

Berlin: A Tale of Two Speeches

U.S. History

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Grade Level	10th – 11th Grade	**Time Frame**	90 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	1-2 class period(s)
Course	U.S. History, World History		

Essential Question

How do events change history over time?

Summary

In this U.S. history lesson, students analyze the Berlin Wall speeches of President John F. Kennedy (1963) and President Ronald Reagan (1987) in both video and text formats. A variety of assessment options are provided for students to demonstrate their understanding.

Snapshot

Engage

Students explore their prior knowledge about the Berlin Wall and merge that knowledge with new knowledge through visuals.

Explore

Student view clips of famous Berlin Wall speeches and complete a speech analysis.

Explain

Students source text versions of the speeches and then do a close reading to facilitate a deeper understanding of the speeches.

Extend

Students create historical sequencing activities online or with index cards and a textbook.

Evaluate

Students show their historical understanding of the Berlin Wall using one of three options for evaluation.

Standards

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

USH.6.1A: Identify the origins of Cold War confrontations between the Soviet Union and the United States including the leadership of President Harry Truman, the postwar division of Berlin, the Berlin Blockade and Airlift, the Iron Curtain,and the Marshall Plan.
USH.8.2: Analyze the economic and political impact of the rise of conservatism and President Reagan's domestic and foreign policies including Reaganomics, the Iran-Contra Scandal and Reagan's Tear Down This Wall speech in West Berlin.

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

WH.4.7: Evaluate the effects of World War II including military and economic power shifts, purposes of the United Nations and NATO, and the origins and escalation of the Cold War.
WH.5.5: Evaluate the people, events, and conditions leading to the end of the Cold War including the
WH.5.5C: fall of the Berlin Wall

Attachments

- Berlin Secondary Source Materials - Optional—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.docx
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- Handout 1 - Speech Analysis—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.docx
- Handout 1 - Speech Analysis—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.pdf
- Handout 1 - Speech Analysis—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.docx
- Handout 1 - Speech Analysis—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.pdf
- Handout 2 - Kennedy Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.docx
- Handout 2 - Kennedy Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.pdf
- Handout 2 - Kennedy Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.docx
- Handout 2 - Kennedy Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.pdf
- Handout 3 - Reagan Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.docx
- Handout 3 - Reagan Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.pdf
- Handout 3 - Reagan Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.docx
- Handout 3 - Reagan Speech—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.pdf
- Template - Two Voice Poem—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.docx
- Template - Two Voice Poem—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches - Spanish.pdf
- Template - Two Voice Poem—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.docx
- Template - Two Voice Poem—Berlin A Tale of Two Speeches.pdf

Materials

- Handout 1- Speech Analysis (attached)
- Handout 2- Kennedy (attached)
- Handout 3- Reagan (attached)
- Template- Two Voice Poem (attached)
- Berlin Secondary Source Materials (attached; optional)

Engage

Students will first engage with the Berlin Wall through their own knowledge, then share with a peer, and then fill in any gaps with photo essays. Ask students to write the words "Berlin Wall" in the center of a sheet of notebook paper. Have students make three circles around the word, leaving enough room between circles to write notes and ideas.

Walk students through the following steps for the Inside Out strategy:

- Give students a minute or two to jot down everything they already know about the Berlin Wall along the innermost circle.
- Next, have students share their knowledge of the Berlin Wall with a partner. Students should write any new knowledge they learn from their partners in the second circle ring.
- Using Time Magazine's photo essay, "The Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall," allow students to gather more information through the photos and captions. Students can use personal devices to view the photo essay, or it can be displayed for the whole class with a projector. New information learned from the photo essay should be added into the last circle.
- Once the activity is completed, students can share circle information about the Berlin Wall with the class if desired.

Teacher's Note

The Berlin Wall was an enduring symbol of the political and philosophical division between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Begun in 1961 by Soviet forces in East Berlin, the Wall stood for decades, only to fall during the reforms of "perestroika" ("restructuring") and "glasnost" ("openness") of Premiere Mikhail S. Gorbachev in 1989. President John F. Kennedy and President Ronald Reagan each gave historic foreign policy speeches at the Berlin Wall, and these speeches provide insight into U.S. Cold War foreign policy over time.

Explore

Students will consider two different presidents delivering two different Cold War foreign policy speeches, both given at the Berlin Wall at different points during the Cold War. Distribute the handout titled "Speech Analysis." Inform students that these are the aspects they will be analyzing as they view the speeches. View the following video clips of these speeches:

- "John F. Kennedy at American University and in Berlin"
- "Reagan - Tear Down This Wall"

As students watch the speeches, ask them to write their own notes on the "Speech Analysis" handout, completing the handout for each speech.

After watching the videos, ask students to discuss their observations with an elbow partner/small group. How did the speeches look/sound alike? Different? Who are the presidents? What do they know about these two presidents?

Sample Student Responses

JFK is associated with the 1960s, which included the space race, the Cold War with Soviet Union, the Berlin Blockade, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Reagan is associated with the 1980s, Cold War foreign policy shifts, "Reaganomics," upgrading our satellite monitoring capabilities, and "Star Wars." Reagan was an actor before becoming president. Students might note that both presidents are challenging the Soviet government in their speeches, though the wall is in East Germany.

Explain

Sourcing asks students to consider who wrote a document and in what context or historical era the document was written. When students review what was happening at the time the document was written, they can more fully appreciate its perspective.

To ensure students have a full understanding of the speeches, review the attached speech excerpts in text form. Conduct a conversation in small groups (or as a class) explaining what sourcing is, its importance to historians, and that it requires that students think about the following aspects of the text:

- Who wrote these speeches?
- What was Kennedy's message in his speech? What was Reagan's message?
- When was each speech delivered?
- Where were the speeches delivered? What impact would that have made?
- Why were these speeches delivered? What was Kennedy's purpose? What was Reagan's purpose?

Close Reading: Ask students to do a close reading of each speech. Close reading is a tool historians use to analyze primary/secondary sources. Close reading requires a slow and thoughtful read-through of the document, taking notes and asking questions about what is said and what is unsaid in the document. To facilitate this, use an analytical reading strategy such as Thinking Notes.

Extend

The goal in the extension activity is for students to evaluate secondary source materials, connect them to one another in an historical context, and then put these materials (photos, videos, text, etc.) in chronological order and be ready to demonstrate how they relate to one another. To do this, four activity options are listed below that are tailored to varying degrees of technology access in the classroom.

Online Option 1: Visit Docs Teach in the National Archives and on the Create page, begin a new activity with the "Finding a Sequence" tool. Using the construction of the Berlin Wall as the beginning event and the fall of the Berlin Wall as the concluding event, have students select documents from the archives that highlight main events in the Cold War from 1963 to 1989.This online activity requires students to search for, select, and organize primary source documents to connect two (or more events), giving them practice in understanding and organizing chronology and context. The site is for teachers, but students may access the same information and create their own activities. Note: Registration is free but required to access the site.

Online Option 2: The teacher can use this same site, Docs Teach, and create one or two "Finding the Sequence" activities for the entire class to complete. In this alternative, the primary sources are chosen by the teacher but the students must create the proper sequence and explain their reasoning.

Face-to-Face Option 1: Using their textbooks or other secondary source materials, students select 5-8 key events/graphs/pictures from their resources that put the two speeches in historical and sequential context. Ask them to put each Cold War event on a note card, naming the event on one side and then providing the event's date (or time span) and, on the other side, their reasoning for including the event in their timeline.

Face-to-Face Option 2: Ask students to create a web organizer on poster paper of key Cold War events surrounding each speech in order to understand chronology and context.

Evaluate

The teacher may choose one of the following three formats as an assessment of students' learning in this lesson:

- Students may complete other student-created or teacher-created "Finding a Sequence" activities online. If the activity was done with note cards, ask groups to switch note card sets and put them in chronological order without looking at the dates on the back of each card. You may also ask the class or a small group to compile all of their index cards and as a whole class/small class and work together to put them in chronological or thematic order.
- Ask students to use what they have learned from the text and analyses of these two presidential speeches to write a brief foreign policy speech on one current foreign policy topic. Have students pay attention to context as they write their speeches. Where would they give the speech? Who would be the student's audience and what kind of background and point of reference would that audience have on that topic? How would these factors affect the way the speech is worded and delivered? Ask students to deliver their speeches if time allows.
- Students may complete a Two-Voice Poem (template attached) in the voices of JFK and Reagan or in the voices of two audience members (Berliners) for each speech.

Resources

- C-SPAN. (2013, June 19). John F. Kennedy at American University and in Berlin [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GN1tcAWx9Y
- Foundation for the National Archives. (n.d.). Finding a Sequence [App]. Docs Teach. http://docsteach.org/tools/finding-a-sequence
- JohnJ2427. (2007, July 3). Reagan - Tear Down This Wall [Video]. YouTube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjWDrTXMgF8
- Time. (2016). The Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall. TIME USA. http://content.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1631993,00.html
- Suggested: Excellent series of short videos exploring the Berlin Wall from perspective of Berliners. Lovell, R., Panetta, F., Bennett, C., and Dein, A. (2009, October). Berlin Wall: 20 years on [Podcast]. The Guardian. http://www.theguardian.com/berlin-wall-20-years-on
- Suggested: ABC Breaking News from November 9, 1989 of the Fall of the Wall. ABC News. (2009). Nov. 9, 1989: The Berlin Wall Falls [Video]. YouTube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnCPdLlUgvo&feature=related