

American Imperialism-- Now and Then: A Comparison of the Spanish-American War and the War with Iraq

Anne Stemmerman
Westwood Middle School

Lesson Plan Summary

This lesson plan is designed to compare and contrast the history of American imperialism (Spanish-American War) and current events, specifically the War with Iraq. Students will utilize available county adopted textbooks and different forms of media, i.e. news magazines, newspapers, television, and the Internet to obtain information regarding the War in Iraq and the Spanish-American War (1898) to determine any differences and similarities.

Objectives

Florida Sunshine State Standards as follows:

SS.A.1.3

SS.A.5.3

SS.B.1.3

SS.A.1.4

SS.A.5.4

Curriculum Maps: 8th grade America: People, Places, Events (1880 to present)

Historical Time Period

1898 to present time

Grade Levels: Can be adapted for middle and high school American History courses

Lesson Time: Total of 3: 1 class period for internet/media research; 1 class period for document analysis and 1 class period for discussion/debate/essay.

Materials Needed:

- Copy of accompanying Document Based Question "Nah, We Don't Want Your Stuff...Really, We Don't: A Look at Early 20th Century American Imperialism in Cuba" by Anne Stemmerman found on Polk County's "Turning Point in American History"
- county adopted textbooks that cover material on the Spanish-American War and the McKinley and Roosevelt presidencies
- various media sources as available/per teacher discretion: internet, newspapers, news magazines, television reports for data and information on the current war with Iraq and September 11, 2001
- Excerpts from the September 11 Commission

Lesson Procedures:

1. Read and review the DBQ, "Nah, We Don't Want Your Stuff...Really, We Don't: A Look at Early 20th Century American Imperialism in Cuba" or similar sources regarding the Spanish American War. Class should discuss the documents.
2. Class should be divided into small groups to research the current War with Iraq. It is expected that groups will discover various web sites dedicated to this conflict with differing points of view, etc. which should be encouraged. In addition to the internet, groups should obtain archived reports on the war and current media reports from sources at the discretion of the teacher.
3. The teacher should obtain pertinent excerpts from the September 11 Commission (www.9-11commission.gov/). One group should be assigned to review the findings/summary of this report.
4. Homework: Students should answer the DBQ question from "Nah, We Don't Want Your Stuff...Really, We Don't. A Look at Early 20th Century American Imperialism in Cuba" or produce a Venn diagram (or other graphic organizer designed to isolate compare/contrast) to determine the differences and similarities between the Spanish-American War and the War in Iraq.

Activities:

1. Groups should be divided as follows (recommended):
 - a. Spanish-American War and Imperialism
 - b. archived media reports on the War with Iraq
 - c. current events reports on the War with Iraq
2. Groups should present their findings
3. Class should compare/contrast the Spanish-American War and the War with Iraq
 - influences of media
 - self-interest groups
 - propaganda and bias
 - public opinion history for both conflicts

Assessment:

Students will complete an FCAT ER question. (see below)

Resources:

1. September 11 Commission; available on the internet at www.9-11commission.gov/
2. Archived media reports (Newsweek, Time, New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune) available on the internet.
3. Turning Points in American History available at the Polk County School Board website.
4. Current media

