

# COLD WAR I

## Yalta: Peace, Power and Betrayal

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### Lesson 1: Setting the Stage

The thousand mile journey will start with one step.

*Japanese proverb*

**Each event in history is impacted by past events and has influence on future ones. One of the greatest treasures a teacher can gift a student with is the ability to analyze the interconnectedness of world events. Giving students the analytical skills to connect current events to past ones, and in fact, to predict the impact the same current events will have on future actions, will make them more effective and more informed citizens.**

**While the Yalta Conference is often cited as the critical event in deciding the face of the post-war world, there are, of course, many other events and situations that forced the outcome of the Yalta Conference. It is a prime example of how history is a chain of interconnected events, a chain of events where every action has widespread effects and where future decisions are often forced upon leaders and countries by circumstances rooted in the past.**

### Learning Objectives

Students will discuss the events leading up to the Yalta Conference. They will analyze the status and strength of each country, both politically and militarily, and use this information to predict how each country will emerge from the conference and, eventually, from World War II.

### Content Standards

#### LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

from McREL standards at

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Standard.asp?SubjectID=7>

#### Reading and Writing

- Gathers and uses information for research purposes
- Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process
- Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process
- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of texts

#### Viewing, Listening, Speaking, and Media

- Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes
- Uses viewing skill and strategies to understand and interpret visual media
- Understands the characteristics and components of the media

**HISTORY STANDARDS**  
from MCREL standards

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=3&StandardID=2>

- Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history and studies how things might have been different in the absence of those decisions
- Understands how the past affects our lives and society in general

**HISTORY UNDERSTANDING STANDARDS**  
from McREL standards at

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Standard.asp?SubjectID=3>

- Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns
- Understands the historical perspective

**CIVICS STANDARDS**

from MCREL standards at <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Standard.asp?SubjectID=14>

- Understands the impact of significant political and nonpolitical developments on the United States and other nations

**LIFE SKILLS STANDARDS**

from McREL standards at <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Standard.asp?SubjectID=21>

**Thinking and Reasoning Standards**

- Understands and applies the basic principles of presenting an argument
- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning  
Effectively uses mental processes that are based on identifying similarities and differences

**WORKING WITH OTHERS STANDARDS**

from McREL standards at <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Standard.asp?SubjectID=22>

**Working with Others Standards**

- Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Works well with diverse individuals in diverse situations
- Displays effective interpersonal communication skills
- Understands and demonstrates leadership skills

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS

A copy of the educational version of the *Yalta Conference*, a television, and a VCR

Computers with Internet access

Computers with word processing program

Computers with presentation software such as Microsoft PowerPoint

Pencil and paper

## TIME NEEDED

The time required for completion of this lesson is dependent upon the teacher and students' backgrounds in the craft of reading, analyzing, and writing poetry as well as in presentation software, art software, and Internet protocols.

## Teaching Strategies

1. It is essential to students' understanding of the impact that the Yalta Conference had upon the post-war world that students understand the state of the world as well as the state of the war leading up to the meeting between the three great leaders, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin. View the beginning of the *Yalta Conference* video Segment 1 and Segment 2.
2. Divide the students into four groups. Assign each group a country: England, the Soviet Union, the United States of America, and Germany.
3. Have each group use the Internet, other resource materials, and prior knowledge to create a brief for their given country. Have students include the key points in their briefs.
  - a. Involvement in World War I
  - b. Reason for entering World War II
  - c. Any major events which affected that country during the war
  - d. State of the military just prior to the Yalta Conference (including recent victories and defeats, approximate troop strength or status, and outlook of future victories)
  - e. Treatment of citizens in occupied territories
  - f. A brief history of the leader of the country
4. Have students prepare Powerpoint presentations, between 6 and 12 slides, describing the country they have researched. If students are unfamiliar with Powerpoint, have students prepare overhead transparencies.
5. Provide time for each group to present their findings to the class. Require each student to present at least one of the slides. Make sure students present on each of the six key points above. Instruct students who are listening to the presentation to take notes so that they may rank the power (in order, from 1 to 4) of the country just prior to the Yalta Conference.

6. Once all presentations are completed, as a class, conduct a brief debate concerning the relative power of each country. Include not only the strength of the military, but also the country's influence throughout the entire world, alliances with other powerful nations, and the ability of that nation's leader.
7. Ask students if the relative power of each country prior to the Yalta Conference will indicate or impact their post-war power. Predict the relative power of each country at the end of the war by ranking the countries in power from 1 to 4. Is this the same order as prior to the Yalta Conference? Have students discuss why or why not.
8. At the end of the video, have students discuss if their predictions were correct, what assumptions they made that were correct, and what assumptions they made that proved to be inaccurate.