

Should Japan Amend Article 9 of the Constitution?

A Common Core study on World History (Strategy) end of World War II(1945)

This lesson was created in post-Second World War II in response to Japan's constitution post-war and relevant in Japan today in controversy regarding whether or not to amending the constitution.

Lesson Activity Overview

Classroom debates allow students a way to organize and discuss topics in a cooperative and collaborative group setting. Students examine controversial topics and are encouraged to organizing the opposing sides of a topic by preparing both pro and con positions.

The aftermath of World War II created many global changes. The historical changes that developed after the Allied Forces declared victory were immense. Many of these changes have not been revisited since the end of the war. There have been some issues which have continued to come up since the time of inception and continue today. One of these issues is Article 9, as it becomes a controversial issue relevant today.

Students will be debating a current topic that Japan is currently facing involving whether or not to amend Article 9 of the Constitution. Not only will students have to debate their reasons for the amendments but they will have to be able to defend their position with the positive affect these changes will have on the current state of Japan but economically and within it defense system. This debate will be based on current information in the culture and security of Japan, as well as the United States.

Lesson Objectives

Students will prepare for the debate using background knowledge of the primary sources of Japan's Constitution of 1951 and 1960. In addition, students will be reading secondary sources that represent Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's reason for amending the constitution. The first article explores Japan's need for a bigger defense program. The second is an article by the LDP vice president who says 'zero possibility' of Article 9 being amended, thus exploring the political issues against it. The third article outlines the opposing views of economic benefits and the rights of the country itself.

Students will prepare both the positives and negatives of amending the constitution. In addition they will explore the impact how such a change to Japanese military would have on Japan and the rest of the world.

Number of Class Periods

This activity is approximately a 90 minute lesson. It is intended to be completed after the conclusion of WWI I Unit, to connect the results of WWII to current events relevant in the world today. Students will have background knowledge of Article 9 and aftermath of WWII. Homework will be assigned in conjunction to the debate itself to prepare for the debate.

Grade Level: 9

Standards:

Common Core:

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 -- Reading**

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2 -- Reading**

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3 -- Reading**

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8 -- Reading**

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as

the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9 -- Reading**

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.2 -- Writing**

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3 -- Writing**

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 -- Writing**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6 -- Writing**

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.1.A

Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10-.1.a-- Comprehension and Collaboration

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.b -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.d -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

Historical Context

Japan rewrote its constitution after the announcement of its surrender in the Pacific War during World War II. Japan was devastated after the dropping of two nuclear bombs and the destruction of the country's economy. After the surrender of Japan, students will understand why the clause was added to the constitution regarding Japan's ability to maintain armed forces, as well as letting the United States' military protect them from war in order for the country to raise its economy to level it is today.

Materials:

- Handouts with instructions
- Articles from *The Japan Times*:
 - Article by Reiji Yoshida on July 6, 2016
 - [LDP vice-president says zero possibility Abe will revise article 9 upper house poll win](#)
 - Article by Kyodo on February 3, 2016
 - [Abe explicit call amendment Constitutions Article 9](#)
 - Voices from the street by Stephen Carr on July 20, 2016
 - [Views from Gifu: Now Abe has the numbers, is it time to tweak the Constitution?](#)
- Timer to keep track of when to switch off during the debate.
- Handout: Debate Format (one for each student to follow along during debate)

Procedure

- **This lesson will occur after the Victory in Japan in WWII after a basic understanding of Article 9 of Japan's Constitution.**
- The links to the articles used for the debate can be found under the material section. These should be read for homework prior to the day of the debate.

- Students should prepare a pro and con list for the debate with at least five detailed bullets each side.
- Students should come in on the day of the debate divided into groups of 5. Two people will be on the pro-side and two people will be arguing for the con-side. One person will be the moderator. This is typically done at random. (Groups can be done in groups of three or you could use a whole class model if preferred.)
- Students can be given a few minutes to prepare further once they know which side they will be debating on.

Vocabulary:

amend

defense

Article 9 (of Japan's Constitution)

Unconditional

DIET

Strife

Upper House

Lower House

Ratified

Inspire

National Police Reserve

Debate Format:

World History Debate:

Resolved: Japan should Amend Article 9 of the Constitution.

Debate Procedures:

1. Opening Statements—present your position and the key reasons for that position.
 - a. Affirmative or Pro-side 3 minutes
 - b. Negative or Con-side 3 minutes
2. Questioning Phase—Only the moderator asks clarifying questions of each debater.
 - a. Affirmative 3 Minutes response time
 - b. Negative 3 Minutes response time
3. Cross-Questioning Phase—Moderator takes notes to help in decision-making process.
 - a. Debaters ask questions of other’s positions 2 Minutes
4. Rebuttal Preparation—Each debater organizes thoughts, ideas, and arguments against the other side to try and “win” the argument.
 - a. Reflect on your opponent’s arguments 2 Minutes
5. Rebuttal Speeches—present speeches in persuasive manner with factual evidenced. Remember you are trying to convince the moderator that your position is the most sound.
 - a. Affirmative 3 Minutes
 - b. Negative 3 Minutes
6. Final Question—from Moderator to wrap up the discussion and aid in the decision-making
 - a. Same question asked to both debaters 2 Minutes each side
7. Moderator presents decision to group giving specific reasons, gathered from the argument, for the decision.
 - a. Moderator 5 minutes to prepare decision

Additional Procedures:

- If a speaker finishes prior to the expiration of time, do not proceed to the next phase; wait quietly until the time has expired and the next round begins.
- No personal attacks.

Part II -- Background Information --

Article name	Revising the constitutions	Against the revision
Abe explicit in call for amendment to Constitution's Article 9	Japan could use a bigger defense program	US would defend Japan is attacked –“mutual treaty” Japan does have forces – “National Police Reserve” Putting more \$ into defense would take away from economy
LDP vice president says ‘zero possibility’ Abe will revise Article 9 after Upper House poll win		Stir up political issues only
Views from Gifu: Now Abe has the numbers, is it time to tweak the Constitution?	It is the right of the country	Peace has lasted 70 years If Japan has its own military arms it will take away from Japan's economy

Article 9 and the US-Japan Security Treaty

- 1947 MacArthur Constitution
- 1950's strife over security treaty with the US and its presence of US soldiers in Japan

Socialist & Communist	Moderate conservatives	Nationalists
Labor unions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt alliance with the US might result in Japan forgetting about its own interests 	Business, rural & bureaucratic sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported creation of modest Self-Defense Forces • wanted US in control of forces so Japan could concentrate on economic recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supported the US alliance • favored a stronger military posture and greater independence from US in foreign affairs • did not like the “MacArthur Constitution” • lower position of emperor, weakened state control of education, local government, & political expression

- The conservative Liberal Democratic party (LDP) controlled most of the government at this time
- 1951 San Francisco treaty- no People's Republic of China (not invited), no Soviet Union
- Japanese government resisted rearmament in the name of the American-inspired constitution

- Japanese agreed to a minimum compromise with the US – “National Police Reserve” – defend Japanese islands
- 1952 US ratified US – Japan Security Treaty
- 1969 Japan formed a new treaty, “mutual defense”, with US over how US would defend Japan if attacked