

Running head: TEACHING FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

Teaching Historical and Current Events from Multiple Perspectives:
The Korean War and Six-Party Talks

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Abstract

Comparing international history textbooks creates a perfect opportunity for students to see the complexity and controversy of history interpretation of certain events. Such a critical comparative approach helps students better understand how people in different countries perceive and interpret the Korean War, its aftermath, and its effects on current international relationships. In this article, we suggest that teachers approach the Korean War and the Six-Party Talks in two ways: Six-Party Discussion Table motivation activities and analysis of middle school history textbook excerpts about the Korean War in the six countries. Detailed lesson plans and handouts are provided for teachers to facilitate these discussions. These include the directions and procedures for the activities, teachers' guide, suggested answers, and textbook excerpts translated into English from the United States, China, Japan, Russia, North Korea, and South Korea.

Teaching Historical and Current Events from Multiple Perspectives:
The Korean War and Six-Party Talks

“The Korean War is an unattractive task which most Americans are more than happy to have slip through the cracks of history.”

- Joseph Goulden

“Technically, the Korean War continues today, as only an armistice agreement halted the fighting in 1953. The Korean peninsula remains one of the world's most dangerous flash points, and the West knows less about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) than about any other nation on earth. The intentions and behavior of its leaders remain shrouded in mystery. To maintain the uneasy armistice, some 37,000 U.S. troops remain in the Republic of Korea. A solution to the Korean problem seems as far off as ever.”

- Spencer Tucker

On December 12, 2008, *China Daily* reported, “the six parties involved in the Korean Peninsula nuclear talks concluded their latest round of negotiations Thursday without registering substantive progress.” On the previous day, Christopher R. Hill, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs lamented, “[W]e had some very ambitious plans for this round. Unfortunately, we are not able to complete some of the things we wanted to do. ... I would say there was a lot of agreement really among a majority of the delegations there, but ultimately the DPRK was not ready really to reach a verification protocol with all the standards that are required.” (<http://www.state.gov/p/eap/regional/c15455.htm>). In the past four years, news about the Six-Party Talks has frequently appeared as headlines in media around the world. However, not many people know what the Six-Party Talks is about and why these nations got involved in DPRK’s attempt to develop nuclear weapons.

DPRK is the abbreviated name for the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, commonly known as North Korea. The Six-Party Talks concerning the DPRK’s nuclear program include the United States, North Korea, China, Japan, Russia and South Korea, countries that

once directly or indirectly got involved in the Korean War during 1951-1953. The Six-Party Talks began in August 2003 as a multilateral approach to ending North Korea's nuclear program. There have been a series of meetings with six participating states each year since 2003.

In 1994, North Korea and the United States signed a nuclear agreement in Geneva. North Korea pledged to freeze and eventually dismantled its nuclear weapons program in exchange for international aid to build two power-producing nuclear reactors. In 1999, President Clinton agreed to the first significant easing of economic sanctions against North Korea since the Korean War ended in 1953. In January 2003, however, North Korea declared its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (Statement of the DPRK Government on Withdrawal from Non-Proliferation Treaty 2003). Since August 2003, members of the Six-Party Talks have convened in Beijing for several rounds of negotiations aimed at curbing North Korea's nuclear weapons program. The summits resulted in a joint statement in September 2005 in which North Korean government promised to abandon its nuclear weapons program and go back to the Nonproliferation Treaty (Zissis & Bajoria, 2008). Yet, to the shock of the world, in July 2006, North Korea tested its ballistic missiles, and two months later, they tested a nuclear weapon.

North Korea, the last Cold War frontier, remained an isolated nation from the rest of the world until 1993 when it declared that it would withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which North Korea signed in 1985. The announcement marked North Korea's first public declaration that it possessed nuclear weapons. Since the Korean War, which ended in an armistice in 1953, North Korea seems to have very little contact with the outside world either mail, telephone, or internet. Therefore, North Korea, the Korean War, and how they are related to the Six-Party Talks all seem incomprehensible to most Americans and the rest of the world. In fact, the Korean War remained as the "Unknown War" or "Forgotten War" in the history of the United States (Blohm, 1999; Edwards, 2000; Tucker, 2000) even though the war was devastating

to the countries involved. During the three years of the war, approximately 3,000,000 Koreans were killed, wounded, or reported missing; 150,000 Chinese and 33,000 Americans also died; a further 220,000 Chinese and 92,000 Americans were wounded (Priscilla Roberts, 2000). In addition, South Korea and North Korea have been divided into two countries ever since. As historian Spencer Tucker (2000) stated, “Technically, the Korean War continues today, as only an armistice agreement that halted the fighting in 1953. To maintain the uneasy armistice, some 37,500 U.S. troops are still stationed in South Korea today.”

Background Information of the Korean War

It is challenging to provide simplified background information of the Korean War. The ways we were educated, the cultures we grew up from, and the multiple perspectives we learned in our academic life have greatly influenced our narration and understanding of the Korean War. However, we will not hide our biases, which are always there when we interpret historical events. We see history not as a fixed set of facts, but as an interpretive process of debates, controversies, and conflicting issues (Loewen, 1995; Zinn & Macedo, 2005). Therefore, the background information of the Korean War we shared here is at best one process of presenting the Korean War as a controversy.

Korea, as one nation with a long history, was under the colonial control of Japan at the beginning of 20th century. In 1945 when the WWII ended, the United Nations, under the dominant influences of the United States, divided Korea into two parts (Lee, 1998). The part of Korea to the north of the 38th degree north latitude, also known as 38th Parallel, was administered by the Soviet Union and the part south of the 38th Parallel was administered by the United States. The separation planted a seed that sprouted soon to lead to the outbreak of the Korean War. The two parts of Korea have been separated by this Cold War mentality ever since (Moon, 2002).

Political elections in North Korea and South Korea were dominated by the Soviet and American influences after WWII. Despite opposition, each elected its own government by 1949 and in the same year, the Soviet and American forces in Korea withdrew. Both the governments in North and South Korea wanted to reunite the peninsula under their own government (Moon, 1998). Around the 38th Parallel, North Korea, with the equipment provided by Soviet Union, was able to escalate border clashes. The American government interpreted the border conflicts as international aggression and called for the United Nations to intervene in the war. Six countries were involved in the war, although Japan's involvement was indirect serving only as American air base. The result of the war hardened the continued division of the two Korean states (Tucker, 2000).

Teaching about the Korean War and Six-Party Talks

It is essential that historical facts and contemporary issues about other nations are included in school curriculum, and it is imperative that students understand the diversity of other nations (Becker, 1981). In fact, many social studies teachers infuse global perspectives into their instruction through teaching multiple and conflicting perspectives, integrate global issues within mandated content, organize instruction through global themes, and ask issues-centered questions to encourage student inquiry (Merryfield & Wilson, 2005). North Korea is one of a handful of nations in the world that is immediately relevant to the United States. In fact, major U.S. television channels, newspapers, and journal publishers often cover negative aspects of North Korean society such as defections, starvation, corruption, missiles, nuclear threats, and human rights. However, beyond these well-documented facets of North Korea contemporary issues related to this country are not discussed in many classrooms (Ogawa and Tulley, 2008). Several teachers have developed lessons that help students understand North Korea and that ask issues-centered questions to encourage student inquiry, but the difficulty of obtaining accurate

information about North Korea creates significant obstacles. Ogawa and Tulley (2008) found that reasons teachers do not include the study of North Korea in their curricula to a higher degree are either lack of time, lack of information, and/or the assumption that state standards only address the Korean War.

In this article, we suggest that teachers approach the Korean War and the Six-Party Talks in two ways: Six-Party Discussion Table motivation activities and analysis of middle school history textbook excerpts about the Korean War in the six countries and detailed lesson plans/handouts are provided for teachers to facilitate these discussions. These include the directions and procedures for the activities, teachers' guide, suggested answers, and textbook excerpts translated into English from the United States, China, Japan, Russia, North Korea, and South Korea.

The Korean War and Six-Party Talks no doubt provide social studies teachers a challenging yet perfect opportunity to teach about historical and current events from multiple perspective. The topic of the Korean War is significant and deserves continued study. Teachers should address rather than avoid the topic, because the Korean War was a turning point in twentieth-century history, the first shooting confrontation of the Cold War, the first limited war in the nuclear age, the only time since WWII that two of the world's major military powers, the United States and China, have fought one another (Spencer Tucker 2000). Teaching about the Korean War and current Six-Party Talks will definitely help students better understand how complex a historical event could be and how unsolved problems in the past could have a profound impact on the countries involved at that time and even today. Using the Six-Party Talks as a model to explore current events and to teach about the Korean War provides an opportunity for students to understand that diplomatic negotiations are better alternatives to military operations to resolve conflicts. When students represent each of the six countries during the

learning activities, they learn to explore global events from different perspectives. Such discussions give greater immediacy to the current global events and motivate students to explore the historical background behind such events (Shaffer, 2001).

Handout I. Motivational Activity: Welcome to a Six-Party Discussion about the Korean War

Welcome to the Six-Party Discussion Table. You are representing _____
(name of one of the six countries) as a negotiation team at the Six-Party Discussion Table. As
representatives from the country, please work with your negotiation team members to complete
the task.

Task: Using encyclopedia and online sources, you and your team will research

- a) Where your country is on a world map;
- b) Your country's neighboring/nearby countries;
- c) The flag of your country, and its current leader;
- d) Current type of government of your country;
- e) Type of government of your country during the Korean War.

Teacher's Guide:

When students come into the classroom, teacher could have already set the table as if all students will be representing the six parties that will participate in the Six-Party Discussion to eliminate North Korean's nuclear weapons program. Classroom should be set up as if they are coming into the "real" negotiation table representing the six nations involved in the Korean War and the current international affairs concerning the nuclear weapons program.

Six Parties refer to

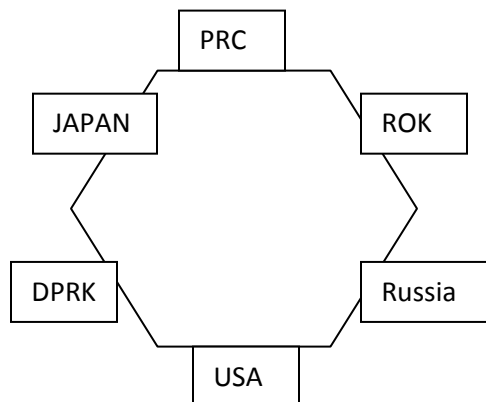
Countries	Official Name	Abbreviations
China	People's Republic of China	PRC
North Korean	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	DPRK
South Korea	Republic of Korea	ROK
United States	the United States of America	USA
Russia	Russian Federation	Russia

(During the Korean War, Russia was part of the Soviet Union)

- Objectives: Students will be able to
- list the six countries that participate in the Six-Party Talks
 - describe and identify flags of each country
 - recognize current leaders for each country
 - identify each country and its bordering countries, if any, on a world map
 - describe the type of government of each country

Procedures:

- 1) Give each student a card that specifies which country/party he or she will represent. At the table, students will then find their corresponding country to sit down. More than one student should be assigned to each country.










- 2) Using encyclopedia and online sources, the students will research in teams

- a) Where your country is on a world map;
- b) Your country's neighboring countries, if any;
- c) The flag of your country, and its current leader;
- d) Current type of government of your country;
- e) Type of your government during the Korean War.

Suggested answers to these questions:

- a) Where each country is on a world map (You might use any world map available);
- b) Each country's neighboring countries (You might use any world map available);
- c) The flags of each country (Flags of Russia Federation and the former Soviet Union are both provided) and its current leaders

<p>North Korea</p>  <p>Socialist Republic</p> <p>Chairman: Kim Jong-Il</p>	<p>China</p>  <p>Socialist Republic</p> <p>President: Hu Jintao</p> <p>Prime Minister: Wen Jiabao</p>	<p>The Soviet Union</p>  <p>Russia Federation (Federal Semi-Presidential Republic)</p>  <p>President: Dmitry Medvedev</p> <p>Prime Minister: Vladimir Putin</p>
<p>South Korea</p>  <p>Presidential Republic</p> <p>President: Lee Myung-bak</p> <p>Prime Minister:</p>	<p>The United States</p>  <p>Constitutional federal presidential republic:</p> <p>President: Barack Obama</p>	<p>Japan</p>  <p>Parliamentary democracy and Constitutional monarchy</p> <p>Emperor: Akihito</p>

Han Seung-soo		Prime Minister: Taro Aso
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- d) Current type of government of your country;
- e) Type of your government during the Korean War (1950-1953).

Type of Gov. Country	Current Type of Government	Type of government during the Korean War
North Korea	Communist state one-man dictatorship with Kim Jong-II as its head	Communist government with Kim Il-Jung as its head
China	Communist government with Hu Jintao as chairman	Communist government with Mao Tse-tung as chairman
Soviet Union Russia	Does not exist any more. Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Russian Federation with Dmitry Medvedev as president	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): communist government under Joseph Stalin Russia was part of the former USSR during the Korean War.
South Korea	Republic President Lee Myung-bak	Republic President Syngman Rhee
The United States	Constitution-based federal republic; strong democratic tradition with President Barack Obama	Constitution-based federal republic; strong democratic tradition with President Harry Truman and President Dwight

		Eisenhower
Japan	Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government Taro Aso as prime minister	Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government Shigeru Yoshida as prime minister

Source: CIA Factbook at <http://www.cia.gov>

Handout II. Objectives of Six-Party Talks

Objective: Students will be able to present objectives of each of the six countries involved in the Six-Party Talks about the North Korean Nuclear Program

Procedure:

- 1) Students stay as representatives of their country and continue with their group research.
- 2) Students research the objectives of their country in the Six-Party Talks.
- 3) Students summarize their research result and write in no more than 100 words use the following table to fill in what they find out as a group.

Country	Group Summary: Objectives of Your Country in Six-Party Talks
North Korea	
China	
Russia	
South Korea	
the United States	
Japan	

- 4) Students present to the whole class the objectives of their country.

Teacher's Guide: Objectives of each of the six countries involved in the Six-Party Talks.

Country	Group Summary: Objectives of Your Country in Six-Party Talks
North Korea	The North Korean government led by Kim Jong-Il seeks a nonaggression security pledge from the United States. It also wants normalized relations with Washington and to be removed from the U.S. State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. North Korea wants access to economic aid from other Six-Party countries.
China	Beijing serves as Pyongyang's most long-standing ally and main trading partner, and has used its influence with the Kim regime to bring North Korea to the Six-Party negotiating table. China's ability to play such a role in the talks boosts its relations with Washington. Like South Korea, China fears a rush of refugees across its border and has provided North Korea with energy and food assistance. Beijing has been resistant to implementing stringent UN resolutions imposing sanctions against Pyongyang. North Korea also serves as a buffer zone between China and U.S. troops in South Korea.
Russia	Moscow's position at the table allows Russia, also concerned with refugee flows, to reassert its influence in Northeast Asia. Russia has joined China in warning against cornering North Korea with harsh sanctions.
South Korea	Frozen in an unresolved conflict with North Korea, South Korea seeks to avoid a sudden regime change in Pyongyang that would force it to bear the economic burden of a large, sudden influx of refugees across its border. Many young South Koreans see their neighbors as poor cousins, and Seoul has taken a softer approach than has Washington to Pyongyang. This warming of inter-Korean relations, known as the "Sunshine Policy," involves South Korean aid as well as economic projects including the Kaesong industrial complex and tourism to North Korea's Mount Kumgang.
United States	For Washington, the Six-Party Talks serve as a means to make North Korea's nuclear weapons program a multinational problem rather than an issue to be solved through bilateral action. Although Washington worries about the Communist state's poor human rights record, the chief U.S. concern remains Pyongyang's nuclear program and possible sale of nuclear materials and technology to hostile states and terrorist groups. As part of any agreement,

	Washington wants the reclusive state to accept IAEA monitors in the country.
Japan	<p>Tokyo worries over North Korea's provocative testing of missiles that could reach Japan's population centers or U.S. military bases there. But Japan also sees the Six-Party Talks as a forum for negotiating an admission of Pyongyang's guilt in the 1970s and 1980s abductions of Japanese citizens by North Korean spies. The issue serves as a divisive point in the U.S.-Japan alliance as Tokyo does not want Washington to remove North Korea from its state sponsors of terrorism list until the abduction question is resolved.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Pyongyang has demanded at times that Tokyo not participate in the talks.</p>

Source:

Zissis, C. & Bajoria J. (2007). The Six-Party Talks on North Korea's Nuclear Program, Retrieved on November 8, 2007 at <http://www.cfr.org/publication/13593/#3>

Handout III. Why and How Your Country Got Involved in the Korean War in 1950-1953

Objective: Students will be able to explain why their country got involved in the Korean War in 1950-1953

Procedures:

- 1) Students stay as representatives of their country;
- 2) Make enough copies of history textbook excerpts for members in each group (available in this Handout IV. Textbook Excerpts A to F);
- 3) Students read as a group and explain why their country got involved in the Korean War in 1950-1953 based on their textbook reading;
- 4) Students summarize their group explanation and write in no more than 100 words using the following table to fill in what they find out as a group;
- 5) Students present and explain their country's involvement in the Korean War.

Country	Why Did Your Country Get Involved in the Korean War in 1950-1953?
North Korea	
China	
The Soviet Union	
South Korea	
the United States	
Japan	

Teacher's Guide

Please note that each country argues from its own perspective. Students should be viewing the Korean War from the perspective of the country they are supposed to represent. The perspective they are taking in this task should not be their real perspectives. Their real perspectives could be shared later after the task is completed and debriefed.

Country	Why Did Your Country Get Involved in the Korean War in 1950-1953?
North Korea	The United States backed the South Korean forces to invade North Korea. Their attack threatened our country. Enemies must be eliminated and our people had to be saved.
China	The United States attacked the North Korean forces and threatened the national security of China, which borders with the North Korea. China formed "People's Volunteer Army" to participate in the Korean War.
The Soviet Union	We did not get directly involved by sending troops over. We signed an agreement with North Korea that if North Korea gets involved with South Korea in military conflicts, we will support North Korea. In the Korean War, we supported North Korea by providing military training, weapons, and moral support.
South Korea	North Korea began their southward aggression along the 38 th parallel. Taken by surprise by these unexpected attacks, South Korea fought back to defend the liberty of the country.
United States	We saw the attacks of North Korea against South Korea as an expanding communist aggression against the rest of the world. We asked the UN Security Council to denounce the North Korean military action as illegal and as a threat to peace. UN decided to help the South Korea. The UN Army constituted of the armies of 16 countries – among them the United States – joined the South Korean forces in the battle against the North.
Japan	We did not get directly involved by sending troops over. During the war, American bases on the main islands of Japan and on Okinawa were used, and a vast amount of military supplies were procured in Japan. Therefore, Japan received economic benefits from the United States' going to war. As a result, Japanese economy experienced an upswing and quickly recovered from the recession after the WWII.

Handout IV. Textbook Excerpt A (Translated from North Korean History Textbook)

Directions: As representatives from North Korea, you, as a group, will read the textbook excerpt and answer questions. Please analyze the following passages and summarize the causes of the Korean War.

Upset by the fast and astonishing growth of the power of the Republic, the American invaders hastened the preparation of an aggressive war in order to destroy it in its infancy.

The American imperialists furiously carried out the war project in 1950. The American imperialist called the traitor Syngman Rhee to Japan and gave him the order to hurry the war, while frequently sending warmongers to the South in order to survey the preparation of the war.

The American invaders who had been preparing the war for a long time, alongside their puppets, finally initiated the war on June 25th of 1950. That dawn, the enemies unexpectedly attacked the North half of the Republic, and the war clouds hung over the once peaceful country, accompanied by the echoing roar of cannons.

Having passed the 38th parallel, the enemies crawled deeper and deeper into the North half of the Republic. A grave menace drew near our country and our people. His Excellency, the great leader of the Republic, had a crucial decision to make – the invading forces of the enemies had to be eliminated and the threatened fate of our country and our people had to be saved.

Questions:

1) What are the causes of the Korean War from the perspective of this passage?

2) What questions do you still have to find out the causes of the Korean War?

Teacher's Note:

This is a passage selected from North Korean Textbook entitled "History of the Revolution of our Great Leader Kim Il-sung: High School. Pyongyang: Textbook Publishing Co., 1999, 125-27.

Handout IV. Textbook Excerpt B (Translated from South Korean History Textbook)

Directions: As representatives from South Korea, you, as a group, will read the textbook excerpt and answer questions. Please analyze the following passages and summarize the causes of the Korean War.

When the overthrow of the South Korean government through social confusion became too difficult, the North Korean communists switched to a stick-and-carrot strategy: seeming to offer peaceful negotiations, they were instead analyzing the right moments of attack and preparing themselves for it.

The North insisted on political negotiations between the leaders of the South and the North aiming toward a constitution of a unified government, and openly publicized their policy. By that time, the American forces stationed in the South withdrew and announced that the peninsula would be excluded in America's first line of defense in the Far East. Taking advantage of this situation, the North Korean communists prepared themselves for war. Kim Il-sung secretly visited the Soviet Union and was promised the alliance of the Soviets and China in case of war.

Finally, at dawn on June 25th, 1950 the North began their southward aggression along the 38th parallel. Taken by surprise by these unexpected attacks, the army of the Republic of Korea (South Korean) fought courageously to defend the liberty of the country. However, with the lack of soldiers and equipment, Seoul had to surrender and the South Korean forces were forced to retreat to a battle line south of the Nak-dong river. The armed provocation of the North Korean communists brought the UN Security Council around the table. A decree denounced the North Korean military action as illegal and as a threat to peace, and a decision was made to help the South. The UN army constituted of the armies of 16 countries – among them the United States, Great Britain, and France – joined the South Korean forces in the battle against the North.

Questions:

- 1) What are the causes of the Korean War from the perspective of this passage?

- 2) What questions do you still have to find out the causes of the Korean War?

Teacher's Note:

This passage is selected from Kim, Doojin's *Korean History: Senior High*. Seoul: Dae Han Textbook Col, 2001, p. 199.

Handout IV. Textbook Excerpt C (Translated from China's History Textbook)

Directions: As representatives from China, you, as a group, will read the textbook excerpt and answer questions. Please analyze the following passages and summarize the causes of the Korean War.

In June, 1950, the war between North Korea and South Korea broke out. The United States undauntedly invaded North Korea with forces. The so-called "United Nation's Troops" with the U.S. troops as its mainstay crossed the 38th parallel and charged towards Yalu River at the Chinese border. American military airplanes invaded the Chinese territory, bombing and shooting the bordering cities in northeast of China. The U.S. 7th Fleet invaded the Taiwan Straits of China to prevent the Chinese People's Liberation Army to liberate Taiwan. The invasion of the United States gravely threatened the security of China.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea requested Chinese government to send troops to aid them. In order to fight against the United States in a response to the North Korean request to aid and to defend and protect homeland from being invaded, in October 1950, the Chinese People's Volunteer Troops, domestically known as Chinese People's Volunteers, under the leadership of Dehuai Peng as the Commander-in-chief, arrived in the frontlines of North Korea and fought against the U.S. aggressors with people and army from North Korea.

Questions:

- 1) What are the causes of the Korean War from the perspective of this passage?

- 2) What questions do you still have to find out the causes of the Korean War?

Teacher's Note:

This is a passage selected from Chinese Textbook entitled "Chinese History". People's Education Press. 2002, 7-11.

Handout IV. Textbook Excerpt D (Selected from American History Textbook)

Directions: As representatives from the United States, you, as a group, will read the textbook excerpt and answer questions. Please analyze the following passages and summarize the causes of the Korean War.

In June 1950, North Korea forces crossed the 38th parallel into South Korea. The conflict that followed became known as the Korean War. President Truman viewed Korea as a test case for his containment policy. He responded promptly. The United States appealed to the United Nations (UN) to stop the Communist move into South Korea. Sixteen nations provided soldiers for a UN force. However, U.S. troops made up most of the force and did most of the fighting. General Douglas MacArthur, former World War II hero in the Pacific, served as commander of all UN forces.

In early fighting, the North Koreans pushed the South Koreans back almost to Pusan. This city was on the southeastern tip of the Korean peninsular. MacArthur reversed the situation by landing his troops at Incheon. This was a port city behind the North Korean lines. It was a daring, dangerous plan, but it worked.

Squeezed between enemy troops coming at them from the north and south, the North Korean soon retreated across the 38th parallel. General MacArthur requested permission of his superiors to pursue the enemy into North Korea. The UN and President Truman agreed. The president hoped the invasion might lead to a reunion of the two Koreas. The UN forces pushed northward beyond the 38th parallel (latitude) toward the Yalu River, the boundary separating China from North Korea. The Chinese warned them to stop.

Questions:

- 1) What are the causes of the Korean War from the perspective of this passage?
-
- 2) What questions do you still have to find out the causes of the Korean War?
-

Teacher's Note:

Please feel free to assign your students to read their textbook pages about the Korean War. This is a passage selected the U.S. Textbook entitled "Creating America: A history of the United States. (2005). McDougal Littell. 795-797.

Handout IV. Textbook Excerpt E (Translated from Japanese History Textbook)

Directions: As representatives from Japan, you, as a group, will read the textbook excerpt and answer questions. Please analyze the following passages and summarize the causes of the Korean War.

While the Cold War was worsening, war finally broke out in 1950 between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (the Korean War). As the North Korean army advanced southward rapidly, the U.N. Security Council, with the Soviet Union delegate absent, decided to give military support to South Korea. The United Nations forces, consisting mainly of United States troops, advanced northward to near the Chinese-Korean border. China sent a powerful volunteer army to North Korea. Subsequently, fierce battles raged around the 38th parallel; in 1953, a cease-fire agreement was concluded at long last.

During the Korean War, American bases on the main island of Japan and on Okinawa were used, and a vast amount of military supplies were procured in Japan. The effect was an upswing in the Japanese economy and a speeding of recovery.

Questions:

1) What are the causes of the Korean War from the perspective of this passage?

2) Did Japan get involved in the Korean War directly by sending in troops?

3) What questions do you still have to find out the causes of the Korean War?

Teacher's Note:

This is a passage selected from Lindaman, D. & Ward H. (2004) History Lessons: How textbooks from around the world portray U.S. History p. 271. The particular passage was selected from Japanese Textbook entitled "Japan in Modern History". Tokyo: International Society for Educational Information, 1994, 183. 185.

Handout IV. Textbook Excerpt F (Translated from Russian History Textbook)

Directions: As representatives from Russia, you, as a group, will read the textbook excerpt and answer questions. Please analyze the following passages and summarize the causes of the Korean War.

Originally, the division of Korea into two parts at the 38th parallel was designed as a temporary measure, intended to prevent clashes between Soviet and American troops fighting against the Japanese. Subsequently, the division was meant to designate the zones in which the two sides were responsible for normalization of civilian life and for the preparation of Korea's population for self-government. Despite the temporary nature in which the break-up of Korea was designed, different approaches of the USA and USSR to post-war organization of life in their respective spheres of influence and the beginning of the Cold War and the conflicts between the superpowers that accompanied it led to a long-term change of the Korean peninsula into an area of competition between two ideologies and the forces that lay behind them.

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The existence of two Korean states, each of which claimed to be the only lawful government of the whole peninsula, clearly created grounds for conflict between them. The 38th parallel became the site of frequent armed confrontations, which numbered 1,836 in 1949 alone and often included larger quantities of troops on both sides.

With the conditions of the conflict escalating, war finally broke out on June 25, 1950. The fighting took place with limited success for both sides. Large forces of American paratroopers and other soldiers were brought in to fight on the side of the South while Soviet military strategists and fighter pilots fought for North Korea. Furthermore, in October 1950, large units of Chinese "People's Volunteers" also appeared to help the North.

By the end of 1950, both opposing armies situated the bulk of their forces along the 38th parallel. After that most of the fighting was contested bitterly along the parallel without major sustained territorial gains for either side. On July 27, 1953, a truce agreement was signed in Korea halting the three-year conflict between the two sides. Both Chinese and American troops remained on the Korean peninsula.

After the conflict, the two Koreas continued to follow their respective paths dictated by the superpowers that influenced them.

Questions:

- 1) What are the causes of the Korean War from the perspective of this passage?

2) Did Russia (formerly USSR) get involved in the Korean War directly by sending in troops?

3) What questions do you still have to find out the causes of the Korean War?

Teacher's Note:

This is a passage selected and adapted from Lindaman, D. & Ward H. (2004) *History Lessons: How textbooks from around the world portray U.S. History* p. 272. The particular passage was selected from Russian Textbook entitled "The Newest History of Foreign Nations: 20th Century". Moscow: Vlados, 1998, 99-100.

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