

World War II: Causes and Consequences: Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum Focus: U.S. History

Lesson Duration: Two to three class periods

Program Description

Examine Hitler's occupation of Europe and the Allies' efforts to fight it. See how World War II changed American society, especially for women. Consider the relationship of the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War. And discover how the U.S. economic recovery after WWII ushered in an age of prosperity.

- World War II (5 min.)
 - Women and World War II (4 min.)
 - The Cold War (4 min.)
 - American Stories: Great Expectations (33 min.)
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Onscreen Questions

- Why did the United States enter World War II?
 - How did World War II affect the roles of American women?
 - What significant political change in Europe took place following World War II?
 - Why did the United States' post-war economy improve?
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Discuss the U.S. economy, society, and politics in the years following World War II.
- Explore the boom in advertising during this period by reviewing print advertisements from the late 1940s and early 1950s.
- Analyze a print ad from the period and compare it to an ad for a similar product today.

Materials

- *World War II: Causes and Consequences* program
- Internet access
- Color printer
- Current newspapers or magazines with advertisements

Procedures

1. After watching *World War II: Causes and Consequences*, review the U.S. economy, society, and politics in the years following World War II. To spark discussion, write the terms below on the chalkboard and ask students: What does each of these terms communicate about post-war America in the late 1940s and early 1950s? In what ways was this a time of prosperity and hope? What were some of the challenges the nation faced? Answers may include the following:
 - Cold War
 - communism
 - arms race
 - baby boom
 - assembly lines
 - vacuum cleaners
 - GI Bill
 - television
 - suburbs
 - segregation
 - cars
 - labor camps
2. Discuss the role of advertising during this era. Ask students: Why did Dick Manoff want a career in advertising after the war? What made this an exciting time for advertising in America? What were some of the new products being advertised?
3. Explain that students will explore advertisements from the late 1940s and early 1950s. Like all advertisements, these showcase a society's latest products and technology. They also reflect the society's values and common stereotypes. (With older students, you may want to discuss this topic further, sparking conversation with a few advertisements from recent papers and magazines.)
4. Show and discuss a few examples of late 1940s and early 1950s print advertisements from the following Web sites. (Be sure to select examples from *after* 1945.) Ask students: What do each of these ads tell you about U.S. society at the time?

- Ad*Access
<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu:80/adaccess/browse.html>
 - AdFlip (click '40s and '50s)
<http://www.adflip.com/index.php>
5. Now have students work with a partner to browse the two Web sites and select an advertisement to analyze. (To narrow their focus and ensure diversity, you may want to assign each pair of students a different Web site section.) Have the pairs print the ad using a color printer and then write a short analysis that answers the following questions:
- What product is being advertised?
 - Who is the target audience?
 - How is the product described? What features are highlighted?
 - What claims does the ad make? What does it promise the product will provide the buyer? (For example: comfort, excitement, popularity, beauty, praise, prestige?)
 - Does this ad use symbols or stereotypes to sell the product? If so, which ones?
 - Does this ad give any evidence or proof to support its claims? If so, what is it?
 - What other information is included in the ad? (For example, was the product's price included?) Was there any information you found interesting or surprising?
 - What does the ad indicate about the U.S. in the post-war years?
 - Do you think this ad would be effective for a similar product today? Why or why not?
6. Next, have the student pairs find a print advertisement for a similar product from a current magazine or newspaper. Have them write a second analysis, first answering the previous questions and then the following ones:
- How are the two advertisements similar?
 - How are they different? (For example, do they make similar claims for the buyer? Do they use different symbols or stereotypes to sell the product?)
7. Have students present their post-war and modern-day ads to the class. Discuss what the ads convey about the post-war era , as well as how life then differed from life today in the U.S.

Assessment

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

- 3 points: Students helped define and discuss several terms from post-war America; wrote informative, thoughtful analyses about their selected ads that answered all of the questions.
- 2 points: Students helped define and discuss some terms from post-war America; wrote clear, complete analyses about their selected ads that answered most of the questions.



- 1 point: Students did not help define and discuss the terms from post-war America; wrote incomplete or vague analyses about their selected ads that answered few or none of the questions.

Vocabulary

arms race

Definition: A competition between countries for the most weapons

Context: As nuclear technology advanced, the United States and the Soviet Union waged an arms race. Each country wanted to have more firepower than the other.

baby boom

Definition: A large and sudden increase in the birth rate in America between 1946 and 1964

Context: Greg Manoff was born in New York City in 1945, making him part of the baby boom generation.

Cold War

Definition: A period of intense rivalry that developed after World War II between groups of communist and non-communist nations, most notably the Soviet Union and the U.S.

Context: The Berlin Wall stood for nearly 30 years, separating the oppressed from the free and symbolizing the deep divisions that split the world during the Cold War.

communism

Definition: A political and economic system in which all means of production are owned by a single party; a social system in which property and goods are owned in common

Context: As World War II drew to a close, the political and economic system of communism took hold in parts of Europe.

suburbia

Definition: The area at the outer edges of a city or town

Context: Suburbia was a new word in the 1950s. It sounded like a foreign country, and for some Americans it was.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.



This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- U.S. History: Era 8— Understands the causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs
- U.S. History: Era 9— Understands the economic boom and social transformation of post-World War II United States; Understands how the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
 - Time, Continuity, and Change
 - Power, Authority, and Governance
 - Production, Distribution, and Consumption
 - Science, Technology, and Society
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

How to Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

Play Video— This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.



Video Index – Here the video is divided into four segments (see below), indicated by video thumbnail icons. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

Curriculum Units – These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

Standards Link – Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

Teacher Resources – This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

Video Index

I. World War II (5 min.)

World War II was the bloodiest conflict in human history. Learn about its causes and how the Allies eventually defeated the Axis powers.

II. Women and World War II (4 min.)

World War II drained the United States of its manpower, which left women to take on challenging roles overseas and at home.

III. The Cold War (4 min.)

After World War II, the Soviets quickly took control of many Eastern European countries, enforcing communist rule and creating the Cold War.

IV. American Stories: Great Expectations (33 min.)

Follow the post-World War II stories of a few American families, from the return of the troops through the baby boom years and the fulfilled promise of their American dreams.

Curriculum Units

1. World War II

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you know about World War II?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What made World War II the bloodiest conflict in human history?

A: More than 60 million people died during World War II, two-thirds of whom were civilians. More than 130,000 people were killed within minutes of the Hiroshima bombing, and more than 6 million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust.

2. Women of World War II

Pre-viewing question

Q: What are some stereotypes about women and their abilities?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you think World War II was more difficult for men than women?

A: Answers will vary.

3. Democracy vs. Communism

Pre-viewing question

Q: Compare and contrast communism and democracy.

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What was the Marshall Plan?

A: It was a plan to implement the Truman Doctrine, President Truman's proposal to stop the spread of communism. Devised by Secretary of State George C. Marshall, the Marshall Plan offered aid to European countries that were rebuilding after World War II so that they would not have to turn to Russia and communism for help.

4. Homecoming

Pre-viewing question

Q: What is the most exciting event you have witnessed?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How might have soldiers felt when they returned home from World War II?

A: Answers will vary.

5. Post-War Melting Pot

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever felt out of place in any situation?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why did people feel post-war America offered a great deal of opportunity?

A: Soldiers received educational opportunities through the GI Bill; people of all socio-economic backgrounds had been able to rise through the military ranks and create post-war opportunities for



themselves; people had not spent their money during the war, so they had extra to spend; and technology and consumer products were developing at a very fast pace.

6. Social Injustice in the South

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever experienced discrimination?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why do you think African Americans returned to the South following World War II?

A: Answers will vary.

7. The Auto Capital of the World

Pre-viewing question

Q: What would you miss about your hometown if you had to move away?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What opportunities did the auto industry offer for African Americans?

A: Detroit's automobile industry provided factory jobs for many African Americans, and women could get secretarial positions. Many African Americans could make good livings, which had not been possible in the South.

8. Post-War Farming Culture

Pre-viewing question

Q: What is the hardest type of work you have ever done?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What do you think was the most difficult aspect for Dust Bowl refugees?

A: Answers will vary.

9. Television Comes to America

Pre-viewing question

Q: What did people do before television was so prevalent in homes?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How does television influence people's viewpoints?

A: Answers will vary.



10. The Boom Years

Pre-viewing question

Q: What goals have you set for yourself?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: In what ways has your life been easier or more difficult than your parents' lives?

A: Answers will vary.

11. Life in the Fields

Pre-viewing question

Q: Who has had the most influence in your life?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Describe the environment of Buckeye Road and why you think it did not prosper.

A: Buckeye Road was a camp for migrant workers in Arizona, an impoverished place that did not hold much promise, even during the 1950s' economic boom. Its population of immigrants, Dust Bowl refugees, and displaced Native Americans had no economic power.

12. Suburbia

Pre-viewing question

Q: What would it have been like to visit the South when it was segregated?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What symbolizes the American dream to you?

A: Answers will vary.

13. Looking Toward the Future

Pre-viewing question

Q: How would you describe the culture of the United States to an outsider?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How do you define success?

A: Answers will vary.

