Huns, Nuns, & Guns: A WebQuest

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Abstract

The cost of war is extremely high. Human, monetary, and physical resources are all used in abundance during war. World War I was no exception. This war of attrition forced governments to devise means of convincing people on the home front to continue fighting the war. This WebQuest is designed to be used as a separate activity or in conjunction with a lesson on the years of deadlock during WWI.

NCSS themes. II. Time, Continuity, and Change; VI. Power, Authority, and Governance; VIII. Science

Propaganda and the Cold War

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Abstract

This lesson set forms an initial study of the Cold War by tenth graders and is used following a unit on World Wars I and II. Students are involved in three components: (1) analysis of political cartoons depicting different sides of the Cold War, (2) defining and evaluating atomic diplomacy, and (3) exploring the reasons for, and effects of, polarization caused by the containment policy. Each lesson uses a learning cycle format.

NCSS themes. II. Time, Continuity, and Change; VI. Power, Authority, and Governance; VIII. Science, Technology, and Society; and IX. Global Connections

Performance Expectations. The following performance expectations within the themes are identified for this lesson set.

- **II. Time, Continuity, and Change – e.)** investigate, interpret, and analyze multiple historical and contemporary viewpoints within and across cultures related to important events, recurring dilemmas, and persistent issues, while employing empathy, skepticism, and critical judgment.
- **VI. Power, Authority, and Governance – d.)** compare and analyze the ways nations and organizations respond to conflicts between forces of unity and forces of diversity.
- **VIII. Science, Technology, and Society – a.)** identify and describe both current and historical examples of the interaction of interdependence of science, technology, and society in a variety of cultural settings;
  b.) make judgments about how science and technology have transformed the world and human society and our understanding of time, space, place, and human-environment interactions.
- **IX. Global Connections – b.)** explain conditions and motivations that contribute to conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations;
  e.) analyze the relationships and tensions between national sovereignty and global interests in such matters as territory, economic development, nuclear and other weapons, use of natural resources, and human rights concerns.
Learning Cycle Lesson 1: Political Cartoons

**Goal:** Understand and analyze political cartoons from the Cold War era.

**Key idea/question:** What do cartoons illustrate about the political scenario of the Cold War?

**Exploratory Introduction Phase**

**Objective:** Students identify the symbols and language used by artists to convey a point of view.

**Materials:** transparencies of contemporary political cartoons

**Procedure:**

1. Place a political cartoon on the overhead. The selected cartoon should be interesting, controversial, or about a timely issue of interest of your students. The cartoon should be fairly familiar to students, presenting a puzzling or contradictory perspective to generate critical thinking.

2. Encourage students to look closely at the cartoon and take notes or write questions about the message, the use of images, and/or the subject.

3. Next, have students organize their questions into the following categories: the cartoon's message, its subject, and its use of images or artistic techniques.

4. Have students share questions they have constructed about the cartoons. They will not be expected to answer the key question above at this time, but they are instructed to generate even more questions and perhaps come up with some possible interpretations of the cartoon.

**Assessment:**

Record questions students have constructed on a chart or overhead and consider quality and appropriateness of their interpretations.

**Lesson Development Phase**

**Objective:** Students analyze political cartoons and provide evidence from the cartoon to support their interpretations.

**Materials:** contemporary cartoons and Cold War era cartoons.

**Procedure:**

1. Have students analyze two cartoons--one that is contemporary and one from the Cold War era--using worksheet located at the following address: [http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html)

2. Have students share and discuss analyses.
(3) Closure: Create a consensus list of the symbols that artists are using to convey their point of view. Create a companion consensus list of the language they have identified within the cartoons used to convey a point of view.

Assessment:
Review consensus lists to determine whether key symbols and language have been identified.

Expansion Phase

Objective: Students create a political cartoon that clearly conveys a point of view.

Materials: paper and pencil (some may want to use large A3 size paper to create a larger cartoon)

Procedure:
(1) Have students create their own cartoons. They should convey a clear message that can be analyzed using the cartoon analysis worksheet from the lesson development phase of the lesson.
(2) Collect cartoons and redistribute them to other students. Have students analyze their peers’ cartoons using the analysis worksheet.
(3) Lesson summary: Briefly have students describe the lesson’s activities and its major points.

Assessment:
Collect and examine the peer assessments of the cartoons to determine the perceived level of utilization of symbols and language.

Learning Cycle Lesson 2: Atomic Diplomacy

Goal: Define, discuss, and analyze the concept of atomic diplomacy on post World War II relations between the USSR and USA.

Key idea/question: Understand how diplomatic relations changed with the development of the atomic bomb.

Exploratory Introduction Phase

Objective: Students describe the consequences of the use of nuclear power and the capability for its use.

Materials: movie clips, pictures, paper, pencils

Procedure:
(1) Show students both pictures and short clips of the atomic bomb droppings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
(2) Ask students to write down what they consider to be 3-5 key ideas about atomic power. Discuss the question: What immediate consequences and long-lasting effects exist in regard to atomic power?

(3) Return to the movie clips and pictures. Discuss whether they wish to revise their key ideas.

**Assessment:**
Using a checklist, note those students whose key ideas relate most closely the evidence found in the clips and pictures.

**Lesson Development Phase**

**Objectives:** Students define atomic diplomacy. Students identify the arguments for and against its use.

**Materials:** primary documents excerpts listed below, pencil and paper

1) *The Interim Committee on Military Use of the Atomic Bomb*, 1945
   [http://www.atomicmuseum.com/tour/decision.cfm](http://www.atomicmuseum.com/tour/decision.cfm)

2) *The Franck Committee on Noncombatant Atomic Demonstration*, 1945
   [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/search.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/search.html)

3) Winston Churchill’s *Iron Curtain Speech*, 1946
   [http://www.historyguide.org/europe/churchill.html](http://www.historyguide.org/europe/churchill.html)

4) The *Truman Doctrine*, 1947
   [http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/trudoc.htm](http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/trudoc.htm)

**Procedure:**
(1) Assign small groups. Then assign the reading of one primary document in the materials list to each group as homework.

(2) In the following class, ask groups to construct a definition of atomic policy. Then ask them to construct a list of the effects of the atomic policy they have defined.

(3) Have students participate in a class discussion via response groups.

(4) Closure: There should be closure with the discussion leading to a consensus in regard to the definition of an atomic policy. There may be several arguments about the different effects especially when the *what if’s* come up. In such an instance, ask the students to list the arguments and identify evidence supporting each argument. Then construct a list of arguments and supports.

**Assessment:**
Consider whether components of the definition of atomic policy are all policy-related. Consider the effects identify and the level of support for each.

**Expansion Phase**

**Objective:** Analyze arguments and form a conclusion for or against the use of atomic diplomacy based on those arguments.

**Materials:** computer, Internet access, paper, pencil
Procedure:
(1) Instruct student groups to identify the principal arguments regarding whether or not to use atomic policy as a viable diplomatic stance.

(2) Prompt students individually to write a letter of advice to the President, arguing whether or not atomic policy should be used. Students should clearly present their argument supporting it with evidence.

(3) Lesson summary: Have a discussion about where the different stances are shared and debated. Most importantly, there should be a discussion about whether there was a way to avoid using atomic policy or whether it was the only choice once this technology appeared.

Assessment:
Consider the validity and appropriateness of the arguments used by students in their letters.

Learning Cycle Lesson 3: Containment

Goals: Construct the generalization: The Cold War caused the world to become polarized through the formation of strategic alliances.

Key idea/question: What were the effects of the Cold War on the world-wide political scenario?

Exploration Phase

Objectives: Students will describe the concept of containment.

Materials: stream table

Procedure:
(1) Use a stream table to demonstrate what containment means. The purpose of the demonstration is to help students realize that water in an inclined stream table can only be contained if proper and strong barriers are placed in the correct places.

(2) Have students consider the stream table activity and draw a parallel between the containment of a water stream and what containment meant during the Cold War.

Assessment:
Note whether students are able to recognize that water in the stream table represents communism while the barriers represent containment efforts.
Lesson Development

Objective: Students identify the various methods and examples used in containment theory that led to the polarization of the world.

Materials: maps, photos, political cartoons, markers, highlighters, glue sticks, and notebooks

Procedure:
(1) Construct and present an interactive slide/PowerPoint lecture that will include maps, photos, and political cartoons with the participation of the students. All of the visuals will attempt to illustrate the polarization of the world as a result of containment policy. Students should take notes on the final lecture (to be used in the next step).

(2) Closure: Have students construct individual interactive student books. With their notes and the arguments used during participation, students should develop their own original arrangement of notes, reorganize the information, reformat it so that it makes sense to them, express their opinions and feelings, and express their own ideas. Finally, students should take a copy of a world political map and attempt to identify and mark the two competing political spheres as well as the areas where containment is/was heavily practiced.

Assessment:
Review students’ individual, interactive books to determine accuracy, appropriateness, and strength of supporting evidence.

Expansion Phase

Objective: Students will apply their understanding of containment theory though a game called Cold War Chess.

Materials: chess sets

Procedure:
(1) Have students play Cold War Chess, replicating how containment policy was acted out in the world scenario. Directions are located at the following address: http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/resrcs/lessons/01_8_%20HitColdWar.pdf

(2) Lesson summary. Discuss the effects of containment policy, how third and second world countries were used, what benefits some countries received, and what were the long-lasting effects.

Assessment:
Ask students to write a brief paper defining containment and its long-lasting effects identifying supporting evidence for their arguments. Consider appropriateness of the supporting evidence cited for their arguments.