

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

The Home Front: Convincing Americans to Help America Prepare

Grade - 6

Length of class period – Two to three 50 minute classes

Inquiry –

- How did the American government convince Americans to help it to prepare for World War II after the attack on Pearl Harbor?
- What role did posters and other visual aids have during a time when television was not yet available to the masses?

Objectives

- Discuss the American government's reaction to the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- Identify ways the American people assisted the government prepare for war.
- List known media that was available to the government during WWII that would have helped them inform the American public.
- Discuss and analyze a WWII poster as a whole class.
- Cooperatively analyze five posters using poster analysis documents.

Materials

- PowerPoint on the American Home Front (attached)
- Video clip on the [American Home Front](#) (YouTube).
- Several copies of the bilingual poster analysis worksheet (attached)
- A variety of printed copies of WWII posters (PPT included as well as scanned copies).

Activities

1. Initiate class by reviewing what occurred in Pearl Harbor.
2. Ask how students would react to such an attack? How would or should the U.S. react? Emphasize America's neutrality and realities of armed forces during that time.
3. List needs in order to fight a war (food, natural resources, industry, etc.)
4. Explain realities and potential of American industry of the time.

5. Using PowerPoint, illustrate American's mobilization and preparedness for war.
6. View a clip of the [Homefront](#).
7. Discuss clip and ask them to think about and write about how the government was able to mobilize the American people to the levels that they did (homework to be ready for next day's discussion).

Day 2 and 3

1. Initiate lesson by reviewing what was talked about the prior day.
2. Listen to responses to homework question.
3. List the media used to communicate to the American people (radio, newsreels, newspapers, posters.)
4. Focus on one media type: Posters.
5. Discuss and list what makes a compelling poster/advertisement. Ask what they consider persuasive. Connect discussion to TV commercials and to poster they designed during prior units (geography).
6. Introduce the poster analysis document and discuss the questions and why these questions are relevant to assessing a good poster vs. one that is not persuasive enough.
7. Analyze one poster together. Once again ask why the WWII poster could be a primary source.
8. Introduce activity, divide class into groups of four. Distribute envelopes with 4-5 posters.
9. Debrief class and discuss analysis together emphasizing why they came up with their conclusions.

Assessment

Students will be assessed through class discussions, whole class analysis, and the final products of their Poster Analysis worksheets. In addition, subsequent discussions of the posters will also contribute to my assessing their ability to not only work together, but also on their understanding of their analysis of the posters.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

CONTENT STANDARD 1: Historical Thinking

- formulate historical questions based on primary and secondary sources, including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, graphs, diagrams and written texts;
- interpret data in historical maps, photographs, art works and other artifacts;

- examine data to determine the adequacy and sufficiency of evidence, point of view, historical context, bias, distortion and propaganda, and to distinguish fact from opinion;
- analyze data in order to see persons and events in their historical context, understand causal factors and appreciate changeover time;
- examine current concepts, issues, events and themes from historical perspectives and identify principle conflicting ideas between competing narratives or interpretations of historical events; and

CONTENT STANDARD 2: Local, United States and World History

- demonstrate an in-depth understanding of selected events representing major trends of world history (e.g., emergence of new centers of agrarian society in the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE, the Black Death, the Columbian voyages, the French Revolution, World War II);