

Unification of Germany

History - IGCSE

Grade 7

Lesson Plan – Session 1

Overview

This lesson plan is designed as a role-play. The role-play is designed to mimic some of the key events that occurred in Germany between the years 1806-1850 and help students identify the events that triggered the thought of unification and the factors that led to its failure.

In the role-play, the teacher plays the role of a dictator while students play the role of people belonging to different kingdoms. Through the session, the teacher acts as a facilitator and supports learning by asking questions and providing information to nudge students in the right direction.

The role-play acts as a teaching aid and helps students better understand the complexity of historical concepts.

Objectives

By participating in the role-play, students will:

- Examine factors that arise a feeling of nationalism.
- Infer how feeling of nationalism can bring together people and make them powerful.
- Evaluate the pros and cons of different governing styles.
- Create an outline that describes the governing style they wish to adopt.
- Analyze the reasons for the failure of their actions.

Activities

The activities suggested for this chapter are group discussions. Students will be divided into groups that represent kingdoms. In the later half of the session, the smaller kingdoms will be combined to work as a single group, while the two larger kingdoms continue to operate as individual groups.

Evaluation

Students will work in groups to create a Cause-and-Effect chart to illustrate the events from the role-play.

Students will use data from the Cause-and-Effect chart to explain the reasons for the failure of their actions.

Teacher's Notes:

Handwritten notes area with horizontal lines for writing.

Begin by dividing (25) students into 5 groups:

- 3 groups comprising 3 students (small kingdoms)
- 1 group comprising 7 students (large kingdom 1)
- 1 group comprising 9 students (large kingdom 2)

Say: We are all lucky because we have been born in this generation. We live in an independent country that follows democracy.

Ask: Based on your prior knowledge, how would you describe democracy?

Note to teacher: Allow children to answer. Then provide the definition of democracy.

Explain: A democratic system means that the citizens of the country elect members from within them to represent them and set systems that will govern the country.

Ask: What does freedom and liberty mean to you?

Note to teacher: Allow children to answer. Write the keywords on the board.

Ask: How will you feel if your freedom was taken away?

Say: Each group here is a kingdom. You don't belong to any country, but you all speak the same language and follow similar culture and traditions.

I am a powerful ruler. I rule many countries that comprise of kingdoms. I see in you an opportunity. I realize that you are all fragmented. Since, I have power, I can bring you all together and rule over you all. So, I invade your territory/region and say, "I will now be your ruler. And from now on everyone in this class MUST follow my rules, else you will be punished. You must work for me and pay me taxes, so I can make my treasury rich."

Ask: Would you like that?

Say: But, I am powerful; I have a large army with me, which I have brought from the other kingdoms that I rule over. Your kingdom has two choices – you can either choose to follow my rules or else fight me in a war.

Ask: Do you want to fight me? Are you powerful enough to defeat me?

Say: Remember, I am powerful.

Note to teacher: If a kingdom wishes to fight you. Tell them that we have fought a war. Since I was more powerful, I defeated you and now

Introduction: 2 minutes

Setting Context: 5 minutes

you have to follow my rules.

Now, I rule over everyone. You will now do as I say. I impose my rules over you. I force you to adopt my culture, my traditions. You begin to lose your identity.

Group Discussion:

Say: As members of the kingdoms, discuss the following points with your group and then present it to the class.

- How do you feel about me ruling over you?
- What will you do?
- Will you just give up and live under my rule?
- Will you protest?
 - Remember, the Simon Go Back movement or the Satyagraha movement or the Anna Hazare fast...what where they about?
- Will you create a strategy and prepare yourselves to defeat me?
- What type of strategy will you plan to defeat me?

Note to teacher: Typically, all groups will express dissatisfaction and hatred towards their ruler. They may talk about conducting different types of protests and may also decide to team together to defeat the ruler. After all groups have made their presentation, explain the concept of nationalism.

Explain: When people feel patriotic towards their culture, tradition or country, they unite together. They get together and conduct protests to express their feelings. And, if required, they combine forces and become powerful and defeat the enemy. Such is the power of nationalism.

- Nationalism led to the unification of Italy.
- Nationalism led to the British being driven out of India.

Say: Great job! You combined all your strengths and defeated me.

- What do you do next?
- Do you continue to operate as fragmented kingdoms or will you unite to form a country?
- Two kingdoms are larger in size and therefore more powerful/resourceful than the rest. Which one of these should be the ruler?

Group Discussion:

Note to teacher: At this time, ask the larger two groups to step outside the class. Provide the following brief to the smaller groups (comprising 3 students).

Say: You are all smaller kingdoms. You know that it makes sense to unite and form a country; otherwise someone else will come to rule over you. You will need the support of one of the powerful/larger kingdoms. But which one should be given power/authority?

Group Discussion & Presentation:
10 minutes

Debrief: 2 minutes

Setting Context: 2 minutes

Group Discussion & Presentation:
10 minutes

Together, discuss the following points:

- What type of governing system would you want for your country?
 - Monarchy, a form of government with a monarch at the head; people have no say or power.
 - Constitutional Monarchy, where a king or queen acts as Head of State. But, the ability to make and pass legislation resides with an elected Parliament, not with the Monarch.
- How will you ensure that you are united and yet not ruled over?
- How will you ensure that people have a say in the day-to-day operations of the country?

Note to teacher: Address the other two groups, individually.

Say: You are one of the larger kingdoms. You are powerful. Your king loves his power. The other kingdoms will come to you with a proposal for unifying all kingdoms. If you accept their proposal, they will choose you to rule over the country. But, you will have to agree to rule by their terms and conditions. You will also have to wage war on the other larger kingdom, defeat them and take them under your reign.

Discuss the following points with your group:

- Should you agree to rule by the terms and conditions of the smaller kingdoms?
- What will you do if the people become more powerful than you?
- Does it make sense to use your resources to defeat the other powerful kingdom?
- After winning the war, you will gain power. But do you want to be just a "Ruling Kingdom, who has no power."
- Should you accept or reject the proposal put forth by the smaller kingdoms?

Note to teacher: Walk around the class as the groups discuss their thoughts. Provide them support, if required.

The objective of the discussion is to have the smaller kingdoms think about electing people to represent their interests in governing the country.

The larger kingdoms should weigh the pros and cons of going to war and must evaluate if the outcome will benefit them or not. The larger kingdoms must decide to reject the proposal presented by the smaller kingdoms.

Note to teacher: After all groups have completed their discussion, ask 1-2 members from the smaller kingdoms to present their thoughts to the larger kingdoms. Ask the larger kingdoms to indicate their decision.

Conclusion:

Ask: Why were you not able to unite into a country?

Discuss the event with your group and create a Cause and Effect chart that explains the following points:

Conclusion: 5 minutes

- The cause – what led you to think of unification?
- The effect – what effect did the cause produce?
- The action – what measures did you take to unify their country?
- The effect – what was the result of your actions?
- The reason – why did you fail?

Use the given template to organize your thoughts and present it to the class.

Explain: Each kingdom wanted things their own way. The smaller kingdoms wanted to protect their interests and therefore wanted representation in the governing of the country. The two powerful kingdoms were not willing to give up their power.

So although, everyone wanted to be united their attempts were fruitless.

Say: What you all have experienced is an event that took place in Germany in the year 1848-1850. We will discuss this event in the next class.

Note to Teacher:

At the end of this session, students will have a clear understanding of what factors triggered thoughts of unification and why their attempt failed.

The next session will focus on discussing the same situation in context to Germany while drawing comparisons to the Cause and Effect chart created.