



VETERANS EDUCATING AMERICA'S STUDENTS

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION POINTS FOR NORTH KOREA:

TEACHERS:

Have students answer the questions below based upon their viewing of the film clips. They should draw evidence from the videos to support their responses.

1. GOVERNMENT:

GOALS: This series of questions is designed to elicit student knowledge about the government of North Korea and the lack of individual freedom in that country.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: North Korea is a Communist state and one-man dictatorship under KIM Jong Un who took over as ruler after his father's death in 2011. Dictators govern without the consent of their people. In totalitarian societies, like North Korea, complete and total power is in the hands of a regime that strictly controls all aspects of life within the country.

FILM CLIPS: Under FACTS AND HISTORY, have students watch the following: **(2:43)**

- TOTALITARIAN STATE (1:19)
- WEAK ECONOMY (:54)
- RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA (:49)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- What country's former government did North Korea use as a model and then how did it evolve?
- Detail one significant way that the government maintains control over its people.
- Does North Korea have a healthy economy? Why or why not?
- Explain North Korea's unusual relationship with China.

2. HISTORY & CONFLICT:

GOALS: This series of questions is designed to encourage students to explore the history of conflict within the Korean Peninsula during the 20th Century, as well as America's role during the Korean War.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: Although Korea was an independent and unified country for much of its history, Japan occupied the territory from the early 1900s until the end of World War II.

FILM CLIPS: Under HISTORY, have students watch the following: **(2:38)**

- WHY ARE THERE TWO KOREAS? (1:00)
- THE KOREAN WAR (1950-1953) (1:38)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- Explain why there is a North Korea and South Korea, and why the two countries have not re-unified.
- What caused the Korean War?
- What two other countries got involved in the Korean War and how was the conflict resolved?



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- Like Korea, has America ever found itself so dramatically divided geographically and politically?

3. HUMAN RIGHTS:

GOAL: This series of questions is designed to promote analysis and critical thinking skills in students about the brutality of the North Korean regime and its impact on the population.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: For decades, North Korean dictators have funneled the country's resources into military efforts and hardware at the expense of citizen well-being. That focus, along with a centralized and mismanaged economy, has forced North Koreans to rely on international humanitarian aid for food.

FILM CLIPS: Under FACTS AND HOT TOPICS, have students watch the following: **(2:01)**

- POVERTY & STARVATION (:35)
- HUMAN RIGHTS (1:07)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- Contrast living conditions in the United States with North Korea.
- Why do you think the majority of North Koreans do not challenge or try to overthrow this extremely brutal government?

4. U.S. & GLOBAL CONCERNS:

GOAL: This series of questions is designed to assess student understanding and thought about the real and perceived threats North Korea poses to the United States and the world.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: North Korea routinely and unpredictably threatens other nations. The regime is preoccupied with the build-up of its armed military forces, weapons development and repeated nuclear device testing.

FILM CLIPS: Under VIDEO and HOT TOPICS, have students watch the following: **(3:21)**

- GLOBAL THREAT (1:35)
- NUCLEAR WEAPONS (:43)
- MILITARY STRENGTH (1:03)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- Which three countries does North Korea threaten most often?
- Why do both North and South Korea share a common mistrust of Japan?
- Do you believe North Korea is a major threat to other countries? Detail your reasoning.
- How would you describe North Korea's military strength?