

Lesson Plan

Terrorism: Confronting Terror

Length

One 45-minute period

Grade Level

High School

Learning Objectives

- Students will identify how terrorism is defined as well as the basic methods used in counterterrorism.
- Students will analyze and present on how counterterrorism has evolved under various presidential administrations.

[Terrorism: Confronting Terror](#)

[Bill Clinton, "Address to the Nation," August 20, 1998](#)

[George W. Bush, State of the Union address, September 20, 2001](#)

[Guided Reading Handout](#)

[Presentation](#)

[Worksheet: Analyzing Counterterrorism Policy](#)

Homework

- Students should complete Parts 1 and 2 of the guided reading handout.

Class One

1. **(5 Minutes) Homework Debrief:** *What are the three ways in which the U.S. government categorizes terrorism? What is an FTO? What is a state sponsor of terrorism? How does the FBI define domestic terrorism? Why is domestic terror treated differently?*
2. **(10 Minutes) Read (Individually):** *The Terrorist Money Trail*
 - Complete Part 4 of guided reading handout.
3. **(30 Minutes) Timeline Jigsaw**
 - Create four student groups. Assigning the corresponding portion of *U.S. Counterterrorism Since 1945*
 - Group 1: Truman/ Eisenhower/ Johnson
 - Group 2: Nixon/ Ford/ Carter
 - Group 3: Reagan/ George H.W. Bush/ Clinton
 - Group 4: George W. Bush/ Obama/ Trump
 - Each group will read and take notes about the ways in which U.S. counterterrorism policies evolved under their presidential administrations. (In many cases, this will involve the creation - or expansion - of groups like the CIA that are involved with fighting terror).
 - Create a brief presentation (poster/slides/ etc) that addresses the following question related to the evolution of U.S. counterterrorism policies. How did counterterrorism policies evolve under your assigned era?

Homework

- Students will complete the jigsaw activity from class. They will share briefly at the beginning of the next class.

Class Two

1. **(15 Minutes) Share:** Jigsaw work related to *U.S. Counterterrorism Since 1945*
2. **(20 Minutes) Primary Source Analysis:** Students will read and analyze primary sources on counterterrorism policy before and after 9/11 using the provided graphic organizer
 - Sources:
 - Bill Clinton, “Address to the Nation,” August 20, 1998
 - George W. Bush, State of the Union address, September 20, 2001
 - Complete Graphic Organizer:
 - Have students preview the graphic organizer, noticing the questions.
 - Have students read the documents, annotating where they address the questions from the graphic organizer.
 - Have students fill out the graphic organizer and share their answers with a neighbor or the whole class.
3. **(5 Minutes) Intro HW**

Homework/ Writing Extension

1. **Op-Ed** After reviewing materials from CFR Education, students will write an op-ed about the threat of terrorism to the United States.
 1. Review several op-eds from a local or national newspaper and identify together what characteristics make for an effective op-ed.
 2. Have students compose op-eds on their own. They might make an argument for what they think is the greatest terrorism threat to the United States, analyze the threat posed by a particular terrorist group or a particular type of group or ideology, or they could analyze a particular counterterrorism strategy they think should be employed.

Vocabulary

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.

counterterrorism

the set of policies and actions—including intelligence collection and analysis, military action, and homeland security measures—designed to combat terrorism.

dissident

an individual who opposes a well-established power structure or system, such as a ruling political party.

drone

an unmanned, remotely piloted vehicle generally used for reconnaissance and combat. Also known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

governance

the tasks and activities of governing, or running, a country.

sanction

a tool of statecraft, frequently involving economic measures such as asset freezes and trade restrictions, used to exact a certain behavior or outcome from another party.

skyjacking

the hijacking of an aircraft.

surveillance

a type of intelligence collection that involves the systematic, and often concealed, observation of people, places, and things by visual, aural, electronic, photographic, or other methods.

mutually assured destruction

the idea that two powerful countries with large nuclear arsenals would destroy each other completely in any nuclear conflict.

nuclear reactor

a container in which a controlled nuclear chain reaction can occur. Nuclear reactors form the core of nuclear power plants but can also be used to make radioactive material for medical use, research, or nuclear weapons.

Osama bin Laden

the Saudi-born cofounder and longtime leader of al-Qaeda, killed in Pakistan in 2011 during a raid by U.S. Navy Sea, Air, and Land Teams (SEALs). Bin Laden was the driving force behind the September 11, 2001, attacks, among others.

refugee

defined by the UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, as someone who has fled conflict or persecution in their home country, has a reasonable fear that returning would be unsafe, and is protected by international law. In many countries, the term refugee also refers to someone who has sought and received asylum in a new country.

waterboarding

a controversial interrogation technique whereby a person is held down and water is poured over their mouth and nose, which are covered by a rag. The technique has been called “simulated drowning” and is the subject of intense public debate. Critics of waterboarding call it torture.