***Lesson: A New Challenge- The Fall of Communism***

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***Courses***: Contemporary History, Social Studies, Civics, Geography

***Grade level of students and academic level***: 9-12

***Total required time to teach lesson***: 2 -45 minute periods

***Summary:***

Students will analyze the events of 1989 and what led to the fall of communism in Europe symbolized by the tearing down of the Berlin Wall. Students will look at pictures of Berliners tearing down of the wall and build their own storylines about the event based on those pictures. Then students will discuss the policies enacted in communist countries and view the Centropa films 1989 and Maps. Students will then complete a one-pager that will assess their knowledge about the fall of communism and its causes.

***Themes***

* Fall of the Berlin Wall
* Revolution of 1989
* Communist policies
* End of the Cold War

***Centropa Materials***

* 1989 Film
* Maps Film
* 1989 Timeline

***Context for Lesson***

* Cold War/ 20th Century History
* Breakdown of the Soviet Union which led to the rise of globalization

***Enduring Understanding***

* Did the fall of the Soviet Block improve the lives of people in Eastern Europe?
* Ordinary people can affect change in their countries
* What impact did this event have on the people of Europe?

***Goals/objectives***

* Students will get an understanding of events and their consequences
* Students will understand the historical process. i.e. What is important and what is not important (Students will understand how events are connected)
* Students will understand that they can affect change in their countries
* Students will practice independent and critical thinking
* Students will be able to evaluate when to take action to change in their communities, localities and /or nation.

***Possible Resources for Teachers***

* Article on the Origins of the 1989 Revolutions[: https://origins.osu.edu/article/1989-twenty-years-end-communism-and-fate-eastern-europe/page/0/1](:  https://origins.osu.edu/article/1989-twenty-years-end-communism-and-fate-eastern-europe/page/0/1)
* Perestroika: <https://www.history.com/news/did-perestroika-cause-the-fall-of-the-soviet-union>
* Fall of Communism: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/fall-of-communism>

***Centropa Resources***

* Website:1989 Timeline: <https://www.1989.centropa.org/timeline>
* Film: Maps, Central Europe and History (optional) <https://www.centropa.org/sites/default/files/film/video/maps_central_europe_and_history_english.mp4>
* Film: 1989: https://youtu.be/PT2-Kfc6m4g

***Background Knowledge***

* Rise of Communism in Eastern Europe/ Communist regimes in Eastern Europe
* History of Communist ideology
  + Social policies: Free Health Care, Jobs for all, Free Education, Free Housing
* Causes of previous protests in Eastern Europe and why they failed? (No freedom of press/ opinion, absence of human rights, no free elections, monopoly of state in the economy)

***The Lesson***

Motivating the students

* Students will analyze a series of photos
  + Fall of the Berlin Wall
* Arrange the pictures to create a story
  + Ask students: Why did you arrange the pictures this way? What story are you telling with your arrangement?
  + Students will write a reflection answering these questions and/or discuss the aforementioned questions in a small group or whole class discussion.
  + Compare Soviet Block living conditions and opportunities to communities today

Introduction

Arrangement of pictures (Focus on different aspects of the fall of the Berlin Wall)- See Above

Show Films:

1989: https://youtu.be/PT2-Kfc6m4g

Students will read: The Timeline on the Centropa Site Timeline 1989 <https://www.1989.centropa.org/timeline>

Teacher should clarify any information that the students may not understand.

Class Discussion

Possible questions to ask students:

* What is the purpose of a wall?
* Do you think countries should have walls to secure their borders?
* Have you heard of the Berlin Wall?
* (What do you remember about the creation of the Berlin Wall? Ask this question if you talked about the Berlin Wall was previously)
* What are the main principles of communism?
* What were the pluses and minuses of communism?

Concluding Activity

One-Pager Requirements

* The One-Pager must contain a title
* The One- Pager must be written in a way the audience/ reader will understand the topic
* List the causes and significant facts about the fall of communism
* Describe how the fall of communism led to the rise of globalism
* Compare and Contrast main ideals of communism and how it was in everyday life.
  + Write them down anywhere on the page. Use different colors and/or writing styles to individualize each fact.
* Use or create a visual image, either drawn, a printed digital picture or cut out from a magazine, which creates a visual focus- these pictures need to illustrate what pictures you have in your mind in regard to the fall of communism.
* Make a personal statement about what you have learned--what did it mean to you personally?
* What do you think about the fall of communism in 1989 and explain your thoughts.
* Ask a question or two related to what you learned and answer it.

Extension: Students continue to research why and how communism fell

Reflection Please write a reflection paragraph about your experience teaching this lesson, using these questions as guidelines:

• What was your experience of teaching this lesson?

• What recommendations do you have for other teachers using your lesson plan?

• What worked well?

• What might you do differently next time? What challenges did you face?