

Module 1: 1968

Activity 3: The Warsaw Pact Invasion

Compelling question: Does a country ever have a right to invade another one that doesn't operate according to their liking?

Overview: Teachers might use and adapt this activity as a standalone exercise or in conjunction with other Module 1 activities. Also, we encourage you to explore Modules 2, 3, and 4 to design a comprehensive exploration of the 68, 77, 89 project.

As you design your students' learning experiences we suggest:

- Utilize the background resources for Module 1
- Previewing the selected primary and secondary resources
- Explore the instructional supports and selected vocabulary
- Adapt the lesson plans and performance assessments we provided for this activity

Focus: In this activity, students will explore the Warsaw Pact, Soviet influences, and protests.

Primary and Secondary Resources for this Activity

Oral History:

1. [Helena Stossel](#) - This 2 minute clip titled “Warsaw Pact Invasion” retells how Stossel’s family acted to the entrance of Russian tanks into her neighborhood.
2. [Gabriel Levicky](#) - In this 3 minute clip titled “Warsaw Pact Invasion” Levicky recalls early encounters with Russian soldiers under martial law.

Socialism Realised:

3. [Almost Hopeless](#) - This 80 second clip illustrates the reactions of Prague’s citizens to the surprising invasion by the Soviet Union.
4. [Slovak Tank Man](#) - This 1968 photograph by Ladislav Bielik captures a striking image of resistance.

Article from the Winter 2007-2008 Issue of *Slovo*.

5. [“Reform and Repression in 1968” \(Miroslav Neovesky; Slovo 8 v.2\)](#) - Former Czechoslovak broadcaster Miro Neovesky captures the complex chain of events that led from exhilaration to disillusionment during 1968. **(The article is on pages 6 - 11 in the magazine and includes primary source photos).**

Support Resources

[Graphic Organizers:](#) Create free, custom made graphic organizers including T-Charts, Venn Diagrams, Frayer Models and much more.

[Document Analysis Organizers:](#) Use these worksheets — for photos, written documents, artifacts, posters, maps, cartoons, videos, and sound recordings — to teach your students the process of document analysis.

[Socratic Seminar/Discussion Stems:](#) A handout of prompts and scaffolds for students.

[Historical Thinking Prompts:](#) The chart helps demonstrate historical thinking and has sentence frames to support the development of these skills.

[Harvard’s Project Zero Thinking Routines:](#) A routine can be thought of as any procedure, process, or pattern of action that is used facilitate the accomplishment of specific goals or tasks. Explore this collection and use them with the activities.

[Rubric Maker:](#) Easy to use, quick and free rubric tool maker.

Key Vocabulary for this activity:

1. **Wenceslas Square:** A vibrant area of Prague used for large gatherings, demonstrations, and celebrations.
2. **Martial Law:** The exercise of government and military control over citizens.
3. **Atmosphere:** The general tone or mood of a place, event, or situation.
4. **Delegation:** A group of people who act as official representatives.
5. **"Limited sovereignty":** An official Soviet policy that did not permit nations to withdraw from their influence.

Suggested strategies and assessments for this activity.

Compelling question: Does a country ever have a right to invade another one that doesn't operate according to their liking?

Instructional Strategy A: [Town Hall Circle](#)

This teaching strategy mimics the process of a town hall meeting, where community members take the floor to share their perspective on a topic of concern. Using this format, students have the opportunity to share their different perspectives by tapping into and out of the group conversation. Students often come away from this experience with a greater appreciation for how our perspective can limit the facts we have at our disposal and the opinions we hold. By listening to others' ideas, students broaden their understanding of the world in which they live. [\(Full details can be found here\).](#)

Class 1: Preparation - Students engage with the 5 resources provided in this activity. Utilize the questions and commentary provided with the resources as well as the support items provided. As students engage with the resources, remind them that they should be looking for evidence to answer the compelling question.

Class 2: Town Hall Square - The teacher facilitates the activity described above. We suggest the teacher or students utilize a

twitter # (that you design for the class) to tweet highlights of the discussion. This allows students to review the exchange in the future. [\(How to use a twitter # hashtag\)](#)

Be sure to remind them that they should be looking for evidence to answer the compelling question.

Instructional Strategy B: Human Timeline

A Human Timeline activity requires students to learn about a particular event and then line up with peers according to their events' chronology. This strategy uses movement to help students understand and remember the order of events. [\(Full details can be found here\).](#)

Class 1: Human Timeline - Situate the events of 1968 in a larger Cold War context. Assign each student one event from the period that you are highlighting. Each event should be described along with the date it occurred. Whether students work individually or in pairs, here is an example of instructions you can provide. Have students research their event including the main outcomes of it.

When completed, invite students to line up in the order of their events. Then, have students present their events. After each event is presented, students can suggest possible causes of the event and can pose questions about what happened and why. These questions can be posted on the board for students to answer later but should always reconnect to the compelling question.

Class 2: Engage with resources - Now that students have developed a broader context, have students engage with the activity's resources. Students should record their main takeaways from each resource using a strategy like "one minute sentence" that has students record all observations and questions from each resource. Once completed, students should share their notes with classmates using the strategy ["Give one, get one"](#) or a similar processing activity.

Suggested Performance Assessments: Now that students have engaged with the documents and have shared their insights with their classmates, it is time for them to collect their thoughts and answer the compelling question. It is important to connect the historical content to the present. In this sense, the historical content informs students about the past and apply that knowledge to the present.

Your decision on what students should produce will relate to the skills you think they should develop to succeed in the future.

- 1) Design a “just war” matrix that describes their stance on the compelling question. Students can share their view with another class and discuss using an online discussion board.
- 2) Write an essay that answers the compelling question.

Focusing on the image [Slovak Tank Man](#), students create a digital portfolio of similar images that can be used to frame their answer to the compelling question.