

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – Who Was Responsible for the Start of the Cold War? **From Douglas Craig**

Grade – High School

Length of class period – Four 45-minute class periods

Inquiry –

What US and Soviet interests/values/beliefs/fears helped lead to the Cold War?

What events helped lead to the Cold War?

Who was to blame for the start of the Cold War?

Objectives

1. Ability to read/understand/utilize information from primary source.
2. Ability to for a cogent argument and argue persuasively.
3. Understand interests, values, beliefs, fears, and events that led to the start of the Cold War.

Materials

Primary sources attached.

Activities

Day 1-

1. Students are introduced to the assignment- an oral presentation in which groups report who they believe is responsible for the start of the Cold War.
2. Students work in groups, reading and discussing the sources, and taking notes to prepare for completion of the presentation.

Day 2-

1. Students work in groups, reading and discussing the sources, and taking notes to prepare for completion of the presentation.

Day 3-

1. Students prepare for presentation.

Day 4-

1. Presentations are made

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

Students will be assessed informally through their participation in group work and through questioning by the teacher.

Students will be assessed formally through the oral presentation and accompanying poster.

CT Standards

2.4 Demonstrate an ability to participate in social studies discourse through informed discussion, debate, and effective oral presentation.

3.2 Analyze and evaluate human action in historical or contemporary contexts from alternative points of view.

Who was to Blame for the Start of the Cold War?

You will be given three class days to prepare an oral presentation with an accompanying poster defending your position on who was to blame for the start of the Cold War. You may decide that the US, USSR, or both the US and USSR were to blame for the start of the Cold War.

You will read through accompanying documents to supplement your background knowledge to come up with a position on this question.

Your group must structure your presentation on a clear thesis statement, providing your position and two-to-three reasons for that position (TP 2/3 R). You must provide support for your two to three reasons using background knowledge and material from the sources. You must cite each of the sources in your presentation.

Your poster will provide a visual representation of your three “reasons” given in your thesis statement.

Presentations are to be a minimum of 5 minutes.

The following rubric will be used to grade your performance:

Feature	5	4	3	2	1
Argument: Clear, well-developed thesis; addresses complexity of question	Thesis is well-developed and clearly focused; acknowledges the complexity of the question itself	Thesis must be consistent and controlled; may not be as focused as in top category	Limited or partially developed thesis which addressed question somewhat	Confused, unsupported, poorly developed thesis	No thesis or an irrelevant one
Critical Thought: Analysis of documents; relevance of outside information; discussion of conflicting evidence	In-depth document analysis; confrontation and discussion of conflicting sources and information; relevance of outside knowledge to the argument	Analysis of several sources (documentary and outside)	More descriptive than analytic; may not discuss entire question	Limited understanding of question; ineffective or inaccurate analysis	Inadequate or inaccurate understanding of question
Evidence: Logical and balanced use of documents and outside information; displays sophisticated knowledge of subject	Balance between documents and outside information; liberal use of both; may include an occasional, insignificant error	Considerable use of documents and outside information; less discussion of relationships among sources	May paraphrase documents and exhibit only sketchy outside evidence; may have errors	Poor use of documents—often only a brief citation or paraphrase; little outside information, which is often inaccurate; may contain major errors	Almost no use of documents or evidence; attempts are confused or inappropriate; major errors
Presentation Style: Organization; clarity; mechanical skill	Must be well-organized and well-written; cogent	Clearly organized and written; not exceptional but logical	Acceptable organization and writing	Weak organization and writing	Disorganized and poorly written
Poster: Ideas clearly portrayed through visual means	Poster is neat, “reasons” given in thesis are clearly represented in visual form. Visuals are highly persuasive.	Poster is neat, “reasons” given in thesis are clearly represented in visual form. Visuals are persuasive.	Poster is neat, “reasons” given in thesis are less clearly represented in visual form. Visuals are less persuasive.	Poster is neat, “reasons” given in thesis are less clearly represented in visual form. Visuals are not persuasive.	Poster is messy or “reasons” given are not well represented in visual form.

Document A

National Security Council Paper #68 (1950):

Declassified in 1975, NSC-68 was the blueprint for US foreign policy for 20 years and is essential for an understanding of US policy during the Cold War.

<http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/pdocs/nsc68.pdf>

It is apparent from the preceding sections that the integrity and vitality of our system is in greater jeopardy than ever before in our history. Even if there were no Soviet Union we would face the great problems of the free society, accentuated many fold in this industrial age, of reconciling order, security, and the need for participation, with the requirements of freedom....

It is quite clear from Soviet theory and practice that the Kremlin seeks to bring the free world under its dominion by the methods of the cold war. The preferred technique is to subvert by infiltration and intimidation.

At the same time the Soviet Union is seeking to create overwhelming military force, in order to back up infiltration with intimidation. In the only terms in which it understands strength, it is seeking to demonstrate to the free world that force and the will to use it are on the side of the Kremlin, that those who lack it are decadent and doomed....

A further increase in the number and power of our atomic weapons is necessary in order to assure the effectiveness of any U. S. retaliatory blow, but would not of itself [be sufficient. Greatly increased general air, ground and sea strength, and increased air defense and civilian defense programs would also be necessary to provide reasonable

assurance that the free world could survive an initial surprise atomic attack of the weight which it is estimated the U.S.S.R. will be capable of delivering by 1954...Furthermore, such a build-up of strength could...might put off for some time the date when the Soviet Union could calculate that a surprise blow would be advantageous. This would provide additional time for the effects of our policies to produce a modification of the Soviet system....

The "overall policy [of the United States is] designed to foster a world environment in which the American system can survive and flourish."

Document B

Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Ambassador to USSR, William C. Bullitt 1943

William C. Bullitt, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," Life,

August 30, 1958, p. 94

Letter from President Roosevelt to US Ambassador to the USSR, William C. Bullitt

I just have a hunch that Stalin...doesn't want anything but security for his country, and I think that if I give him everything I possibly can and ask nothing from him in return, noblesse oblige, he wouldn't try to annex anything and will work with for a world of democracy and peace.

Document C

Excerpts from a telegram by George Kennan from the US Moscow embassy to the State Department, February 22, 1946

The Origins of The Cold War: US Choices After WWII. CHOICES for the 21st Century Education Program. Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University.

USSR still lives in antagonistic 'capitalist encirclement' with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence....[They believe that the] capitalist world is beset with internal conflicts, inherent in the nature of capitalist society...Internal conflicts of capitalism inevitably generate wars...Everything must be done to advance relative strength of USSR...no opportunity must be missed to reduce strength and influence...of capitalist powers....At bottom of Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity."

Document D

Excerpts from Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace's letter to President Truman, July 1946.

The Origins of The Cold War: US Choices After WWII. CHOICES for the 21st Century Education Program. Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University.

"American [military] actions since V-J Day...make it appear either (1) that we are preparing ourselves to win a war which we regard as inevitable or (2) that we are trying to build up a predominance of force to intimidate the rest of mankind. How would it look to us if Russia had the atomic bomb and we did not, if Russia had ten-thousand-mile bombers and air bases within a thousand miles of our coast lines and we did not?"

Document E

Excerpts from the Truman Doctrine speech that outline America's reasons for aiding Greece and Turkey and created a US promise to help countries fighting against communism.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches>

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.... I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes....

It is necessary only to glance at a map to realize that the survival and integrity of the Greek nation are of grave importance in a much wider situation. If Greece should fall under the control of an armed minority, the effect upon its neighbor, Turkey, would be immediate and serious. Confusion and disorder might well spread throughout the entire Middle East. Moreover, the disappearance of Greece as an independent state would have a profound effect upon those countries in Europe whose peoples are struggling against great difficulties to maintain their freedoms and their independence while they repair the damages of war....

In addition to funds, I ask the Congress to authorize the detail of American civilian and military personnel to Greece and Turkey, at the request of those countries, to assist in the tasks of reconstruction, and for the purpose of supervising the use of such financial and material assistance as may be furnished....

The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world. And we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation.

Document F

NY Times Article entitled Aid Bill is Signed by Truman as Reply to Foes of Liberty. April 3, 1948

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0403.html#article>

President Truman signed today the Foreign Assistance Act of 1948, which made the long debated European Recovery Program an actuality, "This measure," he said, "is America's answer to the challenge facing the free world...."

The measure, which Mr. Truman called "perhaps the greatest venture in constructive statemanship that any nation has undertaken," authorizes the expenditure in the next twelve months of \$6,098,000,000 to provide economic assistance to the sixteen nations of Western Europe along with Western Germany, as well as economic and military aid to China, Greece and Turkey....

The suggestion, informal though it was, met widespread favor in Europe at once. A meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union was convoked in Paris within three weeks, but on July 2, Foreign Minister Vyacheslav M. Molotov announced that his Government could not see any merit in the plan and walked out. The Soviet satellite states then imitated its abstention....

The Soviet satellite states united, on Oct. 5, in what came to be known as the Cominform, in Belgrade and pledged undying opposition to the so called Marshall Plan.

Document G

Iron Curtain Speech. Given by Prime Minister Winston Churchill at Fulton, Missouri on March 5, 1946.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/winstonchurchillsinewsofpeace.htm>

Ladies and gentlemen, the United States stands at this time at the pinnacle of world power. It is a solemn moment for the American democracy. For with primacy in power is also joined an awe-inspiring accountability to the future....

It should carry with it the continuance of the present facilities for mutual security by the joint use of all Naval and Air Force bases in the possession of either country all over the world. And this -- this would perhaps double the mobility of the American Navy and Air Force. It would greatly expand that of the British Empire forces and it might well lead, if and as the world calms down, to important financial savings. Already we use together a large number of islands; more may well be entrusted to our joint care in the near future....

A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately light by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organization intends to do in the immediate future, or what are the limits, if any, to their expansive and proselytizing tendencies. I have a strong admiration and regard for the valiant Russian people and for my wartime comrade, Marshall Stalin....

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in some cases, increasing measure of control from -- from Moscow. Athens alone -- Greece with its immortal glories -- is free to decide its future at an election under British, American, and French observation. The Russian-dominated Polish government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany, and mass expulsions of millions of Germans on a scale grievous and undreamed-of are now taking place. The Communist parties, which were very small in

all these Eastern States of Europe, have been raised to preeminence and power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. Police governments are prevailing in nearly every case, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no true democracy.

Twice we have seen them drawn by irresistible forces into these wars in time to secure the victory of the good cause, but only after frightful slaughter and devastation have occurred. Twice the United States has had to send several millions of its young men across the Atlantic to find the war; but now war can find any nation, wherever it may dwell between dusk and dawn. Surely we should work with conscious purpose for a grand pacification of Europe, within the structure of the United Nations and in accordance with our Charter....

In front of the iron curtain which lies across Europe are other causes for anxiety.

Document H

Joseph Stalin, Soviet Premier. 1936.

http://quotes.liberty-tree.ca/quote/josef_stalin_quote_e44a

World dictatorship can be established only when the victory of socialism has been achieved in certain countries or groups of countries ... [and] when these federation of republics have finally grown into a world union of Soviet Socialist Republics uniting the whole of mankind under the hegemony of the international proletariat organized as a state.

Document I

Joseph Stalin quotation printed in Pravada Newspaper, 1946.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/coldwar/G3/cs1/s6.htm>

The following circumstances should not be forgotten. The Germans made their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. The Germans were able to make their invasion through these countries because, at the time, governments hostile to the Soviet Union existed in these countries ...

Possibly in some quarters an inclination is felt to forget about these colossal sacrifices of the Soviet people who secured the liberation of Europe from the Hitlerite yoke. But the Soviet Union cannot forget about them. And so what can there be surprising about the fact that the Soviet Union, anxious for its future safety, is trying to see to it that governments loyal in their attitude to the Soviet Union should exist in these countries?

How can anyone who has not taken leave of his senses describe these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as expansionist tendencies on the part of our state?

Document J

Part of a policy report summarizing the British view of Soviet policies, 1947

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/coldwar/G3/cs1/s2.htm>

Fundamental Principles

5 The Soviet leaders are inspired by the conviction that the capitalist world is bound to collapse. They are also convinced that capitalist governments are likely eventually to resort to force against the Soviet union in an attempt to avert their own collapse. The Soviet government believe it to be their duty to protect the

Soviet union against such attacks by hastening the elimination of capitalism in all parts of the world as a long term policy to ensure by all possible means the security of the USSR

Document K

Yalta Agreement, made by, among others, both the US and USSR in 1945

<http://www.h-net.org/~hst203/documents/YALTA.html>

The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and Fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice. This is a principle of the Atlantic Charter -- the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live -- the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who have been forcibly deprived of them by the aggressor Nations.