

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Cuban Missile Crisis from Joan Galenski

Grade- 11

Length of class period- 58 minutes (2 class periods)

Inquiry- Students will answer the following questions:

What makes the Cuban Missile Crisis one of the few events identified as a crisis?

How can Presidential decision making prevent or cause war?

Why Cuba?

Objectives:

Students will evaluate short term causation.

Students will examine long term causation.

Students will understand Presidential decision making in a crisis as well as the role of leadership.

Students will discuss the difference between Cold War vs. "HotWar".

Materials:

Surveillance photographs of Cuban missile sites

Map prepared for President Kennedy showing the range of the ballistic missiles in Cuba

http://library.thinkquest.org/11046/days/cuba_map.jpg

President John F. Kennedy's October 22, 1962, address to the nation (available on the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum website at

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1962Kennedy-Cuba.html>

Activities:

Students will receive copies of the surveillance images along with the key to interpreting them. The class will have a few minutes to analyze the aerial reconnaissance photos of the Cuban missile installations. Students will be asked: What are the purposes of these images? Do they represent an immediate threat to the United States? Does this evidence justify notifying the President? A discussion will occur in which the students must consider the consequences that would result from notifying the President.

The last step would be for students to analyze President John F. Kennedy's October 22, 1962, television address to the nation stating his case for military action against Cuba.

Students need to analyze the President's speech in reference to:

What country posed a threat?

How does Kennedy characterize the danger facing the United States?

How does he make the case for action by the United States?

Does he mention the Monroe Doctrine?
How does he discuss liberty and freedom?
What references are made to past dangers?
Why does he use these examples?

How will you assess what the students learned during this lesson?

Students will write a response to the President's speech in which they answer the questions I have posed. Their answers must be specific and they must indicate the persuasiveness of this speech to the American public.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:

1. gather, analyze and reconcile historical information from primary sources.
2. Evaluate data within the historic and political context in which it was created.