

Part 3: Consequences of the Korean War

Wyoming State Social Studies Standards

- SS12.1.6 Compare and contrast various world political systems (e.g., ideologies, structure, and institutions) with that of the United States.
- SS12.2.1 Analyze and evaluate the ways various groups (e.g., social, political, and cultural) meet human needs and concerns (e.g., individual needs and common good) and contribute to identity (e.g., group, national, and global), situations, and events.
- SS12.4.1 Describe patterns of change (cause and effect) and evaluate how past events impacted future events and the modern world.

Objective

- Students will analyze the consequences of the Korean War, focusing on the different outcomes for North and South Korea, the impact on U.S. foreign policy, and the lessons learned for future conflicts, particularly the Vietnam War.

Materials

- Projector or Smartboard
- Internet access for research and videos
- Worksheets and handouts
- Map of Korea and Vietnam (pre- and post-war)

Lesson Activities

Interactive Comparison Activity – Venn Diagram (20 minutes)

- **Introductory Video:** Introduce the modern contrast of living in North and South Korea. This is an interesting video that showcases the stark realities of the two: [I went to North Korea AND South Korea. My experience was night and day.](#)
- **Group Work:** Divide students into two groups. Using a Venn diagram, either digitally (on a Google/PowerPoint Slide, Canva Poster, etc.; see sources) or physically on a large whiteboard or paper, assign one group to research North Korea and the other South Korea. On the Venn diagram, task each group with listing different aspects of life (politics, economics, culture, etc.) in their assigned country, such as freedom, education, health, and overall quality of life, on the country's respective side.

- **Presentation:** Once each group has produced at least five points on their side of the diagram, ask them to come together as a whole to compare their sides and find similarities to write in the middle, overlapping section.
- **Discussion:** Take five minutes at the end of the activity to relate the current conditions of North and South Korea on the diagram to the Korean War and its implications.

Impact on U.S. Foreign Policy – Socratic Discussion (30 minutes)

- **Discussion:** Using the synopsis and other sources that summarize the Korean War and the beginning of the Vietnam War, facilitate a class Socratic discussion on U.S. Foreign policy throughout the last half of the 20th century to today. Ideally, students will sit in a circle (at desks or on the floor) to encourage interaction and engagement. Encourage each student (depending on class size) to speak at least twice – once to share an original thought and once in response to another’s thought.
 - Example of a guiding prompt/initial question: Identify, analyze, and evaluate the continuity and change over time of U.S. Foreign Policy from the Korean War, through the Vietnam War, and to the present day.
 - Continue to guide the discussion using additional [Socratic questions](#). These questions may be provided to students or shared by the teacher in the conversation.

Compilation of Sources

- URL for North and South Korea Video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcvguXUkb3Y>
- Digital Venn Diagram Template (ideal for projection)
 - <https://www.classtools.net/Venn/>
 - Reduce the Venn diagram to two circles, with North Korea in one and South Korea in the other.
 - In the description box on the left side, include a brief explanation of the task.
 - Ex: Effects of the Korean War - On either side, describe the political, cultural, and economic characteristics of the country at the top. Use your knowledge of the Korean War to analyze its effects on the modern conditions of each country. In the middle, highlight the similarities between North and South Korea.

- List of Questions to Guide Socratic Discussions (linked in activity description as well).
 - <https://cetl.uconn.edu/resources/teaching-your-course/leading-effective-discussions/socratic-questions/>
- Additional Sources
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2lcmLkuhG0> (Crash Course video on the Cold War in Asia)
 - <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/article/3483261/five-korean-war-firsts-had-lasting-impacts/> (Article on impacts of the Korean War on international and domestic political and military policy)
 - <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/cold-conflict> (Brief article on the Cold War and how it sets the stage for other conflicts and proxy wars)

Planning a Visit to the NMMV

Although the lessons in this series can be implemented in the classroom without time-consuming or difficult preparation, they are also designed to be taught along with a visit to the National Museum of Military Vehicles, specifically the Puller Gallery.

For this lesson (Consequences of the Korean War), pay special attention to these displays and/or highlight the significance of these concepts in the museum:

1. In the last displays of the Korean War exhibit, titled “Stalemate and Armistice,” a wall of statistics including men killed in action, wounded in action, monetary price of the war, causality counts for non-US troops, U.S. missing in action, etc., is boldly presented.
 - a. It is critical to place a particular emphasis here on the number of lives lost and the incredible number of Americans missing in action (who are still unrecovered).
 - b. Here, the point may be reiterated that the war is in a state of ceasefire and is not officially over, with no explicit winner or loser.
2. To further the discussion of the changing U.S. foreign policy during and after the Korean War, the entrance into the Vietnam War exhibit includes panels that depict the escalation of conflict in Southeast Asia. The references to U.S. intervention in the First Indochina War (between the French and the Vietnamese) and the Gulf of Tonkin Incident and Resolution (which authorize combat action without a declaration of war) are particularly notable here.