

Teaching American History For All

A series of lessons incorporating literacy strategies for
Mt Diablo Unified School District
5th, 8th, and 11th grade teachers,
in partnership with
University Of California, Berkeley
History-Social Science Project

11th Grade Lesson: Paving the Way for Suburbanization

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Teaching American History for All
MDUSD/UCB H-SSP
11th Grade Lesson: “America in the 1950s”

Developed by: Jesse Forsland

Teaching American History Grant Focus Question:

How did definitions of citizenship change from the 17th century to the 20th century?

11th Grade Yearlong Focus Question:

How have the powers of the United States federal government expanded or been limited since the Civil War?

Unit Focus: America in the 1950s

Unit Focus Question: How did political and social reforms divide and/or unite Americans in the 1950s?

Unit Working Thesis:

The post-war economic boom gave many Americans unprecedented comfort and convenience; however, many Americans found themselves still mired in poverty and stifled by discrimination.

Lesson Focus Question and / or Writing Prompt Question:

How did U.S. government policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

Lesson Working Thesis:

U.S. federal policy in post WWII America provided the economic and social framework for suburban migration.

Reading Strategy:

Sentence level: Sentence Deconstruction

Passage level: Debate/ Perspective/ Point of View

Writing Strategy: Student worksheet incorporates a thesis, evidence, and analysis.

Suggested Amount of Time: One 45-50 min class period

Textbook:

Danzer, Gerald et al. *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century*. Evanston, Illinois: McDougal Littell Inc., 2006, p. 676, *The American Vision*. Glencoe Inc., 2006, p. 672

Other Resources:

Primary source(s): U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, EDUCATION SERVICE. 2001. “G.I. Bill of Rights” Title III sec. 501(a)

Context of the lesson in the unit:

Lesson should be taught at/towards the beginning of a unit on post-WWII America, or towards the end of a unit on WWII and its aftermath.

Concept of citizenship embedded in the lesson:

What role government plays in providing for the welfare of its citizens.

Lesson Procedure:

Day One:

1. Activities

- Step One... Introduce G.I. Bill (p.1) and fill out content question piece as a class. Class discusses/Teacher explains the impact on such a bill to returning American servicemen. Teacher asks students to make verbal inferences on how this would promote a movement to the suburbs.
- Step Two... (Optional) Class discussion of limitations of the G.I. Bill.
- Step Three... Reading Strategy (Sentence Deconstruction): Introduce “Automania” (p.2) and sentence deconstruction. Students work in pairs to complete (if class has prior experience in sentence deconstruction). As a class, compare responses to content question.
- Step Four... Reading Strategy (Passage Level) Textbook passages (p.3) will be read aloud one at a time. Students will work in pairs to complete table and answer lesson question.

HW:

Day Two:

1. Activities

- Step One... Whole class works to complete the analyzing evidence chart (p.4) then individual students are given time to create a thesis from the given evidence and complete “Drawing Conclusions” piece at bottom of page.
- Step Two... Using the completed analyzing evidence” chart (with thesis and conclusion), students will work individually to complete the paragraph outline (p.5).
- Teacher monitors/examines students’ outlines.
- Completed/Corrected outlines will be typed by students during remaining classtime.

History-Social Science Content Standards:

11.8 Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post-World War II America.

4. Analyze new federal government spending on defense, welfare, interest on the national debt, and federal and state spending on education, including the California Master Plan.

11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

2. Discuss the significant domestic policy speeches of Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton (e.g., with regard to education, civil rights, economic policy, environmental policy).

Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills: Historical Interpretation

1. Students summarize the key events of the era they are studying and explain the historical contexts of those events.

2. Students identify the human and physical characteristics of the places they are studying and explain how those features form the unique character of those places.

English-language Arts Content Standards:

2.2 Analyze the way in which clarity of meaning is affected by the patterns of organization, hierarchical structures, repetition of the main ideas, syntax, and word choice in the text.

2.3 Verify and clarify facts presented in other types of expository texts by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.

2.4 Make warranted and reasonable assertions about the author's arguments by using elements of the text to defend and clarify interpretations.

The Impact of the G.I. Bill

To help ease veterans' return to civilian life, Congress passed the Serviceman's Readjustment Act, or the GI Bill of Rights, in 1944. In addition to encouraging veterans to get education by paying part of their tuition, the GI Bill guaranteed them a year's worth of unemployment benefits while job hunting. It also offered low-interest, federally guaranteed loans. Millions of young families used these benefits to buy homes and farms or to establish businesses.

-McDougal Littell "The Americans" Ed. 2006 p.635

The Interstate Highway System

The more cars there were, the more roads were needed. "Automania" spurred local and state governments to construct roads linking the major cities while connecting schools, shopping centers, and workplaces to residential suburbs. The Interstate Highway Act, which President Eisenhower signed in 1956, authorized the building of a nationwide highway network- 41,000 miles of expressway. The new roads, in turn, encouraged the development of new suburbs farther from the cities.

-McDougal, Littell "The Americans" Ed. 2006 p.646

As Cold War tensions rose, American officials realized that the ability to move troops and military equipment across the country quickly and efficiently could very well determine whether the nation could survive attack. Since the hapless system of two-lane highways that crisscrossed America could not handle such a task, the Eisenhower administration proposed a 41,000 mile network of multi-lane interstate highways.

-Glencoe "The American Vision" Ed. 2006 p.672

Lesson Question and Writing Prompt:

How did U.S. government policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

From: 11th grade Suburbanization Lesson: PART B- Student Handout

G.I. Bill of Rights, 1944: To provide Federal Government aid for the readjustment in civilian life of returning World War II veterans.

Title III Sec 501(a). Purchase and Construction of Homes.

Any application made by a veteran under this title for the guaranty of a loan to be used in residential property, or in constructing a dwelling on unimproved property owned by him to be occupied as his home may be approved by the Administrator of Veteran Affairs...

Content Question: Why was the G.I. Bill important to suburban migration after WWII?

The _____ gives/enables _____
(name/title of source) (WHO? Author, people, the world)

to do/have/make _____
(What? Message of the document)

which causes _____
(Analysis/Conclusion- What does this provide or allow?)

Automania

Title III Sec 501(a). Purchase and Construction of Homes.

Suburban living made owning a car a necessity. Most of the new suburbs, built in formerly rural areas, did not offer public transportation, and people had to drive to their jobs in the cities. In addition, many of the schools, stores, synagogues, churches, and doctors' and dentists' offices were not within walking distances of suburban homes.

-McDougal Littell The Americans" Ed. 2006 p.646

Time marker/ connector words	Who (subject) <i>Participants</i>	Action words (verbs/ verb phrases)	Who, What, Where <i>Message</i>	Questions or conclusions- What connections can you make from this information?

Content Question: Why did suburban living require ownership of at least one automobile?

Automania

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Time marker/ connector words	Who (subject) <i>Participants</i>	Action words (verbs/ verb phrases)	Who, What, Where <i>Message</i>	Questions or conclusions- What connections can you make from this information?
	Suburban living	made	owning a car a necessity.	
Most of	the new suburbs,	built	in formerly rural areas,	
		did not offer	public transportation,	
and	most people	had to drive	to their jobs in the cities.	Why wasn't public transportation prioritized over highway construction?
In addition,	many of the schools, stores, synagogues, churches, and doctors' and dentists' offices	Were not	within walking distances of suburban homes.	How has this impacted how suburbs were planned/built?

Content Question: Why did suburban living require ownership of at least one automobile?

Possible answer: The distance between a family's home and areas of employment, worship, shopping and other necessities and services required ownership of an automobile.

The Interstate Highway System

Source A: The more cars there were, the more roads were needed. “Automania” spurred local and state governments to construct roads linking the major cities while connecting schools, shopping centers, and workplaces to residential suburbs. The Interstate Highway Act, which President Eisenhower signed in 1956, authorized the building of a nationwide highway network- 41,000 miles of expressway. The new roads, in turn, encouraged the development of new suburbs farther from the cities.
-McDougal, Littell “The Americans” Ed. 2006 p.646

Source B: As Cold War tensions rose, American officials realized that the ability to move troops and military equipment across the country quickly and efficiently could very well determine whether the nation could survive attack. Since the hapless system of two-lane highways that crisscrossed America could not handle such a task, the Eisenhower administration proposed a 41,000 mile network of multi-lane interstate highways.
-Glencoe “The American Vision” Ed. 2006 p.672

UNDERSTANDING POINTS OF VIEW

Instructions:	Source A	Source B
<p>1. What were the causes of the growth in federal highways?</p>		
<p>2. What government policies were enacted to provide for this/these needs?</p>		

Lesson Question: How did U.S. government (federal and state/local) policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

The Interstate Highway System

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UNDERSTANDING POINTS OF VIEW

Instructions:	Source A	Source B
<p>1. What were the causes of the growth in federal highways?</p>	<p>America’s obsession with the car required more roads.</p>	<p>The perceived threat of Soviet attack and the U.S.’s inability to transport military resources over long distances made U.S. officials reconsider highway construction.</p>
<p>2. What government policies were enacted to provide for this/these needs?</p>	<p>State and local governments constructed more and more roads, culminating in the Interstate Highway Act, which Eisenhower signed in 1956.</p>	<p>President Eisenhower’s administration proposed a 41,000 mile network of multi-lane highways.</p>

Lesson Question: How did federal policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

A network of highways linking different regions of the U.S. provided an infrastructure for Americans to migrate to areas outside cities while maintaining convenient access to personal and family needs.

ANALYZING EVIDENCE - CHART

Writing Prompt: How did U.S. government policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

Thesis: _____

EVIDENCE Facts, Examples, Details Specific Evidence -Dates, names, quotations	ANALYSIS What does this mean? <i>This means that ... (explanation of evidence)</i> <i>INFERENCES: What ideas follow from this evidence?</i>	RELEVANCE How does this support your thesis? <i>This relates to _____ (thesis)</i> <i>because ...</i>	SOURCE Write down your citation information
			Title III Sec. 2 “G.I. Bill of Rights” “ <i>The Americans</i> ” p635
			<i>McDougal, Littell “The Americans” p646</i>
			<i>Glencoe “The American Vision” p672</i>

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM EVIDENCE
 This is important/significant to _____ (thesis) because ...

From: 11th grade Suburbanization Lesson: PART C- Teacher Key

ANALYZING EVIDENCE - CHART

Writing Prompt: How did U.S. government policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

Thesis: U.S. federal policy in post WWII America provided economic and social incentives for suburban migration.

EVIDENCE Facts, Examples, Details Specific Evidence -Dates, names, quotations	ANALYSIS What does this mean? <i>This means that ... (explanation of evidence)</i> INFERENCES: What ideas follow from this evidence?	RELEVANCE How does this support your thesis? <i>This relates to _____ (thesis)</i> because ...	SOURCE Write down your citation information
<p>G.I. Bill of Rights or Serviceman’s Readjustment Act, 1944</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “low-interest, federally guaranteed loans.” -“Millions of young families used these benefits to buy homes and farms or to establish businesses” 	<p>Veterans were given an advantage to buy homes and there were many cheap homes available in suburbia.</p>	<p>“American Dream” of owning land would now be offered by the U.S. government to veterans.</p>	<p>Title III Sec. 2 “G.I. Bill of Rights” <i>“The Americans”</i> p635</p>
<p>The Interstate Highway Act, ’56 President Eisenhower authorized the building of a nationwide highway network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “41,000 miles of expressway.” - The new roads= new development of new suburbs 	<p>“Automania”-Americans’ obsession with cars actually pushed the local, state and national governments to build more roads and highways. Cars give people independence/ power to move and the ability to live a good distance away from where you work.</p>	<p>Increased construction of roads and highways provided infrastructure for suburban migration and gave people jobs building the roads.</p>	<p><i>McDougal, Littell “The Americans”</i> p646</p>
<p>Cold War & the Interstate Highway Act, ’56</p> <p>U.S. National Defense was a big concern with the threat of a Soviet attack looming- could the nation survive an attack?</p> <p>-Current highways only 2-lane and cannot handle mobilization necessary to transport military resources, if attacked</p>	<p>The threat of Soviet attack heavily influenced government action during the Cold War</p> <p>National Defense is an area where the government was spending a lot of money so it was an excellent reason for funding highway program.</p>	<p>Construction of highways unintentionally provided infrastructure for suburban migration.</p>	<p><i>Glencoe “The American Vision”</i> p672</p>

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM EVIDENCE: This is important/significant to suburban migration because ...

Federal highways allowed Americans easy access into and out of cities and other places of economic and social importance. It increased distances between where one worked and lived.

From: 11th grade Suburbanization Lesson: PART D- Student Essay Outline

QUESTION: How did U.S. government policy influence suburban migration in the post- WWII era?

Thesis: U.S. federal policy in post WWII America _____

Evidence: At the end of WWII _____

Specific Evidence (optional): _____

Analysis: This evidence shows that/is important because _____

E: _____

SE (optional): _____

A: _____

E: _____

SE (optional): _____

A: _____

Conclusion: _____
