Cold War Lesson Plan

9th Grade World History Benchmark:

SS.912.W.8.2 Describe characteristics of the early Cold War.

Directly Correlated 11th Grade U.S. History Benchmark(s):

SS.912.A.6.10: Examine causes, course, and consequences of the early years of the Cold War (Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, and Warsaw Pact).

Learning Goals/Objectives:

- Students will describe the tensions and origins of the Cold War.
- Students will be able to identify the following: Iron curtain, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, Warsaw Pact.

Essential Question(s):

- Why did the Cold War start? Who was primary responsible for the Cold War – the United States or the Soviet Union?

Key Vocabulary: (terms in BOLD also appear in 11th grade U.S. History item specs)


Materials Needed:
Attachment A: Political cartoon of Truman & Stalin
Attachment B: Cold War PowerPoint
Attachment C: postermywall.com sample and instructions

Time: 80 minutes
**Steps to Deliver the Lesson:**

**Introduction/HOOK:** Introduce students to the topic of the Cold War by asking them what they think the term “Cold War” means. How is a “cold” war different from a regular war? Then, show the political cartoon depicting Truman and Stalin as two taxi drivers (Attachment A) and ask students to think about what the cartoon tells them about the Cold War era. Finally, ask students to brainstorm what they already know about the Cold War. (10 min.)

**Activity:**

1. Review key events during the early Cold War years using the PowerPoint (Attachment B). Afterward, assign pairs of students to one of the following terms for which they will create a digital vocabulary poster using www.postermymwall.com: Iron curtain, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, Warsaw Pact. See Attachment C for a sample and instructions for using www.postermymwall.com. (30 min.)

2. Using the Stanford History Education Group’s Lesson Plan on the Cold War (http://sheg.stanford.edu/upload/V3LessonPlans/Cold%20War%20Lesson%20Plan_0.pdf), have students analyze primary source documents in order to answer the essential question: Who was primarily responsible for the Cold War? Detailed instructions, documents, and guiding question handouts are included in the link above. (30 min.)

**Closure:**

Have students respond to one of the following discussion questions and post their response to a class padlet. To do this, you must use www.padlet.com to create a blank canvas on which students may respond in writing to the question: (10 min.)

- Who was primarily responsible for the start of the Cold War? What evidence do you have to support your claim?
- Which of the documents do you believe is most trustworthy? Why?
- Did anyone’s hypothesis change? How and why?
- What other evidence would you need to strengthen your claim?

**Optional Extension Activity/Home Learning:**

- Design a flow chart to show, by nation, the spread of Communism from the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 to the present. Use colors to distinguish those nations that are no longer Communist from those that are still Communist.
A British cartoon of June 1947 shows Truman and Stalin as two taxi-drivers trying to get customers. The 'customers' are labelled 'Turkey', 'Hungary', 'Bulgaria', and 'Austria'.

Who are two central figures? What are they doing? Describe the conditions of the two taxi cars. Who do the passengers depict? What is the message of the political cartoon?
The Origins of the Cold War
The Iron Curtain

Winston Churchill gave the Iron Curtain speech in 1946

Map of the Iron Curtain
The Truman Doctrine, 1947

President Truman outlined the Truman Doctrine to a joint session of Congress in March of 1947.
The Marshall Plan, 1947

A map showing how the plan’s $20B was distributed by country

Photo shows a delivery of wheat from the U.S. being unloaded in Rotterdam, Netherlands
Central Historical Question

Who started the Cold War?
Sample of [www.postermywall.com](http://www.postermywall.com) final product:

Instructions:

- A poster like the one above may be made easily and for free using the following steps.
- Create a free account or sign in to postermywall.com.
- Select “Create a Design” to create a new poster.
- Select “Blank Canvas” or choose an existing template.
- Choose Design Type (sample above uses the Instagram Post design type).
- Choose and customize background (sample above uses gradient colors), then click Apply.
- Add text, photos, or clip art to poster by clicking the appropriate buttons on the left menu bar. Customize, resize, move as needed.
- Share design using email, or via direct link so that others may see it. (Suggestion to teachers: Create a Padlet, Linoit, or another collaborative space to allow students to share their posters with the class.)