

Read over the excerpts and answer the questions for each one.

**A. The following excerpt is from an interview about foreign affairs with Senator John Kerry that was published online by The *New York Times* on March 6, 2004.**

**Kerry:** The war on terror depends on the most unprecedented cooperation in American history, the thing they're worst at. The final victory in the war on terror depends on a victory in the war of ideas, much more than the war on the battlefield. And the war—not the war, I don't want to use that terminology. The engagement of economies, the economic transformation, the transformation to modernity of a whole bunch of countries that have been avoiding the future. And that future's coming at us like it or not, in the context of terror, and in the context of failed states, and dysfunctional economies, and all that goes with that.

**QUESTION: When Kerry says, "Not the war, I don't want to use that terminology," what is he referring to? Give evidence to support your position.**

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Kerry is referring to "the war of ideas" and "the engagement of economies." Although the excerpt begins with Kerry speaking about the "war on terror," he goes on to speak about "the war of ideas" and then comments, "I don't want to use that terminology" before speaking about "the engagement of economies."

**B. The following excerpt is from a speech Vice President Dick Cheney gave at a reception for Senator Jim Bunning in Florence, Kentucky on March 12, 2004.**

**Cheney:** There are many tasks that those of us in public service must take on, but none is more important than working to ensure that the citizens of this great country are safe and secure. We are now entering into a great national debate on how best to deal with the dangers we face. On one side we have the Democratic nominee, who is uncomfortable with the idea that we are at war. "I don't want to use that terminology," he said last week.

**QUESTION: Cheney says that Kerry "is uncomfortable with the idea that we are at war." What does he base that on, and is that an accurate conclusion? Use Kerry's remarks to support your position.**

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Cheney interpreted Kerry's quote in The *New York Times* interview to say that Kerry doesn't want to speak of a "war" on terror. Answers will vary about fairness but a close reading of Kerry's quote points to him being uncomfortable using the term "war" in referring to ideas or economies, rather than the war on terror.

**C. The following excerpt is from a March 13, 2004 article by Al Cross in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* titled "Vice President Cheney Discusses Security, Economy During Visit."**

Arguing that the most important job at the White House is keeping Americans safe, Cheney said, "We're now entering into a great national debate about how best to deal with the dangers we face. On one side, we have the Democratic nominee, who is uncomfortable with the idea we are at war. Quote, 'I don't want to use that terminology,' he said last week." Kerry's remarks were made in an interview recorded by The *New York Times* aboard his campaign plane on March 5.

**QUESTION: Does this excerpt from the newspaper article appear to be pro-Kerry, anti-Kerry, or neutral? Give evidence to support your answer.**

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Anti-Kerry, because the reporter only quotes Cheney's interpretation of Kerry's remarks and doesn't include the context of Kerry's remarks. It would have been more accurate for him to quote both Cheney and Kerry. He also describes Cheney's remarks as emphasizing "keeping Americans safe" and dealing with the "dangers we face."

**D. The following excerpt is from the text of an Internet ad entitled “Keep Our Word” that the Kerry campaign e-mailed to supporters on February 27, 2004.**

Bush shown on screen saying: “When we make a pledge we keep our word. When America works, America prospers. So my economic security plan can be summed up in one word. Jobs.”

Text flashes on screen: “2.9 Million Jobs Lost [Bureau of Labor Statistics.]”

**QUESTION: What is Kerry’s message and what does he use to support it?**

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Kerry suggests that Bush has not kept to his pledge to provide jobs. The Kerry ad cites the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a government office, as the source for his claim.

**E. The following excerpt is from a February 28, 2004 article by David L. Greene in the *Baltimore Sun* titled “Democrats Talking Overtime about Jobs.”**

As Democrats like to point out, nearly 3 million jobs have vanished in Bush’s first three years in office. That makes his record worse than any president’s since Herbert Hoover. The president’s defense is that he inherited a recession and that two wars have weighed down the economy. But his message might not be resonating. In a *Newsweek* poll released last week, 55 percent of voters said they disapproved of Bush’s handling of “jobs and foreign competition.” Only 33 percent said they approved.

**QUESTION: Does this excerpt from the newspaper article appear to be pro-Bush, anti-Bush, or neutral? Give evidence to support your answer.**

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Anti-Bush, because his information appears to come from “Democrats,” not an impartial source. It would have been more appropriate for the reporter to have sought independent verification of the statistic and cited his source in the article. It also calls Bush’s record “worse than any president since Herbert Hoover” and cites a recent poll with high levels of disapproval of Bush.

**F. The final excerpt is from an online article on the factcheck.org website posted March 3, 2004 titled “Kerry’s Attack Video Misleads on Veterans, Jobs.”**

In a news release about its new ad, the Kerry campaign said “George W. Bush has lost credibility” and “his rhetoric does not square with his record.” But the same can be said of some parts of the Kerry ad itself...The ad wrongly states that 2.9 million jobs have been lost under Bush, and cites the Bureau of Labor Statistics as the source. That’s wrong. BLS figures actually show the loss in total payroll jobs has been 2.2 million jobs.

**QUESTION: How could the two sources have different figures for the jobless rate even when they both cite the Bureau of Labor Statistics? Which source is more credible (believable) on the jobs statistics, factcheck.org or the Kerry campaign? Explain why.**

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Statistics can be easily manipulated, even when they come from the same source such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Kerry campaign statistics on unemployment should be suspect since it has a clear interest in making the Bush administration look bad. Factcheck.org, on the other hand, is a non-partisan web site dedicated to investigating the accuracy of political claims.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Factcheck.org reported “the Kerry campaign argued that the ad referred to ‘the loss of private sector jobs only, disregarding a large gain in federal, state and local government employment since Bush took office.’ But there’s no way anyone watching the ad would know that. Kerry has used this misleading tactic before.” Factcheck.org listed specific sources following its article to enable readers to check the statistics on their own.