

SHRAPNEL

WHEN IS WAR JUSTIFIED?

**An integrated unit for students in Grades 6-9
Social Studies and Language Arts Based
Includes lessons in MST, Music, and the Arts**

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Time Frame: 6 Weeks

**Center for the Study of Expertise in Teaching and Learning
(CSETL)**

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Unit Description and Focus

This unit is geared towards middle school students in grades 6 to 9. Lessons were written for heterogeneous classes, as multiple learning styles were considered while instruction was being developed. If classes meet daily for 40 minutes, it takes approximately 5 weeks to complete this unit. However, one should not adhere to this suggested time frame too stringently. There is a wealth of information available on the unit topics that would provide even greater in depth analysis of events and issues. This makes the unit easily adaptable to upper level classes. Likewise, the interest level of the students certainly will dictate the amount of time a teacher spends on any given topic. Given the importance of the concepts addressed, spending six to eight weeks on this unit could certainly be justified.

The essential question, “When is War Justified?” is thought provoking. It is used to measure students’ growth by being administered as both a pre-test and a post-test. The gist of the unit involves students looking at five different twentieth century conflicts involving the United States. They include WW I, WWII, Vietnam, The Gulf War, and the War on Terrorism. Instead of studying each war in chronological order, I chose to divide the unit into four thematic sections to look at all five wars simultaneously. The four sections are: 1) causes of war; 2) costs of war; 3) technological advances in warfare; and 4) civic and moral responsibilities of citizens in war. Much of the information introduced is done in jigsaw form. Each group is assigned one of the wars. Groups research specific sections of that war (cause, weapons, cost etc.). In addition, opportunities are provided for each group to do research on the five wars we are studying. Groups present information gathered back to the entire class on a regular basis. The presentations are made utilizing several modalities to enable all learners equal opportunity to become engaged with the material presented.

The actual information that students receive about the wars can vary depending on the teacher. Some teachers may rely more heavily on textbooks, others on the Internet, and still others on resource centers. The constant here is the importance of providing students with the opportunity to explore multiple sources and perspectives. I also highly recommend the documents I’ve included and/or suggested. Web sites are cited where applicable to make those documents easily accessible. Teachers may substitute any of the documents for personal favorites that convey similar messages. Nothing is set in stone here, and teachers should exercise the creative license to add, cut, and modify as they see fit.

Essential, Guiding and Reflection Questions

Essential Questions

When is war justified?

Should the United States have dropped the atom bomb on Japan?

Guiding Questions

1. What are the causes of war?
2. What are the consequences of war?
3. How does war affect soldiers and their families?
4. Who suffers because of war?
5. Is it unpatriotic to refuse to fight in a war your nation is involved in?
6. What are the civic responsibilities of citizens in war?
7. What are the moral responsibilities of citizens in war?
8. Why does the United States get involved in wars?
9. What is the purpose of propaganda?
10. What are advantages and disadvantages of propaganda?
11. Should all wars be supported?
12. What can you do if you disagree with a war?
13. What is Terrorism?
14. Why do some people disagree with the United States' response to terrorism?

Reflection Questions

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of group work?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of individual work?
3. Which document affected you the most? Explain.
4. What did you struggle with when coming to a decision on whether the U.S. should have used the atom bomb?
5. What parts of the war unit worked best for you and why? What parts did not work and why?

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When is War Justified?

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Guiding Question(s)	What are the causes of war?	What are the causes of war?	What are the causes of war?	What are the causes of war?	What are the consequences of war?
Learning Opportunities	<p>Give pre-test; set up a research center by visiting the library and gathering material from textbooks, encyclopedias, library, and the Internet on WWI, WWII, Vietnam, Gulf War, and Sept. 11th events.</p> <p>In groups of five, students research the causes of a specific war. They take notes in their journal. Complete for homework. Presentation to class due the next day.</p>	<p>WWI and WWII groups present findings to class on causes of their respective war (Give groups 10-15 minutes to organize themselves for the presentation.) Note taking by class as students explain and teacher emphasizes pertinent information and writes it on board.</p> <p>HW-Journal entry. “Were WW I and WWII justified according to your pre-test definition?”</p>	<p>Discuss perspectives on HW assignment.</p> <p>Vietnam, Gulf War, and War on Terrorism groups present findings to class on the causes of each war. Note-taking (same as yesterday).</p> <p>Journal Entry- “Were the Vietnam War, Gulf War, and War on Terrorism justified according to your definition?” (Discussions)</p> <p>HW- Interview adult, ask question, “When is war justified?” Copy response.</p>	<p>Students share responses from interviews. Each group selects the response they like the best. They may combine sections of several responses to create their own “group definition” of when war is justified.. Then they use the response as a “litmus test” to decide if the five wars we researched qualified as justifiable. The class ends with each group reporting back to the class on their results.</p>	<p>Jigsaw by assigning a different war for each group to research. And chart casualties and costs of each war.</p> <p>Group research. Utilize research center and Internet. Groups are responsible for graphing results. Teacher explains different types of appropriate graphs. Students may use software or poster paper for their graphs. Compare graphs.</p> <p>Reflection Question #1 at end of class.</p>
Assessments and Reflections	Pre-test answer question “When is war justified?” Presentation Checklist (Handout #1)	Journal Entry Rubric (Handout #2) Presentation checklist (Handout #1)		Cooperative Learning Rubric (Handout # 3)	Graphing checklist (Handout # 4) Reflection Questions # 1 and #2. (refer to page 6)
Standards	SS 1.2 ELA 1.1	ELA 1.1, 3.2 SS 1.2, 1.4, 2.2	ELA 1.1, 3.2, SS1.2, 2.2	ELA 3.1, 4.1	
Thinking and Decision Making Process	<i>I wanted students to get a general overview of some causes of recent wars. By breaking the class into groups, each group could research a war and then report back to the class.</i>	<i>Having groups research five recent wars and report to the class was an efficient way of presenting a large amount of information without over use of lecture or reading. Reflection is important to get students thinking about the essential question.</i>	<i>I like to get my students involved interacting with their parents and other adults on issues they are studying in school. It gives them a chance to carry on intelligent conversation and see other perspectives.</i>	<i>By examining the question, “Were these wars justified?” from selected viewpoints, students are able to see a situation from multiple perspectives. This opens the door to higher level thinking skills.</i>	<i>It should be interesting for students to compare statistics from the wars we are studying and to draw conclusions based on such statistics.</i>

Handout # 24
Persuasive Writing Essay Rubric

Dimension	1	2	3	4
Opening Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinion is not stated. Opening paragraph needs to be revised to make it more compelling for the reader to continue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak statement on writer's position. Adequate opening paragraph that would benefit with additional description and emotionally charged words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinion is stated with conviction. Opening paragraph grabs the reader's attention. Effective use of description and emotionally charged words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinion is stated clearly and forcefully. Opening paragraph is so powerful that the reader is compelled to continue.
Supporting Sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons don't support opinion. Reasons are simply listed. Needs valid ideas to support opinion. Connection to documents not made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting sentences don't adequately explain position. Limited examples from documents are used to validate opinion. Documents need to be cited correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rational argument is made for supporting author's opinion. Student uses several examples from documents, citing them correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant reasons and logic used to support opinion. Clear and evident relationship between documents cited and author's opinion.
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper ends abruptly with no closing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak closing in need of synopsis that restates main idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative closing that captures main points of argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspirational closing that supports main points of argument, and is powerful enough to sway a reader's opinion.
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many spelling and grammatical errors. Difficult to read. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noticeable spelling and grammatical errors. Acceptable handwriting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor spelling or grammar mistakes. Typed or excellent handwriting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No spelling errors. No grammar errors. Typed, no errors.

Student Work Samples

Why does the United States get involved in wars?

There are really two main reasons that the United States has gotten involved in wars. First, if the United States was provoked or attacked. The second reason the United States has gotten involved in wars is to stop aggression.

In World War I, the United States felt a need to get involved in the war after the United States citizens were killed when Germany sank the Lusitania. In World War II, again the United States got involved after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. The United States declared war on Afghanistan after the terrorists blew up the World Trade Center buildings, killing 6,000 Americans. All three of these wars are examples of the United States getting involved after U.S. citizens were killed. What does not make sense about this is that the U.S. is upset that innocent people were killed and then they declare war and even more innocent people get killed.

The second main reason the U.S. gets involved in wars is to stop aggression. In Korea, the U.S. was trying to stop communist North Korea from taking over South Korea. The same reason applies to the war in Vietnam. The U.S. got involved to stop the spread of communism from North to South Vietnam. In the Gulf War, the U.S. wanted to stop Saddam Hussein's aggression over Kuwait.

The problem is in the cases of Vietnam, and Korea, the U.S. was unsuccessful in stopping the aggression. Even Saddam Hussein is still powerful in Iraq. The lesson is the U.S. cannot be successful in fighting aggression if the other countries involved don't want our help. The war in Afghanistan is not over, but if the people don't want us there, then in the end, we won't be successful there either.

All this war, innocent people are killed, and the U.S. does not always win the fight to stop aggression. There is a saying that "in war, nobody wins." This way a peaceful solution is always best.

Molly Papish's Journal Response,
"When does the United States get involved in war?"

Handout #38

DEBATE ORGANIZER

1. Brainstorm ideas that support your opinion on your chosen topic.
2. List three places where you can find additional information.
3. Use listed resources to research topic and take notes.
4. List several arguments against your opinion that you think the opposition may expose.
5. Identify strengths of your position and try to discredit the opponent's position.
6. Attempt to discredit the opposition's argument. Additional research will be needed.
7. Identify who will deliver opening, argument, attack, rebuttal, and closing. Make sure time is divided equally among group members.
8. Begin working, writing and preparing your part in the debate.
9. Periodically have a peer in your group review your paper.

RULES OF DEBATE

1. Opening statement can be no longer than one minute long.
2. Argument can be a maximum of two minutes.
3. One minute is given to each group to discredit opponent's position.
4. One minute is given to each group for rebuttal purposes.
5. One minute is given for closing.
6. No talking from panel members or audience when speaker has the floor.
7. No personal attacks; stick to the issues!
8. Audience can participate by asking questions after each has their closing.
9. Class vote by secret ballot determines the winner.

DEBATE CHECKLIST

- Speaks clearly.
- Faces audience when speaking.
- Speech is deliberate and not rushed.
- Voice is loud enough for all in room to hear.
- Information is accurate.
- Satisfactorily answers opponent's attack on position.
- Polite and does not interrupt speaker.
- Does not engage in distracting behavior.
- Respectful of other's right to disagree.
- Closing argument sums up main points of presentation.

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When is it Justified?

Week 6	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Guiding Question(s)	Debate topics	Debate topics.	What were the “highlights” of the symposium? Why?	When is War Justified?	When is War Justified?
Learning Opportunities	Practice debate with group that did not practice on Friday. Other groups may work on revisions in library or hall. Set up auditorium for symposium. Review checklist. See last minute details list.	Veteran’s Symposium and Debates See symposium under learning opportunities for symposium agenda.	View video of highlights of symposium. Write thank you letters to veterans who participated.	Revisit essential question by putting desks in circle and having a class discussion. Pass out persuasive writing essay rubric, review and discuss, then write rough drafts of post-test, “When is war justified?”	Peer edit rough drafts Type up final copies in computer lab. Reflection Question #5
Assessments and Reflections	Debate organizer (Handout #38). Symposium checklist (Handout #39)	Students make a 3x5 timeline card with half inch lettering depicting date and important unit event. Card is to be illustrated, colored, and placed on class timeline.		Persuasive Writing Essay Rubric (Handout #24)	Peer Editing Checklist (Handout # 25) Persuasive Writing essay Rubric (Handout #24) Reflection Question #5
Standards Addressed	ELA 3.1, 4.1; SS 1.2, 1.4, 2.1	SS 2.2	ELA 4.2	ELA 1.2, 3.1, 4.1; SS1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2	ELA 1.2, 3.1; SS 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
Thinking and Decision making process	<i>Last chance to conference with students. Review list of details with symposium team.</i>	<i>This is a day of excitement and anxiety as students compete in their debates while having the opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of war from veterans. There should be a sense of pride and achievement in the air. This is their show.</i>	<i>A well deserved relaxed class with lots of laughter viewing one another on video. Work in groups or pairs and peer edit cards and thank you notes to veterans who attended symposium.</i>	<i>The unit and learning experience come together. Students try to make sense of whether war is acceptable. The rubric ensures students will support their conclusions with evidence they have gathered. Compare the post –test with the pre-test and observe students’ growth. Share with the students for some good laughs.</i>	<i>Students will have their essays graded using the rubric. I highlight the criteria each student attains at the various dimensions. They have one week to revise their papers to attempt to scaffold themselves to a higher level.</i>