

INQUIRY LESSON

**JUST TWO DECADES AFTER THE GREAT WAR, WHAT LED TO THE
OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR II?**

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OCTOBER 14, 2008

SOCIAL STUDIES METHODS

PREPARED FOR GRADE 10

Inquiry Lesson Plan

Overview

World War II was a global military conflict that involved many of the world's nations and brought all of the great powers to war with each other only 20 years after signing a peace document, the Treaty of Versailles. It was organized into two main opposing groups, the Allies (including Great Britain, France, Russia, and the US) and the Axis (including Germany, Italy, and Japan). It was and still is the largest war ever fought and saw over 100 million combatants. Every nation involved was in a state of "total war," which forced them to mobilize all of their resources (industrial, economic, and scientific) in an effort to win the war. It was not only the largest war ever fought, but the deadliest that man has ever seen with over 70 million casualties. Student will generate hypotheses as to why WWII broke out, revise those hypotheses through examination of a series of data sets, and then formulate and support a conclusion to the question: Just two decades after the Great War, what led to the outbreak of World War II?

Rationale

This inquiry lesson is important because it focuses on one of the most influential periods politically, socially, and economically in the modern era. Before WWII most nations practiced some form of isolation, but after WWII the world became much smaller and more connected because of this outbreak of war. Our current interwoven world economy, political structure, and social values all stem from this massive conflict that involved or at least affected, directly or indirectly, every citizen on Earth.

Multiple Objectives

During this inquiry lesson, students will:

1. Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events (specific to WWII). (WMAS B.12.4)
2. Identify historical instances when national interests and global interests have seemed to be opposed and analyze the issues involved. (WMAS B.12.17)
3. Compare examples and analyze why governments of various countries have sometimes sought peaceful resolution to conflicts and sometimes gone to war. (WMAS B.12.11)

Grade Level

This inquiry lesson is designed for a 10th grade World History course. This lesson could also be used in a U.S. History course with just a slight tweak with the question asking why the US became involved in WWII.

Time

This Inquiry is intended to cover the length of five 50 minute class periods, depending on the amount of discussion that is created from the hypotheses and data sets.

Course

This inquiry lesson is designed for the use in a World History course. It studies the causes of WWII, which is important because it identifies what went wrong and how we can learn from the breakdown in world diplomacy to ensure that another world war does not happen. Its main themes are diplomacy, citizen involvement, and the value of a democratic society.

Materials

Computer w/ a word processor hooked up to a projector & speakers along with internet connection and access to these sites:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnXKrecRIsM>
- <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/ww2time.htm>

30 copies of Hypotheses Sheet (SEE ATTACHED)

30 copies of Data Set 1 (SEE ATTACHED)

30 copies of *Questions to Consider for Primary Sources* (SEE ATTACHED)

5 copies of series of Data Set (SEE ATTACHED)

30 copies of *WWII: Causes Writing Assignment & Rubric* (SEE ATTACHED)

A dry erase board or chalkboard

Procedure

1) Engagement in the Inquiry:

To start the Inquiry lesson plan the teacher will hand out the hypotheses sheets and have the students start by individually writing down any guesses they may have as to why WWII started for approx. 2-3 minutes. Thereafter this the teacher will show a 5 min clip from the internet website <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnXKrecRIsM>, which can also be found by going to youtube.com and searching "Call to arms-WWII video clip." The clip is a cartoon that gives the appearance of an old time newsreel video clip showing the series of events leading up to the outbreak of the war. Since this is a high school history course, most if not all of the students should have some previous experience with the subject of WWII. This previous experience and knowledge of the topic, coupled with the video clip, should give the students adequate background information on the topic to make educated hypotheses on the start of WWII. Following this clip the teacher will go over what the class will be doing for the next four days and explain to them the remaining steps of the Inquiry lesson plan to them. The teacher will then break up the class into five groups.

2) Elicit Student Hypotheses

While the students get into their groups the teacher will write on the board "Just two decades after the Great War, what led to the outbreak of World War II?" Once the groups are set, the teacher will give them a few minutes to discuss their hypotheses to the stated question and have them possibly create new ones from the clip. After this, the instructor will have the groups' state their hypotheses' one at a time in a clockwise fashion to the entire classroom.

They will write their hypotheses on the board while the teacher types them into a word document, compiling a list of all the hypotheses in the class. Keeping in mind that no hypothesis is wrong, it is the instructor's job to foster an atmosphere that encourages all hypotheses to be considered. In doing so, he or she should still maintain order in the classroom and guide the students from straying too far off path. Once the hypotheses are listed, the students come up with unlikely hypotheses to add to the list. The instructor should also give the students an opportunity to offer their own "out-of-the-box" hypotheses. After the list is finally assembled the instructor should have a student hand out the first data set to the class while the instructor loads up the first data set by going to <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/ww2time.htm> and loading that page onto the projector for the class to see. This is an interactive timeline that has links for certain historic events which give a more in depth view of that event. Granted, there is a lot of information on this site, and it is up to the instructor to keep the class focused on looking for/picking out specific events they believe to be possible evidence for hypotheses.

3) Data Gathering and Processing

Once the data set has been reviewed by the groups, the instructor will help facilitate a discussion of the data (timeline). The aim here is to help the students draw out the information relevant to the inquiry question from the data set. If the data set is a primary source, the instructor will pass out the attached sheet, *Questions to Consider for Primary Sources*, as a reference guide for assessing primary sources. After the information has been drawn out from the data set, the class will determine whether that data set strengthens, undermines, or is neutral to their hypotheses. They will put their answers on the two columns on the right side of their hypotheses sheet. If the class agrees that a certain hypothesis is completely undermined by the given data, they can remove it from their list. The next step requires the groups to discuss and revise their hypotheses to match their new findings. The instructor then passes out the remaining data set packets to the groups. The class then repeats the previous steps of reading the data set, discussing it amongst their groups, and having class discussion. Class discussion can be prompted by asking questions to the class such as "is there any new information in this data set, if so what is it," or "can we count any of our previous ideas/hypothesis' out and why," and etc. questions that force further thinking on the subject. This is followed by evaluation of the data set on whether it supports, undermines, or is neutral to the remaining hypotheses along with creating new hypotheses. As the class moves through the data sets and becomes more proficient in these steps the instructor will allow them to assume more of the responsibility in picking out the important data and carrying on the discussions themselves.

4) Conclusion

After the class has gone through the steps with the final data set, the instructor will have the students go back to their original seats to complete the remaining tasks individually. The teacher then instructs the students to highlight or circle the hypotheses they believe to be the best answers to the inquiry question. The instructor will have a student hand out the *WWII: Causes Writing Assignment & Rubric* to the class. Individually, the students will be asked to write a short paper about their tentative conclusions, which includes a thesis along with

evidence backing up their thesis. Students will hand this in, and will get a chance to revise it in after the final data set. After the students have turned in their papers, the instructor then hands out the “Final Data Set” and the class then goes through the same steps as before. The class must then determine what this new evidence means and find where this data fits into their conclusions. The instructor will follow this by explaining how historians are always forming tentative conclusions, evaluating data, revising their conclusions, and often are forced to pick what data they will use and what data does not get used because not all data points in the same direction. More often than not, there can be numerous conclusions drawn from a single data, not to mention several sets of data.

Assessment

The instructor will move throughout the room during the lesson and will take note of those taking an active part in the discussion and will evaluate students based on their involvement in both class and group discussions. He/she will look for both knowledge of the content area and substantive conversation within the groups. Also, the students will be expected to write a 2-3 page paper at the end of the lesson stating their final hypothesis for the start of WWII and backing up that hypothesis with evidence from the data sets in class as well as arguing against the next most plausible hypothesis. They will be graded on this paper by the attached rubric that they will be given at the end of class prior to the due date of their paper. They will also have the chance to revise this paper following the final data set activity to correlate any new revisions to their hypothesis.

Hypotheses	Supporting Evidence	Refuting Evidence
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Name _____.

Just two decades after the Great War, what led to the outbreak of World War II?

Jonathan Schellin

Lesson Plan Evaluation/Reflection

I believe this lesson plan to be a very appropriate and key lesson plan for any Modern World History course at the secondary level. It fits in perfectly in dealing with global history because it paints a really good picture for the students of how the world functioned just a couple of decades ago and how the global atmosphere has changed politically, economically, and socially from the industrial revolution to the modern era. This lesson is designed for 10th grade students and I believe the data sets and concepts are at an adequate level of difficulty to challenge the students just outside their comfort level. My hypothetical classroom is in a high school in rural Wisconsin, such as Columbus, Wisconsin.

PASS Standards

Standard One: Higher Order Thinking

I believe my lesson plan scores a 4 on this standard. Throughout the lesson students are guided through the process and then later on required to on their own manipulate the information given to them through the data sets. This process requires the students to analyze, synthesize, hypothesize, and revise their hypotheses throughout the lesson. The class discussion also places them in a position to back up their hypotheses in what can sometimes become an unprompted debate amongst the students. The instructor made sure the students were engaged in discussion, collaboration, and evaluation of all the data sets.

Standard Two: Deep Knowledge

On Standard Two, this lesson plan definitely scores a 4. The students must process many different points of views, facts, and events while hypothesizing the answer for the inquiry. They must have a holistic and integrated understanding of the events in order to discuss and draw conclusions for their hypotheses in class for which it critical of them for class participation as well as their final assessment in the form of a paper.

Standard Three: Substantive Conversation

I believe my inquiry lesson plan scores a 4 on substantive conversation. Within the lesson, the students are constantly engaged in extended conversation that builds an improved and shared understanding of the topic. They do this through their discussions within the groups, the class, and on their own. They then must take this improved understanding of the topic and use it in their final assessment project. Overall, substantive conversation is a core component for this lesson and it really doesn't work without the conversation aspect.

Standard Four: Connection to the World Beyond the Classroom

I believe my lesson plan scores a 2-3 on this standard. The lesson does provide for connections to be made to the students world and current situations, but must be fostered by the instructor and isn't necessary to the completion of the inquiry. A few of the data samples

do provide information related to the students such as culture background for those who have German heritage, but it is sometimes a bit too abstract for the students to pull from and make their own connections to it. Other instances of connecting it to the students reality is the connection between the old former alliances and how they have shaped our current global atmosphere in both politics and economics.

Standard Five: Ethical Valuing

I believe my lesson plan scores a 3-4 on this standard. Ethical valuing has a strong theme in my lesson, because many of the data sets are not just about facts, and numbers, and events, but also what people have done and the consequences of those actions. Ethical questions such as whether or not appeasement was right, or the morality and disillusionment of Adolf Hitler are found throughout the lesson and must be dealt with in order to come to a final hypothesis for the inquiry.

Standard Six: Integration

I believe my lesson plan scores a 3 on integration. Mainly, my lesson focuses on the historical content of the period, but it does draw on concepts outside the subject of history such as economics, political science, and geography with the data given. Students will see how the economic ramifications of the Treaty of Versailles could be one culprit for the occurrence of WWII, as well as how the political structure of Europe may have also contributed to the outbreak of war.

Possible Improvements/Changes

There are a few improvements I would make to this lesson plan before administering it to a class. First of all, maybe adding in a data set that wasn't on paper about halfway through the sets so try and break up the monotony of the lesson. Also I would try to be more specific for my procedure to make sure that if I was not that that there was specific questions that were asked in relation to each data set so that I know the students are getting the desired concepts from the data instead of just assuming they will pick it up.

Transcendent/Teaching Issues

There are many things I will take away from developing this lesson plan. First and foremost, good lesson plans are not something you can just throw together before a class starts, but must be carefully planned out and researched so that you as a teacher can make sure your students are getting exactly what you are trying to teach them. I also learned that concepts do not just flow from the content, but must be carefully drawn out through discussion, evaluation, and demonstration by the instructor as well as the students. I believe this inquiry matches my style of teaching perfectly because it allows the students to take an active and sometimes lead role in their learning. It also allows for the students to not only learn what I show them, but also make their own observations, which I believe stick with a student much longer than information that is just spoon fed to them through lecture or notes.