

Title

Background to Bosnia

Grade Level

9-12

Author

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Time Period

2 class periods

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson the learner will be able to...

1. Identify and explain basic themes of Bosnian history.
2. Explain how Bosnian history contributed to ethnic strife evident in Bosnia in the 1990s.

Appropriate National Learning Standards

- 3.i –describe and assess ways that historical events have been influenced by, and have influenced physical and human geographic factors in local, regional, national and global settings
- 4.e – examine the interactions of ethnic, national or cultural influences in specific situations or events
- 5.b – analyze group and institutional influences on people, events and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings.
- 9.b – explain conditions and motivations that contribute to conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies and nations

Background

This lesson introduces students to some of the complex history rooted in Bosnia. While students may be frustrated with pronunciations and potentially confusing names, the main idea is that Bosnian history played a major role in creating the atmosphere necessary for the Bosnian War and genocide at Srebrenica.

Although some of the material can be confusing it is important that students understand the following concepts:

1. Several different groups ruled the area that would become Yugoslavia
2. Although the ethnic groups (Croats, Bosnians, Serbs) are all Slavs, they developed different identities as they adopted different aspects of conquering powers, most notably, religious affiliation.
3. Each group also maintained its own independent status between conquerors
4. Many of the issues that Bosnian ethnic groups have with one another are deeply rooted rooted in history, particularly World War II, and the fact that those issues were never dealt with as Tito tried to downplay ethnic identity for Yugoslav identity during his rule.

Finally, these question sets are largely comprised of text-based questions. There are a few “in your head” questions where students are asked to provide an opinion or prediction about what they have read. These are labeled on the worksheets as “in your head” questions.

Materials

- Copies of: Michael Schuman, *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, (New York: Facts on File, 2003) Ch 1: “From Prehistory to the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand.” Pgs 3-17.
 - Copies of Bosnia and Herzegovina Questions, Part 1
- Copies of Michael Schuman, *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, (New York: Facts on File, 2003) Ch 2: “From World War I Through Tito.” Pgs 18-33
 - Copies of Bosnia and Herzegovina Questions, Part 2

Procedure

1. The teacher will begin the lesson by explaining that students will learn about Bosnian history. Students will then be provided with a copy of *Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1: From Prehistory to the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand* and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Questions, Part 1. They should spend the rest of the period working individually or in small groups to answer the questions.
2. When students are done with Part 1, the teacher can distribute the Part 2 handout and questions. Again, students can work individually or in small groups to answer the questions.
3. Alternately, question sets can be divided among the class either by Part 1 and Part 2, or by smaller divisions. Certain groups can work on a section, and then present their answers to the rest of the class.
4. At the end of both question sets, the teacher should go through and gauge student understanding by discussing the important ideas that come out of each reading.

Assessment

Students should be assessed on the completion of the question sets.

Name: _____

Bosnian History Questions

Part 1

Directions: Use the provided reading to answer the following questions.

1. Who were the first people to settle in the area that is now Bosnia? Who were two groups that invaded them?
2. Which group finally conquered Illyria? In what year?
3. Why do you think it is significant that the Roman Empire split through Bosnia? How might this division have set the stage for future conflict? (in your head).
4. When did the Slavs first appear in Bosnia?
5. What two changes did the Franks bring with them to the area that is now Bosnia?
6. What are two reasons why King Kulin decreed that Bosnians would follow Bogomilism? How did the rest of Europe treat Bosnia because of this decision?
7. Which empire conquered Bosnia in 1465 and Herzegovina in 1481?

8. What are 4 reasons why Bosnians may have more readily converted to Islam than other Slavs?
9. Describe the city of Vrhbosna during Ottoman rule. What was its name later changed to?
10. How did Ottoman rule end up holding Bosnia's development back?
11. Why did Bosnian Christians rebel against the Ottoman Empire? What was the Serbian response and goal?
12. What was one positive impact of Austro-Hungarian rule of Bosnia and one negative impact of that rule?
13. What was Bosnianism and why did it fail?
14. Do you think Bosnianism was a worthy goal? Why or why not? (in your head)

15. What are two reasons why Serbs were against formal Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia?

16. What was the Black Hand and what was its mission in June of 1914?

Name: _____

Bosnian History Questions Part 2

Directions: Use the provided reading to answer the following questions.

1. What happened to Bosnian Serbs during World War I?
2. What country was formed on December 1, 1918?
3. What are three problems the new country had?
4. Based on what you have read, what was the main power relationship between Muslims and Christians in Bosnia? Who held the power? How do you think this may have contributed to contemporary issues in the area? (in your head)
5. What agricultural reforms were attempted to help even out the relationship between Bosnian Muslims and Christians? Were they successful? Explain why or why not.

6. What did King Alexander try to do in 1929 to control the ethnic violence in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and restore political stability? Why weren't his reforms successful?
7. What new name did the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes receive in 1929?
8. Who were the Ustasha, who were their allies, and what were they trying to accomplish?
9. Who invaded Yugoslavia on April 6th, 1941? Why?
10. What is ironic about the name of the Independent State of Croatia?
11. Describe the difference of how Bosnian Muslims and Serbs were treated in the Independent State of Croatia during World War II.
12. Who were the Chetniks?
13. Who were the Partisans?
14. How did the Partisans end up becoming the most successful resistance group in Yugoslavia?
15. Why did Bosnians support the Partisans?

16. Who ruled Yugoslavia after World War II?

17. What are two ways Titoism in Yugoslavia was different than communism in the Soviet Union?

18. What five nationalities were recognized by the Yugoslavian constitution in 1946?
When were Bosnian Muslims recognized?

19. What were the six traditional Yugoslav republics?

20. Why did Bosnia “bloom” under Tito’s rule?

21. Why did Bosnians support Tito?

22. Based on what you have read, how does Bosnia’s history help explain the ethnic tension that developed there in the 1990s? (in your head)