

The Evacuation of Saigon: One Million Cold War Refugees Mark a Nation's End

Teaching Unit Plan

RATIONALE

This unit provides an opportunity for students to explore a number of factors affecting human migration, in general, and the evacuation of thousands of refugees from Vietnam after the fall of the government of South Vietnam, in particular. The unit also provides students an opportunity to explore primary and secondary source materials while exploring Essential Questions concerning this historical event.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will differentiate between natural and catastrophic causes of human migrations.
- Students will analyze the international developments in the post-World War II world.
- Students will trace the geopolitical consequences (both foreign and domestic) of the Cold War and containment policy including The Truman Doctrine and the Vietnam War.
- Students will answer four Essential Questions concerning the human consequences resulting from the struggle for strategic advantage among nations in Vietnam between 1945 and 1975.

REQUIREMENTS

Materials: Computer terminal access to Web for viewing of digital resources. Two-way digital connection between classroom and the Midway Museum for interactive conference. Chalk/dry-erase board, chart paper, and markers, student handouts, viewing guides, student note-taking materials.

Time: Four, 50-minute class periods.

TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS

Large-group discussion, small-group discussion, brainstorming, vocabulary building, Web search skills, analyzing primary and secondary source materials, interpreting documents, maps, photographs, and digital resources, developing group consensus and a final analysis of how the events presented became factors in the movement of more than One Million refugees from Southeast Asia to North America.

VOCABULARY

Two glossary documents and a listing of geographic locations referred to in the presentations are included in this unit. They focus on the military aspects of the war in South Vietnam, leaders in the struggle, and governmental offices and officials involved in the struggle. Familiarity with the terms included in these glossaries is important for a full understanding of the historical events depicted. It is suggested that copies of these documents be made available to the students so they can refer to them as necessary during video presentations as well as their classroom discussions.

OVERVIEW OF LESSONS

“The Evacuation of Saigon: 900,000 Cold War Refugees Mark a Nation’s End,” is divided into four lessons. Each lesson is designed to assist students in answering essential questions concerning factors affecting human migration as a consequence of nations seeking strategic advantage on a worldwide basis. Each lesson is accompanied by a number of short video narrations of the struggle between warring forces in South Vietnam between 1945 and 1975. The final lesson is a two-way electronic broadcast between the Midway Museum and the classroom during which the classroom teacher, students, and the Midway instructor interact while discussing the final fall of the Saigon government on April 29 and 30, 1975. Throughout these presentations, students will be seeking the answers to the four Essential Questions formulated at the beginning of the unit.

Each lesson plan will include a listing of materials needed for the lesson, preparations necessary prior to teaching the lesson, step-by-step presentation methodology, and suggestions for the evaluation of student participation and understanding of unit objectives.

ANCILLARY, PRIMARY, AND SECONDARY SOURCE MATERIALS

Materials are provided in the Ancillary Materials section that will allow students to explore primary and secondary source materials that support and expand their understanding of this historical event. From narratives by Marine guards at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon to discussions between President Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, original source documents are available for viewing and analysis. Teachers interested in having their students gain an understanding of the role international politics plays in individual lives in an ever-shrinking world are encouraged to have their students access these rich documents.

California Standards

This course meets **California Common Core Contents Standards** in the following areas:

Grades 9 – 12 Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills

Chronological and Spatial Thinking

1. Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.

3. Students use a variety of maps and documents to interpret human movement, including major patterns of domestic and international migration, changing environmental preferences and settlement patterns, the frictions that develop between population groups, and the diffusion of ideas, technological innovations, and goods.

Research, Evidence, and Point of View

2. Students pose relevant questions about events they encounter in historical documents, eyewitness accounts, oral histories, letters, diaries, artifacts, photographs, maps, artworks, and architecture.

Historical Interpretation

1. Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.

3. Students interpret past events and issues within the context in which the event unfolded rather than solely in the terms of present-day norms and values.

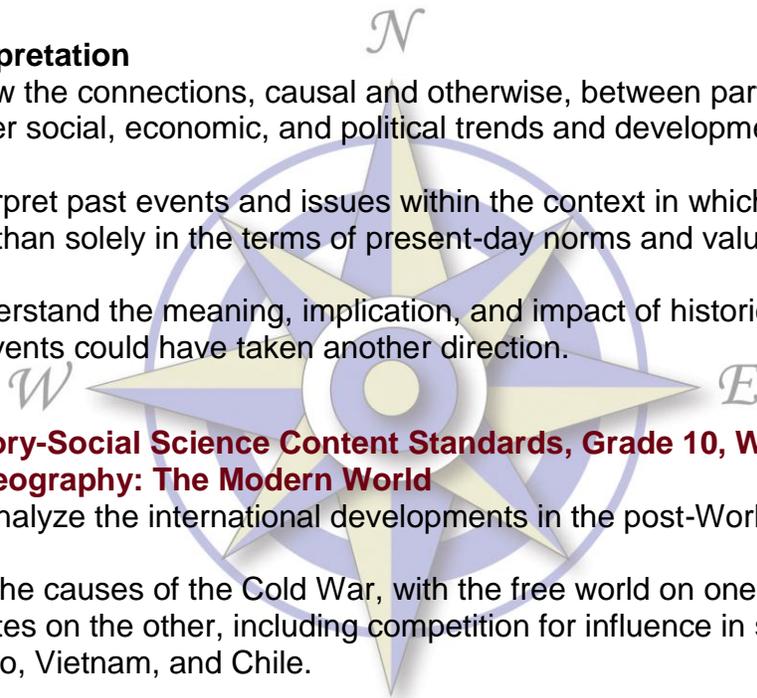
4. Students understand the meaning, implication, and impact of historical events and recognize the events could have taken another direction.

California History-Social Science Content Standards, Grade 10, World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World

10.9 Students analyze the international developments in the post-World War II world.

10.9.2 Analyze the causes of the Cold War, with the free world on one side and the Soviet client states on the other, including competition for influence in such places as Egypt, the Congo, Vietnam, and Chile.

10.9.3 Understand the importance of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, which established the pattern for America's postwar policy of supplying economic and military aid to prevent the spread of Communism and the resulting economic and political competition in arenas such as Southeast Asia (i.e., the Vietnam War).



California History-Social Science Content Standards, Grade 11, United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century

11.8 Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post-World War II America.

11.8.5 Describe the increased powers of the presidency in response to the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War.

11.9 Students analyze U.S. foreign policy since World War II.

11.9.2 Understand the role of military alliances, including NATO and SEATO, in deterring communist aggression and maintaining security during the Cold War.

11.9.3 Trace the origins and geopolitical consequences (foreign and domestic) of the Cold War and the containment policy including The Truman Doctrine and the Vietnam War.

11.9.4 List the effects of foreign policy on domestic policies and vice versa (Peace Movement and the Vietnam War).

The program also satisfies the following Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects:

Writing Standards, Grades 9 – 12

Research to Build and Present Knowledge, items 7 through 9

Speaking and Listening Standards, Grades 9 - 12

Comprehension and Collaboration, items 1 through 3

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, items 4 through 6

The National Council of the Social Studies - National Social Studies and History Standards

National Standards for Civics and Government, 9-12

NSS-C.9-12.4: Other Nations and World Affairs

What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and world affairs?

How do the domestic politics and constitutional principles of the United States affect its relationships with the world?

How has the United States influenced other nations, and how have other nations influenced American politics and society?

National Standards for Geography, K-12

NSS-G.K-12.4 Human Systems

How do the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the Earth's surface?

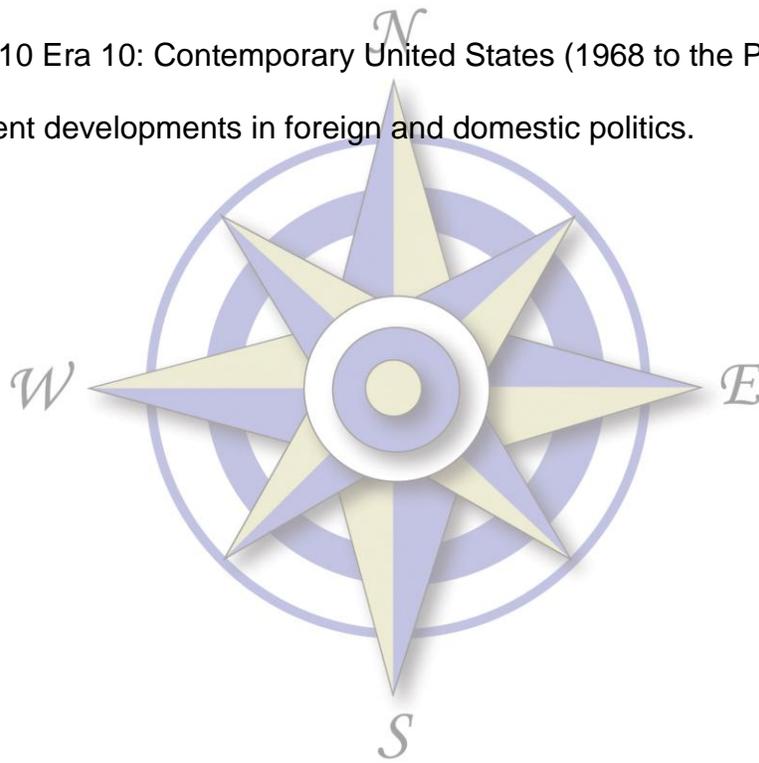
National Standards for U.S. History, 5-12

NSS-USH.5-12.9 Era 9: Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

How did the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influence domestic and international politics?

NSS-USH.9-12.10 Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the Present)

Understand recent developments in foreign and domestic politics.



National Standards for World History, 5-12

NSS-WH.5-12.9 Era 9: The Twentieth Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

How did post-World War II reconstruction occur, new international relationships take shape, and colonial empires break up?

Understand the search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world.

National Council for the Social Studies Historical Thinking Standards

Historical Thinking

Historical Analysis and Interpretation

Historical Research Capabilities

