

A Pathway to Peace - Jimmy Carter and the Camp David Accords

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Overview: These lessons utilize primary sources and background information to help students understand the complex process of resolving conflict. Students will analyze documents, photos, and political cartoons related to the Camp David Accords. They will learn how and why the U.S., Israel, and Egypt negotiated this historic peace agreement. They will also analyze the resulting agreement, understanding that every party doesn't get everything they want in a compromise.

Online Location for this lesson plan: This lesson and additional resources are available at www.jimmycarter.info

Duration: This lesson plan is for a FIVE DAY unit. More condensed lesson plans for a TWO DAY lesson and for a SINGLE DAY lesson are also available.

Group Size: Up to 36 (6-12 breakout groups); could be adapted for smaller or larger groups

Learning Objectives: Students will be able to:

- describe reasons for conflicts between nations and possible ways to resolve those conflicts
- identify causes of past conflict between Israel and Egypt
- identify the three leaders who met at Camp David in September 1978
- explain why President Carter wanted to negotiate peace between Israel and Egypt
- analyze the difficulties and tensions that made an agreement difficult to reach
- compare and contrast the positions of Israel and Egypt as the Camp David summit began
- analyze and interpret primary source documents related to the Camp David Accords, including photos, political cartoons, handwritten notes, personal correspondence, audio clips, and video clips.
- create an informative and effective essay, timeline, cartoon, news reports, or advice column that reflects knowledge and understanding of the Camp David Accords

Applicable Subjects: U.S. History, American Government, Georgia History, World History

Minimum grade / Maximum grade: 5th minimum / 12th maximum; probably ideal for grades 8-12, but could be adapted for 5th grade as well.

Background information for the teacher: Provided on teacher notes handout

Education Standards:

Georgia Performance Standards

SS5H9 The student will trace important developments in America since 1975.

- a. Describe U.S. involvement in world events; include efforts to bring peace to the Middle East.

SS7H2 The student will analyze continuity and change in Southwest Asia (Middle East) leading to the 21st century.

- b. Describe how land and religion are reasons for continuing conflicts in the Middle East.

SSCG20 (grades 9-12) The student will describe the tools used to carry out United States foreign policy (diplomacy; economic, military, and humanitarian aid; treaties; sanctions and military intervention).

SSCG12 (grades 9-12) The student will analyze the various roles played the President of the U.S.; include Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, chief executive, chief agenda setter, representative of the nation, chief of state, foreign policy leader, and party leader.

SSUSH25 (grades 9-12) The student will describe changes in national politics since 1968.

- c. Explain the Carter administration's efforts in the Middle East; include the Camp David Accords, his response to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and the Iranian hostage crisis.

National US History Content Standards

Era 10-Contemporary United States (1968 to the present)

Standard 1: Understands developments in foreign policy and domestic politics between the Nixon and Clinton presidencies

National World History Content Standards

Era 9-The 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

Standard 2 - [Understands the search for community, stability, & peace in an interdependent world](#)

Standard 3 - [Understands major global trends since World War II](#)

National Standards for Civics and Government

IV.B.3-Students should be able to evaluate, take, and defend positions on foreign policy issues in light of American national interests, values, and principles.

Major Vocabulary introduced: compromise, negotiation, conflict, accords, treaty, Jimmy Carter, Sinai peninsula, Six Day War, Yom Kippur (or 1973) War, Menachem Begin, Anwar Sadat, Camp David, shuttle diplomacy, Middle East, settlements

Materials Introduction: Students will use a variety of resources from the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and the Jimmy Carter Library. These include photographs, political cartoons, handwritten notes by President Carter, correspondence between President Carter and President Sadat and between Carter and Prime Minister Begin, audio clips of President Carter's reflections upon the Camp David Accords, and video clips related to the negotiations and the treaty signing.

Procedure - Day 1:

- *NOTE: These plans are based on 50 minutes a day per class period. Teachers who are on block schedules should adapt these procedures to meet their individual needs, perhaps completing all activities in 3 class days.*
- Break students into groups of 3 to 4 students and give each group 2 pieces of chart paper (or a dry-erase marker and a "section" of the whiteboard in the room). It is recommended to use flexible grouping strategies to encourage multiple viewpoints and compromise. One student should serve as recorder (writing ideas on chart paper); other students should serve as reporters (sharing group's ideas with class).
- **Opening Activity:** Show students a picture of a school setting. (If this lesson is being done in the students' actual school, then show a picture of their school. If being done at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains, then show a picture of Plains High School.)
 - Ask students to consider this question: *"What causes conflict between students?"* Students work in groups to brainstorm as many possible answers as they can; list those answers on the chart paper. Teacher should lead sharing of ideas by each group.
 - Ask this follow up question: *"How do conflicts between students affect other students?"* Students again brainstorm in groups to others are affected (negatively or positively) by conflict. Record responses on chart paper.
 - Finally, ask this follow up question: *"How are conflicts between students resolved?"* Students will brainstorm different ways that conflicts may be resolved. Teacher leads sharing of ideas by each group, stressing in the discussion that there are advantages and disadvantages to each form of conflict resolution. POST CHART PAPER on walls of room so students can see each group's ideas before moving on to the next segment of the lesson.
- **Second Activity:** Show students a map of the world or a portion of the world (i.e., the Middle East, Africa, North America, etc.).
 - Ask students to consider this question: *"What causes conflict between countries?"* Students work in groups to brainstorm as many possible answers as they can; list those answers on the chart

- paper. Teacher should lead sharing of ideas by each group. These ideas should come up in the discussion - border disputes, access to resources, revenge, land disagreements, alliances, etc. Teacher should make sure that property disputes and access to resources are mentioned, even if he/she has to prod students into adding that to their lists.
- Ask this follow up question: *"How do conflicts between countries affect other countries?"* Students again brainstorm in groups to others are affected (negatively or positively) by conflict. Record responses on chart paper.
 - Finally, ask this follow up question: *"How can conflicts between countries be resolved?"* Students will brainstorm different ways that conflicts may be resolved. Teacher leads sharing of ideas by each group, stressing in the discussion that there are advantages and disadvantages to each form of conflict resolution. Teacher should draw parallels to opening activity - conflict between students vs conflict between countries.
 - At this point, teacher may need to clarify important vocabulary for students (depending on age and ability): compromise, negotiation,
 - As a transition to the next segment of the lesson, ask students to think about these questions: *"What might motivate a country to try to negotiate an end to conflict between two other countries?"* *"What risks are there in trying to bring a peaceful end to a conflict?"*
- **Map / Background Information:** Distribute to students the **handout** entitled "Camp David Accords - Background Information and Geographic Setting". (Use prepared *Teacher Notes* to supplement teacher knowledge as needed.) Help students to identify important events, people, and vocabulary . Use video segment from Dr. Jay Hakes at www.jimmycarter.info/CampDavid to give students a basic understanding of the history of conflict between Israel and Egypt in the 20th century.
 - **Why Camp David?** Show students a map of Maryland, including the location of Camp David. Lead a brief discussion about why President Carter might have wanted peace talks between Israel and Egypt to take place THERE instead of in Washington, DC. Show the google maps photo of Camp David as well as the detail map of the layout of buildings. This will be important as you later discuss the "shuttle diplomacy" of Jimmy Carter during the most intense and difficult days of the 13 day summit.
 - **Summary Activity for Day 1 + Reading Assignment for Day 2:**
 - Use a "3-2-1" summarizing activity, in which students list on paper (individually or in their groups) THREE things they learned today, TWO things about which they are unclear or still have questions, and ONE short statement (8 words or less) in which they summarize their learning. (Note: the short statement is often difficult for students because it requires them to be succinct. Stress to them that they must use 8 words or less to summarize the *central idea* of the day's lesson.)
 - Assign students a reading assignment before they come in for the next day's class. This is a GREAT opportunity for differentiation. Suggested readings include "Two Weeks at Camp David" from *Smithsonian* magazine (by Bob Cullen, September 2003), selected excerpts related to the Camp David Accords from [Keeping Faith](#) (by Jimmy Carter, 1982 - class sets available for loan from Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains), selected excerpts from the White House Diaries of Jimmy Carter (available from jimmycarterlibrary.gov), or a teacher-created summary of the Camp David

Accords. Assign the readings based on student ability. Note: the Smithsonian magazine article is lengthy, so it may be appropriate to assign certain portions of the article to certain groups of students. Let students know that they will be completing a writing assignment at the beginning of the next day based upon what they've read.

NOTE: If students will be planning a field trip to the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, the activities for DAY ONE should be completed at their school the day BEFORE their field trip. Students will thus have had an introduction to the ideas and complexities of conflict resolution before they examine actual documents related to the Camp David Accords. The activities for DAY TWO or DAY THREE could be completed at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site as part of a field trip OR in the students' regular classroom if a field trip is not possible.

Procedure - Day 2:

- **Opening Activity:** Students will reflect upon their assigned reading by responding to an open-ended question such as "What was the biggest obstacle to peace between Israel and Egypt?" or "How do you think that personal relationships affected the negotiations at Camp David?" or "What risks were all three leaders taking in coming to Camp David in September 1978?" Note: the open-ended questions should fit the specific reading assignments, but they should be questions that do not have concrete single correct answers. Allow students some room for interpretation; their responses will show evidence of their having read the assignment, even if they drew different conclusions from the readings.
- **Review:** Review what students remember from yesterday's discussion about the history of conflict between Israel and Egypt and why peace had not been achieved
- **Primary Source Activity:** Students will use a "Document Analysis Worksheet" (available at www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/) to analyze handwritten correspondence between President Carter, President Sadat, and Prime Minister Begin in the months leading up to the Camp David Accords. Students should note the tone of the letters (the more friendly and less formal communication between Carter and Sadat vs the more formal letters between Carter and Begin). Teacher should lead students into discussion of how the personalities of these three leaders and the personal relationships between them could affect negotiations. After looking at the correspondence in groups, filling out the document analysis handout, and discussing the letters as a class, teacher should play audio segments of President Carter talking about the very different personalities and approaches of Sadat and Begin. See if student perceptions from the documents align with Carter's assessment in the audio segments.
- **The Meeting at Camp David:** Students will analyze photographs of Carter, Sadat, and Begin from the Camp David summit. These photographs will come from Day One (Sept 5, 1978 - arrival of both nations' delegations), a day in the middle of the tense and difficult negotiations, and Day Thirteen (Sept 17, 1978 - reaching of agreement and announcement on national television). Students will use a Photo

Analysis Handout (available at www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/) to analyze the photographs, beginning with simple observations (who do you see? what do you see? what is not in the photo?) and then expanding to deeper conclusions (why are facial expressions different than in the other photos? what role might other people in the photo have played in the negotiations?).

(www.jimmycarter.info/CampDavid)

- **Summary Writing Activity:** Students end day 2 by completing a sentence starter and explaining their response. Sample sentence starters include "The most important thing I've learned about the Camp David Accords is..." or "The most difficult obstacle to overcome on the road to peace was..." or "The most surprising thing I've learned about the Camp David Accords is...".

Procedure - Day 3:

- **Political Cartoon analysis:** Students will analyze one of two different political cartoons related to the Camp David Accords (available from www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov). Students will work in small groups to fill out a Cartoon Analysis worksheet (available at www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/). Teachers have hopefully used political cartoons in earlier content units, so students should have some familiarity with the analysis process. Once students have examined the cartoons, have groups share their insights about what they saw, what they think it means, what the cartoonist was trying to accomplish, who the audience was, etc.
- **White House Diary analysis:** Students will analyze the official White House Diary from Day 1 (Sept 5, 1978), Day 10 (Sept 14, 1978) or Day 11 (Sept 15, 1978), and Day 13 (Sept 17, 1978). These documents are available from www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov; Document Analysis worksheets are available at www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/. Teachers should help students to pick out important differences between the days - the formality of arrival on Day 1, the tension of shuttle negotiations by Day 10 or Day 11, the hustle and bustle of Day 13 (including the return to Washington and the nationally televised announcement of an agreement). Students should also note the other names that appear repeatedly on the diary entries - Sec of State Vance, Press Secretary Powell, Israeli Attorney General Barak, etc. Why does the President talk/meet with these people often more frequently than with Sadat and Begin themselves?
- **Jimmy Carter's handwritten notes:** Students will examine President Carter's handwritten notes entitled "Framework for a settlement in Sinai" (www.jimmycarter.info/CampDavid). Have students use a document analysis handout to identify key parts of Carter's peace proposal and the reasons why Israel and/or Egypt might be taking a risk in accepting the proposal. Students should also identify any key vocabulary that they don't understand. Teacher should guide students in noticing Carter's use of language, his corrections and notations, and his personal tone in the document.

Procedure - Day 4:

- **Reaching Agreement:** Students will view video of national news conference on Sunday night (9.17.1978) and analyze the historic "six hand handshake" photo (available from jimmycarterlibrary.gov). They will review the White House Diary from Day 13 (9.17.1978) to remember the frantic series of events and meetings that led to the agreement on that Sunday, followed by the helicopter flight to Washington for the late evening news conference.
- **From Agreement to Treaty:** Students will use a handout to follow the steps from the September 1978 Camp David Agreement to the March 1979 Treaty between Egypt and Israel. Teacher should lead students in filling in key parts of the handout. Included will be photos of the Carters with the Begin in Jerusalem and with the Sadats in Egypt for students to analyze. After students complete handout, teacher will show video from the March treaty signing at the White House .
- **Assessment of Camp David Accords:** Conclude Day 4 with an assessment of how each of the three leaders (Begin, Carter, Sadat) were affected with the Camp David Accords and subsequent treaty. Teacher should make sure students understand the internal political and social pressures facing both Begin and Sadat. Questions for discussion might include:
 - Which leader had the most to gain from the Camp David Accords?
 - Who took the biggest risk by signing the Camp David Accords?
 - How did the Camp David Accords affect President Carter's re-election chances in 1980?
 - Why was Anwar Sadat assassinated in 1981?
 - How was Menachem Begin's political career affected by the agreement?
 - Who came out of Camp David looking the best or having won the most? Why?

Procedure - Day 5:

- **Student Performance Task:** Today's performance task allows students an opportunity to show what they've learned from this week. Students will choose one of the following activities to complete:
 - Create an original political cartoon about the Camp David summit, its participants, the difficult negotiations, and/or the treaty that finally signed. The cartoon must include multiple elements related to facts learned in class, but it should also be creative. Student will include a written paragraph analyzing their own cartoon.
 - Write news reports as if the student were a reporter for either an Israeli or an Egyptian newspaper in September 1978. Write three reports (perhaps one before the summit, one during the summit, and one after the announcement of agreement); be sure to write from the perspective of your nation. For example, an Israeli newspaper would not have the same opinions or express the same views as the New York Times or the Atlanta Journal Constitution.
 - Write an advice column to future presidents about how to resolve international conflicts. Your column must acknowledge the risks of becoming involved in conflict resolution (possible failure? appearing weak? balancing personalities?) and offer those presidents suggestions for

how to accomplish successful negotiations, based upon student knowledge of the challenges and tensions of reaching the Camp David Accords.

- Write a critical essay in which the student assesses whether the Camp David Accords were fair and/or were a success? Students must offer evidence from texts used in class this week (reading excerpts from Day 1, primary sources from subsequent days, Keeping Faith by Jimmy Carter, other appropriate and reliable source documents, etc.). They should take a clear position on the fairness or success question, then support that position with clearly stated arguments supported with evidence.
- Create an illustrated timeline of the relationship between Israel and its neighbors since the Camp David Accords. Use research to examine leaders of both countries, conflicts/negotiations between the countries, successes and failures in terms of agreement on key issues (Gaza, West Bank, Palestinian state, etc.). While Israel and Egypt have not gone to war since the Camp David Accords, there certainly has been plenty of tension in the region in the decades since the 1979 treaty was signed.

Assessment: Teacher will have many opportunities for formative assessment in this unit, including observation of student brainstorming and collaboration during Day One's activities, observation of completion of primary source analysis sheets, completion of related handouts, and through question-and-answer sessions during discussion. The summative assessment comes with the student-chosen final performance task.

Connections to national parks and historic sites: Many of the primary source documents (photos, written documents, etc.) are available onsite through the education program at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. Classroom sets of Keeping Faith and other publications by President Carter are also available for us onsite at the park or for loan to schools from the park. Students visiting the park will have an opportunity to view and discuss the Nobel Peace Prize from 2002 and the connections between that prize and Carter's efforts at Camp David as well as in his post-presidency throughout the world.

Differentiation/Enrichment: There are many ways to differentiate for this unit, including the incorporation of more complex texts and documents for students who need enrichment. Students who are particularly interested in more information related to the Camp David Accords might read some of Rosalynn Carter's reflections on that September in First Lady from Plains. Further research can be done into the efforts of other presidents in achieving peace in the Middle East, particularly Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Bill Clinton. Students could even research the current administration's efforts in the region and assess their effectiveness. Students might analyze President Carter's Nobel Prize acceptance speech from December 2002 for further insights into his view of how and why we must accomplish peace in the world.

Additional Resources:

- First Lady from Plains by Rosalynn Carter (c) 1982
- The Blood of Abraham by Jimmy Carter (c) 1993
- Palestine: Peace not Apartheid by Jimmy Carter (c) 2006