

No Gun Ri, Korea

Purpose:

Evaluating different perspectives of historical events is challenging yet important.

Essential Questions:

1. What happened at the village of No Gun Ri, South Korea?
2. How do journalists and soldiers look at the world differently?
3. What is the impact of this difference?

Rationale:

This activity exposes students to different perspectives of historical events.

Materials:

The Bridge at No Gun Ri: A Hidden Nightmare from the Korean War by Charles J. Hanley, Sang-Hun Choe, and Martha Mendoza (2001) and *No Gun Ri: A Military History of the Korean War Incident* by Robert L. Bateman (2002).

Activities: (high school social studies target)

Divide the students into two mixed ability groups. Group One is provided copies of *The Bridge at No Gun Ri: A Hidden Nightmare*. Group Two is provided copies of *No Gun Ri: A Military History*.

Both groups are to use their book to explain their answers to the following questions:

Did American soldiers kill hundreds of civilians at the railroad underpass at No Gun Ri in 1950?

Was it intentional?

Was it ordered by officers?

Was it covered up?

The answers for group one using *A Hidden Nightmare* are all “yes.” The answers for group two using *A Military History* are “no.”

Discuss how different people look at the world differently. “Why do you think Bateman writing *A Military History* offers a different perspective from Hanley, Choe, and Mendoza in *A Hidden Nightmare*?” Ask students to come up with other examples which demonstrate different views. Is the Civil War (or War Between the States or the War of Northern Aggression) taught the same way in every state? When your school plays its main rival, who do the referees favor? Is that how the rival sees it too?

SSW:

How might North Korea's history of the Korean War be different from South Korea's? Explain.

Discuss

Assessment: grade the SSW based upon student comprehension of the purpose and essential question for the activity.

Grade Adaptations: Use a *Korean Cinderella* by Shirley Climo (1993) with elementary or middle school students. After reading them the book, divide students into mixed ability groups. Assign each group to rewrite a different version of the story based upon the perception of a character other than Cinderella. One group writes the story from the Step Mother's perception, another from the Step Sisters view, another from the Prince's. After they write and illustrate their story, have them share it with the class. Then discuss how our experiences influence the way we see the world, using the athletic event example and leading up to how history is different depending on what side (of a war, for example) you are on.