     | 33                       | 21                        | 18                           | 1                |
| Early April, 2002: <i>Reports of sexual abuses by Catholic priests</i>   | 27                     | 34                       | 25                        | 13                           | 1                |
| December, 1993   | 18                     | 32                       | 31                        | 18                           | 1                |
| f. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential elections   |                        |                          |                           |                              |                  |
| December 15-18, 2011   | 26                     | 24                       | 20                        | 29                           | 1                |
| December 8-11, 2011  | 27                     | 27                       | 18                        | 28                           | *                |
| December 1-4, 2011   | 25                     | 28                       | 20                        | 26                           | 1                |
| November 17-20, 2011   | 24                     | 31                       | 21                        | 23                           | 1                |



## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

|                              | Very<br><u>closely</u> | Fairly<br><u>closely</u> | Not too<br><u>closely</u> | Not at all<br><u>closely</u> | (VOL.)<br>DK/Ref |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| November 3-6, 2011           | 22                     | 31                       | 20                        | 26                           | 1                |
| October 27-30, 2011          | 21                     | 26                       | 21                        | 30                           | 1                |
| October 20-23, 2011          | 21                     | 28                       | 22                        | 28                           | 1                |
| October 13-16, 2011          | 26                     | 29                       | 22                        | 23                           | 1                |
| October 6-9, 2011            | 25                     | 25                       | 23                        | 27                           | 1                |
| September 29-October 2, 2011 | 27                     | 26                       | 21                        | 25                           | *                |
| September 22-25, 2011        | 25                     | 26                       | 23                        | 25                           | 1                |
| September 15-18, 2011        | 24                     | 28                       | 21                        | 27                           | 1                |
| September 8-11, 2011         | 22                     | 26                       | 21                        | 31                           | *                |
| September 1-4, 2011          | 22                     | 23                       | 22                        | 32                           | 1                |
| August 25-28, 2011           | 22                     | 22                       | 22                        | 33                           | 1                |
| August 18-21, 2011           | 27                     | 26                       | 19                        | 28                           | 1                |
| August 11-14, 2011           | 19                     | 24                       | 20                        | 36                           | 1                |
| August 4-7, 2011             | 18                     | 21                       | 22                        | 37                           | 1                |
| July 28-31, 2011             | 17                     | 27                       | 21                        | 35                           | 1                |
| July 21-24, 2011             | 17                     | 22                       | 28                        | 32                           | *                |
| July 14-17, 2011             | 18                     | 26                       | 27                        | 28                           | 1                |
| July 7-10, 2011              | 16                     | 23                       | 27                        | 33                           | 1                |
| June 30-July 3, 2011         | 21                     | 28                       | 24                        | 25                           | 2                |
| June 23-26, 2011             | 19                     | 26                       | 24                        | 31                           | *                |
| June 16-19, 2011             | 23                     | 29                       | 23                        | 25                           | *                |
| June 9-12, 2011              | 18                     | 30                       | 22                        | 30                           | 1                |
| June 2-5, 2011               | 21                     | 31                       | 22                        | 26                           | *                |
| May 26-29, 2011              | 20                     | 27                       | 24                        | 28                           | *                |
| May 19-22, 2011              | 15                     | 27                       | 24                        | 32                           | 1                |
| May 12-15, 2011              | 15                     | 22                       | 26                        | 35                           | 1                |
| May 5-8, 2011                | 16                     | 24                       | 27                        | 32                           | 1                |
| April 21-25, 2011            | 18                     | 26                       | 23                        | 32                           | 1                |
| April 14-17, 2011            | 20                     | 23                       | 29                        | 27                           | 1                |
| March 24-27, 2011            | 13                     | 19                       | 26                        | 41                           | 1                |
| March 10-13, 2011            | 15                     | 21                       | 26                        | 38                           | 0                |
| February 10-13, 2011         | 16                     | 19                       | 24                        | 40                           | *                |
| February 3-6, 2011           | 15                     | 20                       | 23                        | 42                           | *                |

[SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS](#)

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.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.]**

Dec 15-18

2011

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 18 | Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy                       |
| 17 | News about candidates for the 2012 presidential elections             |
| 17 | A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University                          |
| 12 | The complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq                      |
| 8  | Congress working on a budget agreement to avoid a government shutdown |
| 1  | Political protests in Russia  |
| 8  | Some other story (VOL.)   |
| 20 | Don't know/Refused (VOL.)   |