Cold War in the Middle East: Iran

LESSON TITLE: Cold War in the Middle East: Iran

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GRADE LEVEL: 10th grade – World History II

OVERVIEW OF LESSON: Students will learn about the case study of Iran and how the Cold War affected its politics in the post WWII era, particularly in relation to the Iranian Revolution. Students will then complete a research paper assignment that analyzes causes and results of Cold War conflicts in different geographic locations.

SUBJECT AREA: Global History and Geography (Social Studies)

COUNTRY/REGIONAL FOCUS: General Middle East, Iran and Comparative (Middle East / Iran to Asia, Africa and Latin America)

TIME REQUIRED: Project: 4 weeks
Lesson: 1.5 periods (each period is 49 mins.)

MATERIALS REQUIRED: Powerpoint contains: video clips, primary source excerpts and secondary source excerpts

BACKGROUND:
The lesson begins with the storming of the U.S. embassy in Tehran and looks back to imperialism in the Middle East in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with the objective of examining how imperialism affected events in the Middle East, and particularly, Persia (Iran, as of 1931). The lesson will examine how Cold War tensions affected the politics of Iran in the early 1950s and how U.S. / Soviet intervention resulted in the Pahlavi rule of Iran and the Iranian Revolution. The lesson is part of a series of lessons that presents Cold War conflicts in various parts of the world. These lessons support a research paper assignment that students complete as their final assessment of the year.

CURRICULUM CONNECTION:
This lesson is part of a broader unit on the Cold War – a research project which aims to get students to critically analyze the factors that led to Cold War intervention in Asia, Africa and
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Latin America. By examining Iran, students will be able to understand why and how the Cold War affected the Middle East and how it connects to other regions.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:**

Essential questions for the Unit on the Cold War:

- Why were newly decolonized nations targets for Cold War rivalries?
- What were the policy objectives (goals) for the US and USSR, respectively? To what extent were these achieved / not achieved? Why or why not?
- How did the US and the USSR achieve these goals? At what costs?
- To what extent were the “Communist” groups truly communist? What, if any, circumstances might account for the label?
- To what extent did imperialism of the 19th and early 20th centuries set the stage for the Cold War conflicts after WW II?

Essential Questions for this lesson:

- How did Cold War rivalries affect the nation of Iran?
- How did the Cold War contribute to the Iranian Revolution of 1979?
- How did that affect relations between Iran and the US?

**LEARNING GOALS:**

Students will understand:

- The role of the West in the Middle East in the 19th century and the way it affected early 20th century events in the Middle East
- The reasons for U.S. / British and Soviet intervention in Iran after WWII
- How the rule of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi affected Iranian society, politics and economics and the Iranian Revolution of 1979
- How U.S. support of the Shah affected U.S.-Iranian relations after the Revolution

Students will be able to:

- Conduct research on a particular Cold War case study and
- Prepare a research paper on the case study that demonstrates their understanding of:
  - The causes of Cold War conflict in that country
  - How the Cold War conflict affected that country socially, politically and economically
  - The role that leadership played in the Cold War conflict in that region
  - The extent to which the U.S. and / or the USSR achieved their respective policy goals

**STANDARDS:**

The lesson clearly supports, at least, these standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10
Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.8
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Key Ideas and Details:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

PRE-ASSESSMENT:
The Pre-Assessment activity is for the Unit. Students will discuss the term “Cold War” and its meanings. The discussion will center on the extent to which a Cold War is “cold,” and for whom it is “cold.” The discussion will ask students to look at the term from the perspective of the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and compare it to that of someone from Korea or Vietnam. Would the latter see it as a “Cold War” – why or why not?

PROCEDURE:
For the Unit:
1. First, begin by reviewing the results of WW II and the connection between the Cold War and the “agreements” at Yalta.
2. Then examine the “Iron Curtain” speech by Winston Churchill and Stalin’s “Response” to Churchill and look at the early Cold War conflicts and the extent to which they exacerbated the already growing tensions.
3. The Research Paper assignment is introduced.
4. Next, the unit unfolds with a study and series of lessons on the following topics:
   - The Chinese Communist Revolution / 2 China’s
   - The Korean War
   - Conflict in Vietnam and Genocide in Cambodia
   - The Cuban Revolution; The Nicaraguan Revolution and conflict in El Salvador and the overthrow of Allende in Chile
   - Cold War in Africa: South Africa and the ANC; Angola and Mozambique
   - Cold War in the Middle East: Iran (this is the subject of this lesson and the first case study for the Middle East that is presented beyond a very quick mention).

For the Lesson:
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1. Begin with the PowerPoint and several clips that show the introduction of the film “Argo.” The first 4 minutes give a good summary of post-WWII Iranian history and then brings us to the storming of the U.S. embassy.
2. Then students see a clip of footage from the actual storming of the US embassy followed by a clip of a news story on the hostages. The discussion questions are on each slide.
3. The Power Point lays out the points raised in the lesson sequentially from the 19th century to the U.S.-Iran Hostage crisis.
4. Students will receive two handouts (to read one) for homework and prepare notes.
5. In class the next day, they will compare their two secondary source readings and answer questions as a group to prepare for a class discussion on the coup against Mossadegh (Operation Ajax).
6. Students will be assigned one of four primary sources to examine the effects of Operation Ajax on U.S.–Iran relations (Iranian Revolution and the Hostage Crisis).
7. Students will discuss the sources and what they reveal about the effect of Cold War intervention on US-Iran relations.
8. We conclude the lesson by discussing the essential questions

ASSESSMENT:
Students’ prior knowledge is assessed in the introductory discussion on the term “Cold War.” Students’ understanding of the lesson and the unit is assessed by their discussion and their Final Paper. (See attached Research Paper assignment).

RESOURCES:
Additional sources are listed in the PPT that accompanies this lesson.


The PowerPoint presentation has references for the materials used. It is attached to this template.
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The Research Paper assignment is also attached.