

LESSON THREE: A DEBATE OF THE 38TH PARALLEL: WAS IT RIGHT?

Ohio Standards Connections

- Standard: History
- Benchmark(s): Analyze the connections between World War II, the Cold War and contemporary conflicts.
- Indicator(s): Explain how the Cold War and related conflicts influenced U.S. foreign policy after 1945 with an emphasis on the Korean War and the Vietnam War.
- Standard: People in Societies
- Benchmark(s): Analyze the consequences of oppression, discrimination and conflict between cultures.

Assessment

- *Pre-Assessment:* Students will have a general understanding of the dynamics of the Cold War, especially the tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. We will talk about the Korean War and then look at the division of Korea through the eyes of Americans as well as Koreans.
 - The teacher will place a map of Korea on the overhead.
 - The teacher will pose the following questions to students:
 - Why would other countries want Korea?
 - What does Korea have that could be important?
 - Was Korea a threat in the 1950s?
- *Scoring Criteria:* The students will not be formally tested on this information, but judging by the discussion the teacher will be able to determine if more knowledge needs to be offered before beginning the lesson.
- *Post-Assessment:* Students will be graded on the activities completed during this lesson such as their preparation for the debate, talking points during the debate and the debriefing session afterwards. The final assessment will come in the form of a position paper on the division of Korea.

Lesson Summary:

- Students will learn about the Cold War and how it inevitably caused the Korean War. Students will be asked to confront some very controversial questions about the war and America's involvement in it. To prepare for the lessons, students will need to complete some homework and reading assignments dealing with the topics discussed in class. Finally, students will learn about the ending results of the war and discuss the impact it has had on present day.

Instructional Procedures:

Day One:

- After beginning the first day with the questions listed above, will begin a short lecture highlighting the causes and start of the Korean War. Students will take

notes in their notebooks. Once students have heard the short lecture, they will complete a vocabulary chart using key terms from the Cold War and the Korean War.

Day Two thru Four:

- The teacher will begin the next class period by reviewing the previous days' lecture notes. The teacher will also go over the vocabulary chart.
- The teacher will then tell students that they will be taking sides on the Korean War and the ultimate division of Korea along the 38th parallel.
- Students will be placed into two groups; the first group will represent the American side of the division and the second group will represent the Korean side. Each group will be given a series of talking points to answer as they prepare for the debate. It is the goal of the lesson that the students have to locate information about the conflict. The teacher can supply students information from the resources listed below if there was a limit on access to technology. The groups will be debating the following questions:
 - Could the Korean War have been avoided? If so, how?
 - Did the Americans have an obligation to South Korea? Why or why not?
 - Would Korea be a better place today had the Korean War not been fought and the country permanently divided along the 38th parallel?
- Each group will receive some information as dictated by the teacher.¹ Each group will also have time to look in books and on the Internet to find additional information to support their side.

Day Four:

- The teacher will begin the period by reminding the students of the debate and outlining the rules for the debate:
 - Only one person may speak at a time;
 - Do not talk out of turn;
 - No yelling at others, you will have your turn;
 - Keep a close record of the debate as reference.
- Students will then participate in a debate revolving around the division of Korea. Each student will have a specific talking point during the debate to ensure that everyone talks. The debate will last an entire class period.

Day Five:

- As a conclusion to the debate, students will compose a 3 paragraph position paper on the division of Korea. They may or may not stay on the same side as they were assigned during the debate. Students will need to answer the following question in addition to those given during the debate:
 - Was the division of Korea fair to the people of Korea and the rest of the world?

¹ Teachers may utilize excerpts from the book *Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* by Don Oberdorfer, pages 1-13, as well as many textbooks.

Differentiated Instruction Strategies:

- This lesson will use the following instructional strategies to meet the needs of individual students:
 - Visual note-taking using;
 - Vocabulary understanding using the vocabulary chart;
 - Hands-on application using debate technique;
 - Final summary paper.

Estimated Time Duration:

- Five, 43 minute class periods.

Materials and Resources Needed:

For the teacher:

- Lesson Power Point or overhead lecture;
- Prior knowledge of the Cold War and the Korean War;
- Worksheets provided.

For the students:

- Notebooks;
- Textbook;
- Writing utensil;
- Worksheets provided;
- Debate question packet;
- An open mind.

Additional Readings and Resources:

- Oberdorfer, Don. *Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*. Basic Books, 2001.
 - This is a wonderful book to use, especially for understanding more of the Korean perspective.
- Benson, Sonia and Gerda-Ann Raffaele. *Korean War: Almanac and Primary Sources*. Detroit, MI: UXL, 2002.
 - A good summary and supplemental resource for additional readings and lessons.
- Sandler, Stanley. *The Korean War: An Encyclopedia*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1995.
- United States of America Korean War Commemoration <http://korea50.army.mil/>
 - United States military celebration of the Korean War. Of course, this website is totally from the American perspective but still useful.
- Korean War maps <http://www.koreanwar.org/html/maps.html>
 - Many different useful maps of the Korean War. There are detailed maps of the battles.

Homework Options:

- As a preparatory lesson, students could interview family members that living during the Cold War and ideally the Korean War.

- Students could also work on their debates at home.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Students could read some primary documents from the time period as a connection to English.

Technology Connections:

- Students could compile their own Power Points to reinforce the debate.
- Students could also offer a visual representation of their stand point at the end of the debate versus a paper.

Debate Questions

- Could the Korean War have been avoided? If so, how?
- Did the Americans have an obligation to South Korea? Why or why not?
- Would Korea be a better place today had the Korean War not been fought and the country permanently divided along the 38th parallel?

DEBATE RULES

- Only one person may speak at a time.
 - Do not talk out of turn.
 - No yelling at others, you will have your turn.
4. Keep a close record of the debate as reference

Korean War Debate Talking Points

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

Talking points which support your side of the debate:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Position statement: