

U.S. & World Affairs Lesson Plan - *War in Yemen*

Conflict Simulation

(Created in association with QFI Professional Development Grant - by David Olson - James Madison Memorial High School, Madison WI)

Subject	Course Name	Grade
Social Studies	U.S. & World Affairs (Current Events)	9-12

Sequence	Length of Lesson (1 - multiple days)
<p>This lesson is best used in a Current Events or Geography course. The goal is for students to analyze key current issues in the Arab and Muslim world (the conflict is not strictly an Arab one since Iran is a Muslim country, but not an Arab one).</p> <p>Students begin by being assigned (or choosing) roles. Refer to the “War in Yemen Conflict Simulation” handout for information about roles and “teams.” All students will work with a group of 2-4 students to analyze the conflict from a particular point of view of the U.S. Government. All of these roles are real - and students can also learn about what these roles within the U.S. government actually do.</p> <p>Next, students will spend some time (either in class or as homework) conducting research using the teacher compiled resources. See the “War in Yemen Conflict Resources” handout (note: this should be shared digitally with students in order to more easily use the hyperlinks). In the process of this research, students will complete the “War in Yemen Conflict Organizer” handout. This process allows students to view the conflict from the point of view of five different points of view; 1) Saudi Arabia, 2) Iran, 3) Houthi Rebels, 4) Yemen, and 5) the United States. After completing the Conflict Organizer, students will meet with their team to analyze possible actions by the United States and then develop a Policy Recommendation based on their assigned role’s perspective.</p>	<p>4-5 Day lesson (45-50 minute classes)</p> <p>This will depend on how much of the research is done in class versus as homework. The essential activities that must be done in class are the small group prep work and the actual “Cabinet Meeting.”</p>

The culminating activity occurs when students conduct a Cabinet Meeting - facilitated by the President - in order to discuss what the U.S. action ought to be and why.	
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Standard(s)

CCSS ELA/History Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

C3 Framework for Social Studies:

D2.Civ.6.9-12. Critique relationships among governments, civil societies, and economic markets.

D2.Civ.9.9-12. Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.

D2.Civ.11.9-12. Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels in terms of the civic purposes achieved.

D2.Civ.13.9-12. Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.

D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.

D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

D4.1.9-12. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.

Learning Target(s)

Students will investigate the War in Yemen from multiple perspectives.

Students will develop an understanding of the conflict and work collaboratively to analyze policy proposals.

Students will create a policy recommendation and engage in a collaborative discussion to debate policy proposals.

Texts - Resources - Technology

- Computers with internet access (can be done as a full class activity if necessary)
- Handouts:
 - **War in Yemen Conflict Simulation** - This document explains the student roles and outlines the perspective that each student should use in their analysis.
 - **War in Yemen Conflict Resources** - This document includes a substantial collection of articles, videos, and web resources for students to use to analyze the conflict from multiple perspectives.
 - **War in Yemen Conflict Organizer** - This document helps students analyze the conflict and organize their information. Much of the research should be conducted individually, but students will meet with their “cabinet-level” groups to discuss and formulate a recommendation from their group.

Assigning Roles: Day 1

The activity begins by handing out the “War in Yemen Conflict Simulation” information sheet. Roles can either be assigned by the teacher, assigned at random, or chosen by students. There are 24 roles specified, but more can be added if necessary. Each role is part of a team of 2-4 individuals.

Research: Day 1-3

Students will utilize the “War in Yemen Conflict Resources” in order to complete the “War in Yemen Conflict Organizer.” The resources include many videos, articles, and interactive websites from a variety of perspectives on the conflict. Students are challenged to view this particular conflict from a variety of perspectives - with the goal of identifying the key interests of multiple Arab countries (and Iran) and understanding the underlying religious element of the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The teacher should check in with each team regularly to check for understanding and answer questions. The multimedia nature of the resources should aid in scaffolding for students of various ability levels - and this can also be addressed with targeted grouping of students.

For a teacher with time constraints, much of the research can be done as homework, although this makes formative assessment more difficult.

Collaboration: Day 4

Students should work together within their “Cabinet-level” groups to discuss the different policy proposals. This ensures that all members of the group are on the same page with how the different policy proposals will impact the conflict and U.S. interests. The groups should complete sections 4 and 5 of the Organizer together.

The goal of this discussion is to formulate a specific recommendation for the President and defend the group’s analysis based on their area of expertise. The group should anticipate questions from the President and Vice-President, and prepare answers based on their roles.

Simulation: Day 5

Set up the classroom for a “Cabinet Meeting” - tables or desks in a conference room format. Either the President and Vice-President can facilitate the conversation, or if the teacher needs to facilitate, the teacher shall act as the “Chief-of-Staff” and direct the conversation. All of the Principals are seated at the main table, with other department members seated behind. It is the primary responsibility of the Principal to provide their explanation and answer questions, but they may defer to other members of their group.

The President and Vice-President shall go around the table and ask each Principal for their recommendation. The President and Vice-President shall ask follow-up questions of the principals - particularly as they get different perspectives as they work their way around the table. Each Principal is expected to have prepared a short recommendation and explanation that connects to the interests of their department and area of expertise.

The culmination of the simulation calls for the President and Vice-President to consult with each other briefly and then issue a response with their plan of action. At this point, the teacher may also debrief students on the process, answer questions, or ask questions to check for understanding.

War in Yemen Conflict Simulation

You must assume the role of a U.S. Government official and advise the President on how to deal with the War in Yemen. You will work with your team (see roles below) to figure out which policy action you will recommend to the President.

The Principal advisor of each group gets a seat at the table and must field questions from the President and White House staff. Be prepared to offer your expert analysis and represent your position.

Positions (Principals/positions at the table in <i>italics</i>)	Duty of the Office (this is the point of view you should take when offering your analysis)
Executive Offices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>President</i> ● <i>Vice President</i> ● White House Chief of Staff 	<p>The President is the one who gets to make the ultimate decision. He/she is aided primarily by their Chief of Staff and (to a lesser extent) their Vice President. This team must determine what course to take when dealing with Yemen (and Saudi Arabia and Iran). Their job is to ask probing questions and determine the best course of action.</p>
State Department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Secretary of State</i> ● Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy ● Under Secretary for Political Affairs ● Asst. Secretary for Near East Affairs 	<p>The State Department is the chief Cabinet department that deals with other countries. The Secretary of State is responsible for representing the United States to the rest of the world.</p> <p>The goal of the State Department is to provide the point of view of and to American allies and how our actions might affect their decisions.</p>
Defense Department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Secretary of Defense</i> ● Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff ● Under Secretary for Middle East ● Commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) 	<p>The Defense Department is responsible for all branches of the U.S. military. Any potential military action will rely on the knowledge of military leaders.</p> <p>This group should be able to provide the best information about our military capabilities and potential risks/issues for U.S. military involvement.</p>
National Security Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>National Security Advisory</i> ● Director of National Intelligence ● Deputy National Security Advisor 	<p>The National Security Council representatives should be able to provide information on the military, national security and diplomacy. This group should have a solid understanding of all aspects of this conflict and the implications of action.</p> <p>The real "National Security Council" includes these individuals as well many of the Principals from the other groups.</p>
Central Intelligence Agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>CIA Director</i> 	<p>The CIA is the chief foreign intelligence organization for the United States. They have overt (non-secret) operations as</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Directorate of Analysis 	<p>advisors to the President, as well as covert (secret) operations where they gather intelligence via spies around the world.</p>
<p>United Nations Ambassador:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>UN Ambassador</i> ● Asst. to UN Ambassador 	<p>The UN Ambassador has to represent the United States at the United Nations. Their chief goal is to work with other countries and gather support for U.S. interests within the UN.</p> <p>This person should be able to provide the perspective of how other nations around the world might react to U.S. action and the potential for getting other nations to work with the United States.</p>
<p>Department of Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Attorney General</i> ● Asst. Attorney General 	<p>The Attorney General must advise the President about the legality and constitutionality of his/her actions. If the President might do something illegal, the Attorney General better step in.</p>
<p>Department of Homeland Security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Homeland Security Secretary</i> ● Asst. Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis 	<p>The Department of Homeland Security is in charge of defending the homeland (obvious, I know...).</p> <p>Representatives of this Department must have knowledge of how other nations can impact the United States and understand our national vulnerabilities.</p>
<p>Department of the Treasury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Secretary of the Treasury</i> ● Under Secretary for International Affairs 	<p>The Secretary of the Treasury is responsible for understanding the U.S. economy and protecting it. Any potential conflict will have financial implications. The Treasury Secretary has to inform the President about what they are and how to avoid harming the economy.</p>

Your task is to research this conflict from a particular point of view. You must advocate for a particular course of action and be able to defend your recommendation. In addition, you must field questions from the President and Vice President and work with other members of the Principals Committee.

Complete the “War in Yemen Conflict Organizer” prior to creating questions.

War in Yemen Conflict Resources

Use the resources listed below to examine the War in Yemen from multiple angles. You will need to work together with your group to create a recommendation and answer questions posed by the President and Vice President.

Background Resources

<p>Council on Foreign Relations: Yemen In Crisis: https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/yemen-crisis</p>	<p>The Council on Foreign Relations is one of the most respected foreign policy organizations. This site examines the numerous issues with the conflict.</p>
<p>Council on Foreign Relations Global Conflict Tracker: https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/conflict/war-in-yemen</p>	<p>This site provides clear information about the basics of the conflict and its history.</p>
<p>BBC - Yemen Crisis: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423</p>	<p>The BBC has a large collection of videos and articles to help explain the conflict and its many players.</p>
<p>Amnesty International - The Forgotten War: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/09/yemen-the-forgotten-war/</p>	<p>This site has a timeline dating back to 2004 that does a good job of emphasizing the military and humanitarian issues associated with this conflict.</p>
<p>Yemen Conflict - In Videos</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkyXDDXzPyw • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqIBvVur5SA • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PL6Yz1a4DI • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwwP3SiBIC8
<p>Yemen's Humanitarian Crisis: https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/03/middleeast/yemen-worlds-worst-humanitarian-crisis-un-intl/index.html</p>	<p>This CNN article and video explain the humanitarian portion of the conflict and its toll on the civilians in Yemen.</p>
<p>United Nations - Yemen: https://news.un.org/en/focus/yemen</p>	<p>This United Nations resource provides a significant numbers of statistics about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.</p>
<p>Washington Post - Senate Vote: https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/senate-plans-vote-on-revoking-us-support-for-saudi-arabia-in-yemen/2018/11/26/49fc8554-f1d1-11e8-bc79-68604ed88993_story.html?utm_term=.8712081ee73d</p>	<p>The U.S. Senate held a vote on U.S. support for Saudi Arabia and their role in the Yemen conflict.</p>

Opinion/Policy Recommendation Resources

The articles listed below either advocate for or against policy proposals. As you read, try to identify which “Policy Proposal” it fits with...

https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/09/iran-yemen-saudi-arabia/571465/	https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/chaos-will-erupt-the-middle-east-if-us-leaves-yemen	https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2018/07/03/america_wins_if_houthi_rebels_lose_in_yemen_137412.html
https://www.economist.com/leaders/2017/11/30/how-and-why-to-end-the-war-in-yemen	https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2018/11/30/america_needs_to_learn_how_to_win_wars_without_fighting_138788.html	https://nationalinterest.org/blog/middle-east-watch/yemen-bad-it-would-be-worse-without-us-involvement-26801
https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/12/trump-doubles-down-on-war-in-yemen-pompeo-congress-middle-east-saudi-arabia-united-arab-emirates-bombing-civilian-casualties/	https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/yemen-peace-talks-181202101535422.html	https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/us-should-balance-iran-saudi-arabia
https://www.heritage.org/homeland-security/commentary/why-the-crisis-yemen-matters-the-united-states	https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/27/america-is-not-an-innocent-bystander-in-yemen/	https://www.hudson.org/research/14605-ending-the-not-so-futile-war-in-yemen

NAME: _____

War in Yemen Conflict Organizer

Use this form to research your role, conduct research, and provide a recommendation to the President. All members of the Principal Committee will be at the table for the meeting, but non-Principals should be knowledgeable and able to help answer questions.

My Role:	What is the purpose of this office? What do you need to consider before advising the President?
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With your team, analyze the War in Yemen (use the "Conflict Resources" here: <http://bit.ly/2MHhbRy>). Use these resources to understand the basics of the conflict.

1. Explain how the following groups are involved in the conflict.

Yemen Government	Houthi Rebels	Saudi Arabia	Iran	United States

2. In the spaces below, identify the goals of each of these groups. What would they like to accomplish or see happen with this conflict and WHY?

Yemen Government	Houthi Rebels	Saudi Arabia	Iran	United States

3. Explain key events so far in the conflict. Consult with your team - narrow down your list together...

Event #1	Event #2	Event #3	Event #4	Event #5

4. Construct responses in the table below. You will need to use both the "Background Resources" and the "Opinion/Policy Recommendation Resources" to complete this section. (This would be a good thing to divide and conquer within your group)

Policy Proposals	Which groups would favor this action?	Which groups would oppose this action?	Potential Positives	Potential Negatives
Direct Intervention to Support Saudi-led Faction				
Direct Action to Support Houthi Rebels				
Covert Action to Support Saudi-led Faction				
Covert Action to Support Houthi Rebels				

Limit Intervention to Humanitarian Assistance				
Avoid Involvement				

5. What is your initial policy recommendation? (This may change after you receive questions from the President and submit questions to him/her)