



Mapping a Crisis: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb

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Grade Level High School
Duration 2 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

Element 4: Human Systems

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

Element 6: The Uses of Geography

17. How to Apply Geography to Interpret the Past

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

11-12.RI.9 Analyze foundational U.S. and world documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

11-12.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world.

HS.G1.1 Use geographic data to explain and analyze relationships between locations of place and regions. Key tools and representations such as maps, remotely sensed and other images, tables, and graphs

HS.G1.2 Use geospatial tools and related technologies to construct relevant geographic data to explain spatial patterns and relationships. Key tools and representations such as Google Earth, story mapping, wayfinding apps, and other geospatial technologies

Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.

HS.G4.2 Analyze patterns of global power and influence in respect to trade, demographics, politics, and resource availability and use.

HISTORY

Cycles of conflict and cooperation have shaped relations among people, places, and environments.

HS.H2.1 Explain multiple causes of conflict.

HS.H2.2 Analyze approaches to conflict management and resolution.

HS.H2.3 Evaluate the short- and long- term impacts of conflicts and their resolutions.

Overview

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a time when the world came very close to a nuclear war. Students should understand how geospatial technologies made America aware of Russian missiles during this era, and even today geospatial technologies provide the U.S. government with much information.

Purpose

In this lesson, students will gain a better understanding of the importance of geospatial technologies by studying the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Students will also use map reading skills to plot the distance Russian missiles could travel and impact American cities.

Materials

- Rulers.
- North America Map Activity I and II and Answer Keys
- Protractors (optional)
- Northern Hemisphere Map with polar perspective and Locations plotted
- North America Map and Locations plotted
- Intelligence Report Scoring Guide

- Pictures of Missile Sites
- Final Assessment
- Background Information: Soviet Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis Learning from the Past (See Sources)
- Kennedy Video (18.49 min)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u07rkwHTPLk>
- Computer/Projector
- Possible Outcomes
- Message from Khrushchev
- End Game

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Describe the Cuban Missile Crisis.
2. Measure distances on a map.
3. Analyze aerial photographs.

Procedures

Prerequisite Skills: Students should be studying the Cold War and have knowledge of the reasons why this time period was known as the Cold War. However, they have not learned about the Cuban Missile Crisis yet.

SESSION ONE

1. Begin the class using a map of the world and asking the students, “If you were the Soviet Union, where would you place a bases in your country to shoot missiles at the U.S?” “What cities in the U.S. would you attack?” Guide students in to thinking about the northern polar areas in order to launch missiles over the Arctic Circle and what are the largest cities in the U.S, or the ones with the most military presence. If they have trouble visualizing attacks coming from over the Arctic, use a globe.
2. Distribute the Northern Hemisphere Map Activity. Have the students calculate what cities the Soviet R-7 could strike. Discuss which cities could be reached by the missiles and why they would be selected for attack.
3. Divide the students into 5 groups. Tell them that there is information that the Soviets are placing bases in Cuba.
4. Distribute one site picture to each group and have them examine it and locate any missiles.
5. After a group locates a missile, tell them that the missiles sites are being built in Cuba. Distribute the North America Map Activity to each group or student and have them calculate which cities the Soviet

missiles could strike with the R-12 and R-14 missiles.

6. For homework have the students complete the Intelligence Report Activity.

SESSION TWO

1. At the beginning of the class, divide students into groups based on the choice they made for the second paragraph on the Intelligence Report Activity and as a group, discuss why they selected that option.
2. Play the video of Kennedy addressing the nation. (18.49 min)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u07rkwHTPLk>
3. Have to students divide themselves into the choice they made for the third paragraph on the Intelligence Report Activity and discuss why they choose that option
4. Read the possible outcome for each choice. Inform the class that the last choice is option that actually happened
5. Have the students return to their seats and read the “Message from Khrushchev”. Have the class debate on whether to accept or deny the request.
6. After the debate, discuss the “End Game” with the students
7. Have the students take the final assessment

Assessment

ELA and Social Sciences

North America Map Activity I and II and the Final Assessment can be graded for accuracy. Mastery will be a score of 80% or higher.

The Intelligence Report writing assignment will be graded with the Scoring Guide. Mastery will be considered a score of 8 points or higher.

Sources

Hansen, James; Soviet Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis Learning from the Past
<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol46no1/article06.html#fn1>

The Kennedy video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u07rkwHTPLk>