
Research Kit

Prepared for: Sarah Drake Brown, History Department, Ball State University

Prepared by: Matthew Palmer, Kris Dodson & Jason Marer

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I. Themes/Habits of Mind:

In the teaching of history one must look past generalizations and grasp the complexities that often surround historical events and eras; to develop a sense of how things happen and how things change throughout the course of an event is an important skill students must possess in order to analyze and formulate interpretations regarding historical events. While teaching high school students in an American History course on the War in Iraq, the events, ideologies, and the social influences regarding the war are fundamental for students to learn in order to understand the intricate issues and beliefs behind the war. In the first few years of the 21st century the United States had a plethora of differing opinions regarding the War in Iraq. Prior to and through the duration of the war, military leadership adhered to the ideals of the *Bush Doctrine* which outlined the necessary and just causes and measures relating to war, while other individuals and organizations in the public sphere disagreed and lost enthusiasm for a war that was claiming too many resources, both monetary and human, to be considered necessary or just. It is important to recognize the significant change in public and private support regarding the war when determining whether the actual cost of the war is worthy of a “victory.”

While analyzing primary and secondary sources in this research kit, students are using the Habit of Mind *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*. The sources utilized will allow for students to have the opportunity to recognize the differing ideas that surrounded the War in Iraq and how these

feelings came about and how they changed. All of the documents are primary or secondary sources gathered from different individuals and institutions throughout the duration of the war. This lesson utilizes the Vital Theme and Narrative *Values, Beliefs, Political Ideas, and Institutions* while also addressing the National History Standard *USH.9-12.10 Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the present)*.

II. Key Question:

While exploring the sources provided, students need to utilize historical empathy as well as other forms of critical analysis. Students will be expected to utilize the sourcing heuristic, probing the historical context of each document. Additionally, through the use of the sources students will be able to compare and contrast the differences of each source while considering the key questions: *Is the total cost of war limited to what occurs on the battlefield or is it measured years after? How should victory be measured in the act of war? How is the notion of leadership represented or defined during acts of conflict?*

III. 1st Order Document:

The 1st Order document utilized is George W. Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech of May 1, 2003, aboard the *U.S.S Abraham Lincoln*. The section of the speech utilized specifically in this kit addresses the conclusion of combat operations substantiating the justification for Operation Iraqi Freedom and exonerating American intentions, the declaration of "victory," and

the proposed reconstruction process. The supposed justness of the mission is articulated in Bush's admiration for the determination and discipline of the combat troops, further suggesting an irreproachability of American leadership and conceptualization of duty that is echoed in the sentiments of corroborating 2nd Order Documents. Victory was declared less than 2 months after the official start of the war on March 20, 2003, less than 2 years after the events of September 11, 2001, and Bush's rhetoric suggests that peace in Iraq, a "peace for the world," was at hand.

This document was chosen because it encapsulates the politicization of the conflict in Iraq, while providing an ideological overview of the time period from the perspective of the Bush administration. The promulgation of victory in Iraq as beneficial for both American and Iraqi citizens, as well as for citizens of peace-loving nations around the world provides the benchmark for how victory and leadership were conceived at the time. The criticism that followed this speech illuminates its controversial nature, and its powerful rhetoric encourages questions regarding how victory was and should be measured and consideration of what makes a good leader. "Mission Accomplished" became the symbol of these broad conceptions, by which subsequent developments in Iraq after the summer of 2003 were judged, and students will be able to incorporate what they know and what they uncover through document analysis to corroborate or challenge their initial exposure.

By May 1, 2003, did the U.S. complete the mission it set out to accomplish? Did the mission change? Did the ideological justification change? What effect might the phrase "mission accomplished" have on an audience? What was meant by "major combat operations?" How do these issues relate to the characterization of the war and discussions about cost? Bush's proclamation of victory in Iraq and the proposed de-escalation of combat troops suggested that a

new era of international stability was possible. He claimed that the combat stage of the operation was concluded and, though there was “difficult work to do in Iraq,” that the objectives had been achieved.

The document serves as a launching point for a more substantive exploration of the costs of war within the divisive context of Iraq. It presents an argument for the necessity of the war in Iraq, serving as the basis for further evidential investigation using the events of the time. It constructs a case concerning the justness and effectiveness of the American invasion that will allow for a critical investigation of the questions of victory and leadership that the war produces. Students will be able to utilize established heuristic techniques to contextualize the document, discover its relevance and importance at the time, and evaluate its lasting effects today. Sourcing the intended audience and purpose of Bush’s speech and investigating how it was received and what effect it had in the larger context of the war will allow students to understand the bigger ideas that the document represents and the polarizing effect it had on the American populace.

Juxtaposing this speech alongside the provided second order sources will give students a unique laboratory in which to uncover these explosive issues. At the time that the speech was delivered, Bush was facing declining support for his presidency and a campaign for reelection in the following year. The nation was strongly divided on the legitimacy of the American invasion of Iraq and the controversy surrounding the Bush administration, American foreign policy in general, and the responsibility toward oppressed people. Reactions to the speech brought more criticism upon the executive branch from a plethora of societal groups, and anti-war critics used the banner to attack the unrealistic goals and misperceptions of the conflict and the idealization of victory.

The “Mission Accomplished” speech becomes a means to investigate the issues behind the “victory” in Iraq, its real cost, and the interplay between leadership and outcome as the “rally around the flag” effect related to the Bush Doctrine. The Vital Theme and Narrative used to provide an overarching structure for exploration of these documents is that of Values, Beliefs, Political Ideas and Institutions. The speech reveals the political ideas constructed by a political body, but students will be asked to contextualize the documents and investigate the tension between articulated values and beliefs representative of a group of people and the effect of their politicization and institutionalization. “Mission Accomplished” represents a dialogue between a nation and its leader, and the inherent inconsistencies present allow for more extensive issues analysis and the development of a well-substantiated case.

The historical Habit of Mind that students should utilize in order to most effectively read the documents, formulating ideas that reveal a developed and dynamic analysis relating to the overarching questions posed, is understanding how things happen and change, how human intent matters, but also how consequences are shaped by the means they are carried out in a tangle of purpose and process. What was Bush’s purpose in delivering the speech? What was his intention? Why was the promulgation of victory needed? What about the New World Order? What does this speech reveal about his perception of victory in war? Of leadership? How does this relate to the present day? How has the situation evolved since then? It is important to understand the significance of the speech at the time it was delivered, but more crucial to use that understanding to develop a case that corroborates or contradicts Bush’s intentions and his reformulation of the notions of victory and leadership.

These documents are most well suited for use in the discipline of history, but are flexible enough to be adapted to other social science disciplines, particularly utilizing major concepts of economics, political science, and psychology. Pedagogical techniques integrating an interdisciplinary approach to the documents will allow students to understand the complexity and controversy of the period from multiple perspectives. Ascertaining the reasoning for the formulation of each of these documents in relation to the “Mission Accomplished” speech is the primary task assigned to students and should be internalized and related to their ever developing historical canvas. Lessons about the politicization of ideas, leadership, and the effect of war and victory in a particular social context can be uncovered through analysis, and the development of historical thinking skills will be promoted as students explore the sources in this constructed laboratory of human experiences.

IV. Second Order Documents:

- Bush Final Press Conference Interview
- Indianapolis Star Article Series “A War Within”
- Cost of War Web Site/ CBS News Interactive poll
- Cantigny Oral History Interview with Roy Bourne
- Ultimatum to Saddam Hussein/Bush Doctrine Video

Bush Interview: January 12th, 2009

George W. Bush gave his final press conference on January 12th, 2009. Set in the James S. Brady Briefing Room of the White House West Wing in Washington, D.C., news reporters asked Bush if he had many any mistakes during his presidency. Students will read an excerpt of this interview, in which Bush declares that the “Mission Accomplished” speech sent the wrong

message to citizens. The “Mission Accomplished” speech occurred on May 1, 2003 when Bush stated at the time that major combat operations in Iraq had ended. This source was chosen to allow students to examine change over time.

Nearly six years later, Bush admitted the speech as a mistake. He said, “We were trying to say something differently, but nevertheless, it conveyed a different message. Obviously, some of my rhetoric has been a mistake.” By incorporating this text with other 2nd Order documents, students will begin to see how the words “Mission Accomplished” became a focal point of controversy and criticism after warfare in Iraq increased during the Iraqi insurgency. The vast majority of casualties have occurred since the speech. Therefore, this document relates well to the central question of victory and leadership in the act of war.

Indianapolis Star: August 30th, 2009 to September 2nd, 2009

“A War Within” is a four-day project by *Indianapolis Star* staff writer Konrad Marshall, reported and written between February and August of 2009. This source can be accessed through the print edition or online (Indystar.com/awarwithin), which includes additional multimedia items. Research included dozens of hours of interviews with more than 50 people, including current and former members of the 1451st Transportation Company, family members of Brandon Wallace, Joshua Schmit, Jeff Wilson, Roger Parker and Jacob Blaylock, and extensive follow-up interviews with Rick and Jacqueline Blaylock of Lowell, Ind., Damon Lyden of Indianapolis, and Heidi Plumley of Houston.

Also interviewed were representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Army, including mental health specialists from both organizations. In addition, the Blaylock

family gave *The Star* access to their son's VA medical records, as well as a number of his personal belongings, including notes, drawings, video footage and his music. The articles shed light in difficulties soldiers face when returning home from war. It also discusses families who have lost relatives to the war.

The four-part series included stories on the following items: Sgt. Jacob Blaylock's struggles with grief after two friends were killed in Iraq, Blaylock's difficulties to restart his life back in the United States, the tragedy of the 1451st, and measures the Army needs to take to prevent what befell the 1451st.

This 2nd Order Document shows the human cost of war outside the confines of the battlefield in Iraq. The context included in this report will enable students to deepen their knowledge on the context of war in Iraq. It can lead to discussions on the difficulties soldiers face when returning home and why suicide is the leading cause of death for the 1451st Transportation Company. If needed, teachers could also incorporate this document with a lesson or lecture on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Cost of War and Interactive Poll: Online

Conducted by the National Priorities Project, costofwar.com is an interactive website that illustrates (in real time) the cost of the war in dollars. The additional links allows students to consider the cost of war from an economic perspective. Students will be able to view graphs and statistics that indicate the total war funding since 2001 and the cost of war in Iraq since 2003.

The National Priorities Project (NPP) is a research organization that analyzes and clarifies federal data so that people can understand and influence how their tax dollars are spent.

NPP focuses on the impact of federal spending and other policies at the national, state, congressional district and local levels. This Web site is related to the central question about the total cost of war. Students will be able to compare data and conduct cost/benefit analysis on the Iraq War. In doing so, students will be able to understand the economics behind a war and tradeoffs associated with conflict.

Bush's overall job rating is another 2nd Order document that shows the impact war has on a nation and the presidency. CBSnews.com teamed up with the *New York Times* and created an interactive graphic: Bush's approval rating through the years. Included in this interactive statistic is a glimpse at the president's approval ratings at selected points throughout his term in office and some of the news events making headlines at the time. Overall job ratings are derived from CBS News polls and CBS News/*New York Times* polls conducted by the CBS Polling Unit.

Students viewing this graphic will be able to understand the tribulations Bush faced as America engaged in war with Iraq. Because Bush's final approval rating was 22 percent, it is important that students investigate why he left office as one of the most unpopular departing presidents in history. Interestingly, Bush has the distinction of having the highest approval rating for a president, as well as the lowest. As a result, students can see how much the war in Iraq impacted these ratings. These sources relate to the central question about leadership during acts of conflict. By utilizing the interactive poll, students will be able to evaluate Bush as a president and commander-in-chief during the Iraq War.

Cantigny Interview: Oral History Report (49:00—1:02:00)

Roy Bourne is a soldier of the 1st Infantry Division. In Iraq, Bourne specialized in field artillery and armor. This interview was chosen as a means of introducing a soldier's view on the cost of war. Bourne was heavily involved in civilian life, and his interview explores a military career about education and leadership. Because Bourne emphasizes the importance of unity and leadership, this interview will allow students to investigate how the notion of leadership is represented or defined during acts of conflict.

Bourne was part of a Forward Operation Base, also known as "Rough Rider." For the majority of the interview Bourne discusses his day-to-day activities. To put it simply, he said he was the judge, jury, and law enforcement in Iraq. He said the 1st Infantry Division carried a unity perspective that promoted team-based activities.

The other aspect of this interview dealt mostly with leadership. Bourne says, "A good leader is the ability to convince other people to do something they may or may not want to do." Basically, Bourne says when people are doing what you want them to do when you want is good leadership. According to Bourne, "good leadership is measured not when you are there but when you are gone."

Bourne's interview addresses the heart of the Iraq War from a civilian perspective. Reintegrating into civilian life has been gradual, but Bourne is adapting well. The most important thing to Bourne was how the National Guard accepted him as being part of the team right away. Bourne said this made the transition into Iraq a lot easier on him and his family. This document can also be used with the *Indianapolis Star* report "A War Within."

Ultimatum to Saddam Hussein/Bush Doctrine: March 17th, 2003

What is considered a phrase used to describe various related foreign policy principles of George W. Bush, the Bush Doctrine described the policy that the United States had the right to secure itself from countries that harbor or give aid to terrorist groups. The main elements were in a document, the National Security Strategy of the United States, published on September 17, 2002. The Bush Doctrine has been formulated as a collection of strategy principles, practical policy decisions, and a set of rationales and ideas for guiding United States foreign policy.

This 2nd Order document is a video that shows Bush referencing the main points to the doctrine. The video is an address to the nation: Ultimatum to Saddam Hussein. While this speech was presented approximately six months after the Bush Doctrine was released, it depicts Bush's choice to defeat Hussein's regime and use force in assuring America's own national security. The document recognizes Iraq as a threat to the United States. In doing so, students will see the leadership Bush demonstrated during the Iraq War.

The text of the Bush Doctrine could be provided as well to allow students to interpret and analyze the context of this speech. This document supports Bush's decision to engage in a war on terrorism. Bush alludes to the heightened watch America took during these dangers. In essence, the administration claimed that the United States was locked in a global war, a war of ideology, in which its enemies were bound together by a common ideology and a common hatred of democracy. As a result, students can use this document to see how Bush exhibited leadership during this time period and what policies Bush stood for in an attempt to defeat Hussein and restore human liberty in Iraq.

Conclusion

Historians are the detectives of the past. They are drawn by the excitement of exploring the lives of real people and events. As a result, their writings are often based on the discovery and analysis of authentic primary documents from a particular time period. These 2nd Order documents will allow students to dig into the past- just like a historian. In analyzing each document, students will consider: its overall theme, the motivation or point of view of its writer or creator, the time and place of when it was written or created, and its intended audience.

Essentially, the five 2nd Order documents challenge and corroborate the central ideal in the 1st Order document. By offering multiple perspectives, students will be able to see the costs of war through several lenses. As students read text and interact with multimedia graphs and statistics, they will identify central themes and ideas that relate to what they already know from the 1st Order document.

V. Potential 3rd Order Documents:

- **New York Times—CBS News Poll:** This document is an overview of the Presidential career of George W. Bush, which includes economic, political, and social figures and poll ratings which includes his final approval rating of 22%, the lowest final rating for an outgoing president.
- **John McCain “Necessary and Just” Interview:** In this article, Presidential candidate John McCain voices his support of the war in Iraq. Furthermore, he claims that the war effort is “necessary and just” among other things.
- **“Mistake Accomplished” Political Cartoon:** This image, a political cartoon, criticizes the war in Iraq, and the human cost of war. This image reflects the ‘Mission Accomplished’ speech four years later, highlighting President Bush in a military uniform atop a US soldier’s casket.
- **ABC News—Colin Powell On Iraq, Race, and Hurricane Relief Article:** On September 8, 2005 Powell aired his disappointments and frustrations regarding the war in Iraq and other domestic issues. This article will allow students to examine his relationship with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney over foreign policy choices.

- **Iraq War Documentaries/Films:** Students can be given a list of potential Iraq War-related documentaries and films that depict multicultural viewpoints of the United States' decision to invade Iraq. Films include: "No End in Sight", "Fahrenheit 9/11", "Jarhead", "Syriana"
- **Sports Illustrated—"Remember His Name" Pat Tillman Article:** This article examines the human element of war; Pat Tillman, a former NFL player, became an Army Ranger and was ultimately killed in action serving abroad. This example of the human cost of war highlights how foreign conflict can impact all of America, including celebrities and sports figures.
- **Glenn Beck Commentary:** Glenn Beck is a talk radio and television host, a conservative political commentator, and well-known public figure who has voiced his many opinions regarding American foreign policy, the War in Iraq, and Bush's presidency. Several commentary pieces will offer insight to conservative "talking heads."
- **Chris Toner Cantigny Interview:** This video interview highlights the feelings and attitudes of a soldier involved in military service. Students will be able to analyze and recognize what role the armed forces play in their lives, as well as their reasons for enlisting, and also feelings of war and military service.

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