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Concept Formation Lesson Plan

**Context:**

Title: Imperialism Concept Formation Lesson  
Grade/Class: World History I  
Length: 60 minutes  
Topic: Imperial Actions across Time

Overview: As World History students have begun to learn about classical empires, a new concept presents itself. While the older settlements like Jericho and Aleppo lacked the infrastructure and population to articulate ambitious expansion projects, larger political units began to express imperial ambitions. Going forward, students will study an array of empires that all extended imperially in different ways. This lesson will ensure that students are able to understand which empires take imperial actions. They will not be asked to define a *state* as “imperial” or “not imperial” but rather will be given different scenarios and assess whether the *action taken* is imperialist. I draw this distinction because few modern states are totally bent on imperial adventures, but many states engage in imperialism. It will be more useful, then, for students to understand how to identify an imperial action.

Background Information: Ancient Rome offers examples of imperial actions (and imperialism). This lesson requires a little background information in case students are unfamiliar with this empire (although it is being taught after they finish a unit on Ancient Rome). Before we start, I will give a brief lecture to give all the students the basic context they will need about the example. This will include information about its geographic location, the time period its existence, and its at its height.

Rationale: Concept formation lessons are designed to teach students in such a way about key topics in history so that when they encounter them in the future, they will have a reasonably easy time recognizing the concept in a slightly different context. For 9<sup>th</sup> grade students of world history, imperialism is an excellent choice because it is a foundational principle of state action. When using concept formation, students are asked to identify attributes of imperialism, then examples of imperialism, and finally non-examples of imperialism. This will help them to apply the concept to other periods of history not specifically highlighted in the lesson as well as to situations in their own lives.

**Objectives:**

Academic:

- 1) Students will be able to define imperialism.
- 2) Students will list the attributes of imperialism.
- 3) The student understands the causes and consequences of the unification of the Mediterranean basin under Roman rule THEREFORE THE STUDENT IS ABLE TO

Assess ways in which imperial rule over a vast area transformed Roman society, economy, and culture. (NCHS 3A)

- 4) The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Rome from about 700 B.C. (B.C.E.) to 500 A.D. (C.E.) in terms of its impact on Western civilization by assessing the roles of Julius and Augustus Caesar in the collapse of the Republic and the rise of imperial monarchs. (SOL 6f)

#### Intellectual

- 1) Students will demonstrate an understanding of imperial actions by completing a worksheet that enumerates the concept's attributes.
- 2) Students will demonstrate an understanding of imperial actions by verbally differentiating between examples and non-examples of imperial actions.

#### **Assessment:**

To determine to what extent students have learned what is most important for the concept, I will assess them in five ways. First, I will have them complete a worksheet because the task is familiar for them and some students prefer to articulate their knowledge in that medium. Second, I will ask for whole-class verbal responses about examples and non-examples of the concept. Third, I will ask students to write about a case in their previous studies that reflects the new concept they have learned. Fourth, I will present a tricky list of examples and non-examples for students to consider and verbally indicate which are of imperialism and which are not. Finally, I will ask students to write a correction of a non-example on the back of the worksheet I presented them.

#### **Content and Instructional Strategies:**

1. Attributes of Imperialism: (1) State policy of (2) extending its power through (3) direct territorial control of another area of the world and (4) by controlling that region's economic activity. *Definition:* (from Webster) the policy, practice, or advocacy of extending the power and dominion of a nation especially by direct territorial acquisitions or by gaining indirect control over the political or economic life of other areas; *broadly* : the extension or imposition of power, authority, or influence.
2. Hook *15 minutes:*

First, I will introduce the lesson by explaining to students that we are going to learn an important concept in world history. Because they have just studied the Persian Empire, I will present them with a map of modern day Iran. I will inform them that Iranians are considered to be ethnically Persian. I will ask if Iran is the same size as the ancient Persian Empire. So that they can better visualize the difference in size, I will give them a map of the Middle East and ask them to draw an outline of the two different sizes of the states. This will get them to consider the physical impact of imperial policies as well as reinforce some lessons they have already learned earlier in the year. When they finish drawing, I will ask them to consider the concept that may have caused the Persian Empire to extend over such a vast area of land while modern Iran is comparatively so small. Did

the Persian Empire control territory formally owned by other leaders? How did the Persians take these territories?

3. Data-Retrieval Chart and Example Analysis *10 minutes*:
  - A) After they are done drawing in the hook activity and we have had a brief discussion, I will ask them to pair up.
  - B) I will hand out copies of the data-retrieval chart.
  - C) After explaining how to fill out the chart, I will do the first example with them.
  - D) I will ask them to complete the rest of the examples with their partner.
  - E) During this step, I will circulate the room and evaluate whether students are identifying the information I want. If they are not, we will review the chart before moving on.
4. Example Analysis *5 minutes*:
  - A) When the students appear to have finished their charts, I will ask them what the differences between the examples are.
  - B) I will encourage them to list even obvious differences (geographic location, time, countries involved, etc.)
  - C) Next, we will discuss the similarities. If they have understood the examples, they will report the critical attributes listed above.
  - D) They may offer other similarities, which I will also record on the smart board along with the critical attributes.
  - E) Once they have exhausted their ideas for similarities, I will circle the critical attributes.
5. Defining and Labeling the Concept *5 minutes*:
  - A) Back with their partners, I will ask students to discuss the similarities and differences in the concept with the intention of forming a definition of the concept we are discussing.
  - B) Next, I will have them record their definition on the reverse side of the data-retrieval chart handout.
  - C) Finally, I will ask them to consider a word for the concept. If they are having trouble figuring out what the concept is, I will reveal that it is “imperialism.”
6. Classifying *20 minutes*:
  - A) Type 1: Example and Non-Example
  - B) I will present two PowerPoint slides that include the following information and ask students to identify which is an example and which is a non-example of imperialism.
    - i. Example: After fighting two wars with the Carthaginian Empire over control of Sicily and the Italian Peninsula, the Roman Republic wanted vengeance. In 149 BCE, Roman troops sailed across the Mediterranean Sea and sacked Carthage. They systematically burned the city to the ground. After destroying the city, the Romans annexed the territory once controlled by Carthage and enslaved the civilians still living after the war. Now controlling the territory, Rome used the fertile North African farmland to feed its people.
    - ii. Non-Example: In the aftermath of World War II, several European states began the process of creating the European Union. In 1957, six European countries signed a treaty to create a European coal company and to limit tariffs between nations. As time went on, more countries joined the union and

eventually they established a unified currency. Each country operates its own political organizations and has relative economic freedom. While the Union makes binding resolutions that member countries must follow, states are allowed to withdraw from the Union if they would like.

C) Type 3: Create / Find an example

- i. Using their notebooks (which has all their previous work pasted inside), I will ask students to find examples of imperialism from former lessons. They will be able to pick from China, India, Persia, Greece, and the River Valley civilizations for examples. They will then share their findings with a partner.

D) Type 2: Mixed list of examples / non-examples

- i. I will explain to students that I am going to present a PowerPoint of different examples and non-examples. I will establish that *one person* will be called on to differentiate between an example and non-example.
- ii. First example: In 1874, the Black Hills in South Dakota were owned by Lakota Indians. However, there was a report that the Indians had discovered gold on their land and many Americans rushed to investigate whether they could make money from the Indians' land. Within two years, American gold prospectors claimed all the land once owned by the Indians in the region. At first, the American government tried to stop settlers from moving into the region, but eventually allowed them to freely invade Lakota territory. This sparked a war that the United States won. As a result, Americans now controlled the region that the Lakota owned and few Indians remained independent economic actors.
- iii. Second example: On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1820 the territory of Maine was admitted as a state into the United States. Like the other states, it now had equal representation in the United States government. The people living in Maine were granted the legal ability to vote, and control of their economy was held by the Maine State Legislature.
- iv. Third example: In 2001, the United States invaded Afghanistan to topple the Taliban government which allowed the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda to operate freely in its territory. This organization was responsible for the attack on the United States on 9/11. Once the government was completely destroyed, the United States attempted to rebuild the Afghan infrastructure. With military oversight, various economic projects have been completed. The Afghan government recently had democratic elections and the new leader has control of an armed force that is being trained to prevent a future invasion by the Taliban or Al-Qaeda. While the country is still in shambles, the United States is planning on withdrawing its troops by the end of 2014.
- v. Fourth example: In February 1519, the Spanish conquistadors (conquerors) commenced their campaign to control the region owned by the Aztec Empire in modern day Mexico. After being devastated by disease and economic hardships, the Aztec empire was weak. Led by Hernán Cortés, the conquistadors wreaked havoc in the Aztec empire and took control of its government after toppling its capital in 1521. Though they intended to maintain the empire's economic system, soon the conquistadors demanded too

many resources of the natives. They dismantled the Aztecs' economic system and enslaved the native people.

E) Type 4: Correct a non-example

- i. To save time, I will review the four example listed above and ensure that the students have recorded which examples are of imperialism and which are not. For the two examples above that are not imperial, I will have the students correct them so that they are imperial.

7. Conclusion *5 minutes*:

- A) Once students have completed their non-example, we will turn back to our original examination of the Persian Empire.
- B) I will ask students to, with a partner, reflect on how the Persian Empire was an imperial state.
- C) This process should highlight a final time the foundational importance of understanding imperialism for students as they continue to assess the empires they will learn about in World History I.

**Resources:**

- 1) Smart board
- 2) Chalk board (for clarifying confusing words)
- 3) 30 data-retrieval worksheets
- 4) 30 maps of the Persian empire
- 5) PowerPoint presentation

**Differentiation**

Students will inevitably take this lesson at different paces, but I think this plan is well equipped to challenge students throughout class. Some students will discover what the concept is very early on in the lesson, but they may not know all the fine facets of an imperial action. Additionally, the four types listed above give students a good opportunity to challenge themselves to find unique examples of imperialism or creative ways to change a non-example to an example. At the same time, the language of the examples is simple enough that most students will be able to understand the readings quite easily. If some students in my class need the examples read aloud, I think there is enough time to allow that. Additionally, because the four types are designed mostly to reinforce rather than introduce new information, if students are moving slowly or are frustrated, I can easily cut out parts of the lesson without necessarily damaging their understanding of the concept.

**Adaptations:**

One of the students in my class has a 504 that affects the lesson plan. Her 504 calls for preferential seating, that she may miss class, and that she has a permanent pass to see the nurse. While I have not observed her needing any of these three adaptations, if this occurs during my lesson, I will have a copy of my lecture and the worksheet documents for her to review when she is able to complete her classwork.

**Reflection:**

The class that I am planning on teaching this lesson to has fairly consistent management issues with my CT. However, I think that this lesson is engaging because it allows them to leave the rote memorization pedagogy demanded by the frameworks of World History I. They have a chance to actually review world history – except this time thematically instead of chronologically. I think this will prove an interesting experience for them. I worry about several aspects of the lesson. First, they have never been asked by my CT to think in this way. I am deliberately starting the lesson with a lecture and drawing because this is a comfortable activity for them. I think this will be a good way for them to understand how this lesson is asking them to reach beyond their typical expectations and consider the concept of imperialism more deeply than their typical understanding of prior topics in world history. This may intrigue some students, but it will certainly frustrate others. I understand that I will have to help and manage those students directly so that their frustration does not spread to other students. This frustration will likely coalesce in one of two ways. 1) Some students will shut down and pretend to sleep and 2) some students will attempt to talk with friends about topics other than imperialism. I will use classroom management techniques to mitigate these actions. With the clear instructions for each section, I think the lesson will run smoothly if I am able to manage the frustration of some students.

Example:	What are the two countries involved?	Which country is the winner of the conflict?	Does the winning country control the other country's territory?	Does the winning country control the other country's economy?
<p>In 1931, Japan invaded a region in northern China known as Manchuria. The island nation feared that it did not have the natural resources to support its own people so it aimed to annex the fertile region. After a quick invasion in which countless atrocities were committed, Japan controlled Manchuria and began extracting economic resources from the territory.</p>				
<p>Around 50 BCE, Rome prepared to invade Britain. The Britons were rebelling against paying tribute to the Romans, so Rome resolved to conquer the island rather than deal diplomatically any longer. By the end of the long invasion led by Claudius the Britain island was controlled by Rome and Roman governors were appointed to extract taxes from the local economy.</p>				
<p>Because of trade routes to India, South Africa offered a strategic position for the British Empire. In the early 1800s, the British expanded their small port colonies in South Africa. They began to invade Africans' lands. When rare minerals were discovered in various parts of South Africa, the British began to recruit Africans to work in the mines in oppressive conditions for very little pay. By the end of the 1800s, the British Empire controlled most of modern South Africa.</p>				

