

Joe Serio
Buckeye High School
Medina, Ohio

Tip for NCTA

The American/Korean Conflict (1950-1953): Korean or Chinese Draw...Victory?

Purpose: To provide an inquiry into the so-called Korean War from a Korean and Chinese post-war perspective.

Standard: History and People in Societies (Grades 9-12): Students use knowledge of perspectives, practices and products of cultures, ethnic and social groups to analyze the impact of their commonality and diversity within national, regional and global settings.

Benchmark: To analyze how issues may be viewed differently by various cultural groups.

Indicators 1 & 2 (Grades 9-12): Identify the perspectives of diverse groups when analyzing issues and proposing solutions to current issues.

Grade Level and Course(s): Advanced World Studies, Advanced Placement European History.

Materials:

Main Text(s):

Coffin, Judith G., *Western Civilizations: Their History and Their Culture*; 14th Edition, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, New York, 2002.

Cummings, Bruce, *Korea's Place In The Sun*, W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York, N.Y., 2005.

Ellis, Elisabeth Gaynor and Esler, Anthony., *World History: Connections to Today*, 5th Edition, Prentice Hall, Saddle River, New Jersey, 2001.

Ancillary Text(s):

Catchpole, Brain., *The Korean War*; Carroll & Graf Publishers, New York, New York, 2000.

Fehrenbach, T. R., *This Kind Of War: The Classic Korean War History*, Brassey's, Dulles, Virginia, 2000.

Halberstam, David., *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War*, Hyperion, New York, New York, 2007.

Sandler, Stanley., *The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington Kentucky, 1999.

Whelan, Richard., *Drawing The Line: The Korean War, 1950-1953*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, Massachusetts, 1990.

Procedure and Philosophy: After reading Chapter 34 (World History) or Chapter 32 (Western Civilizations), the instructor will administer a PowerPoint presentation explaining the Korean Conflict (1950-1953) from the western perspective. Special emphasis will be given to the ideological impetus that drove American, Korean, and Chinese forces to engage one another. The rationale behind this lesson is to provide a contextual framework by which to consider why there was no clear victor in the conflict and who could claim the moral, if not, psychological victory. The assignment to follow will be based on the student's ability to answer a series of questions and make inferences from the available historical data provided.

Activities: The instructor will have multiple photocopies of chapters that pertain to the subject matter. The instructor will divide the class into groups of 5 or 6 and disseminate the copies. The sixth group member will utilize the textbook instead of a photocopied chapter. Each student will then be responsible for answering the following questions based on what they glean from the readings. Students will synthesize information when group reconvenes.

Questions:

1. Why does America refer to the conflict as the "Forgotten War" when in both China and Korea it is viewed with a measure of enthusiasm?
2. Was this a Civil War or an ideological battle between a World War II victor and the New Anti-Colonial China or a struggling and determined Korea?
3. Did the Chinese save the Koreans in this conflict according to the authors?
4. Who could claim more of a victory – Mao or Kim Il Sung? Why?
5. In what way did the conflict provide a harbinger for subsequent wars between Asians and Westerners?

Catchpole – Chapter 19: Perspectives on the Korean War

Fehrenbach – Chapter 39: Cease-fire

Halberstam – Chapter 52

Sandler – Chapter 13: Fighting and Negotiating

Whelan – Chapter 35: Final Crisis

Structure:

Day One: PowerPoint presentation covering the Korean Conflict with Q&A.

*****Questions that need to be addressed to provide background information for the later questions listed above.**

- 1. What different names are there for the conflict that erupted in Korea post World War II.**
- 2. What precipitated the conflict?**
- 3. Who were the participants in the conflict?**
- 4. Why did the peace/armistice talks that began in 1951 not end the conflict any earlier than 1953?**
- 5. How desperate did both sides become to end the war?**
- 6. Who were the major political and military figures in the conflict?**
- 7. What were the defining moments of the conflict?**

Day Two: Divide class and distribute photocopies. Students will read and answer questions (above). If not finished during class, students will complete for homework

Day Three: Each group will discuss the conclusions that they've drawn from their individual (chapter) reading within their own group for at least ten minutes. Each group will then decide (collectively) who the biggest winners and losers of the Korean Conflict were and why? Class discussion.