

Civil Wars in the Former Yugoslavia

Tracing the Historical Roots of Present-Day Conflict

Tools		
<i>Kit Software:</i> Inspiration; mPOWER; TimeLiner; World Book Encyclopedia	<i>Other:</i> Computers; the Internet; AppleWorks; EdView	<i>Optional:</i> iMovie; The Writing Trek; a digital camcorder

Project Duration

Five to eight class sessions over one to two weeks

Introduction

The nation-states or provinces making up the former Yugoslavia—Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Macedonia—have been the scene of recurring conflict for centuries. In recent years, armed conflict has torn Bosnia and then the Serbian province of Kosovo, capturing the attention of the world and spurring the involvement of powers such as the United States. What are the origins of the conflict in this region? How can history help students gain a deeper understanding of this area than they would get from the news media?

Project Overview

In this project, student groups research and discuss the history of the religious, ethnic, political, and economic tensions that contributed to civil wars in the former Yugoslavia and the “ethnic cleansing” in Kosovo. They then form new groups, each creating a slideshow presentation about the causes of conflict in a different historical period.

Phase 1: Investigating recent events in the former Yugoslavia

Begin with a discussion about the violent conflicts that have occurred in Bosnia, Kosovo, and other places in the former Yugoslavia since the early 1990s. Ask students what they know about these wars and conflicts. Ask them to explain why this area has been torn by so much conflict recently.

Students then form four groups in which they do some initial research on the former and present Yugoslavia and become familiar with the region and its recent history. They investigate the tensions between the various ethnic groups, the events of the civil war in Bosnia and the conflicts in Kosovo, and the movements for independence among the republics of the former Yugoslavia. For their research, groups can use library resources, World Book Encyclopedia, and the Internet, using EdView (see the Resources section).

Phase 2: Tracing the origins of conflict

Ask each group to begin more intensive historical research, focusing on one of the following areas of difference and conflict: (a) religious; (b) political; (c) economic; and (d) ethnic. Each group should go back in history to at least the early Middle Ages (c. 1000) to identify possible sources of conflict related to its area of focus. Students can search World Book Encyclopedia and the Internet (using EdView) for information.

During their research, groups can collect historical data, notes, media elements, and URLs in TimeLiner. This tool organizes the information chronologically and makes it easily available for constructing concept maps and for use in Phase 3.

When their research is complete, groups make sense of their findings and gain a deeper understanding of how their areas of focus relate to today's conflicts by building concept maps with Inspiration. (See the concept map example "Religious Differences in the Former Yugoslavia" on the kit Web site.)

Phase 3: Understanding and sharing the history of conflict

Ask students to regroup into five new groups, each with at least one "expert" on each of the four areas of conflict. Each group is assigned responsibility for a particular historical period. Suggested periods are before 1389, 1389 to c. 1878 (the Ottoman period), c. 1878 to the outbreak of World War I, World War I to the end of World War II, and 1945 to the present. These new groups create multimedia presentations in AppleWorks or mPOWER that trace the history of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, identify significant events and their relevance, and make connections between religious, ethnic, political, and economic issues during the assigned period. The presentations can include maps, text, photographs, diagrams, and TimeLiner timelines exported as graphics. Each group, in chronological order, presents its slideshow to the rest of the class.

Technical and Facilitation Tips

Facilitation Tips: Phase 1

- During this phase, students can begin collecting URLs, information, and media elements that might be useful for the presentations that will be created in Phase 3.
- The discussion and research in Phase 1 can be completed in one class session.

Tech Tips: Phase 1

- Good keywords for research include: Yugoslavia, Balkans, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbs, Croats, ethnic cleansing, Muslims, Albanians, Serbian Orthodox Church, Sarajevo, and Dayton Peace Plan.
- In World Book Encyclopedia, students can print maps of the present-day Yugoslavia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. They can click Zoom Out to see where these nations or provinces are located, and click Go To Article to find more information. Additionally, students can download from the Internet a special report called "Yugoslavia—A Decade of Ruin" in the "Special Reports" section of What's Online?

Facilitation Tips: Phase 2

- You can help groups clarify their areas of focus by offering the following list:
 - *Religious* = church or faith affiliation, relationship of religion to other religions, historical origins of the church or faith, forced conversions, persecution based on religion, taxation based on religion
 - *Political* = national identity, national borders, government, rulers, colonization, wars, movement of people, immigration, laws, law enforcement, rebellion, propaganda
 - *Economic* = class differences, natural resources, taxes, forced payments, trade, mining, agriculture, poverty, hunger
 - *Ethnic* = language, race, country of origin, national identity, persecution based on ethnic background, stories of ethnic origins and ancient migrations
- The four areas of focus are closely interconnected, and so each group’s work will naturally overlap with that of the other groups. For example, the religion group will find that religious affiliation maps closely—though not perfectly—to ethnicity and to national identity. You can help each group retain its focus while at the same time not discouraging avenues of investigation that may properly be the area of another group. You may, for example, suggest that each group create a list of the types of information that it is seeking (possibly beginning with the list above) and then refer back to this list during the research process.
- With access to the Internet, students can collect information that would otherwise be difficult to find. For example, they can look for sources written by the various participants in the conflict—Serbs, Croats, Albanians, Bosnian Muslims, and so on—to get a sense of their unique points of view.
- Two of TimeLiner’s ready-made timelines in the World History section may be helpful during this phase. The timeline with the filename WWI Begins-1914 identifies the major events leading to World War I (many of which were focused around the Balkan states), and the timeline “Spread of Islam” provides a framework for understanding how the occupation of the Balkans area by the Ottomans fits into the overall context of Islamic expansion and history.
- Inspiration is an excellent tool for organizing the knowledge gained from historical research. See “Organizing Information With Inspiration” on the kit Web site for more detailed information and ideas.
- A major reason for constructing concept maps during this phase is to push students in the direction of viewing their research findings as more than a string of events. What are the major categories or ideas they’ve discovered in their research? Where are the lines of conflict drawn? What is the basis of the conflict and difference? What events were most important? For an example of a simple concept map related to this project, see the “Religious Differences in the Former Yugoslavia” concept map example. Students can print copies of the group concept map for each group member as they discuss their findings and prepare for their presentations in Phase 3.
- Initially, each group may want to divide itself up into library, World Book Encyclopedia, and Internet research teams. The teams can then meet to discuss what they’ve found and plan further research.

- This phase can occupy from one to several class sessions. If possible, minimize the amount of class time by directing groups to meet outside of class (in the library or media center, for example) to do their research.

Tech Tips: Phase 2

- In the research portion of this phase, TimeLiner is used as a database for collecting information that is ordered chronologically. This information can include imported text, student-written notes, photographic images from the Internet or CD resources, sounds and movies, and URLs (which function as live links to the Internet). The contents of each database entry can be edited or viewed as a slide. Remind students that they will use this information to contribute to the multimedia presentation in Phase 3.

Since the multimedia presentations are not done with TimeLiner itself, *students must store the actual graphics, video, and sound files in a folder for later use in the presentation*—any images, sounds, and movies embedded in TimeLiner cannot be copied. It will be helpful if students rename these files with easily recognizable filenames.

- When an image or movie is “added” to an event in TimeLiner, the program keeps track of the location of the file containing the image or movie. In Banner, List, or Compact view, position the pointer on the blue cross next to the event, hold down the mouse button, and choose “Picture or Movie” or “View Slide.” Double-click the image and TimeLiner displays the location of the file.
- Students may want to store their media elements in an AppleWorks database in addition to TimeLiner. This database can be made of two fields: one for the media element, and one for a description of it and its source.
- Remind students to keep track of where they find media elements and textual information so that they can return to these locations for more research and so that they can properly cite their sources.
- In the discussion and analysis portion of this phase, the TimeLiner database can be displayed as a timeline or slideshow, with the notes and media elements available via a click on the timeline event. The timelines can help students make sense of events and developments, serve as a basis for discussion, and help in the creation of their concept maps.

Facilitation Tips: Phase 3

- Students will bring different perspectives to their new groups. Through dialogue and critical thinking they should come to consensus about their conclusions.
- Suggest that students explore the idea of personal identity as they put together their presentations. In the republics of the former Yugoslavia, what are the important parts of a person’s identity? Why are these ways of defining oneself so paramount to the people in this area of the world?
- The timelines and concept maps that students made in their Phase 2 groups can be brought into the new Phase 3 groups as vehicles for sharing the understanding developed in Phase 2.
- The timelines/databases created by the groups in Phase 2 can be merged in Phase 3 to better illustrate how significant events in each area of conflict relate to each other chronologically. For a description of how to merge timelines, see the Tech Tips for Phase 3.

- Challenge students to go beyond simply showing the information they have collected (as would occur if they showed merged timelines as slideshows). The presentations should make sense of history by linking cause and effect, making generalizations, drawing conclusions, and synthesizing information. Encourage students to engage in the necessary higher-order thinking by asking questions such as these:
 - What are the connections between political, economic, religious, and ethnic differences during your time period? How does each support the others?
 - How do the central issues of conflict in your time period differ from those of other periods?
 - What were the most important events and changes during your period?
- Groups should create their presentations with a particular audience in mind—one that knows very little about the history of the former Yugoslavia and wants to know more.
- The “Multimedia Development Checklist” can be used to help students design their presentations, and the “Multimedia Presentation Checklist” can be used to help students prepare for giving their presentations. (See these checklists on the kit Web site.)
- Allow groups at least two class sessions to develop their presentations, and another to show them to the class.

Tech Tips: Phase 3

- Merging timelines in TimeLiner is a powerful way to compare different types of events. To maintain the original identities of events from different timelines, however, each separate timeline should have all of its events assigned to a distinct category, with each category represented by a different font color or style. This can be done during the construction of the individual timelines, by choosing Use Categories from the Format menu in Data view. It can also be done during the merging process by following the instructions TimeLiner provides after step 2 below. To merge one or more separate timelines in TimeLiner:
 - 1** With one timeline open, click the Merge button on the clock toolbar.
 - 2** Choose the file containing the timeline you want to merge with the current one. Click Open.
 - 3** Repeat steps 1 and 2 to merge additional timelines.

Outcomes

After completing this project, students will be able to

- differentiate between political, economic, ethnic, and religious issues
- outline the most important events in the history of the Yugoslav states since late Roman times, and explain how each relates to the present conflicts among religious, national, and ethnic groups of the area
- explain how people construct their identities through religion, culture, language, and ethnicity
- define the most important terms used by the media in relation to the former Yugoslavia, including Croats, Croatia, Albania, Albanians, Muslims, Islam, Serbian Orthodox Church, Kosovo, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Yugoslavia

In addition, students will have

- improved their abilities to identify possible historical causes of current events
- developed the skills involved in working collaboratively in groups to organize a multimedia presentation on a complex topic
- learned skills or acquired knowledge relating to each of the state and national standards referred to in the Project Standards section

Project Standards

From the Secondary Language Arts & Social Studies Web site, you can identify select state curriculum standards and national educational technology standards that correlate to this student project. To locate these standards, go to the kit Web site and click the Curriculum button. Locate and open this student project and click the “Project Standards” button.

Assessment Suggestions

The presentations can be assessed using one or more of the following methods:

- Apply a rubric based on criteria such as the following: historical accuracy, depth of knowledge, use of generalizations, ability to link cause and effect, effective use of media elements, use of facts to support conclusions, cohesiveness of arguments, degree to which new understandings were developed, and clarity.
- Use the “Multimedia Project Rubric” (located on the kit Web site).
- Have students do peer assessments of each other’s presentations, using a set of teacher-written questions or student-created rubrics.

Preparation

- Review and print any of the Step-by-Step Cards for students to use during this project. You might want to make copies of the “Storyboard Card Template” and “Storyboard Example” templates (located on the kit Web site) to help students in designing their presentations.
- If your students are new to TimeLiner, ask them to complete the TimeLiner WalkThrough located in the teacher’s guide on the product’s CD to familiarize themselves with the program.

Resources

Internet

Bosnia: Keeping the Peace

<http://www.pathfinder.com/time/daily/bosnia/index.html>

Brief History of Yugoslavia

http://www.religioustolerance.org/yugo_his.htm

Desktop Movies in Education

<http://www.apple.com/education/dv/>

EdView

<http://edview.apple.com>

Former Yugoslavia: A Map Folio

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/yugoslav.html

Library of Congress—Yugoslavia, a Country Study

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/yutoc.html#yu0030>

Books

MacMillan Atlas of War and Peace: Bosnia Herzegovina by MacMillan Publishing

Bosnia by Noel Malcom

Bosnia-Hercegovina: A Tradition Betrayed by John V. Fine

Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of “Ethnic Cleansing” (Eastern European Studies, No.1)

Kosovo: A Short History by Noel Malcom

Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation by Laura Siliber

While America Watched: Bosnia. Produced by ABC News (video)

Bosnia: Children of War. Produced by “Nightline” (video)

Step-by-Step Cards

- Making a Presentation With AppleWorks 6
- Making a Presentation With mPOWER
- Searching the Internet With EdView
- Searching World Book Encyclopedia 2001
- TimeLiner Basics

Templates

- Religious Differences in the Former Yugoslavia Concept Map Example
- Storyboard Card Template
- Storyboard Example

Additional Resources

- Multimedia Development Checklist
- Multimedia Presentation Checklist
- Multimedia Project Rubric
- Organizing Information With Inspiration
- Using TimeLiner as a Database

Prerequisite Skills

To complete this project successfully, students should be able to do the following:

- use EdView or other search engines to search for information on the Internet related to a particular topic (see the Step-by-Step Card “Searching the Internet With EdView”)
- retrieve information and multimedia from the Internet by printing, copying and pasting, and downloading files
- locate information in World Book Encyclopedia (see the Step-by-Step Card “Searching World Book Encyclopedia 2001”)
- create new events in TimeLiner (see the Step-by-Step Card “TimeLiner Basics”)
- use AppleWorks or mPOWER to create a multimedia presentation (see the Step-by-Step Cards “Making a Presentation With AppleWorks 6” or “Making a Presentation With mPOWER”)

Background Information

Here is some information you may find useful as you plan how to implement this project or introduce it to your students:

- Before 1990, all the Yugoslav republics, or nation-states, formed a single nation (“the former Yugoslavia”). Today, Yugoslavia still exists, but consists only of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro.
- Events in the Yugoslav republics have had worldwide consequences. The 1914 assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo, for example, led to the outbreak of World War I.
- The geographic location of the former Yugoslavia near the “crossroads” of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East has had an important impact on the area’s history.
- The ethnic/national groups that inhabit the Yugoslav region include Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, Gypsies, Albanians, Macedonians, and Muslim Slavs.

Options and Extension Activities

Options

- In Phase 3, when students begin constructing the presentation, they can assume roles: screenwriter, who is responsible for writing the outline of the script; director, who is responsible for directing the production; producer, who is responsible for tracking and editing the graphics and other multimedia elements; and narrator, who will bring passion and empathy to the slideshow.

Extension Activities

- Follow up the presentations with an assignment in which individual students write letters to the editor explaining how historical knowledge could help the news media do a better job of reporting on current events in the former Yugoslavia.

- Suggest that students write a memoir of a fictional teenager living through the war in Bosnia or Kosovo. Students can refer to the Research Hall in *The Writing Trek* to learn more about writing memoirs.
- Students can learn more through communication with other students who may have first-hand knowledge of the wars in the former Yugoslavia. They can search the Internet for sites that may be able to get them in contact with special interest groups for students who currently live in or who have fled the war-torn areas.
- Students can use EdView or other search engines to do a search of their local town or city to see if there are any organizations that may have first-hand experiences with relief efforts in Bosnia or Kosovo. If so, students can interview people who have been involved in these efforts. Refer students to the News Center in *The Writing Trek* to learn how to conduct a formal interview. Students can use a digital camcorder to film the interview and use iMovie to create a desktop movie. The interviews can be shown or presented in class as a current event follow-up to the historical presentations. For help using iMovie, visit the “Desktop Movies in Education” Web site.
- In collaboration with an English teacher, ask students to find and read poems and short stories about the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, and then write about their personal responses. A good resource for this extension is *War and the Pity of War*, edited by Neil Philip.

The Home-School Connection

- Have students ask their family members about their ethnic background and discuss in what ways they or their ancestors were impacted by any major events in the past century due to their ethnicity.
- If one of the students has a grandparent or another acquaintance who remembers World War II or was in a country that underwent an upheaval or civil war, the student can invite this person into the classroom to speak about their experiences and perspectives or they can interview the person and write a summary of the interview to share with the class.

This Project as a Model

This project can be applied to any region of the world where ethnic, racial, or religious conflicts have recently raged. These areas include the Middle East (particularly Israel and Palestine), Afghanistan, India/Pakistan, Indonesia, Northern Ireland, Tibet, and eastern Africa. In all of these areas, the same four categories of ethnic, religious, economic, and political differences can guide groups’ research in Phase 2; for Phase 3 the historical periods would have to be adjusted appropriately.

More generally, combining World Book Encyclopedia and the Internet as research tools with TimeLiner as a tool for tracking, organizing, and displaying the resulting information works well for any kind of project involving an historical investigation. Such projects may also benefit from using Inspiration to link concepts, clarify relationships, and show change over time.