

LESSON PLAN 12

Continuity in Leadership

By
Dr. Samantha Averett

A president serves at the pleasure of the people which means his actions should reflect the will of the people. When a new president is election should he continue the actions of his predecessor? With regard to foreign policies, should our neighbors be able to take comfort in the reliability and predictability of our actions when those actions benefit all members. Or should our neighbors expect that our actions, policies, and behaviors are volatile and temporary, changing with the election of every new president or Congress?

Standard(s):

C3 NCSS

1. D2.Civ.6.6-8. Describe the roles of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives..
2. D2.Civ.14.6-8. Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies and promoting the common good.

Objectives:

1. Identify foreign policies for various presidential administrations.
2. Determine how we (United States government) support our neighbors and global communities.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the foundational principles by engaging in the political process.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and practical application of historical skills (analysis, sourcing, and corroboration).

Activity:

1. Students will analyze the documents.
2. Students will create and expression of their understanding.
3. Students will respond to examination prompts.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is our responsibility to our neighbors and our global community?
2. How can we support our neighbors and global community?

Sources:

1. Documents
 - a. Theodore Roosevelt's Annual Message to Congress for 1904; House Records HR 58A-K2; Records of the U.S. House of Representatives; Record Group 233; Center for Legislative Archives; National Archives.
 - b. William Howard Taft. "State of the Union Address Part I (1912)". Presidential Message, December 03, 1912. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/state-of-the-union-address-part-i-1912>
 - c. Woodrow Wilson, Address at Independence Hall: "The Meaning of Liberty;" Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/206508>

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Warm Up –
 - a. Lead a whole group discussion on the term foreign policy and foreign diplomacy.
2. Examine – Students can work independently or in a small group to examine each document.
3. Discuss or examine – put students in a small group and have each group create a poster that explains the foreign policies and diplomacy of their assigned president. On that poster students should also give examples of that policy or diplomacy in action. Students will then display their poster around the room
 - a. Questions to consider for your poster
 - i. What was the expressed policy of the assigned president?
 - ii. What nations were impacted by the expressed policies of your assigned president?
 - iii. How did the expressed policy/policies impact the United States and the other nations?
 - iv. What were the lasting effects of the expressed policy/policies of your assigned president?
 - v. Why might the president have created the expressed policy/policies?
4. Discuss or examine – Students will conduct a gallery walk and read the posters to determine the benefits and drawbacks of each policy. Then as a whole group we will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each policy.
 - a. Evaluation – Students will then complete the guide questions as a brief constructed response.
 - a. Guide Questions
 - i. What was each president’s foreign policy or diplomatic strategy?
 - ii. Is Wilson’s policy a reflection of or a progression from his predecessors’ (Taft and Roosevelt) policies? Why or Why not?
 - iii. Is it important for our foreign policies and actions to stay consistent for our neighbors or should those policies change when it is beneficial or necessary to meet our nation’s best interests?
 - iv. What was the long term and short term impact of Wilson’s foreign policies and diplomatic strategy?

Suggested Grade Level:

This lesson is suggested for middle school age children.

Suggested Lesson Pace:

Schedule Type/Rationale

80 minute Block Schedule This lesson structure may take one class period. Students will be able to complete the entire lesson in one class period.

45 minute Block Schedule This lesson structure may take two class periods. Students will complete step one, two and three in the first class period. Then step four and step five in the second class period.

Document A

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The Nation continues to enjoy noteworthy prosperity. Such prosperity is of course primarily due to the high individual average of our citizenship, taken together with our great natural resources; but an important factor therein is the working of our long-continued governmental policies. The people have emphatically expressed their approval of the principles underlying these policies, and their desire that these principles be kept substantially unchanged, although of course applied in a progressive spirit to meet changing conditions.....

It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires are to see the

neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. If every country washed by the Caribbean Sea would show the progress in stable and just civilization which with the aid of the Platt amendment Cuba has shown since our troops left the island, and which so many of the republics in both Americas are constantly and brilliantly showing, all question of interference by this Nation with their affairs would be at an end. Our interests and those of our southern neighbors are in reality identical. They have great natural riches, and if within their borders the reign of law and justice obtains, prosperity is sure to come to them. While they thus obey the primary laws of civilized society they may rest assured that they will be treated by us in a spirit of cordial and helpful sympathy. We would interfere with them only in the last resort, and then only if it became evident that their inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations. It is a mere truism to say that every nation, whether in America or anywhere else, which desires to maintain its freedom, its independence, must ultimately realize that the right of such independence cannot be separated from the responsibility of making good use of it.

Source: Theodore Roosevelt's Annual Message to Congress for 1904; House Records HR 58A-K2; Records of the U.S. House of Representatives; Record Group 233; Center for Legislative Archives; National Archives

Document B

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The foreign relations of the United States actually and potentially affect the state of the Union to a degree not widely realized and hardly surpassed by any other factor in the welfare of the whole Nation. The position of the United States in the moral, intellectual, and material relations of the family of nations should be a matter of vital interest to every patriotic citizen. The national prosperity and power impose upon us duties which we cannot shirk if we are to be true to our ideals. The tremendous growth of the export trade of the United States has already made that trade a very real factor in the industrial and commercial prosperity of the country. With the development of our industries the foreign commerce of the United States must rapidly become a still more essential factor in its economic welfare.....

The fundamental foreign policies of the United States should be raised high above the conflict of partisanship and wholly dissociated from differences as to domestic policy. In its foreign affairs the United States should present to the world a united front. The intellectual, financial, and industrial interests of the country and the publicist, the wage earner, the farmer, and citizen of whatever occupation must cooperate in a spirit of high patriotism to promote that national solidarity which is indispensable to national efficiency and to the attainment of national ideals.

The relations of the United States with all foreign powers remain upon a sound basis of peace, harmony, and friendship. A greater insistence upon justice to American citizens or interests wherever it may have been denied and a stronger emphasis of the need of mutuality in commercial and other relations have only served to strengthen our friendships with foreign countries by placing those friendships upon a firm foundation of realities as well as aspirations.....

The diplomacy of the present administration has sought to respond to modern ideas of commercial intercourse. This policy has been characterized as substituting dollars for bullets. It is one that appeals alike to idealistic humanitarian sentiments, to the dictates of sound policy and strategy, and to legitimate commercial aims. It is an effort frankly directed to the increase of American trade upon the axiomatic principle that the Government of the United States shall extend all proper support to every legitimate and beneficial American enterprise abroad. How great have been the results of this diplomacy, coupled with the maximum and minimum provision of the tariff law, will be seen by some consideration of the wonderful increase in the export trade of the United States. Because modern diplomacy is commercial, there has been a disposition in some quarters to attribute to it none but materialistic aims.....

Source: William Howard Taft. "State of the Union Address Part I (1912)". Presidential Message, December 03, 1912. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/state-of-the-union-address-part-i-1912>

Document C

Liberty does not consist, my fellow-citizens, in mere general declarations of the rights of man. It consists in the translation of those declarations into definite action. Therefore, standing here where the declaration was adopted, reading its businesslike sentences, we ought to ask ourselves what there is in it for us. There is nothing in it for us unless we can translate it into the terms of our own conditions and of our own lives.....

The way to be patriotic in America is not only to love America but to love the duty that lies nearest to our hand and know that in performing it we are serving our country. There are some gentlemen in Washington, for example, at this very moment who are showing themselves very patriotic in a way which does not attract wide attention but seems to belong to mere everyday obligations.....

It is not patriotic to concert measures against one another; it is patriotic to concert measures for one another.....

What are we going to do with the influence and power of this great Nation? Are we going to play the old role of using that power for our aggrandizement and material benefit only? You know what that may mean. It may upon occasion mean that we shall use it to make the peoples of other nations suffer in the way in which we said it was intolerable to suffer when we uttered our Declaration of Independence.

The Department of State at Washington is constantly called upon to back up the commercial enterprises and the industrial enterprises of the United States in foreign countries, and it at one time went so far in that direction that all its diplomacy came to be designated as "dollar diplomacy." It was called upon to support every man who wanted to earn anything anywhere if he was an American. But there ought to be a limit to that. There is no man who is more interested than I am in carrying the enterprise of American businessmen to every quarter of the globe. I was interested in it long before I was suspected of being a politician. I have been preaching it year after year as the great thing that lay in the future for the United States, to show her wit and skill and enterprise and influence in every country in the world.....

If American enterprise in foreign countries, particularly in those foreign countries which are not strong enough to resist us, takes the shape of imposing upon and exploiting the mass of the people of that country it ought to be checked and not encouraged. I am willing to get anything for an American that money and enterprise can obtain except the suppression of the rights of other men. I will not help any man buy a power which he ought not to exercise over his fellow-beings.

Source: Woodrow Wilson, Address at Independence Hall: "The Meaning of Liberty;" Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/206508>