

# U.S. FOREIGN AND MILITARY POLICY

## LESSON PLAN

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### Objectives:

- I Outline the goals of American foreign policy
- II Identify some or all of the key events that have shaped foreign policy during the history of our nation.
- III List and describe the major foreign policy players within and outside of American government including the United States.

### Important Terms:

Central Intelligence Agency	International Monetary Fund (IMF)	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Cold War	isolationism	(NATO)
containment	Kennan, George F.	Political Realism
Cuban Missile Crisis	Korean War	Political Idealism
Department of Defense	League of Nations	Reagan Doctrine
Department of State	manifest destiny	Soviet Union
détente	Marshall Plan	Spanish-American War
deterrence	Mexican-American War	superpowers
domino theory	Monroe Doctrine	tariffs
engagement	multilateralism	Truman Doctrine
enlargement	mutual assured destruction (MAD)	United Nations
European Union (EU)	nation-state	Vietnam War
executive agreements	National Security Acts of 1947 and	War Powers Act
floating exchange rate	1949	World Bank
General Agreement on Tariffs and	National Security Council	World Trade Organization
Trade (GATT)	North American Free Trade	World War I
International governmental	Agreement (NAFTA)	World War II
organization (IGO)		

### Activities

1. *Our interests aren't threatened and our threats aren't very interesting!*  
Look at a map of the world and identify where American interests (strategic, economic, cultural, humanitarian) are. Then consider which parts of the world receive the most attention in terms of economic and military aid, U.S. military presence, U.S. trade, etc. Finally, in which parts of the world are there significant levels of political instability, civil war, humanitarian crises, etc. What implications do you think this might have for post-cold War U.S. foreign policy?
2. *The Democratic Peace*  
Two democracies have never gone to war with one another. Why do you think that is, and what implications might this have for American foreign policy in the future?
3. *X*  
Read George Kennan's famous X article published in the journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1947. Assess his analysis of the nature of the Soviet threat and his recommendations for U.S. policy in order to counter that threat. In light of the events of the last fifty years, do you think that Kennan has been proven right?
4. *United Nations*  
Go to the United Nations homepage ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)) and look over at least three of its divisions. Find out what kind of work those divisions do, and then identify the issues that might be

controversial in the United States. Try to find the budget of the United Nations, and consider whether the U.S. should pay the back dues that it owes to this organization. Should the United States support all of the activities that you find on this web site, or should the U.S. choose to support only those that are compatible with American ideals and goals?

5. Find a newspaper or a magazine article on a foreign country or region, or on an international issue. Identify what U.S. foreign policy interests the U.S. might have with that nation or region (important resources? strategic location? cultural ties? trade relations?) or what the U.S. position on the issue in question is. Locate the regions or countries involved on a global map. What other approaches might the U.S. take in regard to the issue, country, or region that you have chosen?
6. *The Chicken McNugget theory of international relations*  
Prior to the NATO war in Yugoslavia, no two nations that both had McDonalds restaurants had ever been to war with one another. Why do you think that is, and what implications might this have for American foreign policy in the future?
7. Read the Constitution of the United States, the relevant *Federalist Papers*, and Washington's Farewell Address. How did the views of the nation's founders in regard to foreign policy differ from those of U.S. policymakers on the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Who did the founders believe should be in charge of U.S. foreign policy, and how did they believe that the U.S. should interact with the rest of the world? Do you think that their concerns are still valid today? Find some modern examples of controversy or commentary on foreign policy that reflect the concerns of the founders (i.e., modern political figures or commentators expressing isolationist views, struggles between the president and Congress over control of foreign policy, etc.)

## **I. Roots of U.S. Foreign and Military Policy**

### **A. Pre-Constitutional Era**

1. **John Adams developed a Plan of Treaties in 1776 that emphasized greater freedom of trade between nations without political or military ties.**
2. **Franco-American Treaty, 1778 – Established a military alliance between France and the United States.**
3. **After the French Alliance and until World War II, the United States entered into no other military alliances.**
4. **The early desire was for a limited army. The first Congress authorized an army but limited its size to 840.**

### **B. The Constitution**

1. **The Framers agreed that the republic's foreign policy was important but limited.**
  - a. **Keep the United States out of European affairs.**
  - b. **Keep European countries out of American affairs.**
2. **Many powers relating to foreign and military policy are shared by the president and Congress.**
  - a. **As commander-in-chief, the president leads the nation's military forces.**
  - b. **The president also has the authority to negotiate and sign treaties.**

- c. Congress has the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations. Congress also provides funds for an army and navy and declares war.
- d. The Senate is constitutionally required to approve treaties by a 2/3's majority.
- e. The president appoints ambassadors and key advisors; the Senate must approve the appointments.

## II. Early History of Foreign and Military Policy

### A. There was a desire for a limited foreign and defense policy.

- 1. The standing army remained small.
- 2. The nation's military strength was decentralized in the state militias.
- 3. Jay's Treaty was the first important treaty following the American Revolution. It normalized relations between the United States and Great Britain.
- 4. In his Farewell Address, George Washington warned against permanent alliances with foreign countries.
- 5. Executive Agreements - An agreement made by the president with a foreign country that has the force of a treaty but does not require Senate approval.

### B. Early Trade and Aid Policy

- 1. Shipping and trade played important roles in early American foreign relations.
- 2. Tariffs – Taxes on imports
  - a. Revenue tariffs – intended to place a minimal tax on foreign products to raise revenue but not discourage trade.
  - b. Protective tariffs – intended to place higher taxes on imports to discourage or minimize foreign trade and “protect” American industries.

### C. Monroe Doctrine

- 1. Formulated in response to American fears that Spain might try to reestablish control over her former Latin American colonies.
- 2. In December 1823, President Monroe announced that it would be dangerous for American peace and safety for European states to attempt to extend “their system” to the Western Hemisphere.
- 3. Monroe Doctrine was respected mainly because it was also the objective of Great Britain to keep other European powers out of the Western Hemisphere.

### D. United States as an Emerging Power

- 1. Manifest Destiny – Belief that American expansion throughout the North American continent was ordained by God; prevalent through the 1840s.
- 2. The United States fought the Spanish-American War in 1898, and as a result acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

E. **Foreign Trade and Aid Policy at the Turn of the Century**

1. Average tariff rates during the Civil War were about 50%.
2. The Dingley Tariff in 1897 raised tariffs to a new high of 57%
3. There was an increased demand for American products on the world market. The U.S. began to export more than it imported.

F. **World War I (1914-1918)**

1. Unable to avoid participation, the United States entered World War I in 1917.
2. President Woodrow Wilson helped design the League of Nations, a global peace keeping organization, following World War I.
3. Fearful of future entanglements, the U.S. did not join the League of Nations. Foreign policy once again leaned toward isolationism.
4. United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corporation (1936) – Supreme Court upheld the right of congress to grant broad authority to the president to act in foreign affairs.

III. **The Great Shift**

A. Near the end of World War II (1936-45), the United States and 51 other nations created the United Nations. Its purposes were to:

- a. Guarantee the security of member nations.
- b. Promote economic, physical, and social well-being around the world.

B. International Monetary Fund – founded after World War II. Its purpose was to stabilize exchange rates among various currencies.

C. World Bank – Established to provide funds for large-scale projects in nations in need of reconstruction.

D. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) A set of agreements reducing tariff levels.

E. Multilateralism – The U.S. was moving toward a position of multilateralism, a belief that foreign policy actions should be taken in cooperation with other states after extensive consultation.

F. **Origins of the Cold War (1945-89)**

1. Truman Doctrine – A policy established by President Harry Truman in 1947 stating that the United States would support any people resisting attempted subjugation by outside pressures: aimed at Greece and Turkey.
2. The U. S. naval presence in the Mediterranean became a permanent presence by the Sixth Fleet.
3. Conscription, once only a wartime measure, was extended in peacetime. The draft continued until the creation of an all-volunteer army in 1971.

**G. The Marshall Plan, MATO, and Containment**

1. **Marshall Plan** – The European Recovery Program, created in 1948 to help post-World War II reconstruction. Provided more than \$6 billion in aid to Western Europe, about ten percent of the federal budget, and succeeded in rebuilding the basis for strong economies in Western Europe, helping to prevent the election of communists there.
2. **NATO** – North Arlantic Treaty Organization – the military alliance between the United States and Western Europe created in 1949. The nation’s first peacetime political and military alliance.
  - a. Most countries of Western and Northern Europe, as well as Iceland, Canada, and the United States were signatories.
  - b. An attack on one would be considered an attack against them all.
3. **Containment** – Based on the observations of U.S. diplomat George Kennan, it would be the policy of the United States to contain Soviet communism where it already existed.

**B. Cold War Era**

1. After the Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb in 1949, both sides began to build nuclear arsenals; an expensive arms race followed.
2. The containment policy was less clear when defining the U.S. role in Vietnam War (1964-1973)
  - a. The U.S. Military left South Vietnam in 1973
  - b. The Vietnamese War left 57,000 Americans dead and 300,000 casualties, not to mention hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese dead.
3. Based on the success of the Marshall Plan in Western Europe, the U.S. viewed economic assistance as a means of transforming poor countries into more prosperous anti-communist allies.
4. Most U.S. loans and grants are made by the U.S. Agency for International Development.
  - a. Most of the money allocated between 1962 and 1989 went to governments threatened by communist forces such as Korea, Pakistan, El Salvador, the Philippines, South Vietnam, and Turkey.
  - b. The two countries receiving the msot aid were Israel and Egypt.
5. The leaders of OPEC gained influence in the global economy by raising the price of oil during the 1970s.
6. The leaders of the Group of Seven countries; Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and the United States, hold annual economic summits to discuss issues of mutual concern.

#### **IV. Machinery of Modern Foreign Policy Making**

##### **A. National Security Acts, 1947-49**

1. The acts consolidated the Army, Navy, and Air Force into one department under civilian control called the Department of Defense.
2. The legislation also sets up two agencies:
  - a. **Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)** to collect and analyze data considered important a national security.
  - b. **National Security Council (NSC)** to advise the president on foreign and military affairs.
  - c. The NSC is composed of:
    1. The president
    2. The vice-president
    3. Secretaries of State and Defense
    4. Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
    5. Director of Central Intelligence
3. Incontrast to domestic policy, Congress and interest groups play a minor role in formaulating foreign and military policy.

##### **B. Information Gap**

1. The president has access to and control over information which enhances his command over foreign policy.
2. When dealing with foreign affairs, the president has exclusive sources of information, such as access to diplomats or military attaches.
3. The president's authority is enhanced by the aura of secret information available to him.

#### **IV. Challenges to Presidential Foreign Policy Power**

##### **A. Congress**

1. Congressional leadership
2. Congressional oversight
3. Treaties and Executive Agreements
  - a. The Senate must ratify a formal treaty by a 2/3's majority. Only 17 have been rejected.
  - b. The Senate rarifies most treaties, however, a president typically will withdraw a treaty rather than risk defeat.
  - c. Presidents can avoid the treaty process by negotiating executive agreements.

4. **Appointments**
  - a. **The Senate must confirm most presidential appointments.**
  - b. **Senators can impede the confirmation process if they have concern over the policy position or the nominee.**
5. **Appropriations**
6. **War Powers Act – Law requiring that presidents obtain congressional approval before introducing U.S. forces into combat and that such troops are limited to a 60 day deployment unless extended by Congress; passed in 1973 over President Nixon’s veto.**

**B. Bureaucracy**

1. **Informaiton**
2. **Implementation**

**C. News Media**

1. **Investigation**
2. **Agenda Setting**

**D. The Public**

1. **Elections**
2. **Public Opinion**
3. **Public Action**

**VI. Toward Reform**

**A. Defining the U.S. role**

1. **With the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has an opportunity to redefine its foreign policy objectives.**
2. **Congress is likely to take more responsibility in foreign affairs.**

**B. The Clinton Administration suggests that foreign policy in the 1990s should rest on the following principles.**

1. **Engagement – The U.S. will not retreat into isolationism but will continue the lead in international political and economic affairs.**
2. **Enlargement - the United States will promote democracy, open markets, and other political, economic, and social values around the world.**