

The M.A.I.N. Cartoons of World War I

Understanding the Causes of World War I

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Published by *K20 Center*

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	1-2 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	90 minutes
Course	World History		

Essential Question

What were the causes of World War I? Why were so many nations involved in World War I?

Summary

In this lesson, students explore the causes of World War I by analyzing political cartoons from the time period. Students discuss how the causes relate to the components of the M.A.I.N acronym—militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism. At the end of the lesson, students create a chart with visual elements to summarize their learning.

Snapshot

Engage

Students brainstorm possible causes of war.

Explore

Students examine and categorize the multiple causes of World War I.

Explain

Students analyze a political cartoon about World War I.

Extend

Students create an Anchor Chart to explain their analysis of a political cartoon and describe how the cartoon relates to the causes of World War I.

Evaluate

Students present their Anchor Charts to the whole class and reflect on what they learned from the lesson.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

IDT301: Identify a clear central idea in straightforward paragraphs in somewhat challenging literary narratives

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

ORG 301: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Group most ideas logically -Use transitions between and within paragraphs to clarify some relationships among ideas
ORG 401: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Group and sequence ideas logically -Use transitions between and within paragraphs to clarify relationships among ideas

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Modern World History)

MWH.C.6.1.A: Describe the complex and multiple causes of World War I (e.g., German militarism and arms race, nationalism, industrial and colonial competition) and examine Europe's alliances affected by the declining power of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.

Attachments

- Anchor Chart Example document — M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- Lesson Slides—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pptx
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort Teacher's Notes—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.docx
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort Teacher's Notes—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.docx
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.docx
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.pdf
- Political Cartoons—M.A.I.N Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.docx
- Political Cartoons—M.A.I.N Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.pdf
- Political Cartoons—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.docx
- Political Cartoons—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.docx
- T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.docx
- T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.pdf
- T.A.C.O.S. Teacher's Notes—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.docx
- T.A.C.O.S. Teacher's Notes—M.A.I.N. Cartoons of WWI.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort (attached; one set per three students)
- M.A.I.N. Card Sort Teacher's Notes document (attached)
- T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis handout (attached; one per group)
- T.A.C.O.S. Teacher's Notes document (attached)
- Political Cartoons handout (attached; one set per 21 students)
- Anchor Chart Example document (attached)
- Sticky notes (one per student)
- Large poster paper (i.e., sticky easel pad or butcher paper; one per group)

Preparation

Prior to the lesson, print multiple copies of the attached **M.A.I.N. Card Sort** handout so that there is one set of cards for every three students. Cut apart the cards and store sets together. Consider laminating the cards or printing them on cardstock so they can be used in future classes.

Preparation

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15 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Content Knowledge

Prior to this lesson, students should be familiar with some information about World War I and the acronym M.A.I.N. (militarism, alliances, imperialism, nationalism).

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Review the essential questions and lesson objective on **slides 3–4**.

Give each student one sticky note. Display **slide 5** and share the question, “What causes a nation to go to or participate in a war?” Have students brainstorm a response to the question on their sticky notes. Then, have students place their sticky notes in an area like on a whiteboard or on a large piece of chart paper.

Read aloud some of the sticky notes students placed in the space. As you read them, group sticky notes with similar themes to help students see similar responses. Guide a class discussion about students’ responses and invite students to elaborate on their responses.

Teacher's Note: Sticky Note Activity for Large Classes

For classes of 24 or more students, consider pairing students with partners and have them brainstorm together rather than individually.

15 minutes

Explore

Organize students into groups of three, and give each group one of the prepared **M.A.I.N. Card Sort** sets. Display **slide 6** and share the Card Sort strategy with students. Tell students that the cards should be sorted into one of four categories, also represented by cards, including militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism. Share that each sorting card should be sorted into the category it belongs to.

Allow students time to sort the cards. Then, check for understanding by making sure that each group has the correct cards sorted into the correct categories.

Sample Card Sort Responses

Use the attached **M.A.I.N. Card Sort Teacher's Notes** document to verify that students sorted the cards correctly.

20 minutes

Explain

Share that students should now deepen their understanding of the causes of World War I by analyzing political cartoons. Explain that political cartoons often depict a visual image of a historical or current event. Share that all political cartoonists express their opinions through their political cartoons.

Have students remain in their group of three. Pass out one copy of the attached **T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis** handout to each group. Display **slide 7** and introduce the T.A.C.O.S. strategy, elaborating on what each letter of the acronym stands for.

Give each group one political cartoon from the attached **Political Cartoons** document. The document includes seven cartoons, one for each group of students. If your class has more than 21 students, print additional copies of the cartoons as needed.

Provide time for students to analyze their cartoons and complete the T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis handout.

Sample T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis Responses

Use the attached **T.A.C.O.S. Teacher's Notes** document to check students' understanding as they analyze their cartoons. Ensure that students have identified the correct information and picked the correct category of M.A.I.N. before they move to the next activity.

30 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 8** and introduce the Anchor Chart strategy to students. Share that students should transform their political cartoon analysis into an Anchor Chart. Give each group one large sheet of poster paper and a variety of markers.

Sample Anchor Chart

Consider sharing the attached **Causes of WWI Anchor Chart Example** document with students to demonstrate the expectations of the assignment.

Review the requirements for the Anchor Charts then have students begin working. Walk around the room to monitor student progress.

Teacher's Note: Displaying Anchor Charts

The finished Anchor Charts can be displayed in the classroom so that students may refer to them throughout the unit on World War I.

30 minutes

Evaluate

Tell students that they should now prepare to present their Anchor Charts to the whole class. Share that each group should explain each part of their political cartoon, share the information on their charts, and describe how their political cartoon explains a cause of World War I.

The assigned political cartoons are included on **slides 9–15**. As each group presents, display the slide with the corresponding cartoon.

Once all groups have presented, show **slide 16**. Lead a class discussion about the overall factors that led to World War I using the following questions on the slide:

- Which of the M.A.I.N. categories may have been the most important factor in leading to war?
- If one of the M.A.I.N. categories wasn't a factor, would the war still have occurred?
- Which categories of M.A.I.N. can be seen in our world today? Do they create a cause for concern?

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Anchor chart. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/58
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147
- K20 Center. (n.d.). T.A.C.O.S. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1196