

Assignment Discovery Online Curriculum

Afghanistan: 12 Years of Violence

Curriculum Overview

World History

Grade level

10-12

Duration:

One or two class periods

Objectives

Students will

- learn about events in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s;
- discuss the role of the United States in the rise of the Taliban to power; and
- consider what can be learned from our country's involvement in Afghanistan.

Materials

- Paper and pencils
- Computer with Internet access
- Newsprint and markers
- Newspaper and magazine articles on Afghanistan's recent history (optional)

Procedures

1. Begin the lesson by asking students what they know about Afghanistan's recent history. You may ask what the Taliban is and if they know why this group rose to power. Are they aware that the former Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan? Do they know any details of the United States' policy toward Afghanistan prior to the events of September 11, 2001?
2. Tell students that during this lesson, they are going to pretend to be foreign policy advisors to the U.S. Department of State. They have been asked to write a paper on the following three questions:
 - What was the role of the U.S. in the rise of the Taliban?
 - What happened in Afghanistan under Taliban rule?
 - What can we learn from the U.S. policy in Afghanistan during the 1990s? What do you think our current policy should be, especially in light of events of September 11 and the most recent war in Afghanistan?
3. Divide students into three groups. Have each group focus on one question. The Web sites listed below include information on each of these topics. Students also can refer to the videotape for more information and on newspaper and magazine articles for details about developments in Afghanistan.

http://www.usip.org/oc/sr/sr_afghan.html
<http://www.rense.com/general14/rise.htm>
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/asia/july-dec96/afghanistan_10-9.html
<http://www.mediamonitors.net/mosaddeq2.html>
<http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/09/18092001112433.asp>

4. Give students enough time in class to conduct their research. Have each group prepare a short paper in response to its question.
5. After all the groups have completed their research, have each group present its paper. Write down key points from each paper on a sheet of newsprint.
6. Ask for volunteers from each group to create a class policy report on Afghanistan together. They can use the key points from the class discussion as the basis for their report.
7. Conclude the lesson by having the volunteers share their report with the class. Then ask other students for their comments. Encourage them to discuss what was learned from the U.S. policy in Afghanistan and what can be done differently to help prevent catastrophic events in the future.

Evaluation

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

3 points: Students completed their research carefully and thoroughly, worked cooperatively with their group to write a draft of the report, and actively participated in class discussions.

2 points: Students completed their research, worked somewhat cooperatively with their group to write a draft of the report, and participated somewhat actively in class discussions.

1 point: Students did not complete their research, did not work cooperatively with their group to write a draft of the report, and participated minimally in class discussions.

Vocabulary:

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar

Definition: The head of the faction defeated by the Taliban

Context: Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and his group are said to have been responsible for the death of more than 2,000 people.

Islamic law

Definition: The traditions, ethics, and morals that all Muslims are expected to follow; different schools of thought within Islam vary on how to interpret these beliefs.

Context: The Taliban's interpretation of Islamic law has led to severe restrictions on women, the banning of television, and harsh treatment of criminals.

Osama bin Laden

Definition: A Saudi-born extremist who was exiled from Sudan and was supported and given asylum by the Taliban

Context: Osama bin Laden gave at least \$3 million to support the Taliban's military efforts in Afghanistan; in exchange, the Taliban let him build his terrorist network from Afghanistan.

Taliban

Definition: A word meaning "seekers"; this group gained power in Afghanistan in 1996, after years of civil war and political chaos.

Context: The Taliban was initially supported by the United States because it appeared that the group could restore order to a war-torn country.

Academic Standards

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

IX. Global Connections

Credit

Marilyn Fenichel, education writer and editor