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11<sup>th</sup> Grade American History

## Japan, the United States and World War II

### Class:

This is a high school American History class with mostly Juniors and some Sophomores. The lesson is part of a unit on World War II that is generally from the American perspective. Each class period is 80 minutes in length and the class lasts one semester. The total time devoted to World War II period is about one week.

### Objectives:

Students will gain a better understanding of why Japan went to war and will be able to compare its imperialistic motivations to those of the United States from previous studies. This lesson will introduce the students to the reasoning behind Japanese empire building as well as the motivation for attacking American naval outposts (with a specific look at Pearl Harbor). Students will also see the American response to the attack.

### Lesson Plan:

Before this lesson, the students will have been assigned the appropriate time period reading in the US History textbook. In class, the students will read and discuss selected portions of the articles “The World at War 1931-1945” and “Japan and the United States at War: Pearl Harbor, August 1941” (discussion facilitated by teacher). The discussion will be followed by a brief viewing of a National Geographic timeline concerning Pearl Harbor (<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor/ax/frameset.html>) as well as listening to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s address to Congress asking for a declaration of war (<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/tmirhdee.html>). Brief discussion will follow the audio in order to compare the viewpoints of the two nations.

### Assessment:

The take-home assignment will be to answer the following questions in essay format:  
*In a world used to colonial empires, was Japan out of step with the Western World? Was Japan a nation with a ruthless leader looking for world domination or simply looking for validation and stability? What led to the attack on Pearl Harbor and how did the United States respond? At what point should the world have taken its stand?*

### Materials Needed:

- Handouts
- Paper
- Writing utensil
- Computer with internet access
- Video projector (boxlight)

### Resources:

The pages of the US History Text cannot be included as I do not have the book I will be using. It is safe to assume that all textbooks include something about Japan's entering World War II.

Both *The World at War 1931-1945* and *Japan and the United States at War: Pearl Harbor, August 1941* can be found at <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/japan/japanworkbook/modernhist/wwii.html>

National Geographic timeline concerning Pearl Harbor is found at <http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor/ax/frameset.html>

Franklin D. Roosevelt's address to Congress asking for a declaration of war is found at <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/tmirhdee.html>

Two websites to look at for World War II materials are <http://www.teacheroz.com/wwii.htm>  
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/index.html>