

Lesson Plan

Contemporary History World at War: Fascism and Communism

Length

Two 45 minute periods

Grade Level

High School

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to identify the key tenets of fascism and communism and identify how they contrast with democracy.

[Contemporary History World at War: Fascism and Communism](#)



[Guided Reading Handout](#)



[Presentation](#)



Homework

1. Divide the class in half and assign to each group ONE of these readings. Instruct students to complete Part 1 or Part 2 of the guided reading handout as it corresponds to their assigned reading:
 - Group 1: *What Is Fascism?*
 - Group 2: *What Are the Origins of Communism?*

Class One

1. **(10 Minutes) Debrief Homework:** Pair students with a classmate who was assigned the other reading for homework. Have them share their key takeaways from the reading including any new or interesting information about each. Briefly discuss as a class and share out a working definition for each.
2. **(30 Minutes) Share and Compare:** Building off the homework debrief, students will work with partners from the other group. Students will create an infographic that compares and contrasts the two systems. Students can use physical arts materials or graphic software such as: Google Drawings (or Slides/ Docs), Canva, Piktochart, or Venngage. The infographic will include:
 1. Similarities
 2. Differences
 3. Key historical examples of these forms of government in practice
 4. Reasons why each system can become a threat to individual freedoms?
3. **(5 Minutes) Debrief:** Have students do a quick gallery walk to reflect upon their infographics.

Homework

- Written reflection on fascism and communism: Instruct students to write a one-page journal entry in which

they imagine and describe what changes and/or similarities in government structure and policy would occur if the United States were to pursue a fascist or communist system.

Vocabulary

alliance

an official partnership between two or more parties based on cooperation in pursuit of a common goal, generally involving security or defense.

civil war

a war among groups inside of one country.

cult of personality

the phenomenon in which a public figure, usually a political leader, is presented by their government as an idealized individual or a role model, often through propaganda.

communism

a political and economic system in which private property is eliminated in favor of common, public ownership of the means of production (such as factories), natural resources, and more, leading to the creation of a stateless, classless society.

democratic institutions

the organized bodies associated with a democratic form of governance, like freely elected legislatures.

pandemic

disease outbreak that has reached at least several countries, affecting a large group of people.

radicalization

the process by which individuals come to adopt extreme religious, political, or social beliefs.