

The Geographic and Political Context of Energy Policy

How do geographic and political contexts affect presidential decision-making?

Overview

Students focus on the geographic and political contexts in which the 1970s energy crisis occurred. They read an additional briefing and primary source documents to gather information. Then they identify key locations in the Middle East and in the United States on a map. They use the information they gather to create a list of key geographic considerations and a list of key political considerations.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://nationalgeographic.org/activity/geographic-and-political-context-energy-policy/>

Directions

1. Briefly review the previous activity.

Distribute students' annotated copies of the Energy Crisis Briefing from Activity 1 for reference, and then discuss what students learned in the previous activity. Invite volunteers to briefly summarize the energy crisis of 1973 and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975. Ask: *Who were some of the stakeholders that would be affected by the act? What were some of the measures that could be included in the act?* Discuss any common misconceptions or vocabulary terms found in a review of students' work in the previous activity. Ask students to recall

the suggestions they had for other types of information that would help them make an informed decision about what measures were most important to include in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

2. Have students read and annotate the Geographic and Political Briefing handout.

Explain that students will be given an additional briefing on the geographic and political context of the energy crisis and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Distribute a copy of the Geographic and Political Briefing handout and Geographic and Political Briefing Discussion Prompts worksheet to each student and ask them to read and annotate the briefing as they did the Energy Crisis Briefing in Activity 1. Remind them to highlight key points, mark any unfamiliar vocabulary, ask any questions of the material, and briefly summarize each section of the briefing. Ask students to jot down their thoughts about the discussion prompts in Part 1 of the Discussion Prompts worksheet as they read. When students have finished reading, discuss the reading using the prompts.

3. Have students locate places that are key to the energy crisis and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

Place students in the same small groups from the previous activity. Have groups brainstorm some of the places that were important in the energy crisis and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Have groups share their thoughts with the class and develop a master list of key places. These could include: members of OAPEC that participated in the embargo (Syria, Egypt, Algeria, Bahrain, Libya, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait); other major oil-exporting countries (Iraq, Venezuela, Ecuador, Angola, Nigeria, and Indonesia); Israel; and U.S. oil production sites that saw increased production following the crisis (Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Colorado, Wyoming, and Alaska). Have each group open the provided 1975 World Political Map on a computer and locate each of these places on the map. As students locate the places, have them jot down their thoughts on the discussion questions in Part 2 of the Geographic and Political Briefing Discussion prompts. When students have finished, discuss the location of these

places, using the prompts.

4. Have students examine primary documents to add to their knowledge of the political situation surrounding the energy crisis and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

Explain to students that they will work with their groups to analyze three kinds of primary documents about the energy crisis and Energy Policy and Conservation Act: video of a speech given by President Ford, letters written to the president by members of the public, and political cartoons on the subject of the energy crisis. Have students analyze the speech, two letters, and a cartoon using the questions on the Analyzing Primary Documents worksheet. Assign different letters and political cartoons to each group. Have groups share one of the letters or political cartoons they analyzed with the class. Discuss what information the documents as a collection give about that period of time.

5. Have students synthesize what they have learned about the geographic and political context of the energy crisis and Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

Distribute the Geographic and Political Considerations worksheet to each group. Have students identify key geographic and political considerations that would be important when deciding what measures to include in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Have students add these key considerations to the table, along with an explanation of why they are important and evidence to back up their reasoning. Collect the Geographic and Political Considerations worksheet, as well as the two annotated briefings for use in future activities.

Informal Assessment

Use students' completed Geographic and Political Considerations worksheet as a formative assessment.

Extending the Learning

Have students research a current or recent energy-related story or event and list key geographic and political considerations. Have them compare the event they researched with the energy-related issues in the 1970s.

Objectives

Subjects & Disciplines

Geography

- Human Geography

Language Arts

- Reading
- Writing (composition)

Social Studies

- United States government
- United States history

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- analyze primary sources related to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975
- identify key political considerations related to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975
- identify key geographic considerations related to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975

Teaching Approach

- Constructivist
- Interdisciplinary

Teaching Methods

- Cooperative learning
- Discussions
- Reading
- Writing

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
 - Learning and Innovation Skills
 - Communication and Collaboration
 - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- 21st Century Themes
 - Civic Literacy
 - Global Awareness
- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Evaluating
 - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
 - Acquiring Geographic Information
 - Asking Geographic Questions

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts

- **Standard 1:**

Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and

nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

National Council for Social Studies Curriculum Standards

- **Theme 2:**

Time, Continuity, and Change

National Geography Standards

- **Standard 11:**

The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface

- **Standard 13:**

How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface

- **Standard 17:**

How to apply geography to interpret the past

- **Standard 4:**

The physical and human characteristics of places

National Standards for History

- **Historical Thinking Standard 5:**

The student engages in historical issues-analysis and decision-making

- **U.S. History Era 10 (5-12) Standard 1:**

Recent developments in foreign and domestic politics

- **U.S. History Era 10 (5-12) Standard 2:**

Economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary United States

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.10:**

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.10** :

By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- **Writing Standards 11-12:**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- **Writing Standards 6-12:**

Text Types and Purposes, W.11-12.1

- **Writing Standards 6-12:**

Text Types and Purposes, W.9-10.1

- **Writing Standards 6-12:**

Range of Writing, W.9-10.10

- **Writing Standards 6-12:**

Range of Writing, W.11-12.10

- **Writing Standards 9-10:**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

The College, Career & Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards

- **Causation and Argumentation: D2.His.14.9-12:**

Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.

- **D2.Civ.13.9-12:**

Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences

- **D2.Eco.1.9-12:**

Analyze how incentives influence choices that may result in policies with a range of costs and benefits for different groups.

- **D2.Eco.8.9-12:**

Describe the possible consequences, both intended and unintended, of government policies to improve market outcomes.

- **D2.His.1.9-12:**

Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts

Preparation

What You'll Need

Materials You Provide

- Highlighters
- Paper
- Pens

Required Technology

- Tech Setup: 1 computer per small group, Projector, Speakers

Physical Space

- Classroom

Grouping

- Large-group instruction

Resources Provided: undefined

- Ford speaks on energy policy

Resources Provided: Handouts & Worksheets

- [Geographic and Political Briefing](#)

- [Geographic and Political Briefing Discussion Prompts](#)
- [Analyzing Primary Documents](#)
- [Geographic and Political Considerations](#)

Resources Provided: Maps

- [1975 World Political Map](#)

Resources Provided: Images

- Letters From the Public: Energy Crisis
- Political Cartoons: Energy Crisis

Background & Vocabulary

Background Information

Prior Knowledge

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Recommended Prior Activities

- None

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
domestic	<i>adjective</i>	having to do with policies or issues within a nation.
embargo	<i>noun</i>	to outlaw trade of a certain good or service, or to outlaw trade from a certain place.

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
energy resource	<i>noun</i>	source of energy found in nature that has not been subject to any human-induced energy transfers or transformations; for example, oil, coal, gas, wind, or sunlight.
energy source	<i>noun</i>	location in which the energy resource (oil, coal, gas, wind, etc.) is converted into electrical energy.
export	<i>verb</i>	to transport goods to another place for trade.
export	<i>noun</i>	good or service traded to another area.
foreign	<i>adjective</i>	having to do with another culture, country, or nation.
import	<i>verb</i>	to bring in a good or service from another area for trade.
import	<i>noun</i>	good traded from another area.

For Further Exploration

Websites

- [Department of Energy: Energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)
- [National Geographic Education: Stakeholder Consequences Decision Making](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/education/stakeholder-consequences-decision-making/)
- [National Geographic Channel: Gerald R. Ford: A Test of Character](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/gerald-r-ford-a-test-of-character/)
- [DeVos Learning Center at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum](https://www.gerald-r-ford.org/learning-center/)
- [Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library & Museum](https://www.gerald-r-ford.org/library-museum/)
- [Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation](https://www.gerald-r-ford.org/foundation/)

Partner





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