

Foreign and Defense Policy: An Overview

Summary

Enduring Understanding

:

Students will understand why the United States have a policy for its relationship with the rest of the world.

Essential Questions

:

What is foreign policy?

Who is responsible for U.S. foreign policy?

Time Frame

1 class periods of 70 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

pen, paper, textbook, copy of the Constitution, assignment

Background for Teachers

This lesson focuses on how American policies evolved from isolationism to internationalism, what foreign policy is, and the President's foreign policy responsibilities.

Student Prior Knowledge

World War II brought profound change in the role of the United States in world affairs. The conflict produced the dramatic shift from this nation's historic posture of isolationism to our present day policy of internationalism.

America hoped to forge a world community in which at least most nations would agree to act together against any nation that threatened the peace.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will understand why the United States must have a policy for its relationship with the rest of the world.

Students will describe what makes up a nation's foreign policy.

Students will identify who is responsible for U.S. foreign policy.

Instructional Procedures

Students will examine their clothing and shoes or other personal items to determine which were manufactured in the United States and which in another country.

1. **Discuss and analyze**

with students the appeal of isolationism and what might occur if the United States adopted isolationist policies today:

Use declining figures for U.S. military personnel on active duty as one indication that we are becoming one world.

Explain the three factors that influence all foreign policy and have students identify how each factor has influenced United States foreign policy.

Three factors that influence policy

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- Politics

-wars and political upheavals anywhere on the globe impact the people of the United States.

- Economics

-economic conditions in other countries directly affect America. Japanese automobiles, European steel, Arab oil and other things that Americans buy affect the economy.

- Geographical

-Americans can not live in isolation-the world of today is "one world."

Discuss

-the President's responsibilities in the field of foreign policy. He/she dominates the field of foreign policy because of the position of commander-in-chief and chief diplomat.

Teacher must discuss the officials and agencies that help the President carry out the responsibilities of guiding American foreign policy.

Students can use a copy of the Constitution to look up the President's powers in Article II of the Constitution.

2. Guided Practice

- suggest the many different policy matters that make up foreign policy and the effect on America. Re-teach the three elements that influence foreign policy.

3. Other Guided Practice

-write the foreign policy on the board and draw a large circle around it. Have students suggest the many different policy matters that make up foreign policy.

Write these items inside the circle.

Ask students to identify the three elements that influence foreign policy:

politics, economics, and geography.

Draw these outside the circle and draw arrows from them to the circle.

Hand out **Identifying Alternatives** assignment. (see assessment section for assignments) This is a critical thinking skills assignment that helps students identify one or more ways to reach a goal and solve a problem.

Students will form small groups and read as a group the excerpt and answer the questions.

Then students will brainstorm several possible U.S. aid strategies.

Students will, as a class, evaluate alternatives. Teacher will write all the alternatives.

Debriefing question: Will your strategies serve U.S. interests?

Re-teaching: Discuss with the students how improvements in communications have made the world a global community-why all countries are now neighbors to the United States.

Closure: Summarize information taught and set up for State Department, Department of Defense and United Nations.

Strategies for Diverse Learners

Enrichment

: Students use newspapers and magazines to locate articles and clippings pertaining to American foreign policy, noting subject, date, and how much the President seems to be involved in the issue.

Inclusion students-Have students devise a graph using the following estimates on U.S. military active duty personnel:

1991-2,077,000 people

1992-1,880,000 people
1993-1,776,000 people
1994-1,680,000 people
1995-1,591,000 people
1996- 1,488,000 people.

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