

## The Berlin Crisis of 1948

Was the Berlin Airlift the best option to address the Berlin Blockade? Was there a better option that would have been less draining on the American economy?



### Lesson Procedures

#### **Step 1: Background**

1. Give students a copy of the background essay to read to get a general idea about the situation of the Berlin Crisis in Europe during the 1948.

#### **Step 2: Hook Activity**

1. Given the scenario of the events currently happening in Berlin, students will be given four options to address the Berlin blockade. Give the students the options: Do nothing, Airlift, Evacuate or Negotiate/United Nations support. Create a padlet or bellwork question and ask them to put themselves in the role of the Harry S. Truman and pick one of the options and describe why this option best addresses the Berlin blockade.
2. After students have responded to the padlet (online resource tool link provided <https://padlet.com/my/dashboard>) or bellwork question have them share out and discuss with a partner. Then, as a whole class have them discuss their option and reasonings behind that choice.

#### **Step 3: Essential Question**

Introduce the essential question: Was the Berlin airlift the best option for addressing the Berlin blockade? Discuss the essential question and explain what was read in the Background Essay and bring back in those options from the Hook activity. What options did the United States discuss during the Berlin crisis (Negotiate/UN support, Evacuate, Airlift and Do Nothing.) Discuss a little about the logistics of using each option prior to digging deeper into the primary sources (provided in the additional teacher resources folder)

#### **Step 4: Sources** (Suggest that documents be handed out individually and not as a packet)

1. Give students Source 1- Point out to students the sourcing information and the note included with the sourcing information at the top of each document. Note includes

additional information about the source or person(s) mentioned in the primary source. Give students time to read the source. Teacher should then model how to annotate the source using the following code: N=Negotiate, E=Evacuate, DN=Do Nothing, A=Airlift (Suggest that students highlight small sections of strong text to support factors.)

2. Audio and Visual sources will be annotated differently. (Suggest having students answer the questions and mark what they hear or see with those primary sources.) Students will have guided questions to complete with those sources as well.
3. Students may choose 7 out of the 10 primary sources to read, watch or listen to and analyze.
4. Students should then look at the rest of the sources, annotating using the same code, highlighting, and annotating using the code listed in the first activity with sources.
5. Students have questions over each of the documents that they can answer.

**Step 5: Graphic Organizer**

After analyzing all of the sources students should complete the Chart Analysis which is found in the Original Documents folder. Directions for completing the chart are located at the bottom of the graphic organizer (Suggest students review after reading and annotating each document.)

Name:		Hour:		
Sources:	Negotiations/UN Support:	Evacuate:	Airlift:	Do Nothing:

\*As you read, view or listen to the sources choose the option(s) that is being proposed in the source. Write the sentence from the source that supports your answer in that category.

**Step 6: Group Discussion-** hold a class discussion about the essential question. Discussion could be held in different ways:

- Divide students into small groups and let them compare their graphic organizers. Let each student defend their answer to the essential questions using text based evidence.
- Label four walls in the classroom with the four options to addressing the Berlin Crisis. (Negotiate/United Nations support, Evacuate, Do Nothing, and Airlift.) Have students go to the wall in which they felt would have been the better option for addressing the Berlin Blockade. Then, have students move to their second choice and discuss. Then, have students move to their least favorite option and discuss. Students can then discuss their reasons for moving or choosing that wall/option based off of what they found in the primary sources.

**Step 7: Student Outcome-**(Suggest that students choose one of the following student outcomes listed below)

1. Students will stake a claim using one of the following formats addressing the essential question, using text based evidence to support their claim. Students should cite sources throughout their claims from the primary source documents (Suggest having students review graphic organizers.)
  - ★ Write a letter to Truman as one of his advisors - what should he do?
  - ★ Write a newspaper account of the Berlin airlift that might appear in a newspaper in Berlin.
  - ★ Write a diary as someone involved in the Berlin airlift, explaining what is happening and how you feel about it. (Choices: citizen of Berlin, American pilot)

**Additional Student Outcomes-**

- ★ Design a museum exhibit about the Berlin airlift. What should be in the exhibit? How could you design the exhibit so that it could be “hands on?”
- ★ Create a diorama (shoebox scene) about the Berlin airlift. Include information and 3 dimensional objects to teach others about it.
- ★ Create a giant timeline of the Berlin airlift which includes the events leading up to the airlift and including the end of the airlift.
- ★ Pretend that a movie is being made about the Berlin airlift. You are in charge of creating a movie poster that would attract people to the movie. Your poster must also include some information about the airlift for those who are unaware of it.

**Step 8: Visit to the Truman Library-** (Suggest using the Truman Library and Museum with a culminating activity)

1. Students will tour the Truman Library and Museum, doing a multitude of activities, (Berlin Airlift section in the Museum includes: information on display and viewing other primary source visuals, audio, videos and a question and answer session.)

## Student Outcome Grading Rubric:

	<b>0</b>	<b>1- Below Basic</b>	<b>2- Basic</b>	<b>3- Proficient</b>	<b>4- Advanced</b>
<b>P= Your main idea</b>	Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task.	Can create a claim only with guidance from the instructor.	Creates an appropriate claim on a topic but is not able to introduce or give further explanation to the idea.	Clearly introduces and stakes out a position on the topic.	Clearly introduces the range of possible answers on a topic while staking out a clear position that can be supported with evidence.
<b>E= Evidence you have to support your main idea.</b>	Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task.	Includes generalizations or other ideas not aligned to the prompt	Generally alludes to evidence but does not cite it, or draws from only one account;	Refers to relevant and accurate evidence from more than one source and links it directly to specific accounts, mentioning the accounts by name.	Seamlessly integrates evidence from multiple sources by accurately summarizing details and using source information to establish its relevance.
<b>E= Evaluation and Explanation of your evidence</b>	Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task.	Distinguishes or sorts between evidence that is/ is not relevant to answering a question or explaining a point of view.	With minor errors explains how evidence is relevant to the question or point of view of the paragraph.	Accurately explains the significance of the evidence used to answer the question.	Accurately explains the significance of evidence used and evaluates the reliability or utility of the available sources.
<b>L= Link to context/content</b>	Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task.	Provides a conclusion that is confused or is not relevant to the evidence.	Provides a general conclusion sentence that summarizes the main point of with no specific link to the point.	Links the back to the original point by summarizing how the evidence supports the main idea.	Links back to the original point by both placing the evidence within historical context and by summarizing how the evidence supports the main idea.



## Answering the Question:

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*Because document-based activities begin with a question, the most natural way to assess students' learning is to have them answer the question. Typically this involves structuring and organizing evidence in order to complete a formal essay writing. While the informational essay is certainly an important skill in a social studies classroom there are also many other valid ways to have students create well-reasoned explanations based on available evidence. Consider the following options for students to answer the guiding question.*

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1. Write a letter to Truman as one of his advisors - what should he do?
2. Write a newspaper account of the Berlin airlift that might appear in a newspaper in Berlin.
3. Write a diary as someone involved in the Berlin airlift, explaining what is happening and how you feel about it. (Choices: citizen of Berlin, American pilot)

### **Additional ideas for student product:**

1. Design a museum exhibit about the Berlin airlift. What should be in the exhibit? How could you design the exhibit so that it could be "hands on?"
2. Create a diorama (shoebox scene) about the Berlin airlift. Include information and 3 dimensional objects to teach others about it.
3. Create a giant timeline of the Berlin airlift which includes the events leading up to the airlift and including the end of the airlift.
4. Pretend that a movie is being made about the Berlin airlift. You are in charge of creating a movie poster that would attract people to the movie. Your poster must also include some information about the airlift for those who are unaware of it.

Links to additional information:

Quotes about the Berlin airlift:

[http://www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org/documents/nc/Berlin\\_Wall\\_and\\_Berlin\\_Airlift\\_Quotes.pdf](http://www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org/documents/nc/Berlin_Wall_and_Berlin_Airlift_Quotes.pdf)

Facts and Figures:

<http://www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org/schools-colleges/national-curriculum/berlin-airlift/facts-figures.aspx>