

Contemporary Conflicts in light of the Cold War Summer Workshop...UCSB...August 2-6

90 Minute Lesson Plan for Nuclear Proliferation

Title: Atoms, Atoms Every Where and Not One for Peace: Nuclear Proliferation in the Cold War and War on Terror

General Goals:

- Understand the importance of nuclear technology and weapons for nuclear and non-nuclear powers from 1945-present
- Expose students to different viewpoints on nuclear proliferation
- Engage students in a discussion of how the end of the Cold War and the start of the War on Terrorism changed or altered the importance of nuclear weapons
- Be able to articulate their positions and support them with evidence in both an oral and written exercise

Objectives:

- Be able to explain the following terms: nuclear proliferation, nuclear non-proliferation, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Atoms for Peace, nuclear powers, non-nuclear powers, security umbrella, Star Wars Program, National Missile Defense
- Be able to explain the differences and similarities between the Soviet and American position on nuclear proliferation (with emphasis on the paradox that the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated on proliferation)
- Explain the different concerns nuclear and non-nuclear powers had and have regarding proliferation and non-proliferation
- Explain what the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was and the different policy positions that helped shape it
- Explain the importance of WMDs (nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons) have to contemporary conflicts

College course level:

US History course (lower- or upper-division or survey), US Foreign Policy course, World History Survey

Time Structure:

90 minutes.

Materials:

Readings:

- Dafna Linzer “Report Faults U.S. Action on Nuclear Proliferation; Carnegie Study Recommends More Aggressive Tactics” *Washington Post* (June 21, 2004) A12. (available on Lexis Nexis)

- Editorial “Dubious Threat, Expensive Defense” *Washington Post* (April 26, 2004) A23. (available on Lexis Nexis)
- Baker Spring “Taking Shots at Missile Defense” *Washington Times* (June 2, 2004), A15. (available on Lexis Nexis)
- Michael Settle “Pressure on Israel to scrap WMD as Libya's move is hailed a coup for Blair” *The Herald* (December 22, 2003) pg. 1. (available on Lexis Nexis)
- International Atomic Energy Agency Website: www.iaea.org
- William C. Potter “Nuclear Proliferation: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation” *The Washington Quarterly* Vol. 8 no. 1 (Winter 1985): 141-154.
- William C. Potter “Prospects for U.S.—Russian Cooperation to Counter WMD Proliferation and Terrorism” (*The Aspen Institute Congressional Program Conference on U.S.—Russia Relations: Opportunities for Cooperation, Moscow, August 10-16, 2003*).
- William Epstein *The Last Chance: Nuclear Proliferation and Arms Control* (New York: Free Press, 1976) 98-119.
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [Can get a copy in: William C. Potter *Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation* (Cambridge: O, G & H, 1982), 243-248.
- *Optional*: Reports on the 2000 Review of the NPT: http://www.mint.gov.my/policy/nuc_prolifer/npt2000revcon.htm

Pre-class Preparation:

Have students read the material before coming to class. Depending on how one would like to structure the class one can either have the students prepare for the simulation in class (more time for small group discussion and less time for discussion between the entire class) or have them meet before coming to class (more time to have discussion with the entire class involved) to hammer out their positions. Provide the students with a list of countries to look up on the International Atomic Energy Agency’s website in order to find out what that country’s position on proliferation is and why.

Talking Points:

Mini-Lecture/Q&A: (10 minutes)

- Speak on the general issues surrounding and history of nuclear proliferation in the Cold War, post-Soviet era, and War on Terrorism
- Ask a few questions during lecture to reinforce key terms from reading: nuclear proliferation, nuclear non-proliferation, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Atoms for Peace, nuclear powers, non-nuclear powers, security umbrella, Star Wars Program, National Missile Defense
- Encourage students to also ask questions about conceptions/terms they had trouble with

Activity/Activities:

Group Presentations on Cold War Attitudes towards Nuclear Proliferation (30 minutes)

Preparation: (5-10 minutes)

Divide students into groups to represent a different country's (or group of countries') official policy towards nuclear proliferation during the Cold War. Have at least one student take notes of the group's position making sure that the group refers to the readings. Examples of groups: United States, Soviet Union, Europe, non-nuclear nations, nuclear nations that are not super powers, anti-nuclear organizations, non-state actors, etc.

Presentations: (20-25 minutes)

Have groups explain their positions to the other students using specific examples from the readings. Encourage discussion of how valid the students feel the group's point of view was.

Mock Nuclear Proliferation Treaty Reassessment (45 minutes -- depending on pre-class preparation time)

Preparation: (15 minutes)

Mix the students up so that most of them are not arguing the position from the group presentations activity. Put the students into pairs with each pair assigned to argue the national policy or position of a different country (such as United States, Russia, China, Libya, Great Britain, Canada, Israel, India, Pakistan, Sweden, etc.). The students are representatives from their country and are meeting 35 years after the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons went into effect to assess its relevance and effectiveness in the wake of the end of the Cold War, September 11th, and the current war in Iraq. The students need to draft a position to list what changes (if any) their country would like to make to the NPT and why. (If one assigned the optional sources on the 2000 review of the NPT ask students to also address how September 11th has changed their views)

Mock Nuclear Proliferation Treaty Reassessment (30 minutes)

Have students pretend you are presiding over this conference. They must not only convince you that their approach to nuclear proliferation is best but they must also argue with the other groups to hammer out a) amendments to the treaty or b) a whole new treaty depending on the direction the students move towards.

Assessment:

- (5 minutes – perhaps longer depending on how well the debates go) Ask students to share their own opinions on nuclear/WMD proliferation with the rest of the class and how the group presentations and simulation may have influenced or changed their opinions
- Take home activity: Ask students to type up their positions from the mock debate and include in a separate conclusion how their opinions have changed.