



Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 3, WEBISODE 16

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



Segment Overview

Instead of concentrating his efforts on terrorism, President Ronald Reagan tried to gain peace between the United States and its old enemy, the Soviet Union. To this end, Reagan engaged in peace talks with Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet premier, urging him to tear down the Berlin Wall.

The Soviets finally tore down the wall during George Bush's (Reagan's successor) presidency. Shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, students in China rebelled against their government. The Chinese government sent an army to suppress the rebellion in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The harsh reaction of the Chinese government led to great outrage in the West, but little direct action could be taken. Bush led the country to war in the Persian Gulf in Operation Desert Storm. While this action reduced Saddam Hussein's power, the region remained unstable, as Bill Clinton became the new chief executive.

Teacher Directions

1. Students, in small teams, discuss the following question.

- What world events seemed to usher in a new era of freedom?
- What world events warned of trouble ahead for the United States and world freedom?

2. Make sure the students understand the following points in discussing the questions.

Although President Reagan's foreign policy marked the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall, dreams of freedom were crushed as student protests in Tiananmen Square ended in brutal suppression. Elsewhere, violent wars erupted in Bosnia and Rwanda, and Iraq invaded Kuwait leading to the military action called "Desert Storm." Even more ominous, a secret terrorist network known as Al Qaeda began expanding.



Let's Discuss



Teacher Directions

1. Show a transparency of the Student Sheet: *Lone Student Faces Tanks in Tiananmen Square*. The students discuss their reactions to the photograph.
2. Share the following information about the democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, China, with the students.

In June of 1989, thousands of Chinese students demonstrated in Tiananmen Square in the center of Beijing, the capital of China, demanding freedom to think and speak. Some students carried banners with slogans such as “Law, Not Authoritarianism” and “Long Live Democracy.”

To symbolize that freedom they made their own Statue of Liberty. The Chinese government, which curbed free expression, cracked down on the student protesters and sent in the Chinese army to break up the demonstrations. Chinese troops advanced in tanks and armored personnel carriers toward Tiananmen Square. In what many world leaders called a massacre, the Chinese army attacked and killed large numbers of civilian demonstrators and instituted martial law.

The Chinese army crackdown in and around Tiananmen Square had an enormous effect on the course of United States-China relations. The deaths of democracy protesters resulted in United States sanctions, suspensions of high-level contacts, and a halt in the transfer of military technology.

3. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Voices from Tiananmen Square*.
4. Working with teammates, students read these first person accounts about the Tiananmen Square massacre and study the photograph of the lone student against a column of tanks.
5. The students imagine that they are newsmen who witnessed and sent accounts of the confrontation. Using the shared information, the photograph, and the quotations about the Tiananmen Square Massacre, the students determine the 5Ws and H (Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?) of their news reports and create individual newspaper articles describing the event.

Note to the Teacher: Students can research additional information about Tiananmen Square using a website offering official documents and a narrative. The site offers the Declassified History: A National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book @ [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB 16 documents/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB_16_documents/index.html).

6. Discuss with the students their reactions to the events at Tiananmen Square.

History Sleuth. Cont.



What do you
Think?

- Why do they think the Chinese students took such risk?

In what ways did the events in Tiananmen Square remind the students of the Boston Massacre in our nation's early history? How were the two events alike? Different?

Teacher Directions

1. Students respond to the following prompt.

- Have you ever tried to sit down and talk with someone you thought you did not like?
- Did you find that the reasons you disliked the person could be resolved by talking about them?
- Were relations with this person improved afterwards?

2. Help the students connect their own experience with that of President Reagan when he chose to speak with Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev about ending the Cold War.

3. Discuss with the students.

- Would you have decided to speak with Gorbachev? Why or why not? Why might that have been a difficult conversation?

Teacher Directions

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *The Story of the Berlin Wall*. Working with teammates, students read the information and discuss the following questions.

- Why was the Berlin Wall created?
- How did it affect life in Berlin?
- What measures were taken by Berliners to escape?
- What did the rest of the world think about the wall?
- How did the wall finally come down?

2. Students discuss the effect of the wall on the life of those living in Berlin, both in the East and the West, and speculate on what it must have been like to witness its fall.



Moving Toward
Freedom

Moving Toward Freedom,
Continued.

3. Students in small teams consider how the fall of the Berlin Wall moved the world toward freedom.
4. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Remembering the Berlin Wall*.
5. Students choose one of the following ways to respond to what they have learned about the Berlin Wall:
 - Write a short poem memorializing those who sought freedom by attempting to escape over the wall.
 - Compose a personal statement about the importance of freedom.
 - Design a memorial for those who sought freedom by attempting to escape over the wall.
 - Create a symbol and a slogan celebrating the fall of the Berlin wall.
6. Students record their responses on the bricks using the Student Sheet: *Remembering the Berlin Wall*.
7. Display the bricks on the classroom wall to create a class mural, "Remembering the Berlin Wall."

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Technology/Dramatic Arts — Students produce "on-the-scene" news broadcasts reporting the fall of the Berlin Wall, the protest in Tiananmen Square, the war in Bosnia and Rwanda, and the Gulf War.

Geography — Students examine and compare maps from before and after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Students list the new republics that were created after the fall of the U.S.S.R.

Geography — Students locate and mark the areas of the former Soviet Union, the Berlin Wall, Tiananmen Square in China, Bosnia, Rwanda, Iraq, and Kuwait. Students research and add other sites of world unrest since the Gulf War to the map. Students speculate what these "hot spots" tell us about the future.

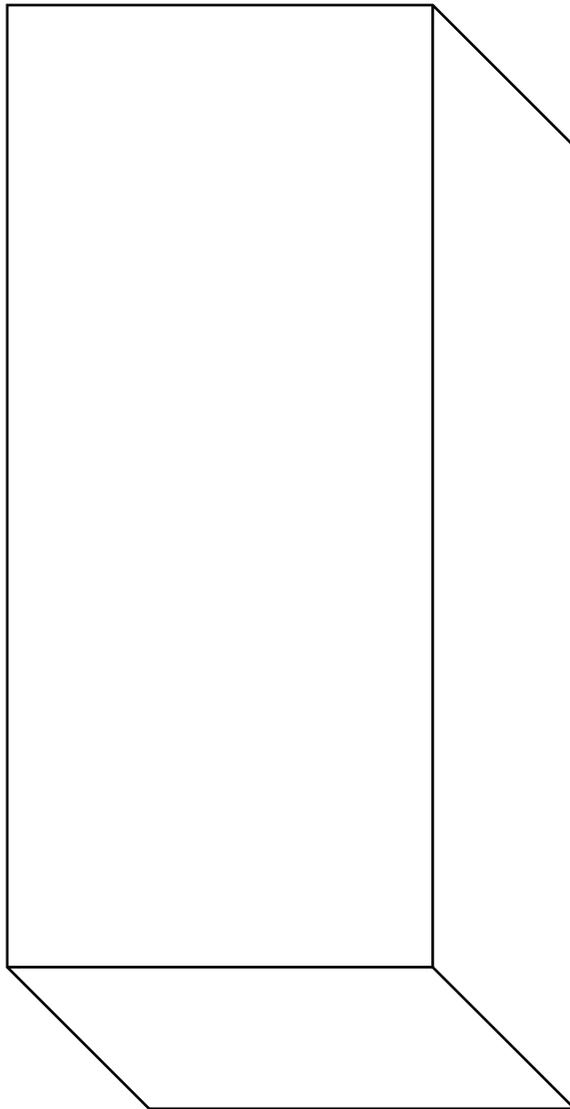


Connections

Lone student faces tanks in Tiananmen Square



Remembering the Berlin Wall



Voices From Tiananmen Square

"Well, the students' demand is very simple. They want to have a dialogue with the leaders of their country. They feel that too often their leaders will not admit to mistakes while they are in office. That's the problem."

"Democracy in China must be a process. It cannot be done in just one day."

From interviews of students during the Tiananmen Square event. Unfortunately the names of the students are not known

"The tyranny of the corrupt officials is nothing short of extreme...The people will no longer believe the lies of the authorities for on our banners appear the words: science, democracy, freedom, human rights and rule by law..."

Excerpt from a treatise distributed by the protestors at Tiananmen Square.

"...at one command, the soldiers raised their guns and fired one round at the residents and students, who fell to the ground. As soon as the gunshots stopped, other people rushed forward to rescue the wounded. The steps of a clinic near Xidan were already covered in blood. But the struggle at the intersection did not stop. Armoured vehicles ran over roadblocks, knocked over cars and buses. The unarmed people had only bricks... What they got in return was bullets... People dispersed and ran for their lives. Soldiers ran after them, guns blazing. Even when residents ran into courtyards or into the shrubbery, the soldiers would catch up with them and kill them".

From: Beijing's Unforgettable Spring, Liu Binyan and Xu Gang, describing events at the Xidan intersection, 2 km west of Tiananmen Square, pp. 59-60

"...Thick smoke and tear gas were bringing tears to everyone's eyes. I met F. who told me how the first tanks had crushed the barricades, knocking people off the tops of buses that soon caught fire. By now the way was clear for trucks to move east one by one, the slowness of their advance suggesting that there must be battles somewhere ahead. The whole city of Peking seemed in a state of outrage and extreme agitation. On the side-streets off Changan Avenue, thousands of us rhythmically shouted in the intervals between gunfire: 'You animals!' 'Li Peng—fascist!' and 'Go on strike!' But the troops shot back, killing those who were not swift enough to squat down or move away or who simply took no heed of bullets. People were constantly falling to the ground and being

taken to a nearby hospital, but the mood of indignation completely overwhelmed any feelings of fear”.

From: Beijing Diary, by Lu Yuan, p. 16

“...many hundreds of people (not only students) appeared on the street. They ran after the trucks and shouted protest slogans. A few stones were thrown. The soldiers opened fire with live ammunition. The crowd threw themselves on the ground, but quickly followed the convoy again. The more shots were fired, the more the crowd got determined and outraged. Suddenly they started singing the Internationale; they armed themselves with stones and threw them towards the soldiers. There were also a few Molotov cocktails and the last truck was set on fire”.

From: Amnesty International Report, August 30, 1989

The Story of the Berlin Wall

At the end of World War II, the city of Berlin, like the defeated Germany, was divided into four sectors: the American, British, and French sectors in the west, and the Soviet sector in the east. By June 1946, the Soviet military started patrolling the border between the sectors. The Soviets worried that many skilled scientists and others were escaping from their sector into West Germany and freedom. The stress of the Cold War and power play between the Soviet Union and the West resulted in a blockade of West Berlin (which was completely surrounded by other Soviet territory) from the Western countries.

This blockade, which began on May 12, 1948, prevented all supplies, mostly food and medical items, from entering West Berlin. To defeat this blockade, the United States, England, and France started an airlift using old World War II planes still in Europe to bring in supplies. The West Germans called these aircraft "Raisinbombers". The Berlin Airlift defeated the blockade, which was officially ended a year later. Shortly after the end of the blockade, England, United States, and France united their sectors in West Berlin, as they did through the rest of West Germany. The West Germans were allowed to govern themselves and created a democratic republic.

On the night of August 13, 1961, the Soviets secretly began the construction of barbed wire barriers between East and West German. That morning Berliners woke up to find that they could no longer cross the border; it was patrolled by armed guards and blocked with a barbed wire fence. Many families were divided by this barrier and could no longer see each other.

By 1975, the Soviets had replaced the temporary barbed wire fence with a solid concrete wall, topped with wire. This was further separated from West Berlin by another fence. In between the two fences was a "dead zone." This area was filled with land mines and covered by guard towers with machine guns and spotlights. Parts of the fence were also electric. This sturdy wall almost completely stopped escape attempts.

Almost as soon as the first fence was built, people tried to escape from East Germany. At the beginning people tried to climb over the Wall or the fences, they jumped out of the houses that were in the border area or built tunnels to escape. Some of the more unusually escapes were made with home built hot-air balloons or home made armored cars. Not only did East Germans want to escape, but often the border guards themselves tried to escape. During the first days several people lost their lives or were killed by the Eastern border guards. Günter Litwin was the first victim who was shot down

by East German border guards in Berlin on August 24, 1961. In all, 171 people were killed or died attempting to escape at the Berlin Wall between August 13, 1961 and November 9, 1989.

Several US Presidents visited Berlin to give moral support and encourage the Soviet Union to reunite the city. The first was John F. Kennedy in 1963. He is famous for standing near the wall and saying, like the rest of the world, "Ich bin ein Berliner," ("I am a Berliner"). What Kennedy was saying is that the situation in Berlin between East and West was, on a closer scale, the same thing that was occurring around the world. He pledged his support for the reunification of Germany. In 1987, President Ronald Regan visited Berlin. He gave a direct plea to Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev. He also stood at the wall and said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

Mikhail Gorbachev listened. He also knew that the Soviet Union was failing as a government. Increasing resisted in Soviet Controlled countries was having a direct effect on the ability of the Soviet Union to govern. Soon there were mass demonstrations in East Germany. These demonstrations forced the resignation of East Germany's head of state and the new government immediately drafted new laws to lift the restrictions. At 06.53 pm on November 9, 1989 a member of the new East German government was asked when the new travel law would be in effect. He answered: "Well, as far as I can see, ... straightaway, immediately." Thousands of East Berliners went to the border crossings. At 10.30 pm the border was opened; that moment meant the end of the Berlin Wall. The citizens of both East and West Berlin went mad with celebration. Families who had not seen each other in years reunited. The West Germans who met them provided the East Germans with wine and champagne. Almost immediately people started tearing the wall down. The hated symbol was so effectively torn down that now only small parts of it remain as a memorial.