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Lesson Plan: **Civilian Internment in Crystal City, Texas** (High School Social Studies)

During World War II thousands of American citizens of Japanese, German, and Italian descent were forcibly relocated into internment camps. Using the government film *Alien Enemy Detention Facility, Crystal City, Texas*, this lesson plan explores the internment of American citizens and the use of propaganda during World War II. It correlates with TEKS curriculum objectives in US History Since Reconstruction, World History Studies, World Geography Studies, United States Government, Psychology, and Sociology.

Objective:

Through the use of primary sources, students will analyze the use of propaganda and bias to shape the way the American public viewed the interment of German and Japanese citizens in the Crystal City Detention Facility. Students will also evaluate the removed rights of these citizens and compare the violations they experienced to those experienced by Jews during the Holocaust and Latin Americans at the facility during the 1960s.

Film:

- *Alien Enemy Detention Facility, Crystal City, Texas*:
http://www.texasarchive.org/library/index.php/Alien_Enemy_Detention_Facility%2C_Crystal_City%2C_Texas

Resources:

- http://traces.org/buseum_2_tour/buseum_2.html: a Web site devoted to German-American Internees.
- http://www.teacheroz.com/Japanese_Internment.htm: a list of links pertaining to Japanese-American and German-American internment during World War II. Provides over 30 resources.
- <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/99/fear/intro.html>: a lesson plan with activities introducing students to Japanese-American internment



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- <http://www.classroomtools.com/prop.htm>: suggestions for teaching propaganda in the classroom

Process:

Prior Knowledge

1. The following activity assumes that students are aware of the causes of WWII, and the alignment of countries between the Allied and Axis powers.
2. Students should also be aware of the conflict between preserving the rights of the individual versus maintaining the safety of the public good.
3. Students should have a working knowledge of human rights and the privileges of citizenship.
4. Students should also have some background knowledge of bias and propaganda.

Hook A - Examining Propaganda

1. Show students early examples of propaganda posters from World War I:
<http://www.nulime.com/img/id304349/n/Enlist-Sinking-Lusitania-Victim-20x30-poster.jpg>, <http://www.classroomtools.com/army1917.jpg>,
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picturegalleries/uknews/3400728/The-power-of-propaganda-wartime-posters.html?image=1>
2. Ask several students to volunteer their interpretations of the meanings of each poster or to explain what the government is trying to accomplish with each.
3. Show students one (or both) of these Nazi-era anti-Semitic propaganda posters:
http://www.lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de/win_pict.php?site=mepi_import_B018P04&lp=de&cssSize=aBigger
-or-
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/churchill/interactive/html/items/wc0213.jpg>
4. Ask a student volunteer to explain why the poster is offensive and degrading for Jews, or explain the meaning of the cartoon if the student's knowledge of Jewish stereotypes is limited.
5. Ask students why the Nazis wanted to portray Jews in this way. What was the Nazis' motivation behind the propaganda? (Students may write their responses or share via discussion).
6. Have students share their answers and explain that the Nazi regime used images like this to elicit a negative reaction towards Jews.



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- a. If students are still having trouble understanding this concept, explain that propaganda is biased information an individual or group presents to influence its audience.
7. Explain that today they will be watching a film made by the United States government during WWII that also uses propaganda to influence the public's opinion. In this case, the government is trying to convince the public that a discriminatory public policy is a fair treatment of US citizens.

Hook B - What is an American?

1. Ask students: "What makes someone an American?" Have them write down words or phrases that define an American on their paper. Remind them there are no right or wrong answers. They don't have to use complete sentences.
2. As students formulate their responses, have them write their responses on the board.
3. Take a minute of silence, and let students examine the board and absorb their classmates' opinions.
4. If people are comfortable sharing their responses, ask why students responded the way they did.
5. Explain that students responded differently because of personal experiences, which shape their bias about what it means to be American. A student who is a fourth or fifth generation immigrant may have a much different response than a first or second generation immigrant.
6. Remind students that there are many different ways a person can be considered "American," but there have been times in our country when those definitions have been restrained by the government under the guise of helping the "greater good."
7. Today they will examine the internment of American citizens in a time of war, and identify how the government used its bias in trying to help the "greater good" by intruding on the rights of certain individuals.
8. Explain that though the government believed they were doing what was "right" in their eyes (which presents a bias), they tried to impose their bias on others using the following film as a source of propaganda.

Lesson

1. Have students look up and define the following words (or define them as a class):



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- a. Repatriation
 - b. Internment
 - c. Detainee
 - d. Rationed
 - e. Morale
 - f. Monotony
2. Students will watch the film *Alien Enemy Detention Facility, Crystal City, Texas* in 5 parts according to the time divisions provided below.
- Part 1: start-2:26
Part 2: 2:26-6:50
Part 3: 6:51-10:10
Part 4: 10:10-15:33
Part 5: 17:46-20:40
3. There is a two minute break between Parts 4 and 5 due to semi-violent content. Please resume the film at 17:46 to complete Section 5.
4. Have students use a T-chart with one side labeled “Propaganda” and one side labeled “Reality.” After each segment, stop the video and have students list the aspects of the segment that made life in Crystal City seem positive, but how in reality the camp deprived American citizens of their human and civil rights.
5. On the back of the T-Chart, have students briefly list the rights of the interned citizens that were violated.
6. Once students have been given time to think about responses, discuss possible answers as a class. If students could not think of an answer on their own, have them write down one of the responses shared in class, or add new responses to their own.
7. Divide the students into groups of four. Have each group answer one of the following questions. When groups have answered the question, designate a presenter from each group to share their group’s response.
- a. Was the United State government successful in making Crystal City look like a positive experience? Why or why not?
 - b. Why did the United States government portray life in Crystal City in this way?
 - c. In the eyes of the creators of this film, how do they define “American” and how do they define “Alien.” Are these definitions fair? Why or why not?
 - d. Who do you think was the intended audience of this film, and why?
 - e. Do you think the citizens in the internment camp were enemies of the United States?
 - f. Are the government’s actions justified? (What were their reasons for interning the prisoners?) Why or why not?



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- g. How are the United States government's actions similar to those of Nazi Germany's actions?
8. Closing the Discussion: Ask students if they think the United States government was justified in internment of citizens in order to protect the nation against its enemies. Did their actions against a small group of citizens benefit the "greater good" of the nation? Does their use of propaganda indicate that they knew they were doing something wrong?

Independent Learning:

Propaganda is still widely used today to influence public opinion. Sometimes propaganda is used to incite hate (as with the Nazi posters), and sometimes it is used to make a policy or organization seem more positive than it is (as with the Crystal City film). Pick a social issue from the list below, and find a piece of propaganda related to the conflict. You may find an image, video clip, or sound clip. Once you have found an example of propaganda, answer the following questions in a written paragraph:

1. What group created the propaganda?
2. What is the motivation of the creator? (Supply background information about the conflict.)
3. Who/What is the target of the propaganda?
4. Who is the intended audience for the poster, video, or sound clip?
5. What stereotypes are used to influence the audience?

Possible Social Conflicts

Israel and Palestine

September 11, 2001

Slavery in the United States

Jim Crow Laws

United States foreign policy with Israel

The "red scare" in the United States



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Immigration of Central and South Americans to the United States

Voting Rights

The War on Terror

The United States Civil Rights Movement

Women's Suffrage Movement

Relocation of Indigenous American Peoples

The Vietnam War

Extended Learning:

Have students read the following articles:

“Walkout in Crystal City.” <http://labloga.blogspot.com/2009/01/walkout-in-crystal-city.html> - portrayal of Crystal City as an area with a reputation for social injustice (with both the internment camp and the Latino civil rights movement)

“Rudolf Hoess, Commandant of Auschwitz: Testimony at Nuremburg, 1946.” - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1946hoess.html>

“Never Shall I Forget”, Elie Wiesel - <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/poetry/never-shall-i-forget-elie-wiesel>

Students will then compare the three different experiences of the following: German and Japanese interned citizens during WWII, Jews interned in NAZI concentration camps, and Latino students at Crystal City in the 1960s-70s.

1. Questions: How are their experiences similar or different?
 - a. What rights were denied to all three groups?
 - b. Who was the governing body that denied those rights?
 - c. Why were the students able to take a stand, but the prisoners were not?
 - d. How did the circumstances (time period, social issues, etc.) affect each group differently?



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- e. How does each situation portray the role of the government? (state, federal, and NAZI)
- f. How is Crystal City a symbol of social inequality?
- g. How is Crystal City a symbol of social progress?

2. Activity:

- a. With students divided into groups of 4-5, use butcher paper and markers to trace the outline of one group member's body.
- b. Draw a line vertically down the center of the outline.
- c. Label one side "Alien Internment" and the other side "Latino Civil Rights;" label the outside space around the body "Holocaust"
- d. Have group members draw characteristics and backgrounds or write words that show similarities/differences between life in the Holocaust concentration camps, Crystal City during WWII, and Crystal City during the 1960s-1970s.
- e. Students should show the physical, environmental, and political differences (and similarities) between the three groups.

TEKS:

US History Studies Since Reconstruction

1.C: Explain the significance of the following dates: 1941-1945

2.C: Analyze social issues such as the treatment of minorities, and problems of immigrants.

6. B: Analyze major issues and events of WWII, such as the internment of Japanese-Americans and the Holocaust.

15.B: Explain the impact of significant international events such as WWII on changes in the role of the federal government.

24.E: Evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author.

24.F: Identify bias in written, oral and visual material.

World History Studies

2.A: Identify elements in a contemporary situation that parallel a historical situation.



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17.A: Evaluate political choices and decisions that individuals, groups, and nations have made in the past, taking into account historical context, and apply this knowledge to the analysis of choices and decisions face by contemporary societies.

18.C: Identify examples of political, economic, and social oppression and violations of human rights throughout history.

25.F: Evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author.

25.G: Identify bias in written, oral and visual material.

World Geography Studies

15.A: Identify and give examples of different points of view that influence the development of public policies, and decision-making processes on local, state, and national levels.

15.B: Explain how citizenship practices, public policies, and decision making may be influenced by cultural beliefs.

United States Government

5.B: Analyze and evaluate the consequences of a government policy that affects the human characteristics of a place or region.

14.A: Understand the roles of limited government and the rule of law to the protection of individual rights.

14.E: Explain the importance of due process rights to the protection of individual rights and to the limits on the powers of government.

15.C: Evaluate whether and/or when the rights of individuals are inviolable even against claims for the public good.

18.C: Describe an example of a government policy that has affected a particular racial, ethnic, or religious group.

Psychology

9.C: Explain types of relationships of individuals with other individuals and with groups.



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Sociology

7.A: Identify the relationship between cultural values and the purposes and policies of government.

7.B: Describe types of government social controls.

12.B: Describe stereotypes of the various US subcultures, and

12.C: Analyze social problems in selected US subcultures