

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
FEBRUARY 6-9, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1,002

Q.1 In the past few weeks, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of Barack Obama, a LESS favorable opinion of Barack Obama, or hasn't your opinion of him changed lately?

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not changed</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
Barack Obama	23	16	60	1=100

2008 CAMPAIGN

TREND FOR COMPARISON:¹

October 31-November 3, 2008	25	25	49	1=100
October 24-27, 2008	24	21	52	3=100
October 17-20, 2008	33	23	43	1=100
October 10-13, 2008	29	21	48	2=100
October 3-6, 2008	28	23	47	2=100
September 26-29, 2008	31	23	45	1=100
September 19-22, 2008	25	20	53	2=100
September 12-15, 2008	20	20	58	2=100
September 5-8, 2008	20	20	59	1=100
August 29-31, 2008	29	19	50	2=100
August 22-25, 2008	22	21	54	3=100
August 15-18, 2008	16	21	60	3=100
August 8-11, 2008	15	18	64	3=100
August 1-4, 2008	16	22	60	2=100
July 25-28, 2008	17	21	59	3=100
July 18-21, 2008	16	22	60	2=100
July 11-14, 2008	15	17	64	4=100
July 3-7, 2008	17	17	62	4=100
June 27-30, 2008	21	19	56	4=100
June 20-23, 2008	16	16	66	2=100
June 13-16, 2008	17	15	64	4=100
June 6-9, 2008	19	17	61	3=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	17	21	58	4=100
May 22-25, 2008	18	20	60	2=100
May 16-19, 2008	19	19	59	3=100
May 9-12, 2008	20	23	55	2=100
May 2-5, 2008	11	25	59	5=100
April 25-28, 2008	16	24	58	2=100
April 18-21, 2008	18	24	54	4=100
March 28-31, 2008	18	27	52	3=100
March 20-24, 2008	22	30	46	2=100

For March 20-24, 2008 through October 31-November 3, 2008 the introduction read, "In the past few days." For September 12-15 through October 31-November 3, 2008 the question asked respondents to "Please think about each of the following candidates," Barack Obama, John McCain, Joe Biden and Sarah Palin in the 2008 presidential and vice presidential elections. For June 13-16, 2008 through September 5-8, 2008, the question was worded, "Please think about each of the following *presidential* candidates..." and asked about Barack Obama and John McCain. For March 20-24, 2008 through June 6-9, 2008 the list of presidential candidates included Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John McCain.

Q.2 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 ITEMS] [IF NECESSARY “Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]

	Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/ Refused
a. Reports about the rising unemployment rate	44	36	11	9	*=100
January 9-12, 2009	45	34	14	7	*=100
December 5-8, 2008	40	33	17	10	*=100
November 7-10, 2008	39	32	17	12	*=100
June 6-9, 2008	25	31	23	21	*=100
b. The debate in Congress over Barack Obama’s economic stimulus plan	41	33	15	11	*=100
January 30-February 2, 2009	36	29	22	13	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:²					
January 16-19, 2009: Debate in Washington over the nation’s economic problems	35	33	17	15	*=100
December 19-22, 2008: Bush administration plan for emergency loans to U.S. automakers	37	33	16	13	1=100
December 12-15, 2008: Debate over a government bailout for U.S. auto industry	40	33	18	9	*=100
December 5-8, 2008: Debate in Congress over a bailout for U.S. auto industry	34	38	17	11	*=100
November 21-24, 2008	41	26	17	15	1=100
October 3-6, 2008: Washington debates plan to stabilize markets	62	26	7	5	*=100
September 26-29, 2008	60	22	10	8	*=100
September 19-22, 2008: Wall Street turmoil	49	28	14	9	*=100
September 12-15, 2008: Government takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac	28	35	19	17	1=100
March 20-24, 2008: Bear Stearns buyout	21	26	21	32	*=100
February 8-11, 2008: Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic stimulus plan	22	33	23	21	1=100
January 25-28, 2008	24	36	19	21	*=100
August, 1989: Savings and loan bailout	26	30	20	23	1=100
c. The recent elections in Iraq	7	22	30	40	1=100
February, 2005	27	39	18	16	*=100
d. Tom Daschle withdrawing his nomination for a cabinet post over a tax related controversy	25	29	19	27	*=100
e. A picture showing Olympic swim champion Michael Phelps smoking marijuana	17	27	28	28	*=100

² January 16-19, 2009 asked about “The debate in Washington over what the government should do about the nation’s economic problems.” December 19-22, 2008 asked about “The Bush administration’s plan to provide billions in emergency loans to U.S. automakers.” December 12-15, 2008 asked about “The debate over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry.” November 21-24, 2008 and December 5-8, 2008 asked about “The debate in Congress over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry.” September 26-29, 2008 and October 3-6, 2008 asked about “The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets.” September 19-22, 2008 asked about “Turmoil among major financial institutions on Wall Street.” September 12-15, 2008 asked about “The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.” March 20-24, 2008 asked about “The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns.” January 25-28, 2008 and February 8-11, 2008 asked about “President Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic stimulus plan.” August, 1989 asked about: “Passage in Congress of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions.”

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
f. A California mother of six who recently gave birth to octuplets after receiving fertility treatment	23	33	27	17	*=100

Q.3 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.**]

- 47 The debate in Congress over Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan
 - 16 Reports about the rising unemployment rate
 - 10 A California mother of six who recently gave birth to octuplets after receiving fertility treatment
 - 10 Tom Daschle withdrawing his nomination for a cabinet post over a tax related controversy
 - 5 A picture showing Olympic swim champion Michael Phelps smoking marijuana
 - 2 The recent elections in Iraq
 - 6 Some other story (VOL.)
 - 9 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100

Q.4 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 rising unemployment rate	13	23	62	2=100
b. The Congressional debate over the economic stimulus plan	8	34	54	4=100
c. What is included in the economic stimulus plan	8	50	37	5=100
d. The recent elections in Iraq	5	47	36	12=100
e. Tom Daschle withdrawing his nomination for a cabinet post over a tax related controversy	18	20	56	6=100
f. A picture showing Olympic swim champion Michael Phelps smoking marijuana	67	5	22	6=100
g. A California mother of six who recently gave birth to octuplets after receiving fertility treatment	62	5	30	3=100

Q.5 In following news about the economic stimulus plan over the past few days, is what you've been reading and hearing about the plan mostly positive or mostly negative?

- 29 Mostly positive
 - 48 Mostly negative
 - 17 Mix of both (VOL.)
 - 6 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100