

Assessment Answer Key

Directions: Answer the following questions in a complete sentence.

1. What ideas did your group raise about the role of government in ensuring the elderly a secure and stable standard of living? What reasons were provided in support of these ideas?

Students' answers could include discussion of the "intergenerational commitment" discussed by President Barack Obama, in which citizens are expected to provide for the elderly and, in turn, expect to be provided for when they retire; or, students could discuss President George W. Bush's concept that citizens should provide for their own retirement through individual accounts.

2. After hearing your classmates' arguments, were you persuaded to modify your own opinions? Why or why not? Where do points of compromise exist among the various ideas shared in your group?

Students' answers will vary, but should focus on commonalities and areas in which compromise could be reached among their potentially disparate ideas.

3. What additional information would you need to make an informed decision about the role you believe the federal government should play in ensuring the elderly a secure and stable standard of living?

Students' answers might include discussion about how much money is currently allocated for Social Security spending, what percentage of the federal budget that money represents, and how those numbers are expected to change in the coming years. They might also want to know what other demands there are on the money. Some students might want to know how other countries approach the challenge of pension plans for the elderly and if they are more or less successful.