

Title: Analyzing the Marshall Plan Speech

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Course: Modern U.S. History

Time Frame: 90 minutes

Subjects:

Marshall Plan, Cold War

Grade Levels:

9, 10, 11, 12

Classroom/Homework Activity to be performed:

For homework, each student will be given a transcript of the speech given by George Marshall at Harvard University on June 5, 1947, and a list of 11 questions (added to the bottom of this form) to answer concerning the speech.

Rationale:

Students need to be able to analyze primary documents.

Lesson objectives - the student will:

- (1) Place the speech its historic context. (What brought it about?)
- (2) Identify how and why Marshall was deliberately general or specific in different parts of the speech, depending upon his goal.
- (3) Explain why he used certain terms or phrases, and avoided using others.
- (4) Explain how Marshall anticipated reaction to his proposal.
- (5) Identify how Marshall links the situation in Europe to the United States.

District, state, or national performance and knowledge standards/goals/skills met:

National Center for History in the Schools

Era 9 (United States from 1945-early 1970s)

Standard 2 (How the Cold War influenced domestic and international politics)

Standard 3 (Domestic policies after WWII)

Missouri Standards

US History

3aW: Describe and evaluate the evolution of United States domestic and foreign policies including the Cold War.

7A: Distinguish between and analyze primary and secondary sources.

7C: Distinguish between fact and opinion and analyze sources to recognize bias and points of view.

Kansas Standards

Benchmark 3: The student uses a working knowledge and understanding of individuals, groups, ideas, developments, and turning points in the era of the Cold War (1945-1990).

2. analyzes the origins of the Cold War (e.g., establishment of the Soviet Bloc, Mao's victory in China, Marshall Plan, Berlin Blockade, Iron Curtain).

3. (A) evaluates the foreign policies of Truman and Eisenhower during the Cold War (e.g., establishment of the United Nations, containment, NATO, Truman Doctrine, Berlin Blockade, Korean War, Iron Curtain, U-2 incident).

Benchmark 5: The student engages in historical thinking skills.

3.(A) uses primary and secondary sources about an event in U.S. history to develop a credible interpretation of the event, evaluating on its meaning (e.g., uses provided primary and secondary sources to interpret a historical-based conclusion).

Primary materials (book, article, video documentary, etc.) needed:

Transcript of George Marshall's speech at Harvard, June 5, 1947, which is available at

http://www.marshallfoundation.org/library/MarshallPlanSpeechfromRecordedAddress_000.html

Full description of activity or assignment:

Students will be provided a transcript of the speech given by George Marshall at Harvard University on June 5, 1947—which is usually seen as the beginning of what becomes known as the Marshall Plan—and a list of questions to answer, based upon the speech. This will be a homework assignment.

The following day in class, the teacher will lead a discussion of the document and the questions, calling on students to contribute their answers to the questions.

- 1) Why, in Marshall's opinion, is it "exceedingly difficult" for the average American to understand what was going on in Europe at this time? (P2)
- 2) Does Marshall expect the American people to understand how the conditions in Europe--and the reactions by the people in Europe to those conditions--impact "our efforts to promote peace?" (P2)
- 3) Why does Marshall maintain that for the past decade, economic conditions in Europe have been "highly abnormal?" (P3)

- 4) Why, according to Marshall, has the recovery of Europe been "seriously retarded?" (P3)

- 5) Read paragraph four carefully and explain how (1) farm production, (2) industrial production, (3) foreign trade and (4) reconstruction are, according to Marshall, interdependent for the European nations.

- 6) What, according to Marshall, is "the remedy" for this situation? (P6)

- 7) How does Marshall attempt to dispel the contention that what he's suggesting is really anti-communist or anti-Soviet Union in nature? (P7)

- 8) When Marshall speaks of the "purpose" of his proposal, why does he make a point of saying ". . . in which free institutions can exist?" (P7)

- 9) Why does Marshall include the statement, ". . . governments, political parties, or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery . . . will encounter the opposition of the United States?" (P7)

- 10) What does Marshall believe should be "the role of this country" in his proposal? (P8)

- 11) In the final paragraph, what does Marshall mean by saying, "Political passion and prejudice should have no part?" (P8)

Full explanation of the assessment method and/or scoring guide:

This will be a non-graded assignment, however, some of the questions will be included on the exam covering that particular unit.