

Lesson Title: The End of Optimism? The Great Depression in Europe

Grade Level: 10th – 12th grade, AP, IB

History/Social Science Discipline: World History, Economics, US History, Government

NCSS Thematic Strands:

II. Time, Continuity and Change

VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

VII. Production, Distribution and Consumption

NCSS Performance expectations:

II. B. Apply key concepts such as time, chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity to explain, analyze, and show connections among patterns of historical change and continuity.

II. D. Identify and use various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, photos, and others.

VI. F. Analyze and evaluate conditions, actions, and motivations that contribute to conflict and cooperation within nations.

VII. H. Apply economic concepts (depression, unemployment) when evaluating historical development.

NETS-S National Educational Technology Standard for Students:

3. Technology productivity tools

- Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.
- Students use productivity tools to collaborate in constructing technology-enhanced models, prepare publications, and produce other creative works.

5. Technology research tools

- Students use technology to evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources.
- Students use technology tools to process data and report results.

NETS Performance Expectations (Grades 9-12):

5. Use technology tools and resources for managing and communicating personal/professional information (3)

7. Routinely and efficiently use online information resources to meet needs for collaboration, research, publications, communications, and productivity (5)

Introduction:

This lesson is designed to blend both content knowledge and historical skills development as students examine the essential question: **To what extent did the economic crisis cause people in Europe to question the effectiveness and sustainability of democratic institutions, and how did these concerns, doubts, and fears translate into political action?** Using an online Digital History Reader module: *The End of Optimism? The Great Depression in Europe*, students examine the context of the Great Depression in Europe and analyze a range of selected primary and secondary sources, including cartoons, speeches, photographs, and charts in order to answer the historical question at hand. Upon completion of a mini lecture, providing the context to the Great Depression in Europe, students utilize group work, a jigsaw sharing/teaching process, and original PowerPoint presentations to educate their peers on:

- (1) Unemployment: Causes, Comparisons, & Interpretations
- (2) Demonstrations, Reactions, and Protests
- (3) Crisis and Conflicts: Elections & Extremism.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Examine the causes and impacts of the Great Depression in Europe.
- Analyze primary documents, including newspaper reports, photographs, cartoons, tables/charts, and diplomatic reports using the SCIM-C Model.
- Compare and contrast significant ideas, events, and political reactions to the impact of the Depression in Europe, with special focus on Britain, France, and Germany.
- Create a PowerPoint outline and jeopardy game questions, and a written narrative that details the extent to which the Great Depression impacted the social and political structures of European countries.

Time: Two 90-minute blocks

Instructional Steps:

Anticipatory Set:

At the beginning of class students are asked to: 1) define economic depression, and 2) brainstorm a concept map that details the effects of economic depression on society. During debriefing the teacher may use Inspiration to capture student responses before transitioning into an explanation of today's lesson by introducing the question for inquiry:

To what extent did the economic crisis cause people in Europe to question the effectiveness and sustainability of democratic institutions, and how did these concerns, doubts, and fears translate into political action?

1. Using the PowerPoint presentation provided, the teacher conducts a mini lecture to introduce students to the topic, historical context, and historical question. The PowerPoint presentation is designed to transition from historical content/context into the classroom research tasks.

(Teacher notes for the mini lecture, the PowerPoint Slide show, and student skeleton notes to support the mini lecture are available at

http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/lessonplan.html.)

2. Using the PowerPoint presentation to focus attention on the directions, students will be divided into groups of three that will draw or be assigned a topic related to the historical question in which they are responsible for becoming experts. The areas of expertise are: (1) Unemployment –Causes, Comparisons, and Interpretations; (2) Demonstrations, Reactions and Protests; and (3) Crisis and Conflict – Elections and Extremism. Within each group the following roles must be filled: group leader (reminds all members to fulfill roles and facilitates discussion), navigator/computer driver (follows site links and describes source titles, etc.), and note taker (takes notes to prepare for presentations).

3. Working with the digital history module *The End of Optimism? The Great Depression in Europe* (http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/index.html), groups will collect and analyze a range of historical sources related to their expert topics as assigned in step 2, in order to reconstruct the past from the perspective of their expertise. The historical context/background information included in the module will lend additional support for students as they analyze sources in order to answer the historical question.

4. After allowing students sufficient time to analyze sources and consider their answers to the historical question, ask students to take responsibility for group products. Two members will assume ownership for the task to develop the PowerPoint presentation, and one member should assume the task of developing five questions for the jeopardy review game. While products are developed, discussion should continue to flow freely among all expert group members so that everyone is capable of presenting both products. Because the primary sources are already well organized and in electronic form, they can easily be pasted into presentations. Doing so will allow students to make powerful visual connections that illustrate their key points and interpretations of the sources. (Please note: model student slides are included in the PowerPoint Presentation.)

5. Once products are complete, student groups are reconfigured into teaching groups. Each teaching group includes one member from each of the three expert groups, for a total of three members. Students will utilize the Jigsaw method to teach their assigned area of expertise to their teaching groups. Upon completion of teaching each of the key areas, the teaching groups will merge their PowerPoint slides in order to reconfigure and create a comprehensive presentation/outline for the historical question. Teaching groups

will then share and discuss their jeopardy questions, designed in expert groups. These may be submitted to the teacher to create a PowerPoint jeopardy game to be played with the whole class. (Template available at http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/lessonplan.html)

6. Students will use their completed PowerPoint slide shows to individually produce a written narrative to answer the historical question that is supported by the sources. In their analysis, students should be encouraged to consider how these sources illustrate the experience of living through the Depression in Europe, and in particular the causal relationship between economic conditions, political attitudes, and the response of governments. (Rubric available at http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/lessonplan.html)

7. Teaching groups are chosen to present their combined PowerPoint presentations, which is followed by playing the teacher led Jeopardy game.

8. To bring closure to the lesson the teacher hands out/ projects the conclusion to the module (http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/conclusion.html) and asks students “What was the legacy of the changes wrought by the Great Depression in Europe?”

Assessment: It is important to monitor group discussions and PowerPoint presentations for understanding. Written narratives should be assessed according to the rubric. (Rubric available at http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/lessonplan.html)

Student Enrichment: Because this assignment integrates primary source analysis, the consideration of a historical question, presentation design, jigsaw teaching, and a written narrative, it should challenge many students. Some students may require some additional supports to succeed. Some suggestions include: providing additional focus questions specific to each area of expertise that elicit essential understandings, providing document analysis worksheets to guide groups through their sources, and/or pre-selecting specific documents that are essential to the content and most appropriate for the audience.

Those students who are comfortable working with primary evidence should be given the following scaffold through which to analyze all sources. (SCIM-C Historical Evidence Chart available at http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/lessonplan.html). It is essential that students recognize both the context and the perspectives embedded in each kind of primary source. They must also recognize how possible political biases of the author, intended audience, and format of the presentation reflect the context in which the source was produced while also shaping the way these events are understood historically.

For further enrichment, students may use Inspiration concept mapping software to illustrate key ideas and concepts within their final PowerPoint presentations- e.g. reactions to Depression, motivations for strikes and demonstrations and protest factors that foster extremist movements.

Finally, depending on the time and level of engagement with the module, a series of assignments are available

(http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/assignments.html). Optional assignments include, writing prompts to examine economic causality in the Depression, an interactive quiz, and questions for further discussion and written response.

Teaching Tips: We have provided a great deal of material to support the historical investigation as designed. However, we believe teaching requires a creative mind, and as a result there are many opportunities to expand or condense this lesson, as necessary, in order for the teachers to make it their own. ~~Whatever the structure and direction of the lesson, we have found it is important and necessary to always pose the historical question at the opening of the activity and refer to it frequently. Use the accompanying PowerPoint presentation to frame the context and direction of the lesson. Model a historical source analysis and share samples of student slides before students engage with the material (found in the PowerPoint). Be willing to be flexible with student presentations in order to avoid repetition. Prepare and discuss rubrics prior to the written narrative assignment. We generally like to use the PowerPoint Jeopardy game on the second day before students complete their writing narratives.~~

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Technology Resources:

Internet: Link to "End of Optimism" module:

http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/eu/mod04_depression/index.html

The Digital History Reader is made up of eighteen modules, each of which explores a key event in United States or European history (see "About DHR" webpage for a complete list of modules). By presenting compelling historical questions, the *DHR* forces students to deal with conflicting accounts and interpretations that they must weigh and use to develop reasonable conclusions. Each module includes the following sections: an **Introduction**, which defines the historical questions and learning objectives; a **Context** section that provides the narrative for the historical material; an **Evidence** section with textual, visual, audio, and video primary source materials; an **Assignment** section with analytical questions that allow students to evaluate their comprehension; a **Conclusion** that integrates the evidence with the historical questions; and a **Resource** section that directs students to additional published and online materials on this historical topic. By presenting a more sophisticated range of responses to historical questions, students learn to consider the power that individuals have to make choices and effect change, thus deepening their understanding of the continuing significance of the past.

Additional software:

Shockwave Flash is needed for the animated chart. (Downloadable from the following site: <http://www.macromedia.com/shockwave/download/download.cgi>)

Inspiration (concept mapping software) is helpful for organizing key details relating to the causes and significance of the depression in Europe, the social impact of depression (demonstrations and strikes), and the rise of extremist forces in Europe. A trial version can be found at <http://www.inspiration.com/home.cfm>

Microsoft PowerPoint will be used for student presentations and jeopardy game.

Microsoft Word is optional for written narratives.

Resources: It is important to stress that all online materials are downloadable and printable for use in classes. Printed versions will need the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

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