

NORTH KOREA AND THE UNITED STATES

GRADES: 9-12

AUTHOR: Emalie Karp

SUBJECT: Current Events, Government

TIME REQUIRED: Two to three class periods (additional class time if video is used)

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Internet access for research
- Handout 1, to be completed after the panel presentation

BACKGROUND:

This lesson should be done at the end of a unit on North and South Korea. Students will have already learned the basic information on the Korean War and the creation of the DMZ. This lesson is about the current U.S. policy toward North Korea and whether or not students believe it is the best policy for the U.S. to take. For this lesson, students will research North Korea's relationship with the U.S. as well as their nuclear weapons program and determine what policy the US should take in dealing with North Korea. One class period will be used for research, and one class period will be used for arguing their side to the policy-making panel. The teacher may also choose to use the *Frontline* video on the PBS Web site to give the students even more information on U.S. policy. This video is especially helpful in comparing President Bush's policy with that of the Clinton administration. Video can be viewed at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kim/>.

PROCEDURE:

Part 1:

1. By now, students should know the history of the division of Korea and we be beginning to examine the current U.S. policy toward North Korea. Begin the class by showing the cartoons on an overhead. Ask students what they know about Kim Jong Il and what they have heard about North Korea. From the cartoons, what can students infer about Kim Jong Il and the US policy toward North Korea?
2. Ask students whether or not they believe that countries can and should negotiate with one another when it comes to foreign policy? Is there ever a situation in which a country should not negotiate with another country? When? Should force be used if a compromise can not be reached? When and why?
3. Screen the *Frontline* episode titled "Kim's Nuclear Gamble" on the PBS site.

Part 2:

1. Divide the students up into three groups representing three different U.S. policy options for the U.S. to take:
 - a. Attack North Korea
 - b. Negotiate with North Korea
 - c. Leave the Korean Peninsula

2. Have students use the class period to begin their research to back up their policy option. Students should type up a page of bullet points to be handed in after the policy panel debate. Some useful websites/articles can be found on:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kim/>
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2340405.stm>

Q&A on North Korea's nuclear program

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/asia/northkorea/>

Students should research at home as well to come up with thorough and thoughtful arguments for their policy.

Part 3:

After students have researched, they should get together in their groups and formulate arguments for their policy. Each person in the group should be prepared to make at least one argument. Students should write down their own arguments and ask group members for advice in how to best get their points across.

Part 4:

Once students have sufficient time to prepare their arguments, the teacher should choose six students (two from each group) to serve on the "policy making panel". This group will ask the other three groups questions on their policy. Group A will go first, making sure all students participate. The teacher should keep track of who is participating and give points for participation. The panel will ask about their stance. The teacher may also ask questions. The teacher should also be sure all students understand some of the history of North Korea and their weapons program (this may be helpful to do before the debates start). Students should also take notes during the discussion as they will need this information to fill out the policy handout sheet.

After all the groups have gone and the panel has asked all their questions, they should take 10 to 15 minutes to discuss what policy option they will take. They will report back to the class and explain why they chose the option they did. Students should also take this time to ask each other questions, with the teacher moderating.

EVALUATION:

Students should fill out Handout 1 and hand it in the following day. Students will be graded on three components:

1. Policy handout
2. Participation
3. Research bullet points

REFERENCES:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/2604437.stm>

<http://www.cdi.org/nuclear/nk-fact-sheet.cfm>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A50241-2005Mar19.html>

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2003/nkorea/>

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/asia/northkorea/>

The Two Koreas by Don Oberdorfer

Inside North Korea (The History Channel)

*Excellent video that provides an overview of North Korea's history and the problems facing the country today. Go to www.historychannel.com for more information

Cartoons:



© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



HANDOUT 1: POLICY DECISION

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions:

Now that you have heard all three arguments for the different policies, fill out the sheet below with your own analysis of what you think the U.S. should do regarding North Korea. Be sure to use facts from the discussion and your own Internet research. If you are not sure of something, ask someone from the group that presented the policy.

Options:

1. Attack North Korea
2. Negotiate with North Korea
3. Leave the Korean peninsula

Policy you most agree with:

Why you agree with it:

How is this policy most beneficial to the U.S.?

What could be the consequences for the U.S. if we take this policy?

What could be the consequences for North Korea if we take this policy?

How will this policy affect the U.S and North Korea's relationships with other countries?

Explain why you did not choose either of the other two policies: