A DATE OF INFAMY

A document based lesson using national tragedies to build historical empathy.

Designed by Mollie Carter



How do Americans react to attacks from outsiders? What are the implications of these kinds of reactions?



He never knew what hit him, December 8, 1941, Dr. Seuss Political Cartoons. Special Collection & Archives, UC San Diego Library

DECEMBER 7, 1941



GALLERY 1.1

Source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Shaw_(DD-373)













Imagine that you were in Hawaii at the time of the attack. Hawaii is not yet a state but America is dazzled by its island beauty; you might even think of it as part of America, your home.

Now picture that you are seeing these images in person, maybe you even saw and heard the planes flying overhead as the attack commenced.

What about the images sticks out to you that might leave a lasting impression? What are you feeling as you see the smoke billowing over the battleships? As the bomb explodes when it hits the ship? You know there is a war going on in Europe and in Asia, but now it's come to you. What might your thoughts be about the people who attacked you? What ideas or values lead you to these thoughts?

DECEMBER 8, 1941

It's the day after the attacks and you are listening to the radio waiting for the President to address the nation. The attack is all everyone has been talking about all day. Rumors have been flying around that it was the Japanese that attacked, maybe even the Germans, but maybe the President would make it clear in his address.

How might you feel before you hear the speech?

Next, listen to the speech.

After hearing the speech, what are your thoughts? Do you feel safer? Might you be scared for the future? Are you feeling any anger at the Japanese for the attack? What American values and ideals does the President reference in his speech?



FDR's Day of Infamy Speech to Congress as you December 8, 1941

More on the writing of the speech from the National Archives



DECEMBER 10, 1941

On December 10 you are listening to the radio when you hear a song about Pearl Harbor. You listen to it intently; maybe it will help you feel differently.

Listen to the song.

Think about how you said you were feeling when you looked at the images from the attack on Pearl Harbor. Does it change after listening to this song? How are you feeling after listening to the song? What lyrics stuck with you? What sorts of values and ideals are touched on in the song?

AUDIO 1.1 We did it before (and we can do it again) By Barry Woods (December 1941)

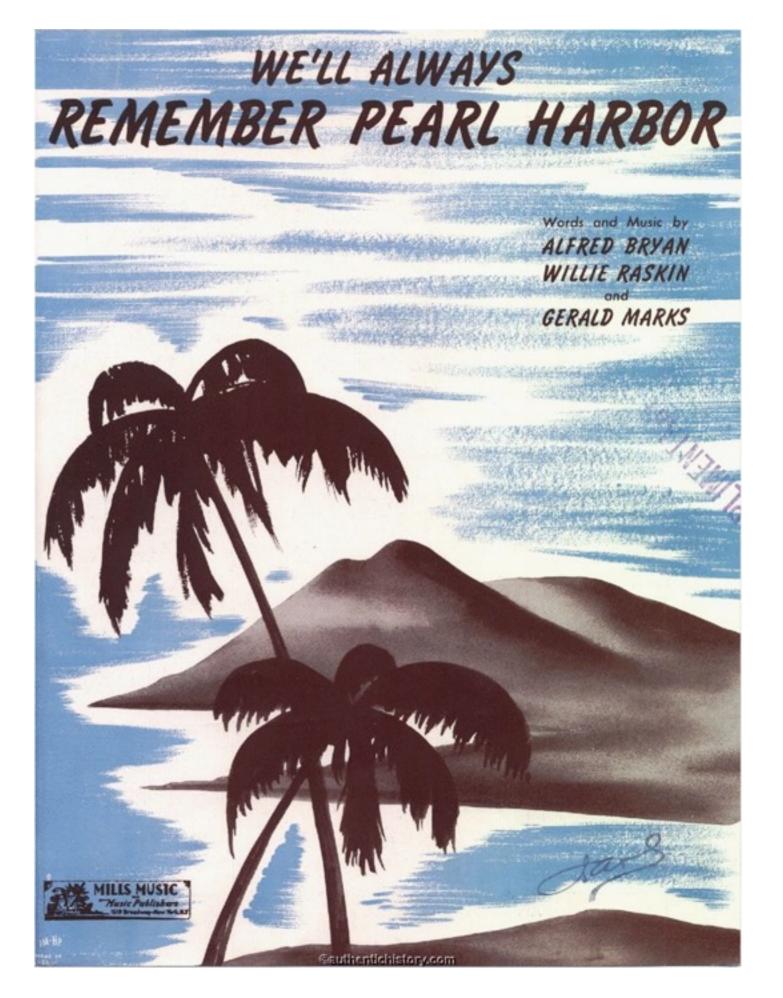
<u>Source</u>

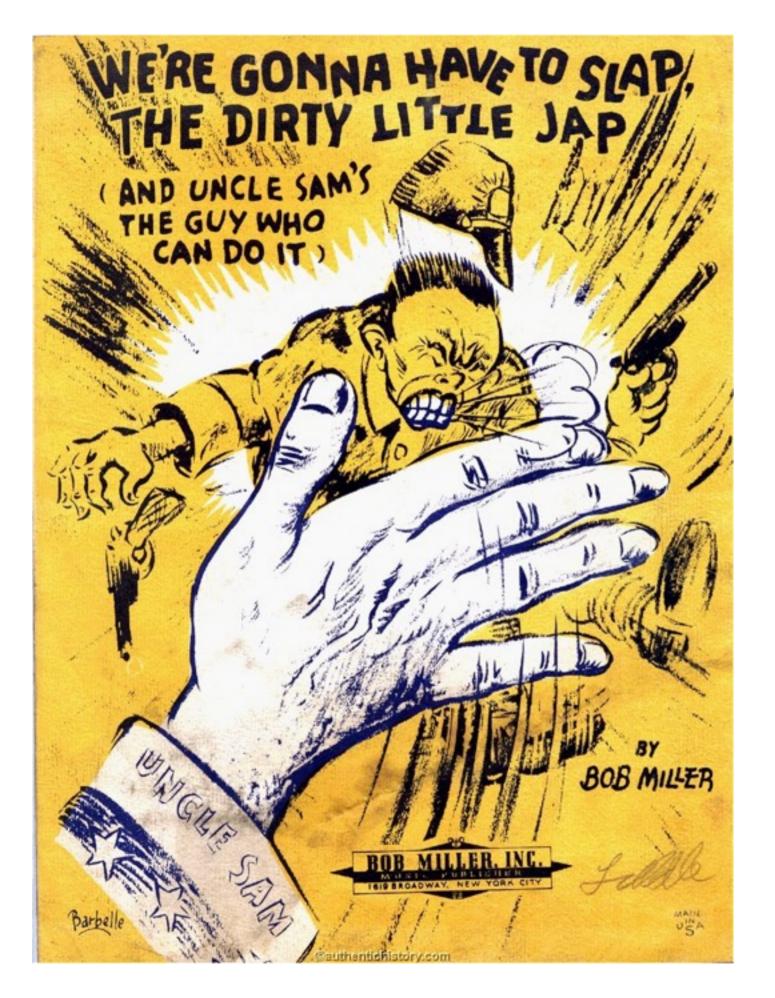
Sheet music cover for We Did It Before (and we can do it again) by Cliff Friend & Charlie Tobias Remember Pearl Harbor by Sammy Kaye (December 1941) Source Remember Hawaii by Bing Crosby (January 1942) Source

Here is a collection of songs that came out in the months following Pearl Harbor that are specifically directed at Pearl Harbor or the Japanese that attacked that day. Listen to the songs and compare the message of the song.

Do they focus more on America's assured victory or on bashing the Japanese who attacked? How do they do this? Pick out specific song lyrics that emphasize the message of the song. Why would they choose to focus on these aspects of the event/America instead of others? How do feel listening to these songs given how you might've felt watching Pearl Harbor be attacked?

TWO REACTIONS





Remember Pearl Harbor by Carson Robinson (December 1941) Source Cowards Over Pearl Harbor by Denver Darling (February 1942) Source

We're Gonna Have To Slap The Dirty Little Jap by Carson Robinson (December 1941)

Pearl Harbor Blues by Doctor Clayton (March 1942)

Source

Source

Two of these songs were released shortly after the attack and two were released months after. Something to consider when listen to the latter of these songs is that in February of 1942 President Roosevelt signed into effect Executive Order 9066 which began the process of Japanese Internment (confinement) on the west coast. Listen to the songs and compare the message of the song.

What do these songs focus on? Pick out specific song lyrics that emphasize the message of the song. Why would they choose to focus on these aspects of the event/America instead of others? How do feel listening to these songs given how you might've felt watching Pearl Harbor be attacked?

What do you think the reaction in America was to the songs bashing the Japanese?

TWO REACTIONS

THOUGHTS ON OUR GENERATIVE QUESTION

How do American citizens react to attacks from outsiders? What are the implications of these kinds of reactions?

In the 1940's, the reactions we've looked at so far were viewed as normal. As stated in the last slide (and shown in the cartoon to the right) people were scared of the Japanese in ways they weren't scared of the Germans or the Russians. To feel safe they took drastic action beyond the musical opinions stated here.

Using our modern perspective, how do you view these actions now? What has changed between then and now? What has stayed the same?

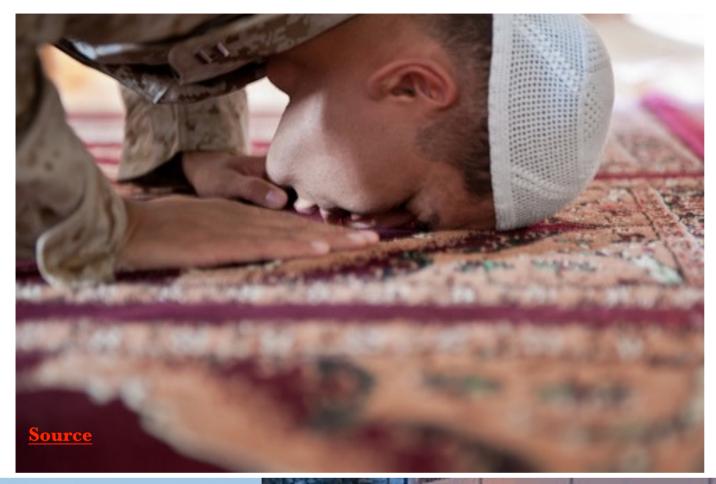
Next we will talk about modern examples.



Waiting for the signal from home..., February 13, 1942, Dr. Seuss Political Cartoons. Special Collection & Archives, UC San Diego Library

<u>Source</u>

MODERN DAY CONNECTIONS



9/11 Attack



Comparisons have been made between Pearl Harbor and many modern events caused by the terrorism of extremist groups. You have grown up in this world, what similarities do you see between Pearl Harbor and events such as 9/11? Or the more recent November 2015 attacks in Paris?

People and politicians may use the fear and sadness after an event to bolster political support for more radical action. Is it possible that internment camps, concentration camps, or registration for groups of people could happen in 2015/2016?

Even if political action isn't taken against the offending group, society may take it upon themselves to act. Should we blame a whole group of people for the actions of a few? What unspoken actions have been taken against Muslim people in the wake of 9/11 and the recent November 2015 Paris attacks?

I have rather enjoyed creating this lesson. The idea was something I became interested in while in college and have not had the space to develop since then. When this project was introduced to me I knew immediately what I would do.

It became more interesting, unfortunately, in the middle of November as Paris was attacked and hateful rhetoric began to come from the republican presidential candidates. It reminded me of some of the rhetoric after the attacks on the twin towers, which as a 12 year old then I clearly remember. As I started my venture into teaching, I realized that many of my students would be born near or after this day that so scarred my memory. I was reminded of my own age as well as my place in the greater timeline of history. It is this realization that directed me to think of another generations "day of infamy" and the ways we teach it to students who have little context for it.

I also find myself wanting to emphasize on historical empathy, or perspective taking. Often times when looking at history, we may look at it with our modern day perspectives and judge the people of the past without seeing things through their eyes. The purpose of this is not to justify their actions but realize that it could still happen to us; that if we forget the past or believe we are above it, we are bound to repeat it.

Creating this document based lesson allowed me to combine both of these ideas of mine into one, ideally powerful, lesson. I am not a Mac person so learning to use the book design software was a bit of a learning curve but in the end I found it worth it to create this easy to access lesson. I hope that whoever may find this will have some deep discussions both about our history and the nature of humans themselves.

REFLECTION





This eBook is a collaborative project of Peter Pappas and his Fall 2015 Social Studies Methods Class

School of Education ~ University of Portland, Portland Ore.

Graduate and undergraduate level pre-service teachers were assigned the task of developing an engaging research question, researching supportive documents and curating them into a DBQ suitable for middle or high school students.

For more on this class, visit the course blog <u>EdMethods</u> For more on this book project and work flow tap here.

Chapters in chronological order

- 1. Finding Egyptian Needles in Western Haystacks by Heidi Kershner
- 2. Pompeii by Caleb Wilson
- 3. Samurai: Sources of Warrior Identity in Medieval Japan by Ben Heebner
- 4. The Declaration of Independence by David Deis
- 5. Reconstruction in Political Cartoons by EmmaLee Kuhlmann
- 6. Regulation Through the Years by Chenoa Musillo Olson / Sarah Wieking
- 7. Battle of the Somme by John Hunt

- 8. The Lynching of Leo Frank by Jeff Smith
- 9. The Waco Horror by Alekz Wray
- 10. The Harlem Renaissance by Monica Portugal
- 11. A Date of Infamy by Mollie Carter
- 12. Anti-Vietnam War Imagery by Felicia Teba
- 13. Examining the Ongoing Evolution of American Government by Eric Cole

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Cover image: Door knocker

Amsterdam NL Photograph by Peter Pappas