

“Local German Americans told to ‘get right or get out’ during World War I”

Materials

- Article: “Local German Americans told to ‘get right or get out’ during World War I,” *Pantagraph*, June 3, 2007
- Primary Documents (for supplementary activities)
 - “German Newspaper Must Change It’s Language,” *Pantagraph*, April 2, 1918
 - “To Abolish German At High School Now,” *Pantagraph*, April 12, 1918
 - Citizens’ Committee Calls on School Board,” *Pantagraph*, April 11, 1918
- Supplementary Articles
 - “Coliseum Filled at German Day Celebration,” *Pantagraph*, October 29, 1915
 - The Beast of Berlin Ad, *Pantagraph*, April 12, 1912

Procedure (50 minutes or longer, depending on supplementary tasks; can be broken into multiple days)

Pre-reading Activity

Take about three minutes to pose the following question for students to journal:

- What do we get from German culture that is evident in America today?”

Depending on students’ background, discussion may need to be guided, but consider the change in terminology during World War I and the rationale behind the changes.

Examples – Hamburger to liberty steak
 German measles to liberty measles
 Sauerkraut to liberty cabbage

Focus Activity

After reading the article “Local German Americans told to ‘get right or get out’ during World War I,” students will discuss the anti-German sentiment during the war as well as the reasons why the sentiment existed.

Once discussion has ended, have students evaluate and analyze political propaganda against Germany at the time. Political propaganda can include national ads as well as local ads (Beast of Berlin”).

Students will read “To Abolish German At High School Now” article to create a propaganda poster to abolish German classes in high schools. Propaganda posters should be paired with arguments against the teaching of German in high school, which can be found in the article “Citizens Committee Calls on School Board.” The main sections to focus on in the “Citizens” article are “Members Make Talks” and “Mr. Bach Talks.”

Supplementary Activities

- Using the “Coliseum Filled at German Day Celebration,” students may write a one page editorial either agreeing with or disagreeing with the content of the article. Focus should be on argumentation and reasoning, particularly making reference to the arguments made by Professor Rittmiller and Professor Goebel.

Standards

Illinois State Standards:

16.D.4b (US) Describe unintended social consequences of political events in United States history (e.g., Civil War/emancipation, National Defense Highway Act/decline of inner cities, Vietnam War/anti-government activity).

16.D.5 (US) Analyze the relationship between an issue in United States social history and the related aspects of political, economic and environmental history.

18.A.5 Compare ways in which social systems are affected by political, environmental, economic and technological changes.

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.RI.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.RI.9-10.6

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.9-10.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.9-10.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

NCSS (National Council for Social Studies):

Culture & Cultural Diversity (Thematic Standard)

- Enable learners to assess the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.
- Have learners interpret patterns of behavior as reflecting values and attitudes, which contribute to or pose obstacles to cross-cultural understanding.
- Guide learners in constructing reasoned judgments about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues.

Time, Continuity, & Change (Thematic Standard)

- Provide learners with opportunities to investigate, interpret, and analyze multiple historical and contemporary viewpoints within and across cultures related to important events, recurring dilemmas, and persistent issues, while employing empathy, skepticism, and critical judgment; and enable learners to apply ideas, theories, and modes of historical inquiry to analyze historical and contemporary developments, and to inform and evaluate actions concerning public policy issues.

Individual Development and Identity (Thematic Standard)

- Have learners compare and evaluate the impact of stereotyping, conformity, acts of altruism, discrimination, and other behaviors on individuals and groups.

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions (Thematic Standard)

- Assist learners in identifying and analyzing examples of tensions between expressions of individuality and efforts of groups and institutions to promote social conformity.

Power, Authority, & Governance (Thematic Standard)

- Enable learners to describe the ways nations and organizations respond to forces of unity and diversity affecting order and security.

NCHE Vital Themes & Narratives:

Values, beliefs, political ideas, and institutions

Conflict and Cooperation

Teacher Materials

A Different Mirror, Takaki (191-215)