

What was “Good” About the “Good War”: World War II?

A Comparison of Public Sentiment of WWII and the Vietnam Conflict On the Homefront and the Battlefield

Lesson Plan using primary sources
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Enduring Understanding:

Content: Students will be able to interpret the prevailing mood of our nation for support of our involvement in WWII and Vietnam. Students will use primary sources of information as a basis of forming opinions and drawing conclusions of why the moods were similar or not.

Process: Employing graphic organizers to analyze primary sources. Comparing and contrasting primary sources, secondary sources and historical time periods.

Assessment:

Content: Students will generate research questions that explore national sentiment during WWII (including prior to Pearl Harbor, and following Pearl Harbor) and during the Vietnam Conflict. Students will write an essay comparing the sentiments of the nation during WWII and Vietnam.

Process: Students will evaluate which documents or activities helped them learn the most.

Setting the Purpose:

1. Students will create a personal connection to the content area by identifying family members/relatives who were involved in WWII and Vietnam.
2. Think-Pair-Share: Students will record information they think they know about WWII and Vietnam. They will share this information with a partner and add things they missed.
3. Students will create a poster or chart of what facts they think they know, display it in the classroom for the duration of the unit, and change or amend it as new information supports or conflicts with their original assumptions.

Engaging with Primary Sources:

1. Students will interview family members who were involved or lived through these historical periods. They will create a written or oral history of the interview.
2. Students will compare primary sources from both historical time periods that reflect or influence public sentiment for our involvement in both conflicts.

Primary sources of information:

WWII: Students’ relatives, archival footage, photos, soldiers’ narratives, homefront narratives, popular music, letters of participants, presidential popularity, bond drives, posters

Vietnam: Students' relatives, archival footage, photos, soldiers' narratives, popular music, letters of participants, presidential popularity, peace signs, posters, etc.

Ties to national primary sources:

1. Students will examine and analyze local primary sources of information. These include oral transcript tapes from the Early American History Museum and taped oral interviews with family and relatives involved in the conflicts being studied.
2. Students will examine and analyze national sources of information
3. Students will discuss and draw conclusions about how local sources and national sources compare and contrast in regards to national sentiment of the two conflicts being studied.

Resources:

<http://afsf.lackland.af.mil/images/WWII/>

World War II Posters supporting the war effort

<http://historychannel.com>

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs>

<http://www.earlyamericanmuseum.org>

Early American Museum, Mahomet, IL