A Health Care Primer

Discussion Questions
1. What does the “rationing” of health care mean? Do any of the current bills propose rationing?
2. Does our current private health care system “ration” care in any way?
3. In the current system, can people select their own doctor? Are their limits to choices?
4. Do illegal immigrants now get any kind of health care? What do current bills propose?
5. Why so many rumors and misinformation about this health care issue?
6. What is a single-payer system? What is universal health care? Be able to explain the differences between those forms of coverage.
7. What is the “public option” that is currently being discussed? What are the pros and cons of this public option?
8. Will Medicare be cut under the current proposals?
9. What is meant by “pre-existing condition?” Can people who have pre-existing conditions now be denied insurance? How about their situation under the reform plans? What moral and ethical issues are involved in this particular issue?
10. What is Medicare and what is Medicaid? Be able to explain these different programs.
11. Why are states so concerned with Medicaid changes?
12. Why do so few doctors accept Medicaid patients?
13. What is meant by “preventive” health care? Would more preventive care save money? Why?
14. Are the political constituents different in Medicaid and Medicare? How does that help explain how monies are allocated? Why does Medicare get so much more?
15. Why are people using the “death panel” argument to attack health care reform plans?
16. Are there death panels in any health care proposal?
17. What is euthanasia?
18. What are “end-of-life” services?
19. Who makes end-of-life decisions now?
20. Why all the lies and scare tactics about health care?
21. What problems are Democrats and liberals having with these health care proposals?
22. Is this health care issue just too complicated for the American people to grasp?
23. How does race play into the health care scare tactics?
24. Why did Hitler kill the Jews during World War II?
25. Why are people (talk radio shows primarily) bringing Hitler into this debate?
26. Describe the British system (NHS)? Is it inefficient? Do the British people approve of the system?
27. How many other Western nations DO NOT have some kind of universal health care?
28. What do these European journalists think of America’s debate?
29. Why do American political debates always seem to tilt toward the extreme viewpoints? What causes that?
30. Should Americans at least understand how the Europeans manage health care in order to learn something?
31. How many small businesses in this country provide health insurance?
32. What problems is the cost of health insurance causing small business owners?
33. Do small business owners want health care reform?
34. Why are seniors so anxious about possible health care reforms?
35. What is a health care “deductible” and how does that work?
36. Why are Americans so worried about people abusing the system?
37. Can people take their health care with them when they leave their job? Can they do that in Europe? What are the implications of this for American workers?
38. Who is against health care reform and why? Be specific.

Class Projects
1. Look up the House and Senate bills on the internet, and find out what these bills include.

2. Once you understand all the details of the health care debate, start following the House and Senate floor debates and/or committee hearings.

3. Interview someone (an adult) who doesn’t have insurance. What are their feelings and thoughts about the system in the United States.

4. Interview a doctor and find out what they think about healthcare reform? Do you think doctors are in favor of healthcare reform?

5. Interview someone on Medicare and find out what concerns they have about health care reform?

6. When did Medicare and Medicaid start? Learn some history by finding out how these programs came about?