

Nanette Hall

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GED 2002 Lesson Plan

Pearl Harbor and Related History

Area/Skill

U.S. AND WORLD HISTORY- and related GEOGRAPHY

Objective

This lesson will help students understand how and why Japan bombed the American Naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and how that was tied to Japan's desire to conquer Asia and eventually rule globally.

Introduction

Remind students that today is the 60th anniversary of the “Day that will live in infamy” in the words of FDR. Discuss what makes an act “infamous” and why we need to remember this event. Discuss the famous quote of George Santayana who said that those who do not remember history are condemned to repeat it.

Discuss the natural resources of Japan in its quest to conquer lands and the natural resource advantages of the U.S.

This lesson will take about 6-7 hours to complete.

Cognitive Skill Levels

Knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis

Activity

Students will:

- Discuss the basics of World War II;
- Read and discuss the related information which includes the United States' decision to freeze Japanese assets making it impossible for Japan to pay for the oil it had been purchasing from the U.S. which constituted 80% of all oil being used by Japan. Discuss and read about Japan's economic conditions in the 1920;s and 30's which had been exacerbated by the 1923 earthquake in Kanto which devastated Tokyo and Yokohama. Discuss the effect of radical right-wing terrorist groups attempting to seize control of the government leading to the assassination in 1932 of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi. Discuss how the economic and political instability of Japan led to a new phase of political expansion into Manchuria with the aim of disrupting the militant new Chinese nationalist movement led by Chiang Kai-shek. Discuss the “slave economy” implemented in Manchuria which the Japanese called a “co-prosperity sphere;” Study the continued growth of Japanese control resulting in Japanese occupation of northern China,

the lower valley of the Yangtze River beyond Hankou and enclaves along the south China coast by 1938. Discuss the fact that the war in Europe encouraged Japan to consider expanding military and political influence into Southeast Asia and how the U.S. gradually imposed embargoes on petroleum products, steel, and heavy machinery ultimately resulting in the resignation of Prime Minister Konoe who was replaced by Japan's then Minister of War, General Tojo Hideki who had Japan prepare for war. Watch the video from Daniel Yergin's The Prize, episode War and Oil.

- Students will mark maps appropriately indicating where Manchuria is located; draw the Yangtze River, Indonesia (Dutch East Indies) and Hawaii.
- Students will be divided into small groups and answer questions about why Japan wanted more territory in Asia and the Pacific and why the U.S. had a naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Discuss the fact that Japan made a propaganda video showing their bombers destroying the petroleum farm on Oahu which was never destroyed in actuality and what that change in events could have done to the outcome of the war. Students will also write and answer questions about why the U.S. was unprepared for such an attack.

Closure/Conclusion

Review the written responses from the students in class and ask the class to describe Pearl Harbor the morning of the attack. Discuss potential retaliation strategies.

Follow-up activity

Watch the video *Enola Gay* which describes the making of the two atomic bombs and their actual delivery and subsequent events; view the video *MacArthur* which describes in some detail, the surrender of Japan at the end of the war and the role MacArthur played in "democratizing" Japan. Discuss with students.