

The Middle East in Transition: Questions for U.S. Policy

Steven Buening William Fremd H.S. Palatine, IL




The Choices Program

THE UNITED STATES IN AFGHANISTAN

AFRICAN ROSE: THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MEMPHIS

GENERAL MARSHALL HISTORY: AMERICA BECOMES THE FACE OF DEMOCRACY

CURRICULUM RESOURCES FOR HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

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The Middle East in Transition: Questions for U.S. Policy

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THE CHOICES PROGRAM
Explore the Past... Shape the Future
History and Current Issues for the Classroom

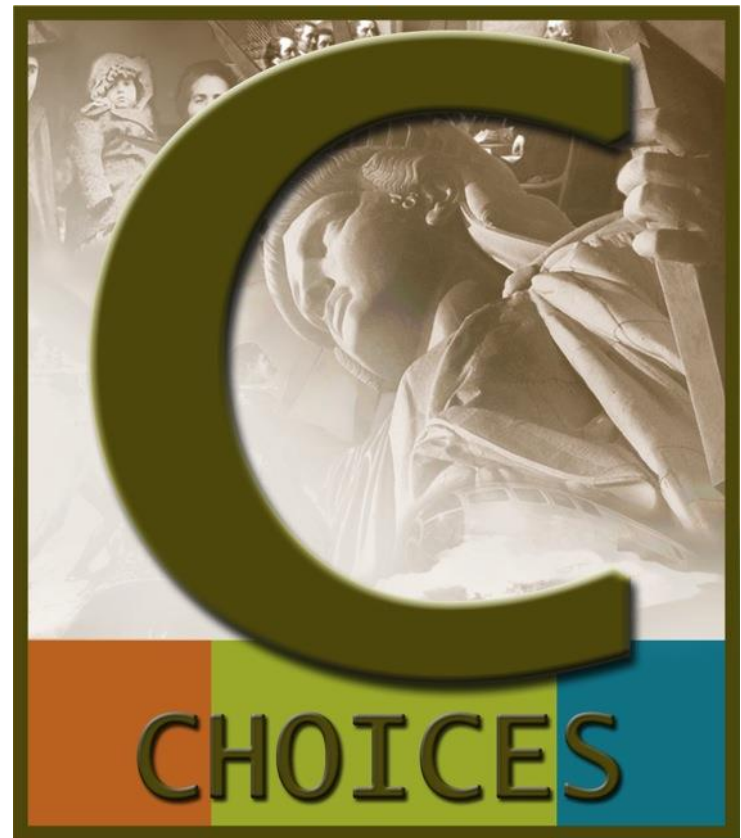
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TEACHER RESOURCE BOOK

Explore the Past... Shape the Future

Our Mission

To empower young people with the skills, knowledge, and habits necessary to be engaged citizens who are capable of addressing international issues with thoughtful public discourse and informed decision making.



Teaching Social Studies, 1973



Core Beliefs:

- **Most significant questions in history (and geography) have multiple/conflicting answers; students must be able to sift through and evaluate multiple sources and viewpoints.**
- **The who, what, when and where are (usually) not debatable, but the WHY, the HOW and the SO WHAT are perpetually open to reinterpretation.**
- **An American public that doesn't know and doesn't care is a dangerous thing!**

According to the American Historical Association.....

“Traditional lectures and traditional assessment are increasingly regarded as major obstacles to good teaching.”

“Authentic assessment measures student learning by their ability to **evaluate documents or develop an argument based on interpreting data, not just recalling information.”**

Aligns With Common Core

Choices Develops the Competencies Required by Common Core

www.choices.edu/common-core

The Choices Program's student-centered approach makes complex issues accessible and meaningful for students of diverse abilities and learning styles.

CRITICAL THINKING

Students examine historical context, analyze case studies, consider contrasting policy options, and explore the underlying values and interests that drive different perspectives.

MEDIA AND DIGITAL LITERACY

Students critique editorials, audio and video sources, maps, and other visuals to identify perspective and bias. Video clips help students gather and assess information from leading scholars.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Students examine primary and secondary sources to assess multiple perspectives on complex international issues.

COMMUNICATION

Students engage in collaborative discussions, build on others' ideas, formulate persuasive arguments, and ultimately express their own viewpoints.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Creating political cartoons, memorializing historical events artistically, or developing original policy options are some of the innovative ways that students express themselves.

CIVIC LITERACY

Choices materials empower students with the skills and habits to actively engage with their communities and the world.



"The Choices curriculum is the best resource I have found to stimulate honors level students and appropriately guide students who need more structure. The writing is clear, the content is impressive, and the question and answer format is particularly helpful. The students also love the simulations!"

-Virginia Teacher



Formats

Choices Curriculum Units are Available in a Variety of Formats

PRINT TEACHER SET

A reproducible student text and a teacher resource book. Teacher Sets are not intended for multi-teacher use.

PDF TEACHER SET

A PDF file, containing a student text and a teacher resource book, downloaded from our webstore. Teacher Sets are not intended for multi-teacher use. PDF Teacher Sets may not be posted online.

TEACHER SET - DELUXE EDITION

Print and PDF versions of a Teacher Set.

PRINT CLASSROOM SET

A minimum order of 10 student texts per title. A teacher resource book will be included free of charge.

eTEXT CLASSROOM SET

A PDF package that includes readings and student handouts that can be posted to a learning management system or course site.

iBOOKS TEXTBOOKS

Digital student text made exclusively for the iPad or iPad mini.

Teacher Sets can also be purchased in a series.

Complete CHOICES **Current** ISSUES **U.S.** HISTORY **World** HISTORY

iBooks Textbooks

www.choices.edu/ibookstextbooks

We now offer iBooks Textbooks that utilize the interactive features and video capabilities of the iPad and iPad mini.



iBooks Textbooks allow students to:

Swipe through photo collections

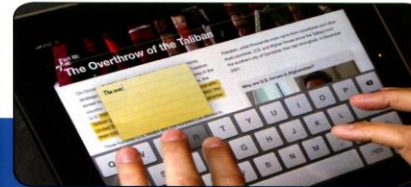
Watch videos

Highlight text

Take notes

Search for content

Look up key terms



Choices Curricula Promote 21st Century Skills

The Choices Program uses a problem-based approach to make complex international issues accessible and meaningful for students of diverse abilities and learning styles.

GLOBAL AWARENESS

Readings and primary source documents immerse students in multiple perspectives on complex international issues.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY LITERACY

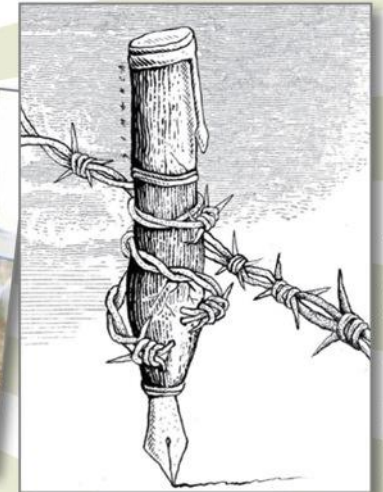
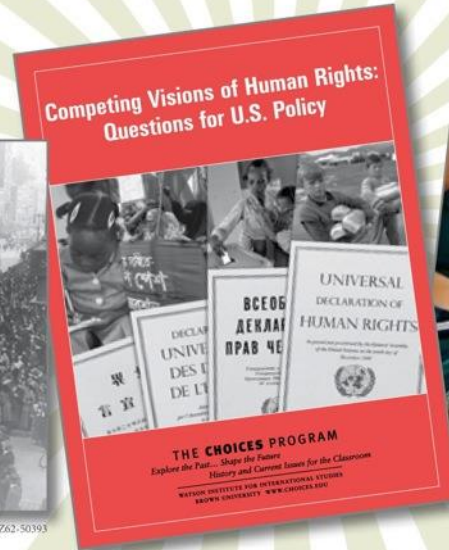
Students critique editorials, audio and video sources, maps and other visuals for perspective and bias. They watch video clips to gather and assess information from leading scholars.

CRITICAL THINKING

Students examine contrasting policy options and explore the underlying values and interests that drive different perspectives.



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COLLABORATION

Students work in groups to make oral presentations, analyze case studies, and develop persuasive arguments.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Creating political cartoons, memorializing historical events artistically, or developing original policy options are some of the innovative ways that students express themselves.

CIVIC LITERACY

Choices materials empower students with the skills and habits to actively engage with their communities and the world.

Make Complex International Issues Understandable and Meaningful for Students

Why did the Truman administration drop the atomic bomb?

How was the decision to invade Iraq in 2003 made?

Why did Brazil's transition from military dictatorship to democracy succeed?

What factors should drive U.S. decisions about foreign aid?

Choices at a Glance

40 Curriculum Units

Current
Issues

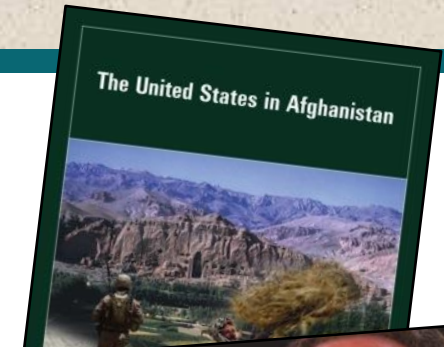
Historical

Web Resources Support Units

- Almost 1,000 Scholars Online videos
- “Teaching with the News” lessons

Professional Development

- Webinars & Leadership Summer Institute



The Middle East in Transition: Questions for U.S. Policy

Current Issues Series

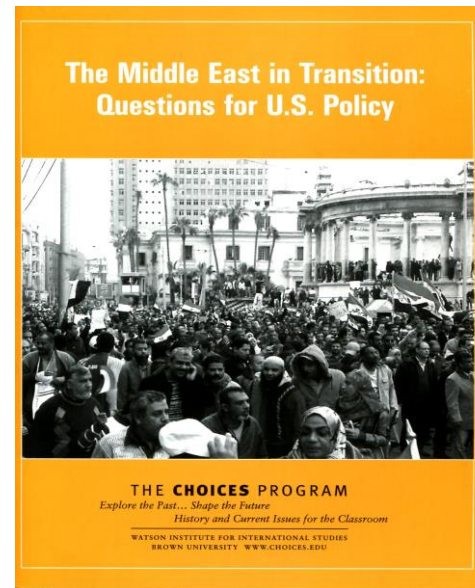
2 Parts

What Should Be the
U.S. Role in the Middle
East?

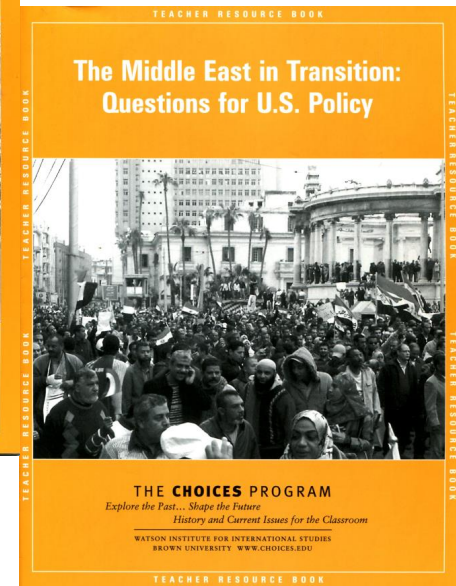


Essential
Question

Student Text



Teacher
Resource Book

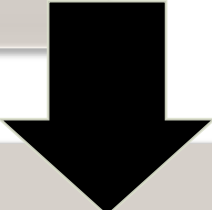


Unit Structure

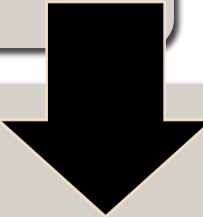
Hint:

*Use
Scholars
Online
&
Teaching
With the
News!*

**Introduce the issue
and its historical
background**

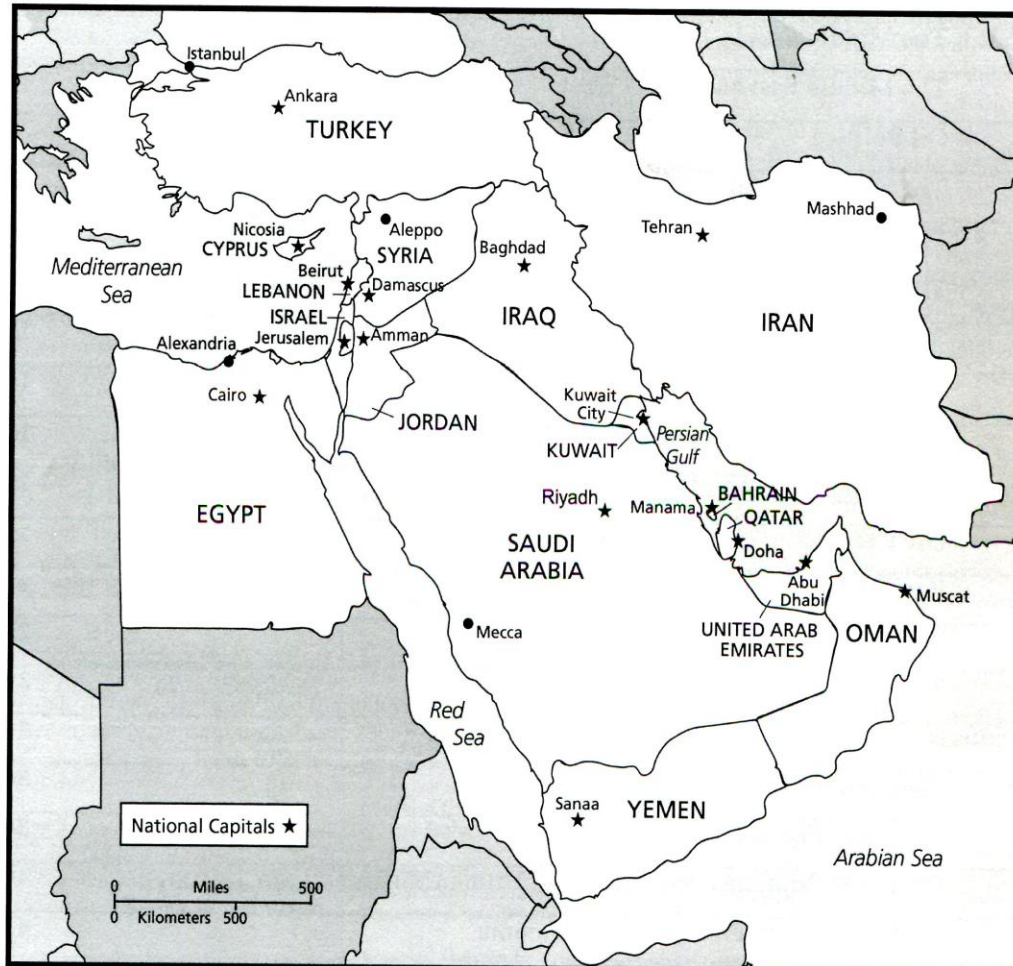


**Analyze the issue, policy
options and values and
conduct role play**



**Students articulate their
own option or reflect on the
significance of decisions
made**

The Middle East



Student Readings

Part I: Provides a brief overview of the history of US involvement in the Middle East since World War I.

Part II: Looks at the critical issues facing the US in the Middle East today: oil trends, regional security (Iran & Iraq), the Arab-Israeli conflict, political Islam, Egypt, and Syria.

Part III: Presents four options for the future of the US role in the Middle East.

Teacher Resource Book

Support Materials

- Reading Strategies and Suggestions
- Key Terms
- Issues Toolbox
- Integration Tips
- Two Levels of Study Guides

Assessment Guide for Oral Presentations

Group assignment: _____

Group members: _____

Group Assessment	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Needs Improvement</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
1. The group made good use of its preparation time	5	4	3	2	1
2. The presentation reflected analysis of the issues under consideration	5	4	3	2	1
3. The presentation was coherent and persuasive	5	4	3	2	1
4. The group incorporated relevant sections of the reading into its presentation	5	4	3	2	1
5. The group's presenters spoke clearly, maintained eye contact, and made an effort to hold the attention of their audience	5	4	3	2	1
6. The presentation incorporated contributions from all the members of the group	5	4	3	2	1

Skills Highlighted

Geography of Middle East

- Map Interpretation Skills
- Visual Literacy

The Partition of Palestine

- Map Interpretation Skills
- Visual Literacy

Views From the Middle East

- Persuasive Techniques and Point of View
- Critical Thinking

The Iranian Revolution

- Testing Hypotheses

Options Role Play Activity

- Critical Thinking
- Collaboration

Middle East Through Literature

- Critical Thinking
- Textual Analysis

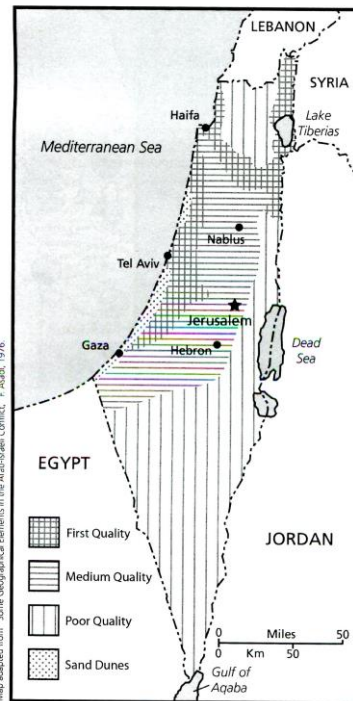
Coping With Crisis

- Global Awareness

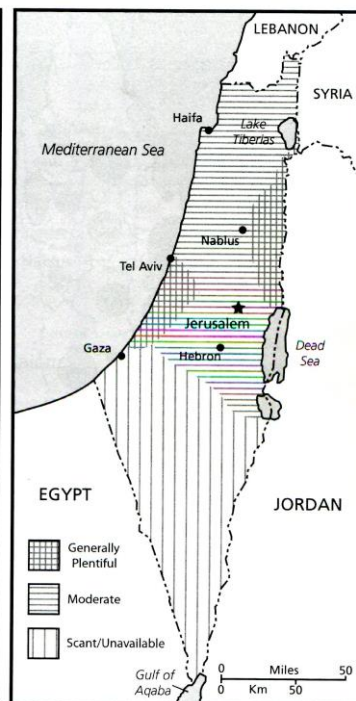
1. Geography of Middle East

Focus question: How has the geography of the Middle East impacted its history?

Soil Quality



Water Resources



- ➔ SKILLS: Map interpretation, drawing conclusions.
- ➔ Deals with both human and physical characteristics of the region.

2. The Partition of Palestine

Palestine Maps and Sources

Balfour Declaration, 2 November 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,

Arthur James Balfour

Statement of British Policy in Palestine Issued by Winston Churchill in June 1922

"...The tension which has prevailed from time to time in Palestine is mainly due to apprehensions, which are entertained both by sections of the Arab and by sections of the Jewish population. These apprehensions, so far as the Arabs are concerned, are partly based upon exaggerated interpretations of the meaning of the [Balfour] Declaration favouring the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine.... Unauthorized statements have been made to the effect that the purpose in view is to create a wholly Jewish Palestine. Phrases have been used such as that Palestine is to become 'as Jewish as England is English.' His Majesty's Government regard any such expectation as impracticable and have no such aim in view. Nor have they at any time contemplated...the disappearance or the subordination of the Arabic population, language, or culture in Palestine. They would draw attention to the fact that the terms of the Declaration referred to do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine...."

Jewish Agency, The Biltmore Program, 1942

"In our generation, and in particular in the course of the past twenty years, the Jewish people have awakened and transformed their ancient homeland; from 50,000 at the end of the last war their numbers have increased to more than 500,000. They have made the waste places bear fruit and the desert to blossom. Their pioneering achievements in agriculture and in industry, embodying new patterns of cooperative endeavor, have written a notable page in the history of colonization.... In the new values thus created, their Arab neighbors in Palestine have shared...."

The Conference urges that the gates of Palestine be opened; that the Jewish Agency be vested with control of immigration into Palestine and with the necessary authority for upbuilding the country, including the development of its unoccupied and uncultivated lands; and that Palestine be established as a Jewish Commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world.

Then and only then will the age-old wrong to the Jewish people be righted."

3. Views From the Middle East

➔ SKILLS:

➔ Point of View

➔ Persuasive Techniques

➔ Critical Thinking

Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei— Supreme Jurist of Iran

Born in 1939, you began pursuing religious studies as a teenager. In 1958, you joined the Islamist movement opposing the shah's modernization program. During the 1960s and 1970s, you were repeatedly imprisoned for plotting to overthrow the shah. With the triumph of the Islamist revolution in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini appointed you to the Council of the Islamic Revolution. After barely surviving a terrorist bombing attack in 1981 against the ruling Islamic Republic Party, you were elected president by a large majority. In 1989, you were chosen supreme spiritual leader following the death of Khomeini. Your position makes you the most powerful political figure in Iran, with the authority to overrule parliament's decisions.

Iran	
Population:	77.9 mil.
Literacy:	77%
Per capita GDP:	\$13,300
Unemployment rate:	15.5%
Internet users:	8.2 mil.
Main exports:	oil (80%), chemicals, food
Major trading partners:	China (22.1%), India (11.9%), Turkey (10.6%)
Military spending as % of GDP:	2.5%

You oppose efforts to expand economic ties with the West and ease Islamic social restrictions. The United States has accused your country of sponsoring terrorism throughout the Middle East, of trying to secretly develop nuclear weapons, and of inciting violence in Iraq. Iran initially supported the protests of the Arab Spring, particularly because they unseated the governments of traditional U.S. allies like Egypt and Tunisia. But Iranian leaders, including you, grew concerned when protests spread to Syria, Iran's key ally in the region since 1979. Iran has supported President Bashar al-Assad during the Syrian civil war. Iran faced its own protests in 2009, which you allowed to be put down with force.

Egypt

Egyptians conducted mass protests and demonstrations in early 2011, and ousted their president, Hosni Mubarak, in February of that year. Mubarak had ruled for nearly thirty years, keeping Egypt under emergency law that limited basic freedoms and allowed the government to conduct regular mass arrests. Beginning in November 2011, Egyptians went to the polls in a succession of elections to elect the new leaders of their government. Mohammed Morsi, a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, won the presidential election in June 2012.

Egypt	
Population:	85.3 mil.
Literacy:	72%
Per capita GDP:	\$6,700
Unemployment rate:	13.5%
Internet users:	20.1 mil.
Main exports:	oil, cotton, textiles
Major trading partners:	U.S. (8.2%), India (7%), Italy (6.7%)
Military spending as % of GDP:	2.2%

A little more than one year later, dissatisfaction with the economy and Morsi's government led to massive protests around Egypt. The Egyptian military forced Morsi from power and put him in prison, suspended the constitution, and called for new elections. In the wake of the ouster, hundreds of thousands of Egyptians have participated in pro- and anti-Morsi rallies. Security forces have violently cracked down on Morsi supporters. International leaders, including U.S. President Obama, have condemned the violence.

4. The Iranian Revolution

➔ SKILLS: Testing Hypotheses

Data Card 4: 1953

In the early 1950s the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was heating up. The Soviets' proximity to and relationship with Iran worried U.S. President Eisenhower, who was particularly concerned about the spread of communism. U.S. and British officials saw the shah as key to their goals in Iran. Both countries wanted an oil-producing Iran firmly aligned against the Soviet Union. They aimed to rid Iran of the Mossadegh government, and increase the power of the shah, who they were convinced would do their bidding. The shah, anxious to increase his power, approved of the coup in advance. In 1953, the CIA and British secret services bribed a small group of Iranians to instigate a coup. Mossadegh was removed from power, and the shah took steps to increase his own power.

Questions:

Mossadegh was an elected representative of the Iranian people. How might Iranians have felt when he was overthrown? How might this event have affected their views of the United States, the British, or the shah?

Data Card 5: 1950s

The shah was anxious to modernize Iran and make it a more powerful country. He had the support of the United States and Britain, who wanted a stable, oil producing Iran as an ally against the Soviet Union. With the help of the United States and Israel he formed SAVAK, a secret police organization, which he used to hunt down opponents. SAVAK became known for the mistreatment, torture, and execution of opponents and political prisoners. The shah's actions severely limited the public expression of political ideas. He also negotiated a new oil contract with Britain and the United States that gave Iran 50 percent of the profits. The shah used most of the profits on himself. During the 1950s, the United States provided more than \$500 million in military aid to the shah.

Questions:

How might Iranians have felt at this time in their history? What options might they have had for changing things they disagreed with?

Data Card 6: 1960s

During the 1960s the shah continued his efforts at modernization. The most important reforms included redistributing land to peasants, giving women the right to vote, and emphasizing education. Elementary school enrollment rose from 1.6 million in 1963 and to more than 4 million in 1977. Land reform took away land from wealthy landowners and from religious schools and mosques, but it did not provide most peasants with enough land to even reach a level of subsistence. The shah also introduced laws that gave women more rights in marriage. Although some supported the shah's efforts to modernize, these reforms were a source of resentment among some religious leaders because they challenged traditional interpretations of Islamic law and replaced them with what religious leaders saw as Western values.

Question:

How might different groups of Iranians have viewed these new laws?

5. Options Role Play

The Four Options: Debate and Discussion

Objectives:

Students will: Articulate the leading values that frame the debate on U.S. policy toward the Middle East.

Explore, debate, and evaluate multiple perspectives on U.S. policy toward the Middle East.

Sharpen rhetorical skills through debate and discussion.

Cooperate with classmates in staging a persuasive presentation.

Handouts:

“Evaluation Form” (TRB-52) for the committee members

In the Classroom:

1. Setting the Stage—Organize the room so that the four option groups face a row of desks reserved for the Committee on Foreign Relations. Distribute “Evaluation Form” to the committee members. Instruct members of the committee to fill out the first part of their “Evaluation Form” during the course of the period. The second part of the worksheet should be completed as homework.

2. Managing the Simulation—Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to-five minute presentations by each option group. Encourage all to speak clearly and convincingly.

Throughout the course of the simulation, all students should fill out “Options: Graphic Organizer.”

3. Guiding Discussion—Following the presentations, invite members of the Committee on Foreign Relations to ask clarifying questions. Make sure that each committee member has an opportunity to ask at least one question. The questions should be evenly distributed among all four option groups. If time permits, encourage members of the option groups to challenge the positions of the competing groups. During the question period, allow any option group member to respond. (As an alternative approach, permit questions following the presentation of each option.)

Homework:

Students should read each of the four options in the student text, then they should fill out “Focusing Your Thoughts” (TRB-54) and complete “Your Own Option” (TRB-55).

Note:

The consideration of alternative views is not finished when the options role play is over. After the role play, students should articulate their own views on the issue and create their own options for U.S. policy. These views will be more sophisticated and nuanced if students have had an opportunity to challenge one another to think more critically about the merits and trade-offs of alternative views. See *Guidelines for Deliberation* <www.choices.edu/deliberation> for suggestions on deliberation.

6. The Middle East Through Literature

➔ SKILLS: Critical Thinking, Textual Analysis

Optional Reading: Middle Eastern Society Through Literature

The field of literature in the Middle East has often been a political and cultural battleground. Most of the region's best-known writers have stood in opposition to their governments. Many have been imprisoned for their work. At the same time, literature has reflected the larger tensions of the region. Writers have played an important role in shaping the struggle between traditional values and Western liberalism. They have often served as a voice for the powerless and the forgotten.

In this section of the reading, you will have an opportunity to sample the work of Iranian, Israeli, Palestinian, and Turkish writers. As you read, identify the values and viewpoints that come across most strongly.

Aboud's Drawings by Ghodsi Ghazinur

Ghodsi Ghazinur (1943-) is a widely-read author of children's literature in Iran. She is also skilled at addressing mature themes through the eyes of children.

Aboud's Drawings is told from the perspective of Morteza, a poor boy living in Tehran, Iran's capital. The story is set in the early stages of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88). While Morteza, his little brother Mostafa, and his friends are playing with cardboard weapons and fireworks in their neighborhood, Iran is experiencing mounting casualties at the battlefield and suffering from increasingly deadly rocket attacks. In the following excerpt, the reality of war intrudes on Morteza's innocent game.

After my brother fell asleep that night, I got to work. I found a piece of cardboard, drew a picture of a J-3 gun, cut the picture out in the dark with a pair of scissors I took out of my mother's sewing box, then I took the half-ready gun to my room and painted it black with a magic marker. It turned out perfect. My brother cried his eyes out when he

saw my gun the next morning. My mother who had lost her patience with him bought him a squirt gun, but my brother kept on crying that that was not a gun and that he wanted a gun and my mother, not knowing what was going on, ignored him. Eventually she got disgusted and started beating him. I felt so sorry for him that I had to rescue him from her, in spite of the fact that he was an enemy, and make him understand that a handgun was as good as any gun in a war....

That day my older brother informed us that he was joining the army on Monday. My mother looked at my father. My father's hand, holding a cigarette, started trembling. They acted as if it were the first time they had learned it. I sat by my brother and said, "Brother, are you going so you can fight the enemy?"

He caressed my hair and said, "Yes."

"With a real gun?" my younger brother asked enthusiastically. My brother smiled bitterly. My younger brother went on gleefully, "We're fighting, too. In the alley. But our guns are fake."

I glared at him but it was too late. I expected my older brother to scorn us, to say that instead of engaging in nonsense like that we should be studying. But he gently said, "Sweet Mostafa! No one really wants to be in a war. You are too young to know what war is, otherwise you wouldn't be playing a 'war' game...."

A few days later a new boy appeared in our neighborhood. He was our age, with a dark complexion and curly hair. We soon found out that his name was Aboud. Akbar was the first to meet him....

When we went to the alley the next day, we found Akbar and Aboud waiting with the rest of the guys. Akbar introduced him to us. When Aboud saw the sacks in our hands and guns on our backs, he asked, "What are these for?"

"For the 'war' game."

7. Coping With Crisis

➔ SKILLS: Global Awareness

Coping with Crisis

Instructions: In this exercise, you are asked to decide how the United States should respond to three hypothetical crises in the region. You should use your answers to the “Your Own Option” worksheet as a guide to developing your recommendations.

Crisis #1—Saudi King Under Siege

Followers of an Islamist movement have launched a wave of labor strikes in the oil fields of Saudi Arabia. The strikes, which have won broad support among both local and foreign Muslim workers, have cut Saudi oil production in half over the past two weeks. Prices in the world market have already jumped to \$204 a barrel since the labor unrest began. The leaders of the Islamist movement have announced that they are seeking to overthrow the Saudi government. They charge that the Saudi royal family is corrupt and out-of-touch. They pledge to install a new leadership that better represents the will of the people. Reports indicate that the movement has received extensive support from Iran. Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah has vowed to use his army to smash the challenge to his rule.

How should the United States respond?

Crisis #2—Unrest Spreads

After a series of suicide attacks from both Gaza and the West Bank that killed hundreds of Israeli citizens, Benjamin Netanyahu, prime minister of Israel, has declared an end to contact with Hamas and Fatah. He has ordered the Palestinians to give up their weapons. The

Israeli military has reimposed direct control over West Bank cities and moved into the Gaza Strip. Fighting is raging in the streets. Israeli tanks have also reoccupied the southern region of Lebanon and launched airstrikes against guerrilla bases. Violence has threatened to spread throughout the region. Other leaders in the Middle East have called upon the United States to act.

How should the United States respond?

Crisis #3—Tumult in Iran

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reports Iran is continuing its nuclear activities. Iran has blocked the IAEA access to its nuclear facilities and has made it clear that any further attempts at interference will result in an acceleration of its weapons program. In recent days, intelligence reports claim that Iran has already acquired chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, as well as long-range missiles that could be armed with weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, Iran has reportedly moved several border posts along the Iran-Iraq border onto Iraqi territory in the latest development of a long-standing border dispute. Meanwhile in Tehran, President Rouhani has ordered armed forces to put down student protests that have erupted throughout the city. The students demand the resignation of the president along with increased tolerance, greater freedom, and other social changes.

How should the United States respond?

OPTIONS ROLE PLAY: What should be the US role in the Middle East?

Options in Brief

Objective:

To analyze the current debate on U.S. policy in the Middle East, evaluate options, and understand the values that support each option.

Students are assigned to one of the following:

4 Option Groups:

- Option 1: Police a Rough Neighborhood
- Option 2: Focus on Oil
- Option 3: Support Democracy & Human Rights
- Option 4: Break Free of Entanglements

Group #5: U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

Option 1: Police a Rough Neighborhood

The attacks of September 11 and the aggressive dictatorships of the Middle East prove that the world is a dangerous place. To ensure U.S. security and the security of U.S. friends and allies, the United States must draw a clear line in the sand. On one side belong trusted friends and allies in the region. Fortunately, there are many. Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, and most of the Persian Gulf states have been reliable partners for decades. When their security is threatened, either by enemies beyond their borders or within, the United States should stand beside them. On the other side are the forces that have aligned themselves against peace and stability. They must be confronted, with military force if necessary before they unleash more havoc on their neighbors and on the United States.

Option 2: Focus on Oil

U.S. citizens have no choice but to recognize that the flow of oil from the Middle East is vital to U.S. prosperity and security. No other issue in the Middle East rivals the importance of energy. U.S. policy in the Middle East must ensure that the United States and its allies have access to the region's oil resources. For too long, the United States' absolute support of Israel has complicated its relationship with leading Arab oil-producers. Economic common sense demands a more balanced approach. Likewise, there is no benefit in picking fights with Iran or Syria. U.S. policies in response to the Arab Spring should encourage stability, promote cooperation with all new political leaders, and above all keep the oil flowing.

Option 3: Support Democracy and Human Rights

Over the past two decades, the world has changed for the better. But until recently democracy has made scant headway in the Middle East, where basic freedoms and the rule of law count for little. Regrettably, U.S. policy has contributed to the Middle East's lack of progress. For too many years, the United States has put its oil interests and security concerns ahead of principles. The time has come for the United States to use its enormous influence to nudge the region toward reform. Governments that take steps toward establishing democratic institutions, open societies, and economic freedoms should be rewarded. At the same time, the United States should withhold favors from those that refuse to budge. Change is possible, but only if the United States is willing to commit its strength and its resources and play a fair and even-handed role with all states in the region.

Option 4: Break Free of Entanglements

Since the end of the Cold War, much of the United States' foreign policy attention has shifted to the Middle East. But U.S. efforts have only increased anti-American sentiment. The United States must break free of entanglements in the region. The U.S. military presence must be eliminated to avoid U.S. involvement in another, potentially far more deadly and expansive war. Likewise, the United States should not be held responsible for guaranteeing peace between Arabs and Israelis. U.S. relations with countries in the Middle East should be limited to issues that do not entangle the United States in the controversies of the region.

What is an Option?

Option 4: Break Free of Entanglements

Since the end of the Cold War, much of the United States' foreign policy attention has shifted to the Middle East. The United States has fought two wars against Iraq, occupied that country, and established an extensive military presence in the region. In addition, it has committed vast diplomatic and security resources to resolving the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. And what has been the result? Only increasing anti-American sentiment. The United States has become the target of terrorist attacks aimed at punishing the United States for its involvement in the Islamic world. History has shown that U.S. policy makers have often misunderstood the Middle East. As September 11 and the 2003 Iraq War have demonstrated, U.S. involvement in the region can be an expensive, dangerous adventure.

The United States must break free of entanglements in the Middle East. The military presence it has built up must be eliminated to avoid U.S. involvement in another, potentially far more deadly and expansive war—against Iran, for example. Likewise, the United States should not be held responsible for guaranteeing peace between Arabs and Israelis. Ultimately, disputes in the region must be resolved by those involved, not by U.S. diplomats or U.S. military forces. U.S. relations with the countries of the Middle East should be limited to issues that do not entangle the United States in the controversies of the region. Like the nations of Western Europe and Japan, the United States should concentrate on doing business with Middle Eastern countries, not meddling in local affairs. Political Islamist movements are a fact of life in the region. Not all Islamists are hostile to the United States. By keeping its distance, the United States will avoid strengthening Islamist extremist groups that use anti-U.S. feelings to recruit new members.

What policies should the United States pursue?

- The United States should withdraw its military forces from the Middle East and end its alliances with countries in the region.
- The United States should scale back its involvement in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and instead advise the countries of the region to take the initiative in pursuing the peace process.
- The United States should pursue open trade and business relations with all of the countries of the Middle East regardless of what type of government they have.
- The United States should repeal its economic sanctions against Iran.
- The United States should reduce its dependence on Middle Eastern oil by encouraging U.S. oil companies to invest elsewhere in the world and by promoting the development of alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind power.
- The United States should end its huge foreign aid packages to Israel, Egypt, Iraq, and the Palestinians.

Option 4 is based on the following beliefs

- The United States' expanding involvement in the Middle East has contributed to the rise of anti-American feelings in the region.
- As a region, the Middle East should not be more important to U.S. interests than other parts of the world.

Arguments for

1. As the United States decreases its involvement in the affairs of the Middle East, it will reduce the sources of anti-Americanism in the region that serve as fuel for dangerous Islamist extremists.
2. Reducing the U.S. presence in the Middle East will save U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars.
3. Untangling the United States from the web of Middle Eastern politics will lessen hostility toward the United States and make it possible for U.S. companies to pursue business in more countries in the region.

- Peace and progress in the Middle East can only come from changes within the region, not from U.S. pressure.

Arguments against

1. Walking away from any role as a peacemaker in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will only lead to a further escalation of the conflict.
2. Withdrawing the U.S. military from the Middle East will set off an even more dangerous arms race and increase the likelihood that biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons will spread in the region.
3. If the United States withdraws from this region, it will give the rest of the world cause to believe that the United States will sit back and do nothing in other areas as well. This will encourage other states unfriendly to the United States to accelerate their weapons programs.
4. Ending the U.S. military presence in the Middle East will end any hope for change in countries like Iran and Syria.
5. Failing to stand up to Iran could open the door to Iranian aggression in the oil-rich Persian Gulf.
6. A U.S. withdrawal from the Middle East will remove one of the few forces for democratic change in the region.
7. Our military, diplomatic, and foreign aid investments in the region are a bargain. They ensure stability and the continued flow of oil, which we depend on.

Group 5: Senate Committee

The Senate asks each group pointed, clarifying questions.



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Evaluation Form Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate

Part I

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?

What was the most persuasive argument presented against this option?

Option 1

Option 1

Option 2

Option 2

Option 3

Option 3

Option 4

Option 4

Part II

Which group presented its option most effectively? Explain your answer.

How Does the Options Role Play Work?

- ➔ Each group makes a 3-5 minute presentation.
- ➔ Senate asks at least 2 questions of each group.
- ➔ Decide when others can ask questions.
- ➔ After all 4 groups present, students enter into a deliberative dialogue.

Options: Graphic Organizer

	What does this option think should be the focus of U.S. policy in the Middle East?	What role does this option think the military should play?	What does this option think U.S. policy towards Iran should be?	What does this option think U.S. policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict should be?	What does this option think about political Islam?	What kinds of relationships does this option think the United States should cultivate in the region?
Option 1						
Option 2						
Option 3						
Option 4						

Concluding Activity

Creating Your Option 5

Students create and express their own policy, based on their own articulated values.

Students may draw from original options or develop an original view based on the work they have done.



But wait, there's MORE!

- 1. Supplemental Materials**
- 2. Scholars Online**
- 3. Teaching with the News**

US Response to Syria

Analyzing Political Cartoons

Iranian Nuclear Program

Arab Spring

Turmoil in Egypt

Iraqi Refugees