
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND LITERACY

United States History





Smithsonian Institution

United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Colonial America



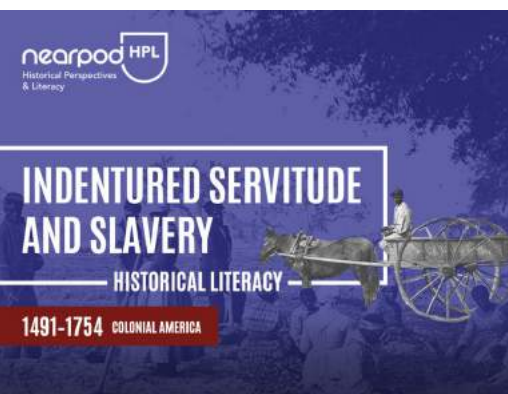
In this social studies lesson, students will examine the impact of Spanish exploration in the Americas, and the legacy of Christopher Columbus. Students will consider how Columbus Day should be treated today.



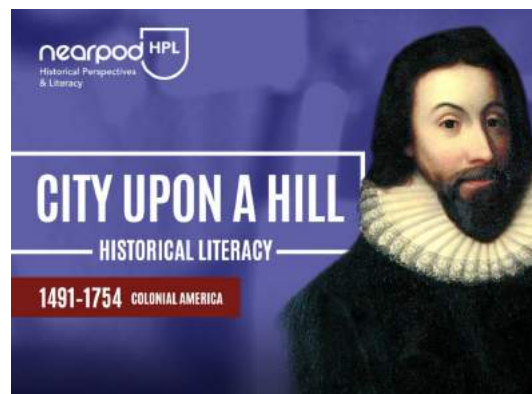
In this US history lesson, students will compare and contrast the efforts made by the British, French and Spanish to colonize America, and the impact this had on Native Americans.



In this US history lesson, students examine the conditions and experiences of Africans during the Middle Passage aboard slave ships. Students consider the immediate and long-term impacts of the transatlantic slave trade.



In this US history lesson, students examine how labor sources varied regionally and evolved in colonial America. Students investigate the causes and consequences of indentured servitude and slavery.



In this US history lesson, students explore the relationship between religion and government by examining the social, economic, and political systems of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

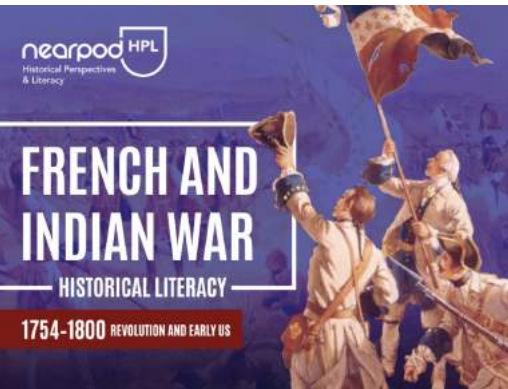


In this US history lesson, students examine the causes of the Salem Witch Trials and the role Puritanism played in the false accusation of women in the New England colonies.

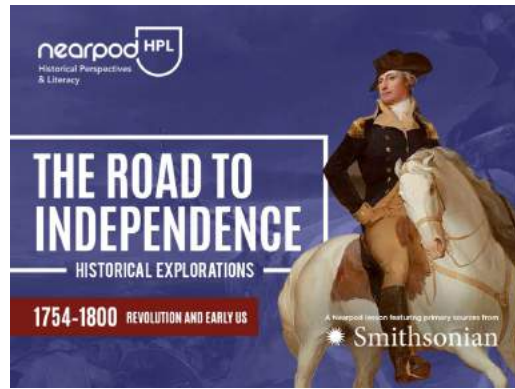


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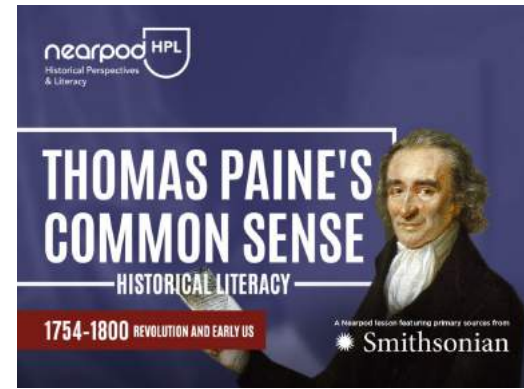
United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Colonial America



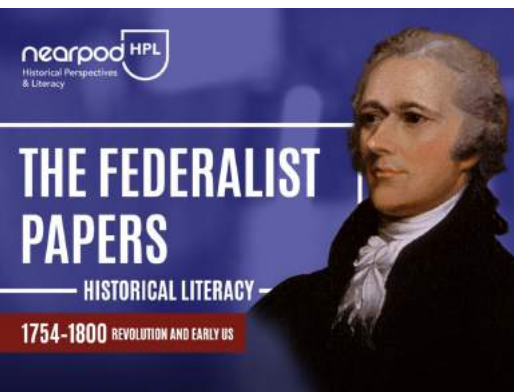
In this US history lesson, students investigate the results of the French and Indian War. Students analyze how the French and Indian War led to the American Revolution.



In this US history lesson, students investigate the forces that led to the American Revolution and determine whether the violent overthrow of British rule was justified. Students compare and contrast primary sources from the Stamp Act protest.



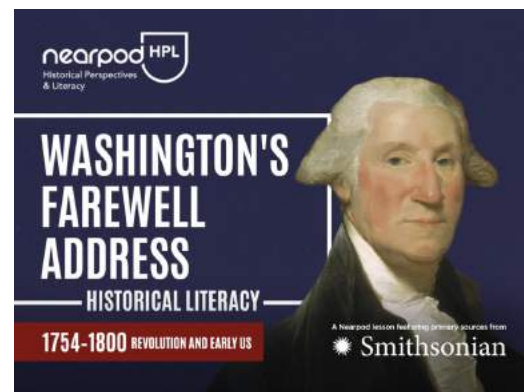
In this US history lesson, students will read and analyze Thomas Paine's Common Sense and reflect on the effect of the pamphlet, both at the time it was written and today. Students will consider the ripple effect a document can have on a government.



In this US history lesson, students unpack the arguments for & against the Constitution. They further reflect on how the debate between Anti-Federalists and Federalists impacted the formation of the modern US government.



In this US history lesson, students examine the major domestic issues facing the new republic of the US and how they shaped the power of the federal government. Students consider problems stemming from the Articles of Confederation.

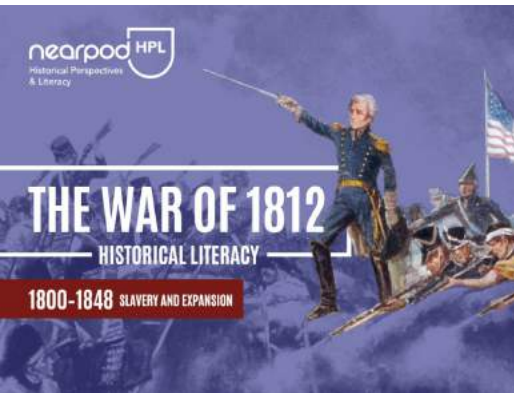


In this US history lesson, students break down George Washington's Farewell Address and reflect on how the speech informs American democracy today.



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United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Slavery and Expansion



In this US history lesson, students examine the causes, important events, and effects of the War of 1812.



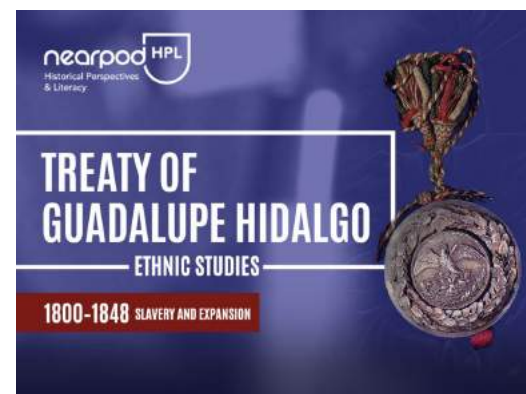
In this US history lesson, students examine the effects of the Indian Removal Act in the 1800s. Students consider the election of Andrew Jackson as president, and how his legacy should be treated today.



In this US history lesson, students examine how the Amistad case helped push forward the abolitionist movement. Students consider how the Amistad case has been remembered in popular culture, and why that might be problematic.



In this US history lesson, students examine what led to Texas becoming a part of the United States. Students consider how the annexation of Texas led to the Civil War.



In this US history lesson, students examine how the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo transformed the United States. Students consider the ways in which the treaty impacted non-American citizens living in territory granted to the US.



In this US history lesson, students examine the purpose and consequences of the Monroe Doctrine to determine its impact on American foreign policy and global influence.

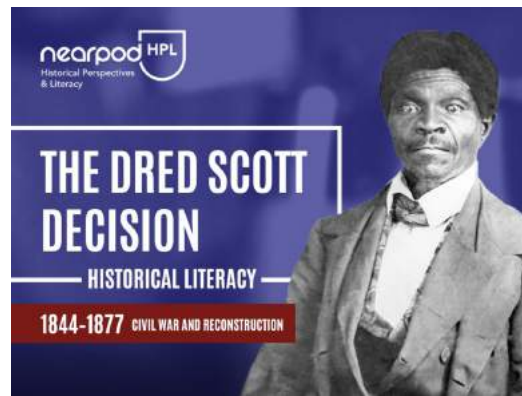


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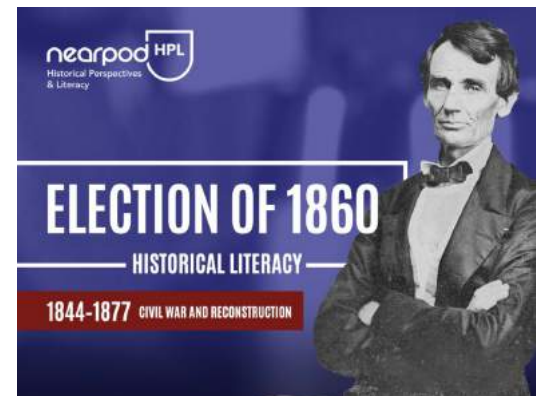
United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Civil War & Reconstruction - Part One



In this US history lesson, students learn why Harriet Tubman is considered a hero in American History. Students reflect on Joseph Campbell's works on heroism, and what distinguishes Harriet Tubman from other heroes.



In this US history lesson, students examine the Supreme Court rule in the Dred Scott case. Students reflect on how the Dred Scott case impacted slavery and the Civil War.

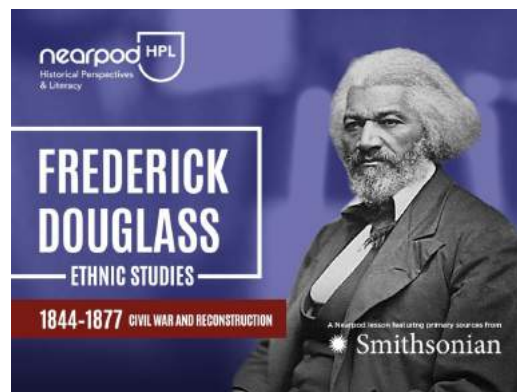


In this US history lesson, students examine the impact of the election of 1860 on precipitating the Civil War. Students reflect on how the election affected the South.

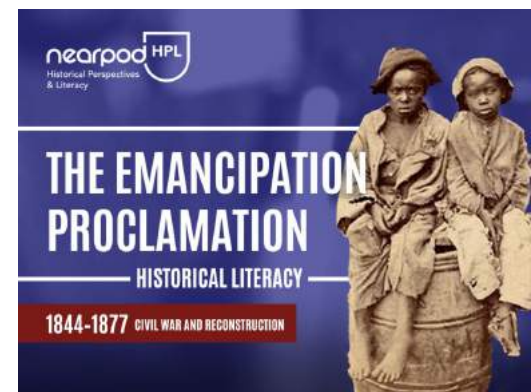


In this US history lesson, students examine what role Asian workers played in the construction of the transcontinental railroad.

Students consider how discrimination impacted the lives of Asian railway workers.



In this US history lesson, students examine Frederick Douglass's role in the Abolitionist Movement. Students consider the struggles that former slaves like Douglass had to overcome.



In this US history lesson, students investigate the Emancipation Proclamation, who the document applied to, and what it tells us about the state of the United States at the time it was written.



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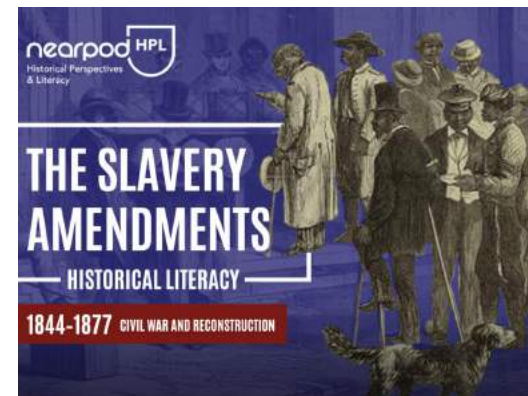
United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Civil War & Reconstruction - Part Two



In this US history lesson, students examine the factors that led to the Civil War, and the significance of major battles such as Antietam and Gettysburg. Through VR field trips to different battlefields of the civil war, students reflect on what made each a turning point.



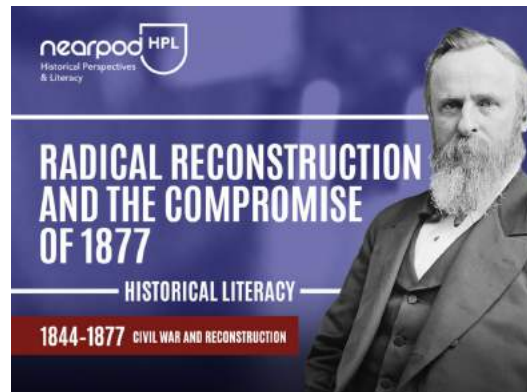
In this US history lesson, students examine how the 54th Massachusetts Infantry formed, and what the infantry fought for during the Civil War.



In this US history lesson, students examine the consequences of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, and how society changed and responded to the new policies. Students reflect on the intersectionality of morality and legislation.



In this US history lesson, students examine the origins, tactics, and motivations of the KKK during Reconstruction. Students investigate how blacks in the South were impacted by the KKK during Reconstruction.



In this US history lesson, students examine the policies, practices, and consequences of Radical Reconstruction. Students consider the legacy of Reconstruction after the Compromise of 1877.

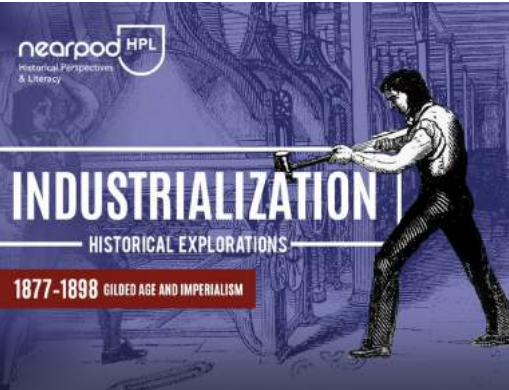


In this US history lesson, students examine the factors that led to the Battle of Little Bighorn, and consider how it is often remembered in American pop culture. Students consider what Crazy Horse fought for, and how his legacy lives on.

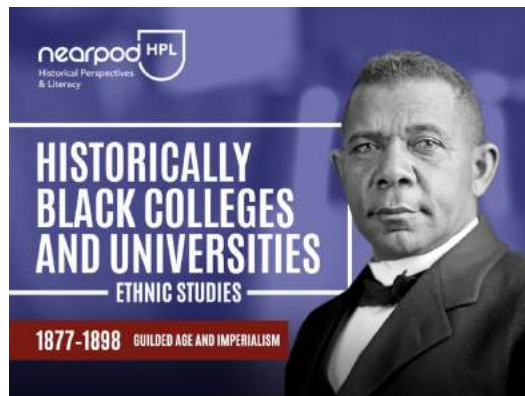


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United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Gilded Age, Imperialism, and Growth



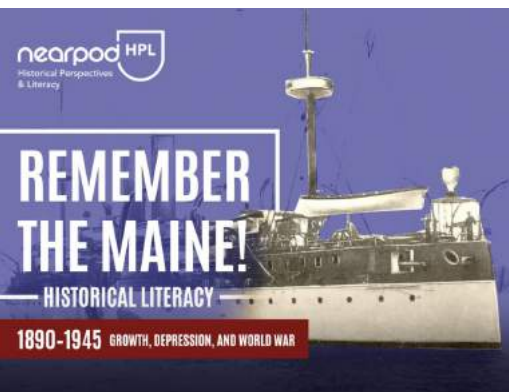
In this world history lesson, students examine how industrialization impacted the development of society. Students consider whether industrialization was a net positive for humanity or not.



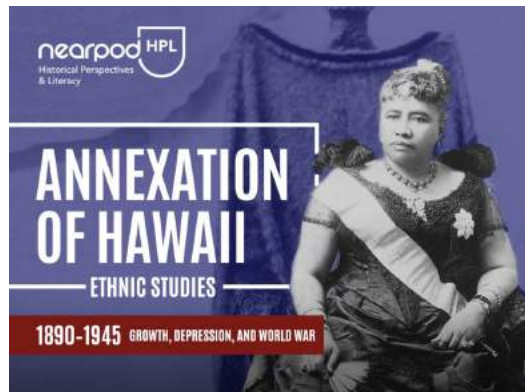
In this US history lesson, students examine the ways in which the educational freedom of African Americans has been denied in America. Students consider how the establishment of historically black colleges contributed to African American equality.



In this US history lesson, students examine what led to such an explicit racial policy like the Chinese Exclusion Act. Students consider the struggles Chinese Americans had to overcome due to discrimination.



In this US history lesson, students consider the causes and impact of the Spanish-American War. Students examine how the war helped establish the US as a world power.



In this US history lesson, students investigate the annexation of Hawaii by the United States, the concept of Manifest Destiny and how it enabled US expansionism, and the legacy that this annexation has forged.

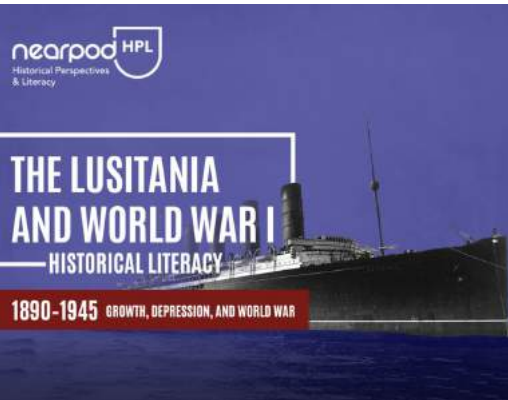


In this US history lesson, students examine events leading up to the construction of the Panama Canal. Students further analyze the political, economic, and foreign relations impact this undertaking had.



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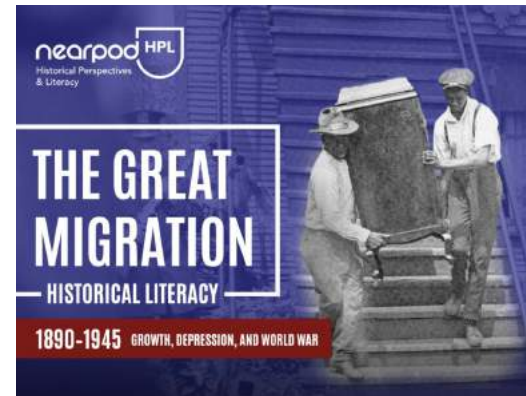
United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Growth, Depression & World War - Part One



In this world history lesson, students examine how the sinking of the Lusitania impacted America's decision to enter World War I. Students consider why Germany attacked the ship.



In this world history lesson, students will examine the events and forces that led to World War I, and the impact of modern warfare. Students take a virtual reality field trip to evaluate the major turning points of the war.



In this world history lesson, students examine the factors that contributed to the Great Migration. Students consider the effects and impact of the Great Migration.



In this world history lesson, students will analyze primary and secondary sources representing the tactics and arguments of the women's suffrage movement.



In this U.S. history lesson, students consider how the changing role of the Border Patrol throughout American history reflects changing attitudes towards immigrants.

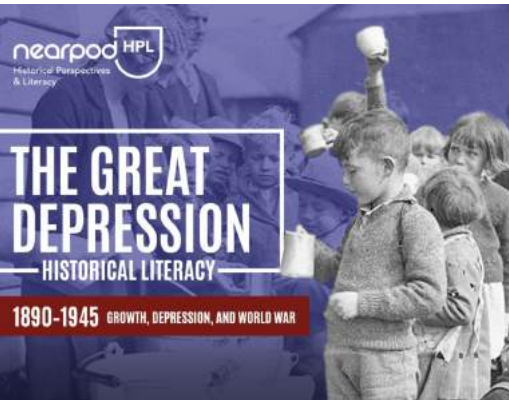


In this US history lesson, students examine the social, cultural, and economic developments of the 1920s. Students consider how the economic boom of the Roaring Twenties changed consumers, manufacturing, and marketing.



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United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Growth, Depression & World War



In this US history lesson, students examine the causes, impact, and responses of the Great Depression. Students consider how the Great Depression changed the role of government.



In this world history lesson, students will explore the rise of Nazi Germany, the formation of alliances during World War II, and consider the turning points during the war through a VR field trip.



In this world history lesson, students examine the factors that led to the attack at Pearl Harbor during World War II, and whether the US response by bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justified.



In this US history lesson, students examine the constitutional issues on the U.S home front, including the internment of Japanese Americans and the restrictions on German and Italian resident aliens.



In this US history lesson, students examine who the Tuskegee Airmen were, and reflect on what black Americans were fighting for during World War II.

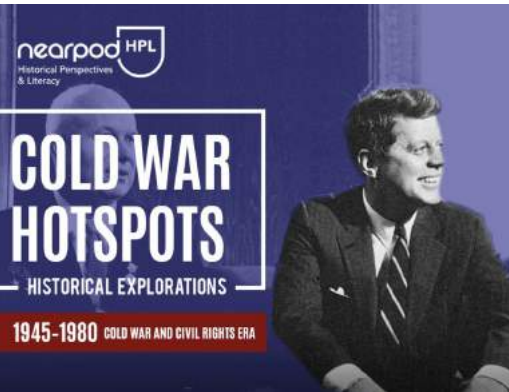


In this US history lesson, students investigate the role Navajo Code Talkers during World War II. Students will examine how discrimination impacted the experience of Navajo soldiers.

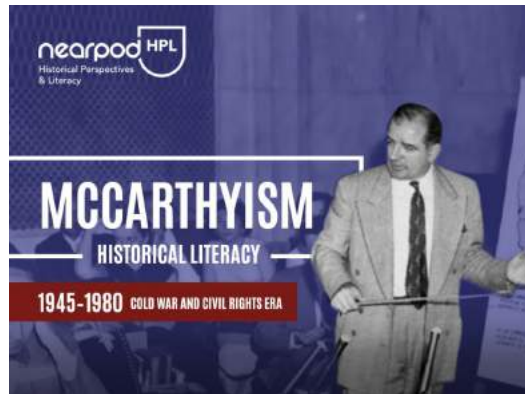


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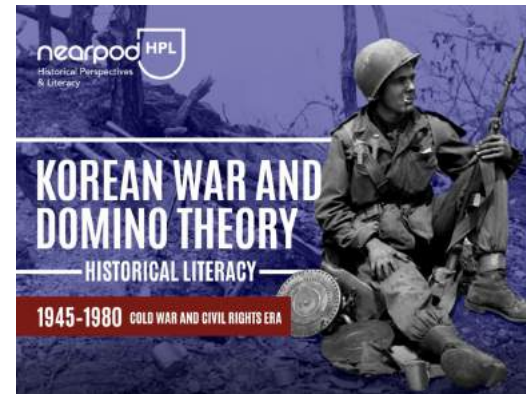
United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Cold War & Civil Rights Era - Part One



In this US history lesson, students will examine the major components that led to the Cold War between the United State and the USSR. Students step into a virtual reality field trip to explore hotspots of conflict around the world during the Cold War.



In this US history lesson, students explore the context of the Red Scare in the scope of the Cold War, the policies of President Truman in the 1950s, and the power of rumors in history.



In this US history lesson, students examine the major events of the Korean War. Students consider how the Korean War impacted America's foreign policy during the Cold War and today.



In this US history lesson, students examine why Emmett Till died, and how his mother shaped his story and legacy.



In this US history lesson, students examine the process to desegregate Central High School in Arkansas in the 1950s. Students learn about two pivotal Supreme Court decisions.

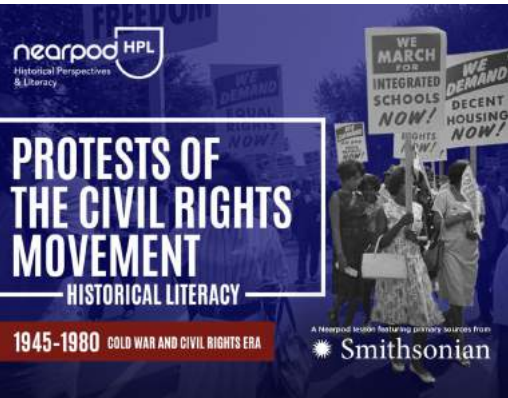


In this US history lesson, students examine what made Malcolm X such a formidable leader. Students consider how Malcolm X impacted the goals and strategies of the Civil Rights Movement.

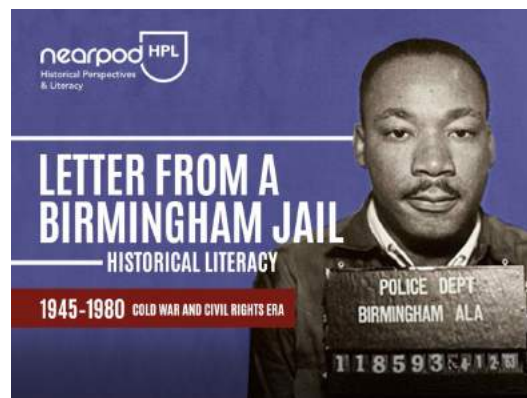


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United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Cold War & Civil Rights Era - Part Two



In this world history lesson, students examine the major protests of the civil rights movement. Students consider if the tactics and strategies of the civil rights protests were effective in bringing about change



In this US history lesson, students consider Martin Luther King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail and what the document helps us to understand about the civil rights movement. Students reflect on what the letter illustrates about King's legacy.



In this US history lesson, students examine what led to Birmingham being a hotspot of the civil rights movement. Students consider what affects the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing had on the civil rights movement.



In this US history lesson, students examine the impacts of segregated housing on individuals and communities. Students consider the steps that have been taken to protect fair housing, and why this problem still exists.



In this US history lesson, students examine the major players in the women's rights movement over different eras. Students consider how societal expectations and limits on women have changed as a result of feminism.



In this US history lesson, students examine how Dolores Huerta impacted the labor rights of immigrant farm workers. Students consider why Dolores Huerta received little recognition for her accomplishments.

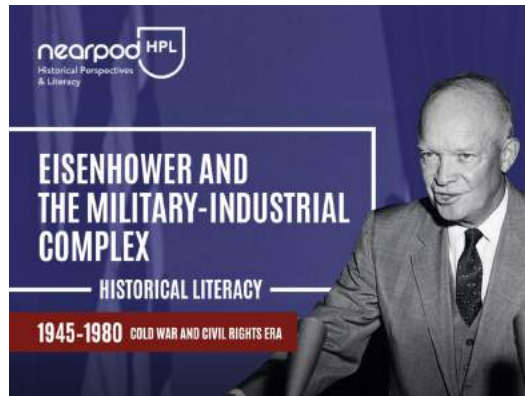


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United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Cold War & Civil Rights Era - Part Three



In this US history lesson, students examine the effects and legacy of the Space Race between the United States and the USSR in the 1950-1970s. Students reflect on the impact national pride has on innovation.



In this US history lesson, students read the Farewell Address from Dwight Eisenhower and analyze the text. Students discuss the significance of the US spending on military and how our military power affects diplomacy with other countries.



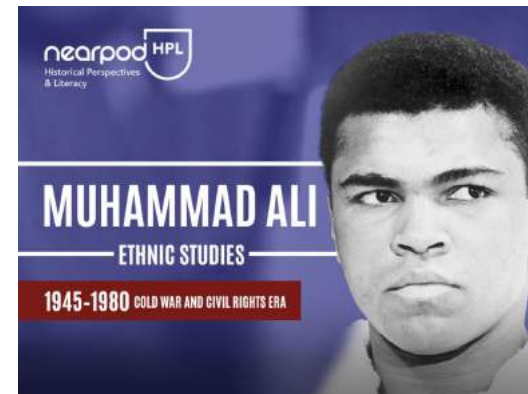
In this US history lesson, students examine the origins, events, and results of the Cuban missile crisis. Students consider what lessons might be learned from the crisis.



In this US history lesson, students consider what the Gulf of Tonkin helps us understand about US involvement in Southeast Asia and the Vietnam War. Students examine the impact of this document and how its consequences are remembered today.



In this US history lesson, students examine what led to the United States' intervention in and withdrawal from Vietnam. Students consider how the media and public perception of war impacted United States foreign policy.



In this US history lesson, students examine the rights and ideas Muhammad Ali fought for. Students consider how Ali's legacy influenced other athletes.



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United States Historical Perspectives & Literacy: Contemporary US History (1980 - Now)



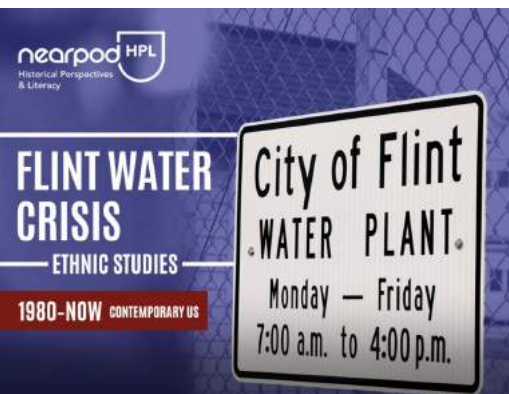
In this US history lesson, students examine why affirmative action exists. Students consider the story we should tell about access to opportunity in America.



In this US history lesson, students examine what it means to feel forgotten. Students consider how race factors into the story told about Hurricane Katrina.



In this world history lesson, students examine why the Black Lives Matter movement emerged, and what its goals are.



In this US history lesson, students examine how the water crisis in Flint, Michigan is an example of environmental injustice. Students consider how state and federal government officials failed the people of Flint.



In this US history lesson, students examine why there is a debate about the use of Native American mascots. Students consider what it means to honor an individual or culture, and who gets to decide if something is an honor.



In this US history lesson, students examine how Puerto Rico became a part of the U.S. Students consider in what ways the people of Puerto Rico have less rights than other citizens of the United States.