

Name: _____

Are We Winning the Global War on Terror?

Introduction: In October 2003, seven months after the United States invaded Iraq, Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense, wrote a memo to four of his subordinates. In his memo he asked his colleagues to consider a number of questions he had about the “Global War on Terror.” Read the memo below, and answer the questions that follow with your partner. Note that DoD means Department of Defense and USG means United States Government.

1. Highlight or underline the questions in Secretary Rumsfeld’s memo that you think are most compelling or interesting. Discuss with your partner why these questions interested you.

2. Why might Secretary Rumsfeld have written this memo at this time?

3. With your partner, consider the first question in Secretary Rumsfeld’s memo: “Are we winning or losing the Global War on Terror?” Below, list the types of information you would need in order to decide whether the United States was winning the war on terror. For instance, would you need to know how many terrorist incidents had occurred in the last few years? Or how many people in poverty-stricken areas had joined extremist groups?

4. How would you locate the information you need? What sources would you consult?

5. Rumsfeld asks at the end of his memo, “What else should we be considering?” What do you think? Are there questions Rumsfeld doesn’t ask that he should? Which ones?

6. Extra Challenge: Secretary Rumsfeld calls the struggle against terrorism a “Global War on Terror.” Is this the right name or title for this struggle? How else could it be described?