



**Literacy Design
Collaborative**

Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain"

★ TASK ★ LADDER

by Justin R. Bailey

Throughout the “Cold War”, the Iron Curtain symbolized the ideological conflict and physical boundary dividing Europe. Winston Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" address on March 5, 1946, at Westminster College, helped popularize the term “iron curtain” across the world. This module is intended to allow student’s to analyze Churchill’s speech and determine what he believed was the dividing ideological and physical boundaries that separated a post-WWII Europe.

This module is designed for a deep dive into a seminal text of the twentieth century. It is organized to take roughly eight classroom hours or ten fifty-minute periods. It was created in the Summer 2013 Social Studies Design Jam, and is shared with special thanks to the Kentucky Education Association for the use of their Lexington facilities.

GRADES

9 - 12

DISCIPLINE

 **Social
Studies**

COURSE

 **US
History**

PACING

 **N/A**

Section 1: What Task?

Teaching Task

Task Template 23 - Informational or Explanatory

According to Winston Churchill, how did the two sides of the "Iron Curtain" differ from one another? After reading Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" Speech, write an essay in which you compare the two sides separated by the "Iron Curtain". Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s).

Standards

College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards

D2.Civ.5.9-12

Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.

D2.Civ.8.9-12

Evaluate social and political systems in different contexts, times, and places, that promote civic virtues and enact democratic principles.

Focus

D2.Geo.2.9-12

Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics.

D2.Geo.5.9-12

Evaluate how political and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.

D2.His.5.9-12

Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D4.2.9-12

Construct explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence (linear or non-linear), examples, and details with significant and pertinent information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanation given its purpose (e.g., cause and effect, chronological, procedural, technical).

Focus

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

Focus

RH.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing

political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.

RH.9-10.7

Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

WHST.9-10.2.a

Focus

Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

WHST.9-10.2.b

Focus

Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

WHST.9-10.2.f

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

WHST.9-10.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

WHST.9-10.9

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Core Content for Social Studies Assessment

SS-HS-5.3.5

Students will explain the rise of both the United States and the Soviet Union to superpower status following World War II, the subsequent development of the Cold War, and the formation of new nations in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and evaluate the impact of these events on the global community.

Texts

 **Winston Churchill's March 5, 1946 "Sinews of Peace" Speech; Often referred to as the "Iron Curtain" Speech (copy attached)**

Student Work Rubric - Informational or Explanatory Task - Grades 9-12

	Emerging	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Advanced
	1	2	3	4
Controlling Idea	Presents a general or unclear controlling idea.	Presents a clear controlling idea that addresses the prompt , with an uneven focus .	Presents and maintains a clear, specific controlling idea that addresses all aspects of the prompt and takes into account the complexity of the topic .	Presents and maintains a precise, substantive controlling idea that addresses all aspects of the prompt, takes into account the complexity of the topic and, where appropriate, acknowledges gaps in evidence or information .
Selection & Citation of Evidence	Includes minimal details from sources. Sources are used without citation.	Includes details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that are relevant to the controlling idea . Inconsistently cites sources.	Includes details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that support the controlling and supporting ideas . Consistently cites sources with minor formatting errors .	Includes well-chosen details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that fully support the controlling and supporting ideas. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format .
Development / Explanation of Sources	Explanation of ideas and source material is irrelevant, incomplete, or inaccurate.	Explains ideas and source material to support the controlling idea , with some incomplete reasoning or explanations .	Accurately explains ideas and source material and how they support the controlling idea.	Thoroughly and accurately explains ideas and source material to support and develop the controlling idea.
Organization	Lacks an evident structure. Makes unclear connections among ideas, concepts, and information.	Groups ideas and uses transitions to develop the controlling idea, with some lapses in coherence or organization .	Groups and sequences ideas to develop a cohesive explanation . Uses transitions to clarify the relationships among complex ideas, concepts, and information .	Groups and sequences ideas in a logical progression in which ideas build to create a unified whole . Uses varied transitions to clarify the precise relationships among complex ideas, concepts, and information.
Conventions	Major errors in standard English conventions interfere with the clarity of the writing. Language or tone is inappropriate.	Errors in standard English conventions sometimes interfere with the clarity of the writing. Uses language and tone that are sometimes inappropriate for the audience and purpose.	Consistently applies standard English conventions; minor errors , while noticeable, do not interfere with the clarity of the writing. Uses language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose .	Consistently applies standard English conventions, with few errors . Demonstrates varied syntax and precise word choice . Consistently uses language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose.
Content Understanding (Generic)	Attempts to include disciplinary content in explanation or argument but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.	Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.	Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.	Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

Background for Students

Throughout the “Cold War”, the Iron Curtain symbolized the ideological conflict and physical boundary dividing Europe. Winston Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" address on March 5, 1946, at Westminster College, helped popularize the term “iron curtain.”

Extension

Not provided

Section 2: What Skills?

Preparing for the Task

ISSUE ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect task content to earlier knowledge and experience.

TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the teaching task prompt.

SCORING EXPECTATIONS: Ability to understand and explain what will count as a strong response to the teaching task prompt.

Reading Process

DETERMINING CENTRAL IDEAS: Ability to determine central ideas or information of primary or secondary source.

EXTRACTING EVIDENCE: Ability to draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

UNDERSTANDING WORDS AND PHRASES: Ability to determine meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

INTEGRATING INFORMATION: Ability to integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

SUMMARIZING: Ability to provide accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

Transition to Writing

CONNECTING IDEAS: Ability to begin linking what has been learned in reading to what will be shared in writing.

Writing Process

ORGANIZATION: Ability to organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.

INTRODUCTION: Ability to introduce a topic.

DEVELOPMENT: Ability to develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CONCLUSION: Ability to provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

REWRITING: Ability to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Section 3: What Instruction?

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
Preparing for the Task				
30 mins	ISSUE ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect task content to earlier knowledge and experience.	QUICK-WRITE In a quick write, write your first reaction to the question: Do ideological obstacles sometimes pose bigger barriers than actual physical obstacles? E.g. Do cultural norms restrict our actions more than physical obstacles?	None	Discuss student responses.
30 mins	TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the teaching task prompt.	QUICK WRITE Share your first thoughts and first questions about the task.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link this task to earlier class • Full task will be introduced and discussed (including timetable). • Content (Task should follow content that introduces the advent of the Cold War). • Clarify timetable and support plans for the task.
10 mins	SCORING EXPECTATIONS: Ability to understand and explain what will count as a strong response to the teaching task prompt.	DISCUSSION In your own words, what are the important features of a proficient response to this prompt?	Student work meets expectations if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restates some key features of the rubric. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass out individual rubric to each student. • Identify or invite students to identify key features of rubric. • Create a classroom list.
Reading Process				
1 hr	DETERMINING CENTRAL IDEAS: Ability to determine central ideas or information of primary or secondary source.	NOTE-TAKING Perform an initial and complete read of the "Sinews of Peace." In your second reading of the speech, do "pencil-in-hand" reading to highlight key phrases. Keep the task in mind: How did the two sides of the "iron curtain" differ from one another?	Student product meets expectations if pencil-in-hand annotations are used to summarize, emphasize, paraphrase, question, and relate to the text as well as make connections to task prompt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will silently read the text (Sinews of Peace) independently as a whole. Students will then re-read the text with a pencil-in-hand approach in response to the task question: How did the two sides of the "iron curtain" differ from one another? • Pencil-in-hand reading is just another term for "annotating." Students should underline or highlight key phrases, identify parts of the text that raises questions, and make notes in the margin (especially in regards to the guiding question). A short introduction to annotating a text may be needed with inexperienced students. Modeling may be needed. • Student's copy of the text should have margins that allow for notes or questioning. • Student should also be instructed to paraphrase difficult sections of the text into ordinary language. • This question should compel students to examine Churchill's view of British and American ideologies in relation to those of many Eastern European countries (e.g. Soviet Union).

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<p>15 mins</p>	<p>EXTRACTING EVIDENCE: Ability to draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>	<p>NOTE-TAKING Listen to excerpts of the speech being read aloud, making notes about any point of interests that you did not identify in your close reading.</p>	<p>Student work meets expectations if: Notes contain "points of interest" and supporting details and/or evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio of the speech can be found online in numerous locations including YouTube. • The length of the audio means that instructors will most likely just want to highlight specific sections of the speech.
<p>20 mins</p>	<p>UNDERSTANDING WORDS AND PHRASES: Ability to determine meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.</p>	<p>LIST In your notes, list words and phrases essential to the text (Sinews of Peace). Add definitions, and (if appropriate) notes on connotation in this context. Use the context of the word in the text to help create your definitions.</p>	<p>Student product meets expectations if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists appropriate phrases. • Provides accurate definitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to share definitions of terms that others overlooked or misunderstood. • Teachers may need to provide direct instruction to work through a key phrase most students missed. • This strategy should be more than just using a dictionary to define terms. Students should use the context of the words to create their definitions. • Think-Pair-Share strategy could be used in this setting.
<p>25 mins</p>	<p>INTEGRATING INFORMATION: Ability to integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.</p>	<p>CLOSE READING WITH MAPS Use the text and an atlas to complete the activity.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On a map of Europe, draw and label the "iron curtain" that extends across Europe. <p>Churchill: "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. "</p> <p>Additional Information: The Iron Curtain divided Germany, and ran along the borders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania (all on the eastern side).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Locate and label Greece on your map. 3. Use your map and text to answer the following questions: <p>A) On which side of the curtain does Greece fall?</p> <p>B) Why does Churchill identify Greece with those countries west of the "iron curtain"?</p> <p>C) Prior Knowledge: Why does Churchill focus</p>	<p>Student product meets expectations if it:</p> <p>Reflects reasonable inferences from the map study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlabeled or labeled maps of Europe may be used for this activity with similar inferences. Labeled maps may remove the need for atlases. • Class Discussion should end this activity so that all students have discussed and recognized the following: 1) Although Greece lies on the eastern side of the "curtain" Churchill identifies it with western states because of similar ideologies: "Greece with its immortal glories - is free to decide its future at an election." Prior knowledge may also allow students to identify Athens as the "birthplace of democracy."

		<p>specifically on Athens, Greece and make mention of its immortal glories?</p> <p>Text: "Athens alone - Greece with its immortal glories - is free to decide its future at an election."</p>		
50 mins	<p>SUMMARIZING: Ability to provide accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE Using your close-read of the text, address the following questions:</p> <p>1) What are the specific contrasting views of ideology that Churchill discusses? Use specific quotes from the text.</p> <p>2) Does Churchill believe that the two sides of the curtain differ on not just their ideologies but also on their approach for spreading and protecting those ideologies?</p> <p>For example, contrast the following statements:</p> <p>A) The Soviet Union desires "the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines. [...] There is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for military weakness."</p> <p>B) Churchill: "I repulse the idea that a new war is inevitable."</p> <p>3) Does Churchill's approach for containing other's ideologies ever contradict the title of his speech: The Sinews of Peace?</p> <p>E.g. "Our difficulties and dangers will not be removed by closing our eyes to them [...] [or] by a policy of appeasement."</p> <p>4) Identify other underlying or subtle</p>	<p>Student product meets expectations if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers are accurate and complete. • Key ideas are explained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In questions one, students should begin to compare/contrast the ideologies of democracy and communism between the two sides using specific quotes from the text. • Venn Diagrams may be used as organizers for constructed responses. • In questions two-four, students should begin to compare/contrast other aspects of the two sides of the curtain.

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		contrasts between the two sides.		
Transition to Writing				
1 hr	CONNECTING IDEAS: Ability to begin linking what has been learned in reading to what will be shared in writing.	ELEVATOR SPEECHES On March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill and President Harry Truman turned a college gymnasium in Midwest America into a world stage. Now, it is your time to deliver a speech. However, your stage will be a handful of people on an elevator. Plan and deliver a quick overview of what you have learned, deliverable in 90 seconds (the length of an elevator ride).	Student work meets expectations if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It compares/contrasts the two sides of the "Iron Curtain." It fits in the allotted time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: This will allow students to talk about their research before beginning to write. This allows students an opportunity to organize their thoughts, make sense of the text, and get feedback from their audience. Many students need time to think and talk about their research before they can write. Pushing them to get a draft done without allowing for this often leads to plagiarism. Elevator speeches are great opportunities to transition to the writing phase. Allow students five minutes to make notes in preparation for their speeches. Depending on the student's speech, it may be time to do additional research, refine the topic, or begin drafting the essay.
Writing Process				
20 mins	ORGANIZATION: Ability to organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.	OUTLINE Make a list of three to five major issues that would make good paragraph topics. Number them.	Work meets expectations if paragraph topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect to teaching task. Relate to the evidence students have studied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite students to compare their lists in small groups/ Assure students that they can change their topics if they have an Aha! As they talk with classmates.
30 mins	ORGANIZATION: Ability to organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.	ANNOTATED NOTES Hunt through your notes, finding the three to five best pieces of evidence for each of your paragraphs.	Work meets expectations if annotations identify support for each paragraph.	As needed, invite individual students to change paragraph ideas if they find that a first idea lacks evidence. Let the whole class hear you congratulate the first student who switches on spotting the problem and then share the solution.
20 mins	INTRODUCTION: Ability to introduce a topic.	OPENING PARAGRAPH Write an opening paragraph that includes a controlling idea and sequences the key points you plan to make in your composition.	Work meets expectations if it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides direct answer to main prompt requirements. Establishes a controlling idea. Identifies key points that will shape be developed later in the piece. 	In pairs, students share their opening paragraphs and discuss ways to improve.
30 mins	DEVELOPMENT: Ability to develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient	BODY PARAGRAPHS Working from your notes, create a paragraph in which you have one topic	Work meets expectations if each paragraph:	Not Provided

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	facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.	sentence that shares your main point and multiple other sentences that use evidence from your notes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects the student's plan for topics. Includes information from students' notes. 	
20 mins	CONCLUSION: Ability to provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	CONCLUSION Write a final paragraph that sums up your essay.	Not Provided	Not Provided
20 mins	REWRITING: Ability to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	FEEDBACK FOR A CLASSMATE Read a classmate's essay, noting five strong points and three ways you think could be stronger. Be helpful!	Work meets expectations if feedback is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly stated Helpfully stated. 	Before students begin their reviews, have some discussion about what kinds of feedback is most helpful to the person who receives it.
30 mins	REWRITING: Ability to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	FINAL DRAFT After considering the feedback, revise your essay	None/Scoring with LDC Rubric.	Not Provided

Instructional Resources

No resources specified

Section 4: What Results?

Student Work Samples

No resources specified

Teacher Reflection

The exact Kentucky State Standards for this module are as follows:

D2.Civ.5.9-12. Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.

D2.Civ.8.9-12. Evaluate social and political systems in different contexts, times, and places, that promote civic virtues and enact democratic principles.

D2.Geo.2.9-12. Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics.

D2.Geo.5.9-12. Evaluate how political and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.

D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D4.4.9-12. Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.

All Attachments

📄 Winston Churchill's March 5, 1946 "Sinews of Peace" Speech; Often referred to as the "Iron Curtain" Speech (copy attached) : <https://s ldc.org/u/2qhf9bgs9tsw6zxjndu3kl2v>