The Minnesota Literacy Council created this curriculum with funding from the MN Department of Education. We invite you to adapt it for your own classrooms.

MASTER

U.S. History (1945-1960) – Week 1 of 2

Unit Overview

This 2-week unit is designed to give students a glimpse of life in the middle of the 20th century. It is not intended to cover all of the important events of this era. Students will practice identifying the main idea and supporting details. They will also learn about some questions asked for the U.S. Citizenship Test.

Unit Objectives:

- Students will be able to list 3 things they know about U.S. history in the period 1945-1960
- Students will identify the main idea and supporting details in a paragraph or article.
- Students will practice summarizing
- Students will learn about strategies for note taking
- Students will keep a timeline throughout the unit
- Students will learn 10 questions asked in the U.S. Citizenship Test.

Monday, Week 1 of 2: America and the World (The World After the War)
Tuesday, Week 1 of 2: America and the World (Communism, A Communist at our Doorstep)
Wednesday, Week 1 of 2: America and the World (The Cold War)
Thursday: Lifestyles (Booms; Images of Women)

MATERIALS

BOOKS
Lesson Objectives:
- Students will create a KWL chart for this period in U.S. and world history.
- Students will define “main idea” and “supporting details.”
- Students will find the main idea in history articles.

Materials
- History Articles:
  - Amazing Century 3: p4-5, 6-9
- Back Up/Alternative Stories:
  - Amazing Century 3: p13, 14-16
- KWL Chart (see below)

Activity Ideas:

Creating Context: U.S.A. and the World from 1945-1960:
- Warm Up Discussion: What do students know about their own country’s history at this time? How old would a child born in the 1950s be now? Think of a family member who was alive at this time. Has he or she ever told you about his/her life?
- KWL Chart: As a class, start developing a KWL chart to introduce the concept. After some examples and modeling, have students complete individually. (Save this chart. It will be used again during and at the end of the unit.)
- Develop a Class Timeline (items to be added to this over the next two weeks): Using Amazing Century 3 pages, 4-5, give a general overview of the unit and begin developing a class timeline. (Students may copy this timeline in their own notebooks but tell them that we will be adding dates and events to the timeline over the next two weeks.)
- Show pictures from this time period in U.S. history. Bring in music or video samples from this era.

Studying the World after World War II:
- Reading Amazing Century article (p. 6-9): This article can be read either individually or as a class jigsaw activity. If used as a class jigsaw activity, students should work in groups and report back the main idea and supporting details of their section.
  - Study the maps and photos from the article.
  - Post reading: Find dates from the article and add them to the class timeline.

Defining and Finding “Main Idea”:
- Pre-Reading Activities for Amazing Century article: Have students develop a class definition of “Main Idea” and “Supporting Details.” Students can debate these terms and the definitions if they are unsure or have differing definitions. The teacher should avoid giving students the answers unless absolutely necessary. Students should write the definitions in their notebooks.
  - Reading: This article can be read either individually or as a class jigsaw activity. If used as a class jigsaw activity, students should work in groups and report back the main idea and supporting details of their section.
  - Finding Main Ideas: Teacher should highlight a paragraph. Together as a class, find the “main idea.” For a second small section of text, students (individually or in groups) should re-read that portion and find the main idea.
  - Finding Supporting Details: Using the second small portion of text, students (individually or in groups) should discuss supporting details in the text for the main idea they listed.
KWL Chart

Before you begin your research, list details in the first two columns. Fill in the last column after completing your research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What I Know</th>
<th>What I Want to Know</th>
<th>What I Learned</th>
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U.S. History (1945-1960): Tuesday, Week 1 of 2

America and the World (day 2 of 3): The World Reacts to Communism; A Communist at Our Doorstep

Lesson Objectives:
- Students will read about some major events involving Communism from 1945-1960.
- Students will identify the main idea and find supporting details in history articles.
- Students will add events and dates to the class timeline.

Materials
- Reading about Communism:
  - Amazing Century 3: p10-12, 21

Activity Ideas:

Review Yesterday’s Class:
- Warm up Discussion: What did you do in yesterday’s class? What new information did you learn? What was interesting? What do you want to learn more about?

Studying the World’s Reactions to Communism:
- Pre-Reading: Define and discuss “communism” as a class.
- Reading Amazing Century article (p. 10-12 and 21): This article can be read either individually or as a class jigsaw activity. If used as a class jigsaw activity, students should work in groups and report back the main idea and supporting details of their section.
- Study the chart and photos from the article.
- Post reading: Find events and dates from the article and add them to the class timeline.
- As a class, build a table comparing communism and capitalism.
- Discussion: How does communism differ from democracy? Which is better, communism or democracy? What are the benefits and weaknesses of each?

Identifying “Main Idea” and Finding “Supporting Details”:
- Review concepts of “main idea” and “supporting details”: Review the class definition of “Main Idea” and “Supporting Details.” The teacher can ask the students about the definition developed yesterday.
- Reading: This article can be read either individually or as a class jigsaw activity. If used as a class jigsaw activity, students should work in groups and report back the main idea and supporting details of their section.
- Finding Main Ideas: Teacher should highlight a short section (multiple paragraphs) of the text. In groups or individually, students should find the “main idea.”
- Finding Supporting Details: Using the same section of text used, students (individually or in groups) should find supporting details in the text for the main idea they listed. This can be repeated.
**U.S. History (1945-1960): Wednesday, Week 1 of 2**

America and the World (day 3 of 3): The Cold War – and a Hot Spot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Objectives:</th>
<th>Materials</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Students will learn and use a graphic organizer.</td>
<td>Reading about the Cold War:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Students will read about the Cold War.</td>
<td>● <strong>Amazing Century 3</strong>: p17-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Students will practice identifying supporting details from a main idea.</td>
<td>Graphic Organizers:</td>
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<td><strong>Graphic Organizers</strong>: p. 6, 8</td>
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**Activity Ideas:**

**Studying the Cold War:**
- Warm Up Discussion: Discuss “communism” and review what happened in yesterday’s class.
- Pre-Reading: Define and discuss “Cold War” as a class.
- Reading **Amazing Century** article (p. 17-20): Have students read the article one for general comprehension. Read a second time to search for words they do not understand that interfere with comprehension. (Teacher should encourage students to only look up words they think they absolutely need to understand the article.) Read a third time to find sentences that hold important ideas, the main idea and supporting details. Students should then compare their highlighted sentences with others in pairs.
- Study the map and photos from the article.
- Post reading: Find events and dates from the article and add them to the class timeline.
- Discussion: Was the Cold War a “real” war? Did it impact your native country? How?

**Learn and Use a Graphic Organizer:**
- Teacher should select a graphic organizer to use for the day and introduce it to the class.
- Teacher should model the graphic organizer with a guided example.
- Students should complete their own graphic organizer using the important ideas highlighted in the article.

**Identifying Main Idea and Supporting Details:**
- Review concepts of “main idea” and “supporting details”
- Reading: This article can be read either individually.
- Finding Main Ideas and Supporting Details: In groups, students should work together to identify the main idea and supporting details for the entire article.
Lesson Objectives:  Students will read about the “booms” from 1945-1960.  Students will practice taking notes and summarizing.  Students will practice using a graphic organizer from yesterday’s class.

Materials

Read about Booms:

- Amazing Century 3: p. 22-25
- Note Taking Guidelines (found below)

Activity Ideas:

Studying Booms from 1945-1960:

- Warm Up Discussion: Discuss the term “boom.” What does it mean? How is it used?
- Pre-Reading: Define some of the primary booms of this period and discuss them as a class. Teacher could have the students could skim the article headings for this process. (Have students view the headings but do not let students read the article.)
- Reading Amazing Century article (p. 22-25): Complete the note taking activity to read the article.
- Study the photos and graphs from the article.
- Post reading: Find events and dates from the article and add them to the class timeline.
- Discussion: How do these booms in the U.S. compare with what was happening in your native country at this time?

Practicing Taking Notes and Summarizing:

- While reading the article, have students take notes and not refer or read directly from the article.
(See above) In pairs, compare notes and share ideas.
Summary, Note Taking, Main Idea & Details

Grade Level(s): 9-12
By: Guy Mcdonald, Resource 6-12 Teacher

TLW take notes from oral reading, simulating class lecture, for the purpose of extracting main idea and details and transcribing them into a summary.

Materials:

- 2-3 page magazine article, newspaper article, or very short story less than 500 words
- pencils
- large sticky notes (approx 3 x 5 inches)
- medium sticky notes (approx 2 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches)
- small sticky notes (approx 1 1/4 x 1 1/2 inches)

**measurements are approximate (you'll understand as you read on!)

Plan:

1. Focus: Today I will read aloud for 5-7 minutes. You will take notes on the paper I give you, and then we will do several activities from your notes.
2. Take notes in outline format (not essential if students do not know what an outline is)--substitute Take notes the best you can and write down every important fact that I say.
3. Promise you will write in your normal, best handwriting. You are not allowed to scrunch up, write smaller than normal, and you may not write on the back of the paper I give you. Does everybody understand? Does everybody promise to write normal size?
4. Pass out the largest sticky notes, one sheet per student. Listen for the grumbling. Remind students they can only write normal size on one side only.
5. Read the selection, pausing and repeating when you get to a name, date, or place which is important.
6. When finished reading, have some volunteers attempt to 'fact recall' from their notes. Get consensus as to which set of notes is most complete.
7. Now, pass out medium sized sticky. Reply to the grumbling. "Now you will choose only the most important facts from your notes to write on the smaller sticky note. You have only 90 seconds (or 2,3,4,5 minutes, depending on level)
8. Repeat step 5 above to get volunteers to read their 'most important' facts, reminding them they cannot write smaller or on the back. Achieve consensus as to best fact recall.
9. Now, teach summary. Explain summary as the main idea, plus only one or two details, but summary is the 'essence' or what the whole article is about. Summaries are always brief, short cut versions of the whole article, book, or movie.
10. When there are no more questions, pass out the smallest sticky note. Remind students their promise to write the same, normal size as on the first and second stickies. Say, "Now, summarize onto your sticky what the article I read to you, and about which you have taken notes. Before you begin, plan your summary. Think about only the most important meaning of the article and perhaps 1/2 details. You have very little space, choose words carefully and wisely."