The M.A.I.N. Cartoons of World War I
Understanding the Causes of World War I

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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 will explore the causes of World War I by completing a card sort and analyzing political cartoons. Students will create and present an anchor chart in groups over the causes of World War I.

Snapshot

Engage

Students brainstorm and categorize reasons for war through a sticky note activity.

Explore

Students examine the multiple causes of World War I by engaging in a card sort.

Explain

Students analyze a political cartoon about World War I in groups of four.

Extend

Students create an anchor chart explaining the political cartoon analyzed and explain how the cartoon relates to the causes of World War I.

Evaluate

Students present their anchor charts to the class in groups of four.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: World History (9th through 12th grade))

WH.4.1: Explain the complex and multiple causes of World War I, including militarism, nationalism, imperialism, systems of alliances, and other significant causes.

Attachments

- Card Sort Teachers Notes—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.docx
- Card Sort Teachers Notes—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- Card Sort—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.docx
- Card Sort—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.pdf
- Card Sort—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.docx
- Card Sort—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- Causes of WWI Anchor Chart Example—MAIN Causes of WWI.pdf
- Lesson Slides—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.pptx
- Political Cartoons Packet—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.docx
- Political Cartoons Packet—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.pdf
- Political Cartoons Packet—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.docx
- Political Cartoons Packet—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- TACOS Cartoon Analysis—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.docx
- TACOS Cartoon Analysis—MAIN Cartoons of WWI - Spanish.pdf
- TACOS Cartoon Analysis—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.docx
- TACOS Cartoon Analysis—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.pdf
- TACOS Teacher Notes—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.docx
- TACOS Teacher Notes—MAIN Cartoons of WWI.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Card Sort (attached; one set per group size of your choice)
- Card Sort Teacher's Notes (attached)
- Political Cartoons Packet (attached)
- T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis (attached; one per student)
- T.A.C.O.S. Teacher's Notes (attached)
- Anchor Chart Example (attached)
- Sticky notes (one per student)
- Large poster paper (i.e., sticky easel pad or butcher paper; one per group)

15 minutes

Engage

Students should have read in their text some some information about World War I and the acronym M.A.I.N., (militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism) prior to this lesson.

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Review the essential questions and lesson objective on **slide 3** and **slide 4**. Provide each student with a sticky note. Ask students to brainstorm and write a response on their sticky note to the question on **slide 5**, *What causes a nation to go to or participate in a war?* Ask students to place their sticky notes in one area such as on a white board or on a large piece of chart paper. Read some sticky notes aloud and group the sticky notes together that have the same theme to help students see similar responses. Have a class discussion about the responses students have written down and invite students to elaborate on their responses.

> **Teacher's Note: Sticky Note Activity for a Large Class**
>
> If you have classes of 24 or more students, you may save time by pairing students into partners and have them brainstorm together rather than individually.

15 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Activity Preparation

Before you begin this portion of the lesson, print and cut out the attached card sort activity. You'll need one set of cards for each group of students. Depending on class size, consider having students work through the card sort in pairs or small groups. Consider printing and laminating the cards so they can be used again in the future.

Pass out the attached **Card Sort** to each student or student group. Display **slide 6** and explain to students that there are four types of cards: militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism. Have students sort the cards into the category each belongs to. After students have sorted the cards, check for understanding by making sure they have the correct cards under each category. Use the attached **Card Sort Teacher's Notes** to verify the sorting. Ask students to briefly share out their reasoning. Allow a few minutes for students to re-sort their cards based on other students' explanations.

20 minutes

Explain

Tell students that next they will deepen their understanding of the causes of World War I by analyzing political cartoons. Explain to students that political cartoons are created to provide a visual image of a historical or current event. All political cartoonists are expressing an opinion when they create their political cartoons. Have students analyze the political cartoon for the opinion expressed.

For this activity, students will use the T.A.C.O.S. Instructional Strategy. If students are not in groups already, place students into groups of four for the remainder of the lesson. Pass out the attached **T.A.C.O.S. Cartoon Analysis** handout for students to use during this activity. Briefly explain each part of the T.A.C.O.S. acronym on **slide 7**. Provide each group with one political cartoon from the attached **Political Cartoons Packet**. There are seven cartoons total, one for each group. You will need multiple copies of cartoons for classes larger than 28 students. Tell students to use the T.A.C.O.S. acronym to break down each part of the cartoon. Students should also decide which category of M.A.I.N. their given cartoon fits into. Use the attached **T.A.C.O.S. Teacher Notes** handout to check for their understanding as groups finish analyzing their cartoon. 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

Tell students that next they will turn their political cartoon analysis into an [Anchor Chart](). The anchor charts created can be displayed in class for students to refer to throughout the unit on World War I. Provide each student with a large piece of paper and a variety of markers to create their anchor chart. Show **slide 8** and review the requirements each group should include in their anchor charts. Monitor students as they create their anchor charts. An example of a completed anchor chart is included in the attached materials.

30 minutes

Evaluate

For the final activity, tell students they will present their anchor charts in groups to the class. Instruct students to explain each part of the political cartoon and information included on the anchor chart to the class including how the political cartoon analyzed explains a cause of World War I. So students can observe the cartoons in more detail during presentations, they are included on **slides 9-15** for each group to display while explaining their anchor chart.

Have a class discussion with students debriefing the overall factors in Europe that led to the war. Possible questions to discuss include:

- *Which of the M.A.I.N. categories might be the most important 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 and does that create a cause of concern?*

After students have presented their anchor charts, display them in class during the unit on World War I.

Resources

- File:Map Europe ALLIANCES 1914-EN.SVG. (2009, January 12). File:Map Europe alliances 1914-en.svg - Wikimedia Commons
- K20 Center. (n.d.). T.A.C.O.S.https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1196
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Anchor Chart https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/58

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