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# Research Kit

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## **I. Introduction and Vital Theme and Narrative:**

Before learning about the Iraq War in a classroom setting, students will already have preconceived ideas about the war and its implications. As educators it is necessary to present a variety of viewpoints and sources to students so that they can form their own ideas and responses to their existing and growing knowledge. Students will be exposed to several different forms of sources so that all types of learners are using primary sources that are most meaningful to them. Our research kit includes sources that explain the different positions regarding the Iraq war. Our First Order document, the War on Terror speech made by President Bush, was instrumental in organizing the focus of our research kit. The content in the speech concerning allies' opinion of the war and the consequences of the war on Iraqi citizens became the foundation for our research kit. The kit can be used to examine the war from military, political, and cultural perspectives.

The Vital Theme and Narrative, Conflict and Cooperation, organized the research kit content best. Our selected interview focused on the combat that Daniel Eakins experienced while serving in Iraq. We believed that this Vital Theme and Narrative was appropriate because we have found secondary sources that address the U.S. allies' support and opposition to the Iraq War. The Vital Theme and Narrative allows students to explore the causes of the war, and the ongoing effects. Our habit of mind is: Understand how things happen and how things change, how human intentions matter, but also how their consequences are shaped by the means of carrying them out, in a tangle of purpose and process. Our sequence of documents demonstrate the idea that repercussions have resulted from the war that were not initially expected. Global public opinion and the

experiences of Iraqi civilians have changed the war process. Students will read documents that show the developments in the war, whether intentional or accidental.

## **II. Key Questions:**

We have chosen two key questions for this research kit. The first key question is: How has the Iraq War been perceived by American allies? Several newspaper articles show European support for the Iraq War and others demonstrate world condemnation for the Iraq War. For instance, one article was about the White House cafeteria changing the name of French fries to freedom fries to show their anger at French disapproval for the war. The second key question is: How has the presence of United States forces influenced the Iraqi way of life? We have included our interview as well as other interviews to help the student researcher learn about soldier interaction with Iraqi civilians.

## **III. First Order Document**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Order document used in this lesson is President Bush's Speech on the War on Terror. President Bush gave this speech on Wednesday, November 30, 2005 at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. This speech highlights the United States' strategy for increased military efforts in Iraq, the training of Iraqi forces, and our perceptions of the "enemy" that we face. The context of the speech reveals President Bush's stance on not creating a time line to bring troops home. The speech emphasizes that there is a continuous need to convince the public that the U.S. serves a purpose in Iraq. Thus, the president calls for U.S. involvement in the Iraqi political process.

A common theme throughout President Bush's speech is how the United States will not back down from the fight against terrorism. President Bush describes our "enemy" specifically, explaining the different terrorist groups that we face—rejectionist, former regime loyalist, and terrorists inspired by Al Qaida. President Bush made it clear that the U.S. would remain in Iraq until the threat of terrorism was removed, regardless of the allied response.

Students should note the date this speech was given. The invasion of Iraq took place on March 20, 2003. This speech was given in November of 2005, a little over two and half years after the start of the war. What were Americans' perceptions of the war at this time? What other events are happening in the fall of 2005 in America—economically, socially, politically. What about globally? What events are taking place around the world at this time? How did people react to this speech and how had global perceptions changed? In what ways had the Iraqi experience changed?

This article possesses the necessary qualities that a First-Order document must have. In general, the War on Iraq is a subject that will be interesting to many students. The consequences and the intent of the war are likely to cause debate. Students could easily access third-order documents refuting or supporting Bush's position on the war. Many students will have preconceived notions surrounding the war from their peers, parents, and the media. It is important to encourage students to actively read all interpretations of the war with an open mind in order to gain an overall encompassing view. This will allow students to create a better understanding of the war in order to make informed decisions by themselves.

The habit of mind that students will be using while reading and analyzing this document is to understand how things happen and how things change, how humans intentions matter, but also how their consequences are shaped by the means of carrying them out, in a tangle of purpose and process. This is evident in the decision made by Congress and President Bush to invade Iraq. Why did we go to war? What is the purpose of war? What are the consequences of being at war in the Middle East? Are we solving anything? How has being at war changed the U.S.? Specifically mentioned in this speech are the three main elements to our strategy in Iraq. This speech demonstrates the changing nature of strategy. All of the previous questions just asked lead to our key question, how has the presence of U.S. forces influenced the Iraqi way of life?

While using the First-Order document, students will be asked to remain objective in their analysis. The First-Order source introduces students to multiple aspects of the war, and the subsequent documents expand on or present challenges to the ideas presented in the First-Order document. When doing research students should question how the war has changed the world's perspective of the U.S. This next March will mark the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the war. For many Americans, it is easy at times to forget that the U.S. is at war. Thus, it is important for students to recognize the intentions of the U.S. and analyze the influence of the war from a worldly view at this point in time.

This document, along with the chosen 2<sup>nd</sup> order documents will be used to frame the purpose for American presence in Iraq. The Vital Theme and Narrative that organizes the research best is conflict and cooperation. Specifically, President Bush states the need to train Iraqi forces so they can better protect their families and secure their freedom. Thus, an article titled "What If America Left" will follow the reading of President Bush's

speech. Also, tying in with the theme of worldly views and cooperation, students will read articles from two different U.S. allies.

The Iraq War and the sources used in the research kit perhaps best fits a high school government class. By using primary sources students will learn about the Iraqi war from multiple viewpoints and consider how this war that is still currently going on affects us now and how it will influence both Iraqi and American ways of life in the future. At the end of their research students should question if, when, and how the war will end.

#### **IV. Second Order Documents:**

The interview with Daniel Eakins was devoted to his personal experiences as a soldier in Iraq. Eakins elaborated particularly on his experiences with Iraqi soldiers. Eakins believed that while there were conflicts between American soldiers and Iraqi civilians and soldiers, his experience was for the most part, positive. Despite diverse backgrounds and different military strategies and training, American and Iraqi soldiers managed to work together. Eakins also believed that the Iraq War was changing the image of America from a global perspective in both positive and negative ways. This interview was chosen as a Second-Order document because it addressed the influence of war on Iraqi way of life and also the multiple ways in which European major powers viewed the Iraq war.

The article “House cafeterias change names for ‘french’ fries and ‘french toast” addresses the French disapproval of the Iraq war. In response to France’s plea to the United Nations to allow weapon inspectors in Iraq more time, two Republican House members started a movement that changed the word “French” in the title of menu items

to “freedom.” The act was a small move by Capitol Hill politicians, but it represented the sentiments of many frustrated Americans and also demonstrated the strained relations that the Iraq War was causing between the U.S. and European allies. The article concluded by stating that France’s leadership in the global disapproval of the war caused the U.S. opposition against France. This Second-Order document shows that resistance to the Iraq War was not confined only to France, but extended to other U.S. allies such as Russia and Germany as well.

Prime Minister Tony Blair was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and addressed the U.S. Congress on July 18, 2003. Blair began the speech by addressing the horrors of September 11, 2001 and stating that the U.S. had his and Great Britain’s support in the Iraq War. Blair continued by arguing that the Iraq War was necessary because terrorists could eventually gain access to weapons of mass destruction. Blair stated that while the terrorists may not currently have the capabilities, eliminating the possibility could prevent disasters. Blair acknowledged that several European countries did not support the U.S. war effort, but hoped that with compromise, the U.S. and Europe could make amends. Blair concluded by arguing that the U.S. decision to go to war was not a choice at all, but a part of destiny and that Great Britain is proud to aid America in the war. This document was chosen because Blair spoke specifically on Great Britain’s reaction to the war, but also to the views that European and Middle Eastern countries have of the war. Blair was careful to include why countries might choose to not join the effort, and also warned the U.S. not to “command” European powers into involvement. Thus, Blair committed his country to act, but remained neutral to the other countries by refraining from berating those not involved.

The article “America-An Iraqi’s First Impression” was written July 27, 2008 by Suadad Al-Salhy, a female Iraqi reporter who traveled to the U.S. to join *The New York Times*. Al-Salhy compared her experiences in the U.S. with American citizens to her interactions with American soldiers. Al-Salhy believes that American soldiers do not understand Iraq’s culture and laws, and that soldiers in Iraq are “bullies and aggressive.” Al-Salhy believed the violent actions of American soldiers is caused by the belief that Americans think all Iraqi people are the enemy. Al-Salhy didn’t believe that American foreign policy towards Iraq would be changing any time soon. She stated that the Bush administration went “quickly into the hell hole and he took us with him.” Al-Salhy’s interview is being used as a Second-Order document because it provides a detailed analysis of the Iraqi way of life and ways in which it has changed since the U.S. began occupation.

The article “With Pledges to Troops and Iraqis, Obama Details Pullout” was printed in the *New York Times* on February 27, 2009. The article analyzes President Obama’s decision to fully remove U.S. troops from Iraq by December 2011. The author, Peter Baker, argued that the definition of success has changed since the beginning of the war. Baker stated that the war has been destructive to the America’s reputation. An advisor of Iraq’s prime minister said that all Iraqi’s are ready for America’s exit, and that the only concern is over the potential instability following the withdrawal. This article was chosen as a Second-Order document because it reflected on the consequences of the war on Iraq and how there have been unintended results from the war, such as disagreements between the U.S. and allies.

A photograph of a statue of Saddam Hussein being torn down on April 9, 2003 shows Iraqi citizens and American soldiers working together. The image was taken at a time when little was known about the Iraqi perspective and the U.S. citizen outlook on the war was still positive. Several European countries were beginning to voice their dissent for the war. The photograph points to a changing time in the nature of the war, and how the developments in the war were also affecting the global perspective of the U.S.

The Second-Order documents all reflect upon at least one of our key questions, if not both within the same source. The documents relate well to the First-Order document because the documents included content that was discussed in President Bush's War on Terror speech. The documents had multiple perspectives, allowing students to read and analyze the differences in opinion of the necessity of the Iraq War between world powers, and also between the experiences of Iraqis and of Americans in Iraq. In each document students are analyzing the ways in which the war has developed and consequences that have been created by the war. By analyzing the Second-Order documents in conjunction with the First-Order document, students will be able to explain the Iraq War from varied perspectives and be aware that the developments in the war change daily and that additional consequences are likely to ensue.

## **V. Potential Third Order Documents**

- Newspaper article: "If America Left Iraq" was written by Nir Rosen in December 2005. This article discusses the complications that have been caused by U.S.

occupation, the potential solutions that can be made, and the experiences of Iraqi citizens.

- President Bush's 2003 State of the Union Address: This speech was delivered on January 28, 2003. In his speech, President Bush discussed the reputation of the U.S. and the obligation of America to ensure safety to its citizens, and that promising safety would require action in the Middle East. President Bush also spoke on U.S. relations with allies. This speech would be useful in doing a comparison to the War on Terror speech.
- Political Cartoon of President George Bush in the midst of warfare: This cartoon shows President Bush declaring that the U.S. will not surrender, while a U.S. soldier asks the president to whom the U.S. could surrender. The image depicts the violence and chaos in Iraq and the experiences of U.S. soldiers and Iraqis.
- Survey and graph: "Poll find Europeans oppose Iraq war": The BBC published this article in February of 2003. The article stated that most European countries are overwhelmingly against U.S. occupation of Iraq and also agreed that the war was changing European views on President Bush and U.S. foreign policy in general. This would be a useful tool during a lesson to demonstrate the European dissatisfaction with the war.
- Article "EU allies unite against Iraq war": This article was written January 22, 2003 by the BBC. The article covers a meeting between French and German leaders and their agreement to refrain from entering the Iraq war. A lesson that shows the progression in European decisions made to pledge their disagreement

with the war would be necessary in demonstrating the Habit of Mind that war progresses in unpredictable ways.

- Article “Gates cites Europe’s anger over Iraq War” by Robert Burns: This article appeared in USA Today on February 8, 2008. This article discusses the lingering repercussions of the Iraq war in the minds of Europeans, and also discusses how Europeans are less likely to intervene on the behalf of Americans on the war in Afghanistan. Students could create a timeline that shows European approval and how this has influenced the global opinion on U.S. foreign affairs.

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