

America in the Cold War

Team Members:

Heidi Amelia-Anne Weber, SUNY Orange (Global Studies)
Edward R. Sucich, Minisink Valley High School (History)

Project Outline:

Part I- Pretest- DBQ Essay on Cold War from Regents to see where the groups are at

Part II- Strategies for Reading History/ Primary Sources

- A. QAD Method- Help focus students on what is important
Q= Question- Identify key words in the question so that you know what is important in the document.
A=Answer- Read the document and give a general answer based on the main idea of the document from memory (see the whole picture)
D=Details- Ask the journalist questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why is it important? Give a complete answer by going back to the document for these details.

- B. Graphic Organizers for longer readings through “Structured Note Taking”- Research indicates that over 50% of content is lost within minutes of reading or hearing a passage. Structured note taking helps students select, organize, and remember key points. This method is most effective for visual learners.

- C. Document Analysis Worksheets from the National Archives and Records Web Site
 1. Written Document Analysis Worksheet
 2. Poster Analysis Worksheet
 3. Photo Analysis Worksheet
 4. Cartoon Analysis Worksheet
 5. Map Analysis Worksheet

Part III- Lessons on the Cold War- These will consist of interactive lecture and the use of multiple documents to teach the history of the Cold War. Every class will begin with at least one document to analyze using the strategies above.

Part IV- Research Project Based on a Song (Primary Source) Selected by the Student on the topic of the Cold War.

- A. Analysis of the meaning of the Song (approximately one page)
- B. Research about the Cold War event that is the subject of the song

List of Primary Sources:

- part of Churchill’s “iron curtain” speech
- Eisenhower Memo after Sputnik
- Truman’s Statement announcing the Korean War
- George F. Kennan- A call for Containment
- Marshall Plan Cartoon

- Korean War Map
- Fear of A-bomb Cartoon
- Firing of MacArthur Cartoon
- Joseph McCarthy Cartoon (comparing McCarthyism to the Salem Witch Trials)
- Red Scare Cartoon
- Gulf of Tonkin Resolutions
- Vietnam Cartoon (Nixon expands the war into Cambodia-war never ending)

Song Project

Objectives:

1. Students will understand that history is part of our culture and that knowledge of history helps us make sense of the world around us (other examples are movies, historical sites, literature, etc.).
2. Students will be motivated to learn and research by the use of songs which most people enjoy.
3. Students will have to analyze the lyrics like they would analyze a poem. This is an important critical thinking skill.
4. Students will attain knowledge about the specific Cold War event that is the topic of their song.

Task:

1. Students will pick a song (see suggestions below) about the Cold War (1945-1991).
2. Students will print out a copy of the lyrics. No songs with inappropriate language can be used.
3. Students will write approximately a one page analysis of the meaning of their song. Specific lines from the song should be quoted and explained.
4. Students should pick a topic that has a relation to the song and the Cold War. They should research the topic and write a three page research paper. The paper should include citations in the body of the paper and a bibliography. Please DO NOT pick a broad topic like the Vietnam War. Five hundred page books have been written on the Vietnam War. Instead pick a specific aspect of the Vietnam War like the Kent State protest, the Tet Offensive, or the My Lai Massacre.

Song Suggestions:

You DO NOT have to choose one of the songs but if you are having difficulty finding a song you may pick one of the following:

“We Didn’t Start the Fire” “Ohio” “Born in the USA” “War” “For What It’s Worth” “Fortunate Son” “99 Luftballons” “Land of Confusion” “Back to the USSR” “Heresy” “Leningrad” “Eve of Destruction” “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall” “I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin-to-Die-Rag”

Structured Note Taking Analysis:

Three quizzes were given during the first marking period based on homework readings. The quizzes were not announced but students were allowed to take notes on every reading done for homework so that they would be able to use them if there was a quiz.

Results:

The first quiz was given at the beginning of the quarter after an elaborate lesson on how to take notes on the textbook reading. No graphic organizer was used. 72 students took the quiz and averaged 77.22%.

The second quiz was given approximately 10 days later without further instruction on note taking. 70 students took the quiz and averaged 71.42%.

The last quiz was given at the end of the marking period over one month later. A lesson was given refreshing student's memory about the first lesson and a graphic organizer was presented to the class. 63 students took the quiz and averaged 70.95%.

Possible reasons for the low average on quiz 3:

- Difficulty of material- Quiz 3 was on a reading assignment having to do with foreign policy of the first five presidents while quiz 2 was on the American Revolution.
- The third quiz was given over a month after the second quiz. Students may have gotten used to not having quizzes and may have been surprised by the quiz.
- The quiz itself may have been more difficult than the other quizzes.

In retrospect, I think the visual used was not imaginative enough to help students really get a visual image of the material. I will try to use Venn Diagrams which I have seen students do on their own for other homework assignments. I have also experimented with cause and effect diagrams which might be a more logical way for students to organize material than the visual used.

Observation on the QAD Method:

- Last year after discussing this idea with my partner, I tried it out on my two freshman classes. They did very well on their document based questions. This may be because they were just learning how to do DBQs. Freshman also tend to be less able to focus and more immature than most juniors. The QAD method seemed to focus them better.
- I have done something similar in the past with my lower level students and again they started to get more of the questions correct.
- The higher level students that I currently teach already answer these DBQ questions well. There has not seemed to be much change in their performance after using the QAD method. I get the feeling that many of them don't take the time to go through the steps of the QAD method because they feel they do not need to.

Observations on the National Archives Worksheets on analyzing maps, pictures, and cartoons:

- I took the worksheets and tried to shorten the amount of time it would take to review these types of primary sources.
- We've done most of our work on cartoons.
- With every cartoon we do in class, students must identify the topic, the symbols (and what they represent), and the overall meaning of the cartoons.
- This has been successful at focusing students of all abilities to analyze cartoons. Students seem better able to understand cartoons after identifying the symbols first.

Rubric for Song Assignment:

_____Choice of song was appropriate (5)

_____Interpretation was logical/lyrics handed in (15)

_____Grammar/directions followed (10)

_____Information in paper was accurate, in depth, and based on song (50)

_____Sources and citations well done (10)*

_____Appropriate use of library time (10)

*If the information in your paper is not in your own words, the assignment will receive a zero. If you do not cite any sources in the text of your paper, you will lose 20 points.