

Teacher Implementation Plan: Korea

Course: Contemporary Issues, Modern World History

Topic: US Policy on North Korea

Lesson Title: US Policy Options on North Korea

Time Frame: 2-3 Class Periods

Materials:

Computers for internet research and writing speeches

[PBS Frontline: Secret State of North Korea](#)

Recommended websites for research such as

- [BBC on North Korea's Nuclear Programme](#)
- [New York Times on North Korea](#)

Objectives:

1. Understand North Korea's policies and leadership.
2. Understand the interests of the US in North Korea.
3. Compare policy options and tradeoffs.
4. Write persuasive speech/essay and marshal evidence to support a position.

Overview: Students will research and prepare policy recommendations for the United States to respond to tensions on the Korean peninsula, especially North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Day One:

1. Display recent news stories about tensions on the Korean peninsula. Discuss with the class how these affect the national interests of the United States. Explain that the class is going to develop a set of policy recommendations for the US president to follow.
2. If students have not already learned it, provide them with an overview of the history of the Korean peninsula since World War II, explaining the division of the country, Korean War, political developments, South Korea's position as an American ally, and recent US actions toward North Korea.
3. Show students the Frontline program "Secret State of North Korea" so that they better understand the country and its actions. (This might be spread out over two days.)
4. Divide students into teams of 3-4 students, each of which will have a particular focus: foreign policy, domestic, military, human rights, economic, etc. Explain that they are to research on the internet to find out how US actions toward North Korea affect that aspect of policy. For example: *How would a tightening of sanctions on North Korea affect our relations with China? Would the human rights situation in North Korea improve if the US eased sanctions?* Each group should research and prepare a 3-5 minute presentation in which they argue for their recommended course in relations with

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North Korea. All students are required to participate in the presentation. They should consider both the pros and cons of each recommendation, as well as the likely long and short-term consequences. Emphasize that the quality of evidence supporting their recommendation is the most important factor in making a recommendation. Options might include tightening or easing of sanctions, military strike, US withdrawal from the Korean peninsula, or entering of negotiations (bilateral or multilateral).

5. Depending on the level of your students you might direct them toward particular internet resources or give them a template to help them organize their research and speech.

Days Two-Three

1. Continue researching and writing. Coach students to help them understand the issues and prepare effective presentations.
2. Arrange the room with a group of chairs and desks facing “the president’s” (*your*) desk. Have the group present their recommendation. Ask follow-up questions to elicit more nuanced thinking and details.
3. Follow-up ideas:
 - a. Have the class vote on the best policy and discuss.
 - b. Do a Four Corners activity and discuss.
 - c. Have each student write a short essay in which they must choose the best *overall* policy and defend their choice.

Ohio Standards

1. Historians develop theses and use evidence to support or refute positions.
2. The global balance of power shifted with the end of the Cold War. Wars, territorial disputes, ethnic and cultural conflicts, acts of terrorism, advances in technology, expansion of human rights, and changes in the global economy present new challenges.
 - a. The breakup of the Soviet Union ended the Cold War and the United States and the non-aligned world.
 - b. Proliferation of nuclear weapons has created a challenge to world peace.
3. Effective civic participation involves identifying problems or dilemmas, proposing appropriate solutions, formulating action plans, and assessing the positive and negative results of actions taken.
4. Nations seek to ensure the security of their geographic territories, political institutions, economic systems and ways of life. Maintaining security has political, social and economic costs.

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