

NAVAL HISTORY STEM-H LESSON PLAN

TEACHER HELP GUIDE

LESSON PLAN: Using Oral Histories to Learn About the Cold War

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INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

1. Become familiar with social science research methods.
2. Gain a deeper understanding of history through first-hand accounts.
3. Practice reading, writing, and evaluating information.
4. Look for biasness in documents and literature.
5. Appreciate the experiences of sailors, both enlisted and officers.
6. Relate personal stories to historical content.

BACKGROUND: The Cold War refers to the post World War II confrontation between the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies. From 1945 to 1991 international policies were shaped by intense rivalries between these two groups – noncommunist and communists. This led to military coalitions, weapons development, space race, espionage, and propaganda. It included the “hot” wars of the Cold War: Korea and Vietnam. The Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

View “The U.S. Navy in the Cold War”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVAtVFnuRk&list=UUGiS44OoLuJJliAWk341OAw&index=44&feature=plcp>

for a ten minute summary of the U.S. Navy’s role across 5 decades following World War II.

RESOURCES:

History of the Cold War

<http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/coldwar-1.htm>

Naval Historical & Heritage Command: Oral History of World War II

<http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq87-3.htm>

Library of Congress: Veterans History Project

<http://www.loc.gov/vets/>

STANDARDS: 3A: The student understands major global trends since World War II.
Explain why the Cold War took place and ended and assess its significance as a 20th century event.

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INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES FOR LESSON:

1. Review the background information on the Cold War (or assign as homework prior to the lesson).
2. Hand out the attached worksheet for students to complete while listening to an oral history of veterans.
3. Play the audio from an actual oral history using one of the links listed above as the students complete the worksheet.
4. Ask the students to then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using oral histories. Write the list on the board.

Below are some ideas that students may come up with when brainstorming:

Advantages

Real stories often overlooked in history books
Add personal touch to historic events
Various perspectives
Human experience

Disadvantages

Could be biased
Memories could be faulty
May have an agenda

5. Have students individually look up an oral history using one of the websites listed below and complete another worksheet.
6. After completion have students share any interesting or pertinent findings with the class and then turn in their completed worksheet to the teacher.

KEY TERMS:

Ranking System for the Navy which can be found at <http://www.navy.mil/navydata/ranks/rankrate.html>

Primary source

Secondary source

Have students become familiar with basic vocabulary and history from a given time period.

EXTENSIONS: Students may also interview local veterans. Visit <http://www.loc.gov/vets/questions.html> for tips on how to conduct a quality interview.

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Worksheet for Oral History Lesson

Name _____

Prior to choosing an oral history from the websites provided, list at least 4 things that you know about the Cold War AND 4 things that you would like to learn. Next choose an oral history and complete the chart by listing at least 4 things that you learned from your listening/reading.

Name of the Sailor: _____

WHAT I KNOW	WHAT I WANT TO KNOW	WHAT I LEARNED

Websites to use for your research:

<http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq87-3.htm>

<http://www.loc.gov/vets/>