

1970's

Introduction

This unit emphasizes writing and critical thinking. There are three types of activities. The news stories, writing exercises and telegrams require students to evaluate, prioritize and write about historical events.

The chronology and data analysis activities require students to detect trends and draw conclusions.

The viewpoints and issues activities present different views of the same event. The critical thinking exercises that accompany these units require the students to evaluate the information.

Many of the activities deal with popular news stories of the decade that are usually not covered in textbooks.

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Creative Activities for Teaching Critical Thinking and Writing U.S. History: The 20th Century

There are nine units in this series.

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Critical Thinking

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1973 (cont'd)

- Spiro Agnew, Vice-President, resigns.
- Oil exports from Arab countries are banned.
- Eliot Richardson, Attorney General, resigns and special Watergate prosecutor, Archibald Cox, is fired by President Nixon.
- Congress overrides Nixon's veto of the War Powers Act.
- Alaska oil pipeline signed.

1974

- impeachment hearings opened in Congress against President Nixon.
- U.S. Supreme Court rules that Nixon has to release 64 White House tapes to Watergate Special Prosecutor, Leon Jaworski.
- House Judiciary Committee recommends three articles of impeachment against Nixon.
- Nixon resigns on August 9.
- President Gerald Ford gives Nixon unconditional pardon on Sept. 8.

1975

- Haldeman, Ehrlichman and ex-Attorney General John Mitchell found guilty in Watergate cover-up.
- U.S. civilians are evacuated from Saigon on April 29 as N. Vietnamese communists complete take-over of South Vietnam.
- U.S. merchant ship Mayaguez and crew seized by Cambodian communists. U.S. Marines rescue ship and crew.
- Congress votes \$405 million for Vietnamese refugees. 140,000 flown to U.S.

- "Blueribbon panel" reveals CIA engaged in illegal operations including records on 300,000 Americans and infiltration into American political groups.

- Patty Hearst caught by FBI.

1976

- Lockheed Corp. admits paying \$22 million in bribes to foreign officials to sell planes.
- U.S. celebrates 200th anniversary of country.
- "Legionnaire's Disease" kills 29 people at American Legion convention.
- Viking I and II space probes set down on Mars.
- J. Carter elected President over Gerald Ford.

1977

- Jimmy Carter gives amnesty to 10,000 Vietnam War evaders.
- Convicted murderer Gary Gilmore executed. First execution since 1967.
- President Carter creates new cabinet-level department – Energy Department.

1978

- U.S. Senate approves of treaty to turn over Panama Canal to Panama in 1999.
- California voters approve Proposition 13 which limits property taxes. The first measure of its kind.

1979

- Major nuclear accident at Three Mile Island.
- Federal government provides \$1.5 billion loan to bail out Chrysler.
- 63 Americans are taken hostage in U.S. Embassy in Iran. Iranians had overthrown the U.S.-backed Shah (king) of Iran.

Amnesty for Vietnam protestors

Many young people did not approve of the Vietnam War during the 1960's. A large number left the country to evade the draft. Many denounced these young people as "traitors." Since they evaded the draft they could not return to the U.S. without facing 5 years in jail and a large fine. Millions of young Americans were drafted and served in Vietnam. Over 50,000 Americans were killed in the war. Others urged, since the war was over, that the draft evaders be forgiven and the serious division between those who supported and those who opposed the war be healed. Should President Carter give amnesty to the 10,000 young men who went to Canada to escape the draft? What would you do?

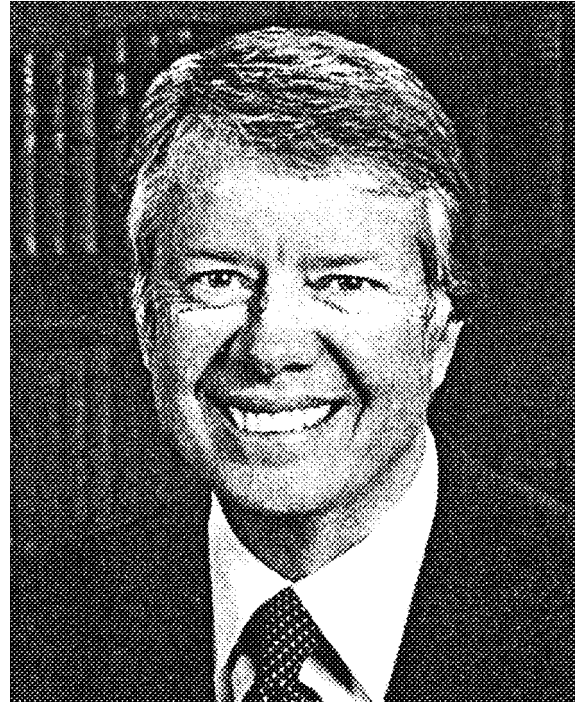
- A. Grant the amnesty
- B. Not grant the amnesty

Iran hostages

In 1979 the Shah of Iran, whom the U.S. had supported, was forced out by revolt. On November 4, 1979, Iranian students invaded the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took 62 Americans hostage. The Iranians refused to release them. The shah had escaped the country and fled to the U.S. The Iranians wanted him returned to stand trial.

A special force, the Delta Force, had been trained to rescue hostages. The problem with using such force in this case is that Teheran is over 1,000 miles from the nearest ocean. The U.S. could only reach the embassy where the hostages were being held by refueling helicopters in the middle of the Iranian desert, a tricky operation at best. A failed rescue operation could result in the death of the hostages. Carter was facing an election in 1980 and seemed powerless. What would you do?

- A. Return the shah in exchange for the hostages.
- B. Use Delta Force.
- C. Do nothing.



Jimmy Carter

Russian grain embargo

In 1979 The Russians invaded Afghanistan to overthrow a government they did not like. Jimmy Carter, elected president in 1976, had to decide what to do about it. Many Americans were outraged by the Russians' actions. It was impossible to send military aid to the Afghans. Afghanistan is landlocked and thousands of miles from the United States.

Some thought it would be a good idea to refuse to sell the Russians wheat. After years of poor harvests Russia was buying large quantities of U.S. wheat. Farmers were opposed to the idea and argued that if the Russians didn't buy their wheat from the U.S. they would buy it from some other country. An election was coming up in 1980 and Carter wanted to look like a strong president. What would you do?

- A. Stop the sale of wheat to Russia.
- B. Do nothing.