

## CHAPTER 1

# *Choosing Content and Methods for Teaching About International Conflict and Peace*

Merry M. Merryfield and Richard C. Remy

- The Challenge of Selecting Content and Method
- Assumptions about Teaching and Learning
  - Planning Begins with Knowledge of One's Students
  - Content Is Basic
  - Active, Reflective Learning Is Essential
  - Attention To Values Is Necessary
  - Instruction Must Have Variety
  - Content, Methods, and Educational Goals Are Connected
- Integrating Content on International Conflict and Peace With the Social Studies Curriculum
  - Planning Instruction: Forward or Backward?
  - Identifying Content for Basic Courses
    - World/Global History
    - World Cultures/World Geography
    - United States History
    - United States Government
    - Economics
  - Strategies for Weaving Content into Courses and Units
- Teaching Methods for International Conflict and Peace
  - Methods That Help Students Experience Cultural Differences and Similarities
    - Rationale
    - Sample Methods
    - Planning With These Methods
  - Methods That Have Students Examine Multiple Perspectives
    - Rationale

- Sample Methods
- Planning with These Methods
- Methods That Teach Students About Cooperation and Collaboration
  - Rationale
  - Sample Methods
  - Planning with These Methods
- Methods That Teach Students How to Find and Evaluate Conflicting Sources of Information
  - Rationale
  - Sample Methods
  - Planning with These Methods
- Methods That Have Students Identify and Analyze Values and Attitudes
  - Rationale
  - Sample Methods
  - Planning with These Methods
- Methods That Have Students Use Knowledge and Skills through Authentic Applications
  - Rationale
  - Sample Methods
  - Planning with These Methods
- Examples of Classroom Practice
  - Shirley Hoover, Upper Arlington High School, Upper Arlington, Ohio
  - Connie White, Linden McKinley High School, Columbus, Ohio
  - Steve Shapiro, Reynoldsburg High School, Reynoldsburg, Ohio
- Conclusions

Social studies is about people and their interactions in groups ranging from the family to the global community. Ever since people have lived in groups conflict has been an inevitable characteristic of the human condition. The rise of modern nation-states, the scientific revolution, and the global dissemination of modern technology have made human conflict a fact of contemporary international life as well as a continuing feature of people's face-to-face relations.

The spread of human conflict to the global level has been accompanied throughout history by the persistent effort of thoughtful people to find ways to limit, manage or resolve international conflicts. Over time nations and other international actors have evolved a variety of practices and ideas for managing conflict such as diplomacy, international law, treaties, alliances, and other means of negotiation and settlement.

Scholars have studied the management and resolution of international conflict and developed a base of knowledge about such critical issues as the use and control of military power, diplomacy,

human rights, self-determination, economic cooperation, and the global environment. Knowledge of such practices and issues is a key for competent citizenship in a global age.

In recognition of this fact more and more states and school districts are mandating courses in world cultures, local-global connections, and global history in secondary social studies. Beginning teachers need to be prepared to teach about global interconnectedness and international conflict and peace, yet there are few instructional materials on these topics developed for beginning teachers or preservice teacher education programs.

This book was designed to help you better understand international conflict and peace as you learn about instructional methods and begin to teach. The book brings together current scholarship on major topics in the management of international conflict and methods for teaching that are especially important in globally-oriented social studies education. We have selected international topics and instructional methods that are critical for preparing secondary social studies teachers for globally-oriented curriculum innovations in an era of school reform and restructuring.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One (Chapters 1 and 2) explains the relationships between content about international conflict and peace, and exemplary teaching practice in secondary social studies classrooms. In Part Two, eminent scholars provide essays on major themes in international conflict management relevant to the social studies curriculum.

## THE CHALLENGE OF SELECTING CONTENT AND METHODS

Most beginning teachers struggle with choosing content and appropriate instructional methods. Matt, a preservice teacher in his second social studies methods course, and Barb, his cooperating teacher, are discussing a unit Matt is planning to teach in Barb's global history class.

BARB: We should be ready to start teaching about independence movements and self-determination next week. How have you decided how to begin the unit?

MATT: First the students need to understand the effects of World War II on colonized peoples. Then we'll examine steps in gaining indepen-

dence and compare independence movements and reactions of colonial powers in different countries. Finally we will come up with what the concept of 'self-determination' meant then and what it means today. Here are my ideas.

Matt pulls out his tentative plans for sequencing the unit and shares it with Barb.

BARB: So you want to begin with outcomes of the war for colonial peoples in Africa and Asia. How are you going to teach about what it meant to those people? What would be appropriate methods to use given your goals and content?

MATT: I could have them examine some primary sources where people are explaining their views. Perhaps they could read some speeches or letters or even stories that were written about that time? They could use that information to role-play discussions that could have taken place in Algeria or Kenya or India . . . And France or Britain. Or I could lecture on the relationship between the war and independence movements over the last fifty years? They do well in cooperative groups, so I could have them work in small groups and use those books in your collection to construct a time-line of independence movements from the 1940s to today. There's that video on the independence movement in Indonesia. I could use that as the beginning of a case study. There are so many ways to teach. How do I decide?

As Matt indicates, there are many choices. What methods of teaching will be most effective in helping his students understand self-determination? How can his instructional methods support his content goals? By choosing methods that are appropriate for his students and congruent with his content, Matt can provide a cohesive and powerful learning experience.

In this chapter we share our assumptions about teaching and learning, discuss steps involved in making decisions on choosing content and methods, and then describe methods that are particularly appropriate for teaching about how people throughout history and today have found ways to deal with, manage, or resolve international conflicts. By *methods* we mean the ways a teacher may structure teaching and learning experiences for students. The chapter concludes with vignettes of actual classroom practice that illustrate how experienced teachers have integrated these instructional methods to achieve content goals.

## ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING

This book is grounded in several assumptions about the teaching and learning of social studies. These assumptions, in effect, form criteria by which one can make judgements about the quality of instruction. Research on teaching and learning indicates that instruction that embodies these assumptions will be more effective than instruction that fails to do so.

### *Planning Begins with Knowledge of One's Students*

Although American secondary school students share many similarities, it is the complexity of their differences that challenges every teacher. We must understand our students before we can effectively help them learn. Knowledge of students' backgrounds and lifestyles (for example, a student's Muslim upbringing, a father's job at General Motors), developmental levels (an eighth grader's attention span of twelve minutes), cognitive styles (a visual learner), special needs (a ninth grader reading at a fifth-grade level), and personal interests or experiences (a fascination with computers) help teachers make appropriate instructional decisions. Good teachers use knowledge of their students to sequence content, choose methods and materials, connect them to the topic under study, create interest, build on previous knowledge and skills, and individualize the process of learning so that all students can and will succeed.

### *Content Is Basic*

We believe that good teaching in the social studies is based on the conceptual understandings and knowledge available from the social sciences, history, the humanities, and occasionally other disciplines. Findings from more than twenty-five years of research in cognitive science—the study of how we think, remember, and learn—clearly indicate that attempting to teach problem solving and higher-level thinking skills in the absence of solid content is not effective. Put another way, trying to teach students inquiry and thinking skills without simultaneously teaching domain specific knowledge—knowledge, for instance, about world history or American foreign policy—will not work, because such “strategies can help us

process knowledge, but first we have to have the knowledge to process.”<sup>1</sup>

Not just any historical or social science knowledge will prepare young people for citizenship in the twenty-first century. The ever increasing political, economic, social, technological, and environmental connections between the United States and the rest of the world demand that American students develop an understanding of why international conflicts arise and how such conflicts can be managed, resolved, or possibly avoided.

### *Active, Reflective Learning is Essential*

Students master content not only by being exposed to information through readings and lectures or by learning to recall facts for a test but also by engaging in a reflective process in which they make the information their own by evaluating and using it. Teaching and learning are likely to be most effective when the teacher serves as coach and reflective practitioner and when the students are active learners who take responsibility for their own learning. In this process the student learns to be a researcher, thinker, decision maker, and meaning maker.

Survey approaches that skim the surface of large bodies of discrete facts do not give students the time for reflection or the depth of knowledge they need to apply the content to new situations. Used judiciously, the less-is-more or depth-over-coverage approach in planning curriculum and selecting content can provide students the time and in-depth knowledge they need for mastery learning, reflection, and practice in using knowledge. Although teachers may employ a variety of tools and methods to evaluate student learning, there should be some assessment where students demonstrate their mastery of learning through meaningful tasks, performances, or exhibitions that are authentic for their adult life as citizens in a democracy.

### *Attention to Values Is Necessary*

By the nature of its content, social studies instruction is value laden and deals with controversial issues. One cannot understand the human condition without considering the role of individual and

---

<sup>1</sup>John T. Bruer, “The Mind’s Journey From Novice to Expert,” *American Educator* 17, no. 2 (summer 1993): 15.

societal values in the evolution of human history and without paying some attention to past and present perspectives on injustice, inequality, and inhumanity. If the study of international conflict management is to be addressed effectively in the classroom, students must understand how human differences in values, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, or economic development have been and continue to be the basis for conflict, discrimination, and aggression.

### *Instruction Must Have Variety*

A central feature of good teaching is instructional variety. We have all known social studies teachers who rely heavily on one method as *the* way they teach day after day. In some schools students know that Mr. Davis will lecture on history, in economics Ms. Casper will have them answer questions out of the textbook, and geography means watching videos with Mr. Page. Not only is the use of the same instructional method unstimulating to students and teacher alike, but such teaching does not address diverse student needs and learning styles. Some students learn effectively by reading, writing, or listening, but many students need visuals, cooperative learning, active learning, or hands-on experiences. Instructional variety gives all students opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

Teachers who seek out and incorporate a variety of teaching methods learn to improve their effectiveness as facilitators of learning as they grow professionally from one year to the next. Every time we try a new method or experiment with new materials, we have the opportunity to examine and reflect upon the eternal questions of teaching and learning—what involves the students in the learning process and excites them about the subject? What helps them master content and learn to synthesize and make use of knowledge? How do students learn *how* to learn? Such reflective practice is central to becoming a good teacher. In the vignettes that conclude this chapter you will meet experienced teachers who continue to improve their teaching by finding new materials and integrating new methods into their practice year after year.

### *Content, Methods and Educational Goals Are Connected*

Finally, there should be a direct relationship between teaching methods and knowledge, skill, and attitudinal objectives. How we

teach should support what we teach. The lecture method, for instance, can be an excellent means to convey a large amount of factual information to students but is ill suited to helping students learn to develop thinking skills. Teachers who take account of the relationship among content, educational goals, and methods plan instruction so that *how* they teach maximizes their educational goals. Some teaching methods are more appropriate than others for teaching about major dimensions of international conflict management, such as diplomacy, negotiation, peaceful settlement, military power, economic cooperation, human rights, self-determination, and the global environment. These methods can help students better understand and reflect upon the complexity and interconnectedness of international conflict management and encourage them to apply what they are learning to their own decisions, actions, and worldviews.

### INTEGRATING CONTENT ON INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND PEACE WITH THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

A key theme of this book is that if our students are to make informed judgments and decisions in today's world, they must develop some fundamental understanding of the management, resolution, and avoidance of international conflict. For this to happen, social studies educators need to be prepared to teach about themes in international conflict and peace in basic social studies courses.

What is the process of planning instruction that will bring topics in international conflict and peace into your social studies curriculum? Matt, the preservice teacher we met earlier, has just finished his first day of teaching and sits down to discuss it with Barb, his cooperating teacher.

MATT: I'm not sure what went wrong. They certainly got confused over my instructions on developing cases. They just sat and looked at the print and video materials I had brought in for them to use. Was it because they don't understand self-determination? Or was it a mistake to think they could construct case studies? Maybe I should have first shown them how I developed that case study of self-determination in India.



BARB: Sounds like you aren't sure whether they understood the content or whether you should have used another method.

MATT: You make it look so easy. I guess I thought I could just chose a topic and a way to teach from the ones I've seen you use. It's so complicated. I have to decide what to teach and how to teach it, find resources, and get it all organized—and then they say they don't understand, and I have to change it as I teach. How can I do better tomorrow?

Good teachers do make planning look easy, but most beginning teachers find it difficult and confusing at first. Where do you begin? An important first step is to recognize that there is no one right way to plan social studies instruction in the United States. In fact most teachers modify the way they plan through years of practice as they learn, experiment, and incorporate ideas from colleagues, inservice education, and professional journals or meetings. Experienced teachers have developed many approaches to planning courses. In some school districts or specific schools, teachers are required to write formal plans that meet criteria such as those embodied in state frameworks or proficiency tests or are consistent with a school district's graded course of study. In other districts or schools without such criteria teachers often develop their own individual approach to sequencing content, organizing instructional units, and writing lesson plans.

### *Planning Instruction: Forward or Backward?*

Many teachers begin the planning process by making decisions on the scope and sequence for the entire course of study (for example, the breadth and depth of a year-long world history course) and then allocating time periods for specific topics (the first nine-week grading period on ancient and classical civilizations) or questions (three weeks for, How has technology changed the environment?). Most teachers use unit planning to develop instruction on a single topic or theme for one to several weeks (for example, a three-week unit on conflict in the medieval world). Daily lesson plans are usually sequenced within the unit plan and modified as they are taught (a lesson of map work and small group discussion on the spread of diffusion of Islam may end up taking two days instead of one).

Traditionally teachers have built their curriculum forward

from setting goals or objectives to developing lesson one, two, three, four, and so forth. The major assessment for student learning (such as a unit test) has been usually developed last, perhaps even after much of the unit has been taught. Working with new educational reforms such as Ted Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, some social studies teachers are now planning backward. They first develop essential questions that are the targets for student learning, and then they plan how they can assess the students' performance in answering those questions. After the assessment is developed, the teachers plan backwards to identify the knowledge and skills students need in order to achieve success in the assessment. The vignette of Steve Shapiro's planning at the end of this chapter and his unit in chapter 2 illustrate interdisciplinary teaming and backwards building curriculum in high school social studies.

At each step in the planning process, teachers make decisions on educational outcomes (what students should know, be able to do, and be like), on the scope and sequence of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and on the instructional methods that help students to learn. Teachers often alter instructional plans in the process of teaching to meet the needs of students and the many interruptions they usually encounter during the school day.

### *Identifying Content for Basic Social Studies Courses*

Although there is no national curriculum in social studies per se, the typical secondary school curriculum includes courses in world and U.S. history and geography, U.S. government, and economics. How do topics in international conflict and peace relate to such courses? While we cannot answer that question in detail here, we can give some examples of how the topics and issues presented by the international relations scholars in part 2 of this book fit with these courses. As you study the essays in part 2 you will readily see how systematic attention to such topics can enrich your social studies courses by helping your students:

1. view the world from multicultural and global perspectives and appreciate the views of people different and similar to themselves;
2. make connections over time (past, present and future) and space (local, national, regional, and global) as they examine events, ideas, and issues;

3. apply the knowledge and skills they have already mastered to interests, issues, or concerns in their own lives so that they can better meet the challenges and realities posed by an interdependent world.

**World/Global History.** Whether social studies teachers use a chronological approach or a thematic one, most teach about the rise and fall of great kingdoms, civilizations, nations, and their alliances. Having used their military to subdue new peoples and take new lands, many rulers throughout history enforced peace through conquest and direct or indirect rule. Students can compare the use of the military to bring about peace in the time of the Pax Romana with its use to bring about peace in India during colonialization or its use to bring about peace in Bosnia in the 1990s. Issues such as human rights and self determination can serve as major themes in the study of the world's history, as slavery, genocide, use of torture, suppression of people's rights and people's search for self-government have gone hand in hand with conquest, imperialism, colonialization, and liberation.

Throughout history people have found ways to maintain peaceful contact and interaction through diplomacy, negotiation, alliances, and the trade of products and services. At the same time, the search for trade routes, products, and markets has often precipitated conflict and raised issues of human rights, ethics, and fairness. Students could compare the effects of trade on conflict and peace from the Phoenicians and early Arab traders to the Spanish globalization of trade, the integration of the European Community, the 1990 conflict in the Persian Gulf, and the recent round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Over the course of history, what have been the relationships between trade and the use of the military? What have been the benefits of economic alliances? What have been the connections between economic development and peace? Can economic boycotts bring about political change? What roles have diplomacy, negotiation, and alliances played in shaping the world of today?

The history of the world is one of increasing globalization through technological changes in transportation, communications, energy, agriculture, industry, health, and engineering. These innovations have brought peoples closer together and, in general, improved the quality of life for people on the planet. New technologies have also given rise to new environmental issues and conflicts about

our global commons of land, air, and water. From the study of early terracing of rice patties and building of dikes to today's pollution and urbanization, history is also the study of humans modifying their physical environment. How have people worked together to manage conflicts over the use of the oceans, the atmosphere, Antarctica, and outer space? What roles have the United Nations, regional alliances such as Rarotonga Treaty's South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone, or people's organizations such as Greenpeace played in management or resolution of environmental conflicts?

**World Cultures/World Geography.** Contemporary world cultures and the planet's changing physical environment are often major topics of study in secondary geography courses. Themes in international conflict and peace can serve to unify these courses and help students develop a global perspective on the world's cultures, regions, and ecological systems. For example, in many world geography courses students study regional units such as North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and so on. Focusing on unifying themes such as dealing with conflict or managing the global environment, teachers can help students synthesize and connect what they have learned about each region's experiences with environmental issues and conflict management and apply these generalizations to current regional or global issues.

Self-determination, the use of the military, and economic cooperation are three critically important themes if students are to understand world cultures and world maps today. What are the relationships between cultures and nations? Why are there Chinese subcultures in Malaysia and Indonesia? What are the effects on other cultures and nations around the globe of the Jewish diaspora? Why do most African nations trade more with Europeans than with other Africans? Why has Slovenia recently become a new nation? Why do some cultures within nations or regions (such as the Lebanese in West Africa) have such different economic development from other cultures in the same country or region? If students are to understand cultural conflicts of today's world, teachers must help students make connections across regions and think critically about peoples' desires for freedom and self determination, security, and economic development and the effects of alliances, nationalism, and military power.

**United States History.** Placed in the context of world history and globalization, U.S. history provides invaluable insights into rela-

tionships between international and domestic conflict and peace. The roots of what we have come to call “the American experience” are found in the world’s political and cultural conflicts, human rights abuses, and economic tribulations. Given our increasing interconnectedness with other peoples and nations, the future of the U.S. depends upon its citizens’ abilities to understand and interact with people beyond our borders.

Social studies teachers have usually addressed diplomacy and the use of the military and military alliances in bringing about conflict management or resolution in the study of our wars and military entanglements at home and overseas. Self-determination is often taught in the context of the American Revolution and the plight of Native Americans during the European settlement of North America. All of these concepts can be enriched by linking them historically to other world events (such as self determination of other peoples under British rule) and by asking students to compare the American experience with that of other peoples today (as in issues of self-determination of French Canadians, Armenians, or indigenous peoples in East Timor).

In both U.S. History and American Government students learn the history of American foreign policy and the issues that we face today. What should be the role of the United States in international conflicts? Should we work through the United Nations and alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? Should Americans intercede where people are suffering because of regional conflicts, governmental persecution, poverty, or environmental catastrophes? How do Americans work through peoples’ organizations such as Amnesty International, CARE, the Red Cross or Catholic Relief Services to influence international conflict and peace? How do foreign policy and economic alliances affect American businesses, jobs, and peoples’ standard of living?

U.S. History is also a history of land use and environmental decisions that increasingly deal with shrinking resources and complex ecological, economic and political issues. How do American decisions reflected in acts such as promulgating the Clean Air Act or joining the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) affect the global environment? How does nuclear proliferation in North Korea or drift net fishing in the Pacific affect the future of the United States? Do Americans debating clear-cutting of forests need to understand forest-related issues and experiences in Germany or Brazil?

**United States Government.** Concepts such as ‘democracy,’ ‘constitutional law,’ ‘individual rights and liberties,’ and ‘political participation’ are central to U.S. Government courses. Actions based on interpretations of these concepts play a central role in international conflict and peace. By learning about such topics as the development of political parties or civil rights within the context of other countries’ experiences, students can begin to see their own government in a global framework and recognize how their actions can affect the management of international conflict.

Certainly a U.S. Government course is the ideal place to examine the role of government (local, state, national, or international) in resolving conflicts between people at home and those abroad. How have Americans used their government to resolve economic conflicts with other countries (or their businesses)? How does political participation affect the government’s decision to send in troops or begin a economic boycott or sign an alliance?

**Economics.** ‘Economic cooperation,’ ‘economic development,’ and ‘economic exchanges’ are key concepts in secondary economics courses. By examining these in the contexts of international conflict and peace, students can understand the critical role that economics plays in global security and issues such as self-determination, the use of the military, and the global environment. In their study of benefits and costs, students can explore the ramifications of an expansion of off-shore drilling or an oil spill both on a multinational oil corporation (e.g., its employment and profits) and on the oil-rich region’s environment (e.g., tourist industries, regional fisheries, endangered species, or the fishing rights of indigenous peoples. How can economic cooperation bring about peace and justice in such conflicts?

World trade, tariffs, international economic organizations and economic alliances affect all our lives. Students need to understand conflicts growing out of the global assembly-line, long-term effects of regional economic unions, such as the European Community and NAFTA, or the work of international organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. What is the relationship between economic cooperation and peace? What are the effects on global security of North-South economic differences or demands for a new international economic order? How will the restructuring of the former Soviet Union and Eastern

Europe into market economies effect international conflict and peace?

Although history, geography, government, and economics courses may be the most obvious places for studying international conflict and peace, a psychology course could include a unit on interpersonal conflict resolution, or a sociology class could include global perspectives on the role of socioeconomic differences in international conflict and peace. In fact it is very difficult to teach a social studies course without paying considerable attention to how people deal with conflicts.

Topics related to international conflict and peace are ideal for interdisciplinary integration or parallel teaching across social studies and other subjects. The global environment and technology issues from links with science courses; literature, biography, research, and writing skills fit well with language arts or a humanities course. As you read the essays in the second half of the book you will find many other ways to strengthen student understanding of how individuals, organizations, and governments have addressed, managed, or resolved international conflicts.

### *Strategies for Weaving Content into Courses and Units*

As teachers begin to sketch out their course plan at the beginning of the school year or semester, they may consider a variety of strategies for integrating content in international conflict and peace throughout the entire course as well as within specific units. Sometimes teachers find it appropriate to develop strands or themes for an entire course such as “conflict and cooperation” or “human rights.” These strands become a facet of every unit and provide cognitive links across units. Another approach is through *thematic units* such as “self determination in the twentieth century” (in a world history course), “conflict resolution and democracy” (government), or “global environmental issues” (geography). Such units can help students generalize and draw conclusions across time periods in history, levels of governance, or geographic regions in a world cultures course.

Teachers may organize *units to synthesize and apply content* at the end of a term or year-long course, as Shirley Hoover did in her unit on “international conflicts and the state of the world” in global history (see vignettes at the end of chapter 1). An economics course could end with a two-week unit on “alternatives in resolv-

ing global economic conflicts,” or a U.S. History might conclude with “the role of the United States in global peace and security.” Such units require students to use the knowledge and skills they have worked with in several units in drawing generalizations or analyzing a major contemporary issue or problem.

Many teachers use an *infusion approach* which integrates concepts (e.g., intervention), issues (e.g., human rights, the role of United Nations), or strategies in conflict management (e.g., the use of the military, negotiation, diplomacy) units such as in Connie White’s unit (described in the vignettes in chapter 1) on “Arab Achievements and the Middle East.” The major topics in chapters 3–9 can be restated as a unit’s *essential questions* such as, How do people resolve conflicts over the environment? (in a geography unit on North America) or, Does third-party negotiation work? (in a world history unit on twentieth-century conflicts). Steve Shapiro describes such a unit in chapter 2.

International conflict and peace can also serve as a *unifying structure throughout a social studies course* by linking ideas, concepts, and factual information. A teacher introduces students to the conceptualization of peace tools (see chapter 3) the first time the topic of diplomacy arises in a history or government class. In later units the teacher builds on those concepts to incorporate new approaches and later developments as the class studies other events, issues, and decisions. Such interconnections within a course create cohesion for mastery learning and reward students for linking content across months of study.

Another approach in planning topics in international conflict management is *assigning long-term projects or news reporting* so that students collect information and report on it to the class over a term or even a year. Each student reads a biography of a peacemaker during a course and presents an individual report at the appropriate chronological time, for example, a report on Martin Luther King when studying the Civil Rights Movement in a U.S. History course. Or perhaps students prepare all year to be a country representative at a simulated United Nations held in May. In their “General Assembly” the students discuss a number of issues, such as where peacekeeping or peace enforcement troops should be sent and ways to finance such operations. Some teachers assign students roles as “reporters” on regional conflicts (the Middle East) or global issues (human rights, conflicts over the environment)



over a school term or course. They “report” on their regions or issues when they are pertinent to topics under study or when current events demand in-depth examination and discussion. Teachers may want to consider all of these approaches as they develop their course goals and plan units.

## TEACHING METHODS FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND PEACE

Another critical step in planning instruction is selecting teaching methods appropriate for the content to be taught. In the remainder of this chapter we describe six categories of teaching methods that are particularly useful for teaching about international conflict and peace. For each category we provide:

1. a rationale for why the methods are especially appropriate for teaching about international conflict and peace,
2. sample methods in the category with examples of how they can be used in a lesson or activity,
3. some advice on planning instruction with these methods.

As you study the categories of methods below, think about the relationship between teaching methods and content as embodied in educational goals. How can methods support educational goals? How can methods increase learning of knowledge, skills, and values in teaching about international conflict management? What are roles of the teacher in these instructional methods? What is expected from the students?

### *Methods That Help Students Experience Cultural Differences and Similarities*

**Rationale.** If students are to understand international conflict and the intricacies of cross-cultural communication and understanding, they must have some first-hand knowledge, experience, and practice in working with people from different cultures within the United States and in other parts of the world. Methods that provide cross-cultural learning can contribute to students’ academic and psychological readiness for understanding and appreciating people whose views or experiences differ from their own.

Students should be encouraged to apply their own cross-cultural learning experiences to understand other peoples' historical and contemporary experiences with conflict, negotiation, cooperation, and other key themes.

Experiential learning can significantly contribute to the development of skills in perspectives consciousness, the ability to recognize that people may perceive an event, issue, or idea in many different ways. Cross-cultural experiences are often the critical bench-marks in changing an individual's world view from only an ethnocentric perspective to a more global perspective.

### Sample Methods.

- Students practice active listening by interviewing people from another culture. *Example:* students interview a Vietnamese immigrant about his perspectives on refugees and political asylum.
- Students work cooperatively with people from another culture toward common goals. *Example:* students work with employees of a local Honda plant to develop a video on cross-cultural understanding and economic cooperation.
- Either as a class or in small groups students discuss issues, topics, or questions with people from other cultures; for *Example:* through pen-pals or electronic mail hookups, students in another country share their concerns about the global environment.
- Students observe people from other cultures. *Example:* students attend a debate on the effects of NAFTA sponsored by the Mexican-American Community Center.
- Students are immersed in another culture. *Example:* students raise money and plan a study tour to visit rainforests in Costa Rica.

**Planning with These Methods.** In order to provide students with cross-cultural experiences, the teacher needs to identify international resources within the school and community. Most schools have students, teachers, or parents who are from other cultures or who have lived in or visited other countries. Many cities have councils on world affairs, religious groups, immigrant organizations, international visitors bureaus, returned Peace Corps volun-

teer organizations, veterans' groups, or exchange organizations that can provide leads in finding appropriate resource people. Most large cities and state capitols have persons who are responsible for encouraging trade and cultural exchanges with other countries. Chambers of commerce are often helpful in identifying local companies or industries with global connections or international expertise. Most colleges and universities have international students who are willing to work with teachers. The federal government funds more than one hundred Title VI area studies centers (the African Studies Program at Indiana University) or international centers in universities across the United States. These programs have mandates to provide outreach services to local schools.

Usually the first step in planning a cross-cultural lesson is lining up the resource people who have the interest, knowledge, and expertise to work with students. The teacher is responsible for planning the activity with the resource person so that the overall goals as well as class procedures are clearly understood. It is critical that the students are prepared to work with a person from another culture and that the teacher help the resource person understand norms of the classroom and expectations of the students.

Cross-cultural experiences can also involve out of school activities such as a field trip to a Chinese exhibit of photographs of political protest or to a South African play dealing with human rights issues sponsored by the African Students Association of a local university. Many schools organize study tours or student exchanges to other countries.

Depending on the goals of the cross-cultural experience, the teacher may want to assess student skills in cross-cultural communication and interaction, student attitudes (such as tolerance and empathy), as well as knowledge objectives. Observations of student interaction and questioning, reflective writing assignments, and follow-up discussions or application projects that ask students to work cross-culturally over longer periods of time can identify progress in learner outcomes. One of the best ways to judge learning in the cross-cultural arena is by examining attitudinal and behavioral changes from those early experiences in the school year to those later in the year.

Resource people from other cultures can also serve as consultants to students as they study international conflict and peace

and compose authentic audiences for exhibitions or performance-based assessment.

### *Methods That Have Students Examine Multiple Perspectives*

**Rationale.** If we want students to understand why international conflicts arise and how they can be managed or resolved, we have to help them recognize the importance of examining multiple perspectives. Most forms of negotiation, peaceful settlement, and cooperation depend upon understanding how other parties interpret historical antecedents and perceive the issues, opportunities, constraints, and alternatives. Perspectives consciousness—skill in identifying other people’s viewpoints and seeing the world through their eyes—is an important part of understanding international conflict and peace.

Although most Americans would agree that there are many viewpoints on issues of international conflict, only recently have social studies educators recognized the benefits of understanding other people’s perspectives. Methods that help students practice skills in perspectives consciousness can open their minds to understanding the views of people in their local community, nation, and world. Perspectives consciousness does not mean one has to like, agree with, or accept other points of view. But it does mean that an appreciation of multiple perspectives is essential for real understanding of the multifaceted nature of managing international conflict. For instance, it is hard to understand economic conflicts among the world’s peoples if one does not realize that many people in developing countries (and other parts of the world) believe the very structure of the present international economic system is such that it causes benefits to pile up in corporate headquarters in the industrialized countries, thus making it necessary for developing countries to seek aid and dooming them to perpetual dependency and poverty.

#### **Sample Methods.**

- Students read literature or watch a play and conclude why people see events or issues differently. *Example:* Students analyze Nigerian and British views of colonialism in Nigeria through selections from Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and Joyce Cary’s *Mister Johnson* and then discuss different perspectives and their historical contexts.