

President Ford and the Helsinki Accords: Building a Decision Statement

What are the influences, complexity, and interconnection of relationships that occur during the presidential decision-making process?

Overview

Students synthesize all the information they have gathered in previous activities to write a new decision statement. They then reflect on the similarities and differences between this decision statement and the one they wrote in the first activity from the perspective of a particular stakeholder.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/president-ford-and-helsinki-accords-building-decision-statement/>

Directions

1. Review and discuss all previous activities in this lesson.

Briefly review what students learned in Activities 1-3, using the provided President Ford and the Helsinki Accords photo gallery. For each photo in the gallery, review what students learned about the related content in the caption. Explain that in this activity, students will put together everything they learned in the previous activities to write a new decision statement. Place students in the same small groups they

worked with in Activity 1, and return students' annotated case studies, Stakeholder Tables, consequences webs, and notes from the previous activities. Explain that they will use their work in previous activities as evidence in their final decision.

2. Have students review the information they gathered on stakeholders in President Ford's decision to sign the Helsinki Accords.

Distribute a copy of the Your Decision Statement worksheet to each group. Have them use the information they gathered in Activities 1-2 to complete Part 1 of the worksheet. They should refer to the case study, as needed, and to their Stakeholder Table as a reminder of what they learned.

3. Have students analyze the effects President Ford's decision had on various stakeholders.

Have students review the consequences webs they created in Activity 3. Then have them complete Part 2 of the Your Decision Statement worksheet to identify the main consequences for each stakeholder.

4. Have students write a decision statement.

Have students use the information they have gathered and summarized in Parts 1 and 2 of the Your Decision Statement worksheet to write a final decision statement. Explain that students can use the decision President Ford made for their decision statement or make their own decision based on what they have learned. Explain that students' decision statements must include their decision, a rationale for their decision with evidence to support it, and identification of which stakeholders will be negatively impacted and which will be positively impacted by their decision. When students have completed their decision statements, collect them for formal assessment of the full lesson.

5. Have students reflect on the decision-making process.

Ask students to compare their final decision statement with the one they wrote in Activity 1 from the perspective of a single stakeholder. Ask:

- *Did your decision change? If your decision did not change, why?*
- *What information did you learn throughout the activities that influenced your final decision?*
- *How is a president's decision-making process different from the decision-making process of one stakeholder? Explain.*

Have each student respond in writing to the following prompt: How did analyzing the presidential decision-making process help or hinder you in making your final decision?

Extending the Learning

Students can apply what they have learned about presidential decisions and the decision-making process to analyze other important historical or contemporary decisions.

Allow time for students to explore the other two decision scenarios in the web-based interactive You Decide: Presidential Decisions.

Objectives

Subjects & Disciplines

Geography

- Human Geography

Social Studies

- United States history
- World history

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- rate each stakeholder's influence on President Ford's decision to sign the Helsinki Accords
- rate the consequences of President Ford's decision on each stakeholder
- make a decision about signing the Helsinki Accords from their own perspective

Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

Teaching Methods

- Cooperative learning
- Discussions
- Multimedia instruction
- Reading
- Reflection
- 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
 - Global Awareness
- Critical Thinking Skills

- Analyzing
- Understanding

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 17:**

How to apply geography to interpret the past

- **Standard 4:**

The physical and human characteristics of places

- **Standard 5:**

That people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity

National Standards for History

- **Historical Thinking Standard 5:**

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

- **U.S. History Era 9 (5-12) Standard 2:**

How the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

- **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:**

Range of Writing, W.9-10.10

- **Writing Standards 6-12:**

Text Types and Purposes, W.9-10.1

- **Writing Standards 6-12:**

Text Types and Purposes, W.11-12.1

- **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.Civ.14.9-12.:**

Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

- **D2.Civ.3.9-12:**

Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order

Preparation

What You'll Need

Materials You Provide

- Pencils
- Pens

Required Technology

- Internet Access: Optional
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, Projector

Physical Space

- Classroom

Setup

Arrange the space so students can work in small groups.

Grouping

- Large-group instruction

Other Notes

In Activity 4, Step 1: Students will need access to all previously completed work for this lesson.

Resources Provided: Handouts & Worksheets

- [Your Decision Statement](#)

Resources Provided: Images

- President Ford and the Helsinki Accords

Background & Vocabulary

Background Information

Prior Knowledge

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Recommended Prior Activities

- None

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
consequence	<i>noun</i>	result or outcome of an action or situation.
stakeholder	<i>noun</i>	person or organization that has an interest or investment in a place, situation or company.

For Further Exploration

Reference

- [National Geographic Education: Stakeholder Consequences Decision Making](#)

Video

- [National Geographic Channel: Gerald R. Ford: A Test of Character](#)

Websites

- [Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library & Museum](#)
- [Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation](#)
- [DeVos Learning Center at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum](#)

Partner



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