Scholastic News Online/News In–Depth Issue: Iraq
Roots of the Conflict

Tensions between the United States and Iraq began more than 10 years ago. Study this time line to understand the roots of the current conflict, then answer the questions.

1979  Saddam Hussein becomes President of Iraq.

1980  Iraq and Iran go to war. The U.S. sides against Iran and sends arms to help Iraq.

1988  Iraq uses chemical weapons to attack the Kurds, an ethnic group in the northern part of Iraq. The war with Iran ends.

1991  The U.S. attacks Iraq in Operation Desert Storm. After two months, Iraq leaves Kuwait. Iraq promises it will stop building chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It agrees to let the UN conduct weapons inspections.

1998  Iraq refuses to let UN weapons inspectors in.

2000  Iraq again turns away UN weapons inspectors.

2002  Evidence grows that Iraq is making illegal weapons. Experts also worry that Iraq will align itself with al Qaeda, a terrorist organization. Finally, Iraq agrees to let UN weapons inspectors in.

2003  Weapons inspectors finish their tally. The U.S. considers Iraq an urgent threat and asks the UN to support an attack on Iraq.

1. This time line is divided into segments. Each segment stands for ___________ years.

2. How long has Saddam Hussein been in power in Iraq? ______________________

3. When did Iraq use chemical weapons? _______________. Against whom? ________________

   ___________________________________________________________________________

5. Why did the U.S. attack Iraq in 1991? ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

   ___________________________________________________________________________

7. According to the time line, what are two reasons the U.S. currently considers Iraq a threat?
   ___________________________________________________________________________