

The lesson plan title: **Destroying walls and building bridges.**

Names of the teachers:

- Carolina Panasiti, Science Park High School, Newark, New Jersey, USA
- Viktoria Kadyuk, EC 141 ORT, 5 Shamo boulevard, Kiev, Ukraine
- Simonas Jurkštaitis, Pazinimo Medis, Verkiu st. 37, Vilnius
- Damjan Snoj, OŠ Preserje, Preserje, Slovenia

Courses lesson taught in: English, Civics and History.

Primary category/ies: Fall of Communism. Civil Rights.

Grade level of students: Primary, secondary, middle school; Age 11-15.

Total required time to teach the lesson: Two forty-five minute lessons (90 minutes).

Personal information:

Carolina is a Montclair State graduate and English Language Arts teacher at Science Park High School in Newark, New Jersey. She has been teaching at Science Park for 10 years.

Viktoria is a Kyiv Linguistic National University graduate. She has been teaching English at EC 141 ORT for a year.

Simonas is currently working in Pažinimo Medis, a private school in Lithuania. He has been teaching history in this particular school for 2 years now. He gives lectures to students from fifth to eighth graders. Simonas graduated at University of Vilnius and received a bachelor's degree in History. He is finishing the studies in Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences to get equalisation studies. Simonas also wrote the article about Kupiškis (Kupishok) Jewish community a few years ago which was published in a book "The Jewish community in Kupiškis: The links between the past and the present.

Damjan is a primary school teacher in Slovenia since 1998. He teaches Geography, History and Ethics. He cooperates with Centropa since 2013 and Centropa named him as a coordinator of Centropa for Slovenia inside the Centropa Balkan Network. He is active on national level of history education as a member of a so-called development group for history at National Institute for Education and a member of editorial board of the History in School magazine published by National Institute for Education.

Summary:

This lesson requires students to research different types of totalitarianism systems such as capitalism, socialism and communism: origin, history, advantages and disadvantages to comprehend what it might have been living under these mentioned systems. By the end of the lessons, students will have earned more knowledge on the fall of communism.

Background information:

Goals/objectives:

Students will

- understand why and how people in 1989 wanted to break free from communism in different countries (based on various sources of information they will examine different processes that led to the fall of communism).
- explain changes on political map of Europe between 1989 and 1992.
- compare/contrast capitalism and communism.
- evaluate consequences of living under a communist regime.
- discuss censorship, abusive power, restrictions, democracy vs. communism, free will.
- write a creative narrative outlining principles of a communist society vs. what it means to be part of democratic community.

Sources/materials:

- Text/Resources:

Interview to Lea Beraha: <http://www.centropa.org/photo/leon-beraha-his-friend-david-benvenisti> (www.centropa.org)

- Centropa Videos:

Maps, Central Europe and History: <http://www.centropa.org/teaching-materials/maps-central-europe-and-history-lesson-plan-changing-borders-19th-and-20th>

Miksa Domonkos: The major who worked in hell: http://www.centropa.org/centropa-cinema/miksa-domonkos-mayor-who-worked-hell?language=All&subtitle_language=All

Ranana Malkova – A world destroyed, a world to remember: http://www.centropa.org/node/78683?language=All&subtitle_language=All

- Materials:

Computer, worksheets, printer, internet access, journals.

- Specific background skills:

The ability to find reliable sources in order to gain a better understanding on these topics.

The Lesson:

Procedures:

Motivation, opening of the lesson:

10 minutes:

The teacher brings powerful visual aids to the classroom in order to provoke students' reactions by allowing them to brainstorm key words or ideas in connection to the lesson on

"Fall of Communism" (for example photos, flag, national anthem...). The teacher circles key words related to the topic written on a blackboard.

Part I:

Pre-task: Students collect as many information as possible about totalitarianism regimes.

15 minutes: In groups, students will research their assigned concept with the resources brought to the lesson. Each group will prepare an informative presentation to teach their classmates core values of the assigned concept: advantages, disadvantages, and examples of communities living under one of the mentioned types of governments/societies.

20 minutes: The presentations will be designed to inform and answer any possible questions from audience. After presentations, students will distribute a quiz to check for understanding.

Part II:

30 minutes:

Evaluating and comparing.

Using different resources (movies, interviews ...) students will read and analyse interviews that portray the fall of communism and its consequences. In small groups, students will debate and argue whether they would like to live under a communist, socialist or capitalist government/regime.

English: They will record their discussions in their journals to create individual thoughts on each concept considering advantages and disadvantages.

History, Civics: debate, persuade!

English:

Part III: Creating Writing.

Individually, students will imagine that they can travel back in time to Hungary in 1950 before The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 (national revolt against communism). In this trip back in time, they will pretend they go to a café and attempt to persuade a group of young people to start a revolution against communism. In their persuasive attempt, student will use persuasive techniques by presenting disadvantages of communism in comparison to advantages of democracy (free will). Each student will write a creative/persuasive narrative of 2-3 pages attempting to describe political tensions in Hungary and disconformity towards the government. Students will have the freedom to create characters they talk to according to their research using centropa.org and any other reliable website portraying what it might look like to live in Hungary in the 1950s before the revolution.

Part IV: Feedback and Self-evaluation

Whole-class, students will have the opportunity to provide feedback on each activity. Teacher will consider suggestions for future lessons. In addition, students will self-evaluate their performance individually and in groups on each assignment.

History, Ethics:

Part I:

Pre-task: students will be encouraged to ask their parents and grandparents about actions and context from 1989 to 1992. They will bring their notes and gathered research to the class the following day (Homework-in class: 20 minutes).

Part II:

Students will share their research and personal stories from their families and compare to each other. After students have shared their feedback, teacher will expand the historical context on 1989 (sharing 30 minutes/ teacher's lecture: 15 min).

Part III:

Homework: individually, students will analyse and compare/contrast a political map of Europe before 1989 and after 1992 in order to comprehend the changes during that time.

Part IV:

Students will be exposed to the Centropa film "Maps: Central Europe and History" (10-15 minutes). After that, students will exchange their personal opinions and compare/contrast different countries experiences and key moments from 1989 to 1992. Students will debate, summarize and create a conclusion based on their own research and others. Students will compose a conclusion based on discussion, debate and teacher's lecture. After that, teacher will evaluate students' comparison and contrast of key events from 1989 to 1992 and their conclusion on the Fall of Communism and the change in maps in Eastern and Southern Europe.

Remarks:

There is a possibility to upgrade this lesson to a cross-cultural project.