

Redefining Modernism: Explaining the World at War through Modern Art

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Introduction

I am a high school Social Studies teacher in a school in Southeast Charlotte whose demographics, as of 2008, are 60.7 percent African American, 2.9 percent Asian, 17.1 percent Hispanic, 2.2 percent Multiracial, and 16.7 percent White. Of the 2,500 students, just over 15 percent of the student population is Limited English Proficient and just over 53 percent of the student population qualifies for free and reduced lunch. I teach a group of students belonging to a cohort identified as “Ninth Grade Academy”; the Academy is comprised of students who have failed one or both of the eighth-grade gateways of either Reading or Mathematics. Many of these students have been identified as high-risk students. This distinction is due in part to a dysfunctional home life or because some of these students come to high school one or more grades behind their same aged peers in academic development. Some of these students will come to high school with a minimal grasp of reading, writing, study skills, critical thinking, and appropriate social behaviors. As a teacher in this academy I am tasked with multiple objectives. First, I am charged with the task of improving their reading and writing skills so that they are on par with the rest of their same aged peers. Second, I am given the directive to improve their critical thinking skills in order to increase their chance of a successful high school career and diploma. Third, I am tasked with improving my students’ academic performance in order for them to be able to demonstrate a year or more of academic growth. A typical class will have thirty to thirty-five students; with approximately half of them being identified as Ninth Grade Academy students, a smattering are identified as Exceptional Children and one or two identified as gifted, the remaining students are typical ninth graders. All of these students are expected to perform at or near the same level of proficiency. I will accomplish this task by encouraging my students to engage in higher order thinking skills by incorporating modern art in my lessons of World War One, between the Wars, and World War Two.

In North Carolina, all students must pass Ninth-grade World History in order to move on to progress towards the next classes in Government and United States History with the ultimate goal of receiving their high school diploma. Students study five-thousand years of world history in eighteen weeks. My students come from a diverse range of socioeconomic status. As such, most of my students have never seen art of any kind, especially not modern artwork. Prior to high school, students have had a shallow introduction to World History; they have been introduced to major topics but have not

gone into the depths required in high school. As a result of this, students come to class with only a ground floor understanding of World History. The unit on the world at war encompasses the early twentieth century and focuses on World War One, the period between the wars, the rise of dictators, and World War Two. It is taught near the end of the semester and will take approximately four weeks to complete. By using modern art in the classroom I will accomplish four goals. First, I will expose them to modern art, thereby encouraging them to think about society in a new vein. Second, I will increase their understanding of the topics discussed in class by using modern artwork as a bridge between their own experiences and what is discussed in class. Third, I will encourage the use of higher order thinking skills by utilizing modern art as discussion starters, writing prompts, and interdisciplinary integration. Fourth, I will present works of modern art in a chronology that corresponds with the major events of the world wars. By guiding my students' thought processes towards the higher order levels of thinking, I am guaranteeing that the information presented will help them not only in my class, but all the other Social Studies classes that are required for high school graduation. My overarching goal, as a high school World History teacher, is to create a personal and comprehensive understanding of history not as a collection of facts, but as continuing narrative that should be experienced.

Rationale

World History is an elusive topic for many students. The concept of learning about events hundreds of years in the past has very little appeal to many students. They do not understand why they must study past events. Today's students are visual learners. They have been brought up in a culture that values videos and pictures over the written word. Traditionally, World History has been a lecture course that students must "slog through" in order to obtain their diploma. This perception has been perpetuated by the increased academic stress of math and science and the decreased academic stress of World History and Social Studies in general. This devaluation of World History has led many people to view the subject as "fluff" and not truly critical to a well-rounded academic education. The use of modern art in the World History classroom will not only increase the academic stress of the subject, but it will also change the perception of World History as a lecture course and at the same time increase the interest in World History as a relevant, worthy subject.

To some people modern art is generally not associated with World History, but it should be. In a 1971 article, Clement Greenberg, a modern art critic, stated:

"Modernism is as specific a historical phenomenon as Romanticism was, but it doesn't represent nearly so specific an attitude, position, or outlook. Modernism may continue

certain aspects of Romanticism, but it also reacts against Romanticism in general-just as in reviving certain aspects of Classicism it reacts against Classicism in general. In the context of what is signified by terms like Romanticism and Classicism when they are used unhistorically, Modernism as a whole distinguishes itself by its inclusiveness, its openness, and also its indeterminateness. "¹

For any teacher to be effective in the classroom, they must be able to link the subject at hand with their students' personal experiences. An effective way to accomplish this is through visual stimuli. Modern art pieces such as *Miserere* by Georges Rouault can invoke an emotional response. The Bechtler catalog of modern art describes Rouault's art as being "Conceived in the years in which Europe was hardest hit by the war, the set was inspired by the sufferings of human beings, which can often be without any reason for those who have to endure it, which makes it more distressing." ² By invoking an emotional response you are now able to engage students in classroom conversations about the world at war. Students' interests are piqued when they are able to experience a topic outside of the perceived norm. This then becomes a golden opportunity to deepen students' understandings of the societal impact of war, thereby increasing the amount of higher order thinking skills students engage in. World History should not be considered as "fluff" and irrelevant to a well-rounded education; instead, World History is a worthy subject that should be appreciated by everyone. Modern art will become the bridge between students' personal experiences and the subject taught in class, thereby increasing the likely hood that all students in the class will be able to perform at or near the same level of proficiency.

Objectives/Background

The unit on the World at War is designed for ninth-graders near the end of their tenure in World History. World History is a semester-long class of eighteen weeks. The eighteen weeks are broken into nine week long quarters that are further divided by topics. Quarter One is a concentration on the pre-1500 world, with snapshot studies on topics such as ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, classical civilizations of Greece and Rome to the influence of the Middle Ages. Here, students receive a foundation of key civilizations, movements, and accomplishments that will aid them in their study of Civics and Economics, the Social Studies course they will take in their tenth grade year. Quarter Two consequently, is a concentration on the post-1500 world with snapshot studies on topics such as the Enlightenment, the Reformation, Revolutions in America and Europe through the Cold War. Topics discussed in this quarter will aid students in their study of American History, the Social Studies course they will take in their eleventh grade year. As stated by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, "To become informed citizens, students require knowledge of the civilizations that have shaped the

development of the United States. World History provides the foundation that enables students to acquire this knowledge which will be used in the study of Civics and Economics and United States History".³ The unit, "The World at War" is presented during the last month of instruction and will take approximately four weeks to complete. This unit contains lessons on World War One, the Great Depression, the Rise of Dictators, World War Two, and the Cold War. Immediately prior to this unit, students will have studied the rise of nationalism, imperialism, and unification. Information presented in this unit gives students the background needed to accomplish the tasks of the unit on The World at War.

The unit on The World at War begins with a brief overview of the Russian Revolution. The Russian Revolution is taught within one ninety-minute period. The purpose of the study of the Russian Revolution is to bridge the gap between nationalism and the start of World War One. By studying the end of imperial Russia and the rise of the Bolshevik state, students gain an understanding of the importance of societal movements during World War One. A modern art movement known as Suprematism provides images pertinent to the topic of the Russian Revolution. Modern art pieces by Kasimir Malevich will be used to show the societal changes that occurred during the authoritarian rule of Vladimir Ilych Lenin and Joseph Stalin. Kasimir's paintings titled "*Head of a Peasant*" and "*Haymaking*" are dramatic representations of "...the sad predicament of Russian peasants, who in the late 1920's were suffering famine, exile, and the cruel process of civilization."⁴ Students will be given instructions to write a reflective article on the Russian Revolution using the Malevich painting and knowledge gained through class discussion.

World War One, including the mini lesson on the Russian revolution will stretch over the course of six days, with a test being given on the sixth day. During the lesson on World War One students will look at and discuss the works of modern artists such as Kasimir Malevich, Kathe Kollwitz, and Otto Dix along with YouTube videos that show actual film footage of the Frontline and major events of the War such as the assassination of the Archduke and the introduction of tanks and poison gas. Excerpts from "Over The Top an American Soldier Who Went" will also be used to give students a firsthand account of World War One. The purpose of modern art at this point in the unit is to help the students develop an idea of events witnessed by both Americans and Germans. The Art department will be included in the unit in order to gain access to the textbook '*Discovering Art History*', 4th Edition. The following except on the Dada movement is taken from this text. "During World War One, a group of artists and volunteers gathered in Zurich to organize a protest against the complete degradation of European society as well as the monstrous destruction of such a war."⁵ We shall see how these conditions affected the art of this challenging time. Modern art pieces will be used on the unit test to

give students visual clues in referencing learned material to ensure a successful outcome on the test.

Kazimir Malevich

The two paintings that my students will look at and discuss are *'Head of a Peasant'* and *'Haymaking'*. Both deal with the daily life of the peasantry. Through a comparison of the paintings, my students see the change in society from an absolute monarchy to an authoritarian government. Students will discover that his paintings are political statements. In this instance, modern art will be used to help students draw conclusions on how World War One changed society. A biography of Kazimir Malevich stated that he was the subject of criticism and disdain for his portrayal of Russian citizenry under the Communist regime.⁶

Kathe Kollwitz

Far too often, students are taught World War One from the perspective of the Allies. Too easily, they are denied the chance to see what the experiences of the German and Austrian citizens. This error is rectified through the introduction of Kathe Kollwitz who suffered great personal tragedies during the War. She provides students with a German viewpoint of World War One. "Kathe Kollwitz is considered as one of the most important German artists of the twentieth century, and as a remarkable woman who created timeless art works against the backdrop of a life of great sorrow, hardship and heartache."⁷ My students will see Kathe Kollwitz's work as a direct demonstration of the influence of war on society. Through her works, my students will understand that citizens of Germany were also victims in World War One. Far too often, students want to see the world in black and white, and they must understand that the world is actually made up of many different shades of gray. The art of Kathe Kollwitz gives students the opportunity to see a major world events from different points of view. Her art reflects the plight of German citizens. "In August 1932 a war memorial was unveiled at the Roggevelde German war cemetery, near Vladslo in Flemish Belgium: a sculpture of two parents mourning their son, killed in October 1914. It is the work of Kathe Kollwitz. There is no more moving monument to the grief of those who lost their sons in the war than this simple stone sculpture of two parents, on their knees, before their son's grave."⁸ Kathe Kollwitz's story is truly a heartbreaking one in that she lost both sons and a grandson in wartime conflicts. Through Kathe Kollwitz, my students understand that there is more than one way to view history. There is the traditional view of history that emphasizes only the tragedies of the Allied forces and the often uncomfortable reality that, in war, all people suffer. By exposing them to modern art from other cultures they

will be able to synthesize a view of the world that is more inclusive of the complexities of history.

Otto Dix

Another German artist, Otto Dix shows the horrors of war through his paintings. His work, *Self portrait as Mars*, 1915, shows a soldier surrounded by whizzing bullets and explosions. Students gain a first-hand experience of trench warfare through the art of Otto Dix. "Dix was a veteran of the First World War. He was haunted by the brutality of mechanized warfare long after the guns fell silent. Through his art, he returns to the desolated landscape of military trenches strewn with mutilated bodies. The dead are distorted by decomposition. Human characteristics are indistinguishable in gas masks and steel helmets".⁹ Otto Dix was in direct contrast to the Futurists who saw violence as a righteous means to achieve their end. The Futurist art movement was politically allied with the Fascists in Italy who saw industry as the key to the supremacy of the Italian state.

YouTube

You Tube is a fount of information for World War One. There, you can find videos of film footage from the Frontline, the trenches, and the home front. These videos are used as discussion points within the lesson. Films from both the Allies and Axis powers will be shown to demonstrate the complexities of history. For example, the YouTube video "Battleship Potemkin" is a dramatic film created on orders by Joseph Stalin and used to explain why the Bolshevik Revolution needed to happen.

After students study World War One they will examine, discuss, and write about the era between the wars which includes the Great Depression and the rise of dictators. This portion of the unit will encompass two days. The first day will concentrate solely on the Great Depression, not only in the United States but also around the world. Photographs of Dorothea Lange, YouTube videos showing the sheer destitution of people, and paintings of Thomas Hart Benton will be used to show aspects of the Great Depression. Students will gain a deep understanding of how World War One and the Great Depression led to the rise of dictators in Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union. This in turn is used to help explain why World War Two occurred. John Heartfield's piece "*Adolf the Superman Swallows Gold and Spouts Junk*" is an excellent idea to demonstrate the anti Nazi sentiment in Germany during the rise of Hitler. According to *The Essential Encyclopedic Guide to Modern Art*: "Heartfield...was one of the most politically involved artists. This montage was enlarged and posted up throughout Berlin shortly after the

National Socialists narrowly failed to win a major in the Reichstag."¹⁰ Pablo Picasso's piece "*Guernica*" (1937) is used to demonstrate the rise of dictators that influenced society. Even though Francisco Franco and the Spanish civil war are not immediately studied, student will become aware that Adolf Hitler was a supporter Francisco Franco and therefore had a part to play in the Spanish civil war. Modern artists of the Bauhaus will be mentioned in that the Bauhaus was shut down by the Nazi Party because they were considered to be anti-German and Socialist. According to the modern art encyclopedia, *Styles, Schools and Movements*: "...the school was accused of being too cosmopolitan and not sufficiently 'German', and in 1932, its grant was cancelled...This only lasted until April 1933 when the Nazis finally closed it down, declaring that it was 'one of the most obvious refuges of the Jewish-Marxist conception of "art"."¹¹ YouTube videos of the dictators will be shown in class. The purpose of the videos is to show how the public reacted to the rise of the dictators. For example, a YouTube video that shows Francisco Franco, Benito Mussolini, and Adolf Meeting together is used to demonstrate how the dictators collaborated with each other to assume power. The YouTube videos will be used in conjunction with images of Degenerate Art. Degenerate Art is art that was banned by the Nazi Party because they did not conform to their vision of society. Most that were affected by this were artists involved in abstract art and German Expressionism. Many of these artists were banned from exhibiting their art in Germany, and some were prohibited from creating anything at all. Artists who were labeled as Degenerate artists include Otto Dix, Pablo Picasso, and Georges Rouault.

World War Two, including the mini-lesson on the Great Depression and the rise of the dictators will stretch over eight days. As mentioned previously, the lesson on the Great Depression and the rise of dictators will last two days. In the lesson on World War Two, students will be expected to use their knowledge of World War One, the Great Depression, and the rise of European dictators to lead classroom discussions on how and why World War Two began. Modern artists such as Fernand Leger, Alfred Manessier, Marino Marini, and Henry Moore along with YouTube videos are used to explain aspects of the War. The artists mentioned have selected pieces at the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art that will be shown to the students throughout the lesson.

Fernand Leger

Fernand Leger was influenced by World War One. His pieces are used to help the students understand the intricacies of World War Two. As a survivor of World War Two, Fernand Leger, as with Otto Dix from World War One, offers the students an eye-witness account to the atrocities of war. According to the modern art encyclopedia, *'Styles, Schools, and Movements'*: "During his two years at the front in Argonne, the horrors he witnessed, the ordinary men he served with, and the artillery and mechanical

vehicles that whizzed by him caused his paintings to become more figural and mechanical in the 1920's."¹² Leger's piece, '*Komposition 1933*' is used as a writing prompt to link World War One with World War Two. Students are asked, after examining the painting, to write an extemporaneous paragraph on how they believe the painting reflects not only the aftermath of World War One, but also the influence of World War Two on society.

Students will again examine the work of Fernand Leger at the end of the lesson on World War Two through his piece '*La Partie de Campagne*'.(1952) I use this piece because I believe that it provides the students with a visual representation of post-war society. Students understand complex concepts when they are able to build a cognitive bridge between the presented topic and their own experiences. All of my students have memories of the terrorist attack on 9/11. The artwork shows individuals lounging on the ground in front of what looks like twisted pieces of metal. Students will use their memories of 9/11 in combination with this piece to generate written reflections on how society reacted to the aftermath of the war.

Alfred Manessier

Alfred Manessier was influenced by World War Two. According to the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art catalog: "Alfred Manessier was one of the original founders of the *Salon de Mai* (the May Salon) that was formed in a Paris cafe in October 1943 during the German occupation of France. These painters and sculptors were in occupied France at the time, and in the daring move signaled opposition to the Nazi ideology and condemnation of degenerate art, and asserted a defense of modern art."¹³ His piece "*Printemps nordique*"(1954) looks like a child's memory of a lush, green park. This piece will be used to help explain to the students how people in times of war will create a fantasy world to help them deal with the horrors that are all around them. Alfred Manessier offers the students a western European outlook of the war, this will be contrasted with students know about the war on the Homefront.

Marino Marini

Marino Marini's sculpture of a horse will be a discussion starter on the emotional toll of war. According to the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art catalog: "The sufferings of World War II changed Marini's outlook toward the equestrian subject matter. He stated, "My equestrian figures are symbols of the anguish I feel when I survey contemporary events. Little by little, my horses become more restless, their riders less and less able to control them."¹⁴ Students will use the art of Manessier and Marini to develop a dialogue

of how the average European citizen must have felt and perceived the world around them as their countries were taken over by Hitler's regime.

Henry Moore

As an English artist, Henry Moore gives an Allied view of the War. His piece "*Reclining Figure*"(1959) will also be used as a discussion starter. This time, the art work will be used to help lead a discussion on the London Blitz. "Moore was commissioned as a war artist and created a large number of drawings of the people of London sleeping in the Underground Tube to escape the bombing from the German Luftwaffe."¹⁵ Students will use the picture of the sculpture to create a written account of the London Blitz.

YouTube

As with World War One, YouTube videos will be used as tools to highlight key points within the lesson. For example, there are rare color films that show how Hitler was able to rally public support to his cause. In addition, there is a film commissioned by Adolf Hitler, "Triumph of the Will", that explained his rise to power and justifying everything that he did. This video will be used to stress the concept of bias and propaganda.

Students will transition from World War Two to the rise of the Cold War. The purpose of this transition is to tie modern events to their origins in the world wars. It is at this point that students will be given their final assignment. This assignment will tie together the world wars, the Russian Revolution, the Great Depression, and the rise of European dictators together. For their culminating project, students will be put into heterogeneous groups of three or four. Each group will be given a major event discussed in the unit The World at War. Here, they will be given a multitude of tasks to complete. The project is to create a CD cover using modern art, write song titles to describe major events within their topic, and write a song to overview the significance of their topic. Their song will be based on a favorite song or rap. Students will simply replace the lyrics with their own description. The ultimate purpose of this project is threefold. First, they will use modern art as a catalyst for higher order thinking skills. Students will be required to analyze art to synthesize how the art was a direct reflection of the state of society. Second, they will actively review information in the lesson within their group, thereby increasing their own knowledge and understanding of the material. Through cooperative groups, students will share their learned knowledge of the world at war, thereby increasing their own understanding. Third, they will incorporate literacy strategies to access higher order thinking skills. Students will be required to read, write, listen, and speak cooperatively. Reading and writing are done on a daily basis of notes

and class discussions. Speaking and listening skills are honed through cooperative grouping.

Once students have been given their topic, they will have access to the Bechtler Museum or the catalog, if a museum visit is not possible. At this point students will be directed to locate a piece that they feel describes their topic. This piece of modern art becomes the album cover of their CD. As a group they must be able to defend how the piece they selected helps describe the event they were given. Students are then given directions to create a list of ten "song titles". The titles give a brief synopsis of key events within their topic. Again, students must be able to defend why they chose the titles. One of the song titles will be cooperatively chosen as the main idea or key focus of their topic. They will write lyrics to this song by using a favorite song or rap as a template. As a bonus, students may provide the teacher with an instrumental version of their song and perform it in class. Whether they perform or not, the CD covers, lists of songs, and key song will be put on display and used as a gallery walk as a final review of the unit before they test. Through the use of modern art and YouTube videos, students will be exposed to various views and opinions of war to help them gain an well-rounded education. As stated previously, my overarching goal, as a high school World History teacher, is to create a personal and comprehensive understanding of history not as a collection of facts, but as continuing narrative that should be experienced. I believe that this unit on the World at War will accomplish this goal.

Strategies

The following strategies are used within the unit The World at War. Preceding each strategy description is a sample of how it is used within my classroom.

Think-Pair-Share

In Think-Pair-Share students are in small cooperative groups. The students are grouped heterogeneously to secure the widest possible input of collected information. Think-Pair-Share works best in groupings of two or three students. It is recommended that the teacher assign the groups to ensure that students are up in such a way as to ensure the greatest chance of academic language being spoken, and not gossip. As previously mentioned, heterogeneous grouping is best; however, if the class has a high percentage of limited English proficient (LEP) students, then homogenous grouping is recommended in order to take full advantage of peer mentoring. In this strategy students are given a topic to contemplate. They will then pair up in their groups and share their thoughts and answers.

Think-Pair-Share is used on several occasions within the unit. One instance it is used is during the discussion of the Russian Revolution. At this point in the lesson, students have taken notes on the Russian Revolution, participated in a class discussion, and have looked at the art work of Kasimir Malevich. Students are asked to think on how Russian society changed during the Russian Revolution. Once directed, students will move into their groups and share their knowledge of the Russian Revolution. Once they have shared their information, they will write a reflective article on the Russian Revolution. Even though each member of the group is expected to write their own essay, they will work collaboratively to create the outline of their essay. Think-pair-share should be done within one class period.

Socratic Seminar

Socratic Seminar is a whole-class discussion of a specific topic. In this strategy, the teacher introduces a topic, gives the students a visual reference, and guides them through a discussion of self-discovery within the topic. According to Thomas Noonan: "The Socratic method of teaching is based on Socrates' theory that it is more important to enable students to think for themselves than to merely fill their heads with "right" answers. Therefore, he regularly engaged his pupils in dialogues by responding to their questions with questions, instead of answers. This process encourages divergent thinking rather than convergent."¹⁶ This method of class discussion is uncomfortable to some students, so the teacher will need to spend time, prior to the lesson, coaching students through the Socratic process.

This strategy is used when works of art are introduced into the class discussion. For example, in the lesson on World War Two students are introduced to the art of Fernand Leger, Alfred Manessier, Marino Marini, and Henry Moore. Upon examination of the art, students will be asked to describe how the art is a depiction of World War Two. After hearing a student response, the teacher can pose a question such as, "Why do you think that?" or "Can you explain what you mean?" Or ask another student if they agree or disagree with what was stated and explain why. The purpose of the Socratic seminar is to move the class from teacher-focused to student-focused.

Collaborative Groups

Collaborative grouping is different from cooperative groups in that collaborative groups do not follow all of the rules that one might see in cooperative groups, such as assigning roles to students within the group. "“Collaborative learning” is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or

students and teachers together. Usually, students are working in groups of two or more, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, or meanings, or creating a product." ¹⁷ In collaborative groups, the teacher takes on the role of a mediator.

Collaborative grouping is used during the unit project. The unit project is the cumulative assignment in the World at War unit. For the project students are put into groups of three or four. It is recommended that the teacher chooses the groups to ensure that each group is mixed heterogeneously. Within each group, students will be given roles to assign to group members. There should be a recorder, researcher, and reporter/art critic. The recorder will be given the task of writing down brainstorming ideas of song titles and the lyrics the group collaboratively creates. The researcher will be given the task of leading the group into locating necessary information within their notes, textbook, and any other sources available to the class such as the internet or media center. The reporter and/or art critic will be given the task of locating the modern art selection, creating the reasoning behind the selection, and presenting the list of songs to the class. All group members will be actively involved in all stages of the project. At no time should the project become the sole responsibility of one member of the group. The teacher will act as a project manager to ensure that all groups are working collaboratively and communicating effectively with each other.

Cornell Notes

Cornell notes are a style of note-taking that has been proven to be successful in helping students study and stay organized. The simplest way to conduct Cornell notes is to direct students to fold their paper in half lengthwise. The left column is for the note heading. The right column is for the actual notes. This way, students can fold their paper, looking at the headings listed on the left side of the page and quiz them or neighbors on facts from class discussions. The bottom four lines of each page are set aside for a written summary of the notes included on that specific page.

The teacher should guide their students through the basic concept of Cornell notes before attempting to have students write them. Time should be taken to walk students through the process of how to take notes in Cornell style. At least one class period at the beginning should be set aside solely for instruction on how to write Cornell notes. Examples of Cornell notes should be provided to give students positive examples of how to correctly write their notes. Constant feedback should come from the teacher. Once Cornell notes have been instituted in the classroom, the teacher will notice that the students are better organized and perform better in class because their notes are easier to access and understand.

In the unit, The World at War, each topic introduced will be labeled on the left hand side. The headings on the left side will include: The Russian Revolution, Russia Changes, How World War One started, Key Events of World War One, The Home front, The End of the War, The Great Depression, The Rise of Dictators, Changes in Europe, How World War Two Started, Key Events of World War Two, Key People and their Influence, The Home front, The End of the War, and The Rise of the Cold War.

Classroom Activities

The following is a day-by-day outline of the unit "The World at War." Within each day are specific topics and strategies that should be used. Test dates are included in the outline. The outline is based on the assumption that class periods will last for ninety minutes each. Shorter class periods will directly result in the need for more days to complete the unit. From beginning to end, the unit will encompass 19 school days.

Day One

Students will have a lesson on the Russian Revolution. Day One begins with a warm-up activity. Students view Kasimir Malevich's painting, *The Mower* and write a few sentences describing the painting. The teacher will then use Cornell Notes to guide students through the key points of the Russian Revolution. The lesson will culminate with a YouTube video, an excerpt from the "Battleship Potemkin", a propaganda film created by Sergei Eisenstein. The teacher will lead the students in a brief Socratic discussion on the purpose of the film. The final activity, or ticket out, will be based on another painting of Kasimir Malevich, *Head of a Peasant*. Students will examine *Head of a Peasant* and compose a written comparison with the *The Mower*. In their responses, students should mention how the painting reflects the plight of the average Russian citizen.

Days Two through Five

Students will discuss and examine World War One. Each day will begin and end with a writing prompt. Teachers are encouraged to use the modern art selections mentioned in this unit as catalysts for the responses. Day Two centers on the direct and indirect causes of World War Two. The students will use YouTube videos of the funeral procession of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife as a catalyst to begin a class discussion on the causes of World War One. The teacher will use a graphic organizer to guide students through the war's direct and indirect causes. Day Three is dedicated to the new weapons

that were introduced in the war, using YouTube videos that show actual film footage of tanks, poison gas, and trench warfare. The teacher will show works from Otto Dix to guide students through discussions on the impact of World War One weapons. At the conclusion of Day Three, students should be able to hold a discussion of how the weapons introduced in World War One changed modern warfare. Day Four focuses on the path of the war. Students will reflect back on the causes mentioned in Day Two as the basis for their discussion on the course of the war. The teacher should take care to ensure that students are shown the impact of the war from both sides. To guide class discussions, the teacher will use art from Kathe Kollowitz, Otto Dix, and Fernand Léger. Day Five focuses on the end of the war. Students will read excerpts from "Over The Top: An American Soldier Who Went" to provide them with a first-hand account of the war. To demonstrate the German perspective at the close of the war, students will additionally view selected art of Kathe Kollowitz.

Day Six

Students will test on the Russian Revolution and World War One. The test will include short answer writing prompts in which modern art are used as part of the questions. As students turn in their test they will look up names and terms on the Great Depression and the rise of dictators.

Day Seven

Students will study the Great Depression. Teachers should take care that students understand that the Great Depression was not an 'American' crisis, but a 'global' crisis. The teacher will explain how countries' responses to World War One were causes of the Great Depression and use art from Thomas Hart Benton to show aspects of the Great Depression. Students will participate in a class discussion on the global impact of the depression.

Day Eight

Students will discuss and examine the rise of dictators. The teacher will introduce students to dictators Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Benito Mussolini, Francisco Franco, and Hirohito. Students will create a "foldable" containing information on who these dictators were as individuals and what effect their actions had on their own people and the world. To personalize a connection to the material, the teacher will show archival footage of the dictators from YouTube.

Days Nine through Twelve

Students will discuss and examine the course of World War Two. Each day will begin and end with a writing prompt. Again, teachers are encouraged to use the modern art selections mentioned in this unit as catalysts for the responses. Day Nine centers on the direct and indirect causes of World War Two. The teacher will place emphasis on creating an understanding of how World War One and the Great Depression led to World War Two. Students will create and use graphic organizers to guide the discussion on causes. Days Ten and Eleven focus on the course of the war in Europe. The teacher will lead class discussions centered around the works of modern artists such as Fernand Leger, John Heartfield, Alfred Manessier, Marino Marini, and Henri Moore. Day Twelve centers on the entrance of the United States and the close of the war. Students will view film footage of Pearl Harbor, D-Day, and the bombing of Japan.

Days Thirteen and Fourteen

Students will discuss and examine the Holocaust. YouTube has many videos of actual film footage from concentrations camps and of the liberation of the camps. These videos are used to enhance students' understandings of the Holocaust.

Day Fifteen

Students will test on the Great Depression, the rise of dictators, World War Two and the Holocaust. The test will include short answer writing prompts accompanied by examples of modern art in which the art is used as part of the questions.

Days Sixteen and Seventeen

Students will discuss and examine the rise of the Cold War. The teacher will focus on fostering the understanding of the transition that occurred between World War One, World War Two and the Cold War as related to the art of Nicolas de Staël.

Days Seventeen through Nineteen

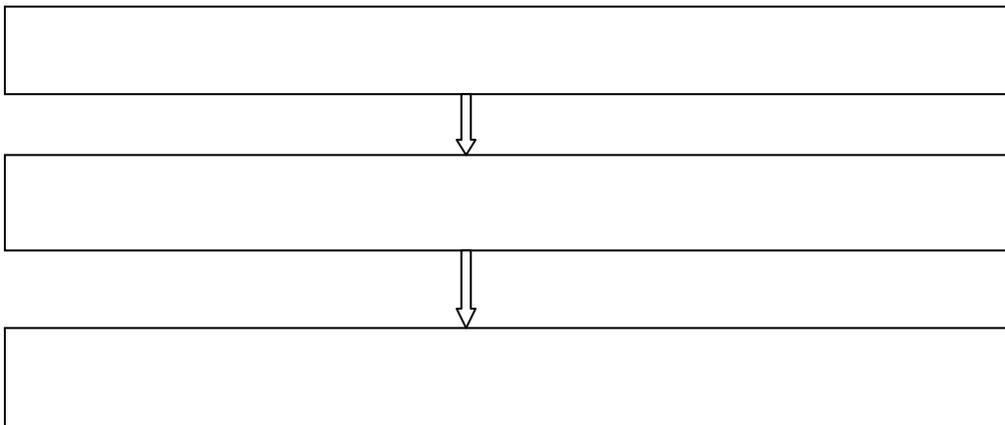
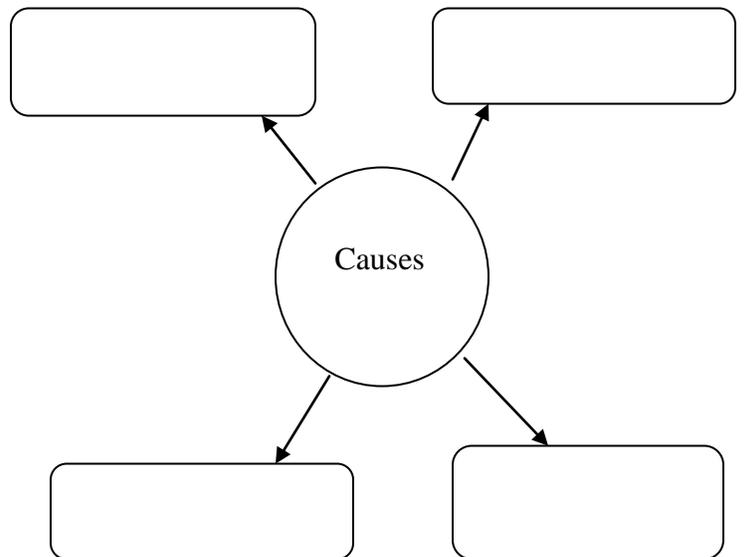
To help students synthesize their knowledge from the unit into a cohesive understanding, students will spend the remainder of the unit working on their collaborative group

project. Day nineteen can be used for oral presentations if the teacher requires each group to present. The teacher should use their own discretion to decide if the project should encompass all three days. It should be noted that some classes may finish the project in one and one-half or two periods. At this point in the lesson the teacher should be prepared to be as flexible as possible.

Resources

Graphic Organizers

Main Points	Details





Endnotes

¹ Greenberg, Clement. "Necessity of Formalism". *New Literary History* 3, no. 1(1971): 171.

² Bos, Harriet P., John Boyer, and Michael Godfrey. *Bechtler Museum of Modern Art*. (Charlotte North Carolina: Belk Printing Technologies, 2009), 156.

³ NCDPI, www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum.

⁴ Douglas, Charlotte. *Kazimir Malevich*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, 1994), 108.

⁵ Brommer, Gerald F. *Discovering Art History*. (Davis Publications, 2007), 480

⁶ Douglas, Kazimir Malevich, 110.

⁷ Rogal, Robert. "Kathe Kollwitz." <http://rogallery.com/kollwitz/kollwitz-bio.htm> (accessed September 2010).

⁸ IBID.

⁹ Fulmer, Jeffrey. "Otto Dix." January 2009. www.ottodix.org (accessed September 2010).

¹⁰ Dempsey, Amy. *Styles, Schools, and Movements*. (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 2005), 150.

¹¹ Dempsey, *Styles, Schools, and Movements*, 133.

¹² Dempsey, *Styles, Schools, and Movements*, 108.

¹³ Bos, *Bechtler Museum of Modern Art*, 114.

¹⁴ Bos, *Bechtler Museum of Modern Art*, 120.

¹⁵ Bos, *Bechtler Museum of Modern Art*, 132.

¹⁶ Noonan, Thomas. "Socratic Seminar." February 2000.

http://www.studyguide.org/socratic_seminar.htm (accessed October 2010).

¹⁷ Smith, Barbara L. "What is Collaborative Learning?" (1992),

<http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/pdf/collab.pdf>. (accessed October 2010).

Annotated Bibliography

Bos, Harriet P., John Boyer, and Michael Godfrey. *Bechtler Museum of Modern Art*. Charlotte North Carolina: Belk Printing Technologies, 2009. This is the catalog for the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art. The catalog has been digitized and is on the Bechtler Museum website. The staff at the Bechtler Museum, and the museum catalog, proved to be invaluable tools for the curriculum unit.

Brommer, Gerald F.. *Discovering Art History*. Davis Publications. Davis Publications, 2007. This is a standard art textbook used by art classes at my school, but can easily be accessed on the internet. This is an easily accessible source to attain basic knowledge of art and art movements throughout history. I found this textbook insightful as I planned this curriculum unit.

Collins MA LLB, Neil. "Degenerate Art." April 2008.<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/degenerate-art.htm> (accessed October 2010). This website is an excellent source of World War Two era art.

Crone, Rainer, David Moos. *Kasimir Malevich: The Climax of Disclosure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. I recommend that teachers access this book before teaching the Russian Revolution through the art of Kazimir Malevich.

Dempsey, Amy. *Styles, Schools, and Movements*. New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 2005. I recommend this modern art encyclopedia for teachers who would like to learn more about modern art. This encyclopedia proved to be an invaluable tool to me as I planned this curriculum unit.

Douglas, Charlotte. *Kasimir Malevich*. New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, 1994. I recommend that teachers read this book, along with Crone and Moos book on Malevich, to fully understand how the Russian Revolution influenced modern art and society.

Fulmer, Jeffrey. "Otto Dix." January 2009.www.ottodix.org (accessed October 2010). I recommend this website for teachers who would like to learn about art during World War One and World War Two. As an eyewitness to the atrocities of war, Otto Dix offers a personal account of society during the wars.

Greenberg, Clement. "Necessity of Formalism." *New Literary History* 3, no. 1 (1971): 171-175. I recommend this article to teachers who would like to understand modern art from the perspective of an art critic.

NCDPI, www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum (accessed October 2010). This website lists the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for all subjects and grades.

Noonan, Thomas. "Socratic Seminar." February 2000.http://www.studyguide.org/socratic_seminar.htm (accessed October 2010). This website is recommended for teachers who would like to learn about how to incorporate Socratic seminars into their lesson plans.

Ramirez, Susan E., Peter Stearns, and Sam Wineberg. *Holt World History*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. Houghton Mifflin Hartcourt, 2007. This is the World History textbook used at my school. This is a standard textbook used by many Social Studies departments. Copies of this textbook can be accessed on the internet if they are not available at school.

Rogal, Robert. "Kathe Kollwitz." <http://rogallery.com/Kollwitz/Kollwitz-bio.htm> (accessed September 2010). This website explains the art of Kathe Kollwitz and goes into detail about how Germany was impacted by World War One.

Smith, Barbara L.. "What is Collaborative Learning?(1992), <http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/pdf/collab.pdf>. (accessed October 2010). This website is for teachers who would like to learn about how to incorporate collaborative groupings into their lesson plans.

Wales, Jimmy. "Malevich." June 2010.www.wikipedia.com (accessed October 2010). I recommend this website to both teachers and students that would like to learn more about Kazimir Malevich and the Russian Revolution.

Appendix

Implementing District Standards

Art Education Goals

Goal 4 – The learner will choose and evaluate a range of subject matter and ideas to communicate intended meaning in artworks. Goal 4.02: Interpret the environment through art.

Goal 5 – The learner will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures. Goal 5.01: Know that the visual arts have a history, purpose, and function in all cultures. Goal 5.02: Identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places. Goal 5.03: Compare relationships of works of art to one another in terms of history, aesthetics, and cultural/ethnic groups.

Goal 6 – The learner will reflect upon and assess the characteristics of their work and the work of others. Goal 6.02: Describe how peoples' experiences influence the development of specific artworks.

Goal 7 – The learner will perceive connections between visual arts and other disciplines. Goal 7.04: Compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues or themes in other disciplines.

Goal 8 – The learner will develop an awareness of art as an avocation and profession. Goal 8.03: Articulate how art provides an opportunity for lifelong learning.

Social Studies, Grade 9 – World History goals

Goal 1 – The learner will identify, evaluate, and use methods and tools valued by historians, compare the views of historians, and trace the themes of history. Goal 1.02: Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources to compare views, trace themes, and detect bias.

Goal 4 – Revolution and Nationalism – the learner will assess the causes and effects of movements seeking change, and will evaluate the sources and consequences of nationalism. Goal 4.04: Examine the causes and effects of the Russian Revolution and its effect on Russia and the world.

Goal 5 – Global Wars – The learner will analyze the causes and results of twentieth century conflicts among nations. Goal 5.01: Analyze the causes and course of World War One. Goal 5.02: Assess the significance of the war on global, foreign, and domestic policies of the 1920s and 1930s. Goal 5.03: Analyze the causes and course of World War Two and evaluate it as the end of one era and the beginning of another.

Goal 8 – Patterns of history – The learner will assess the influence of ideals, values, beliefs, and traditions on current global events and issues. Goal 8.01: Trace developments in literary, artistic, and religious traditions over time as legacies of the past societies or as cultural innovations. Goal 8.03: Classify within the broad patterns of history those events that may be viewed as turning points.