

Barbara Marks
Watertown High School
Watertown, TN

Unit: The Spanish American War

Lesson Title: Spanish terrorists or Yellow Journalism

Grade Level: 11

Era: 6- The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900)

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: Did the Spanish really set explosives inside the Maine?

Lesson Time: 45 minutes

Curriculum Standards:

- 1.0-Understand how industrial development affected the United States culture
- 1.0-Understand how the influx of immigrants after 1880 affected United States' culture
- 2.0-Investigate how the modernization of agriculture and capitalist industrial development affected the economy of the United States
- 2.0-Understand the economic disparity between farmers and wage earners as compared to industrial capitalists.
- 3.0-Recognize the geographic areas in which industrialism occurred
- 3.0-Recognize the areas affected by westward expansion of the US
- 4.0-Understand the effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the US politics
- 4.0-Understand the political issues and problems that affected the US during the last half of the 19th century.

Technology used and how: Students will use computers to access the web. Students will be directed to *The Granger Collection* to view a variety of pictures about the Battleship Maine. Pictures include various pictures of the Maine up to and including the destruction of the ship through an explosion.

Instructional strategies: Students will look at original pictures of the Maine including a picture that was on the front page of the New York newspaper *The World*. Students will be directed to *The Granger Collection*. The pictures are primary sources. After the students view *The Granger Collection* Maine pictures, they will be given an 8X10 size picture of the exploding Maine as it was shown in *The Granger Collection* on the front page of *The World*.

Students will be placed in groups of three or five to discuss the front-page picture after they have viewed pictures at the website. They will be asked to discuss what they see. The groups will decide if they think what they see gives enough information about what

happened that day. Then each individual in the group will work to create a poster on which they will list the conclusions they have gleaned through their discussion. After all groups have shared, they will again go to the computer to Google U.S. Navy Battleships-USS Maine. After reading information at the Navy website groups will continue discussions about what they think really caused the explosion of the Maine. Students will discuss the idea of Yellow Journalism and how events are often reported to the public in a manner that will inflame them about an event. Each student will create a bumper sticker that may have been created at the time about the explosion of the Battleship Maine. Bumper stickers will be displayed in the classroom.

Students will visit the Volunteer Voices site and link to the Tennessee Museum.

<http://www.tnmuseum.org/exhibitions/military.htm>

Students will be asked to find the answer to this question. What American ship fired the first shot in the Spanish -American War? The answer is the USS Nashville. If possible a field trip will be arranged to the museum so that students can view the deck gun that fired the first shot of the Spanish American War. Students will google Wikipedia and click on the USS Nashville, a gunboat that saw action during the Spanish-American War. Students will view a picture of the USS Nashville and read about the vessel.

Students have participated in cooperative learning with The Battleship Maine project. Through this method of learning the students have created team goals and also worked individually to access information. Every team member brings a different perspective to the group discussion. According to Dr. Spencer Kagan, students who have participated in cooperative learning have shown positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation and simultaneous interaction.

All of this project will be done in class and the computer lab. Students will have additional reading assignments about the Spanish American War. This activity will help them to understand how the world was changing as the United States struggled onto the world stage.

Assessment:

Students will be evaluated by use of a test. There will be at least one question on a chapter test about Yellow Journalism and the explosion of The Battleship Maine. The test will be given after an intensive study of the chapter of the United States History textbook that includes the study of The Spanish American War. In addition to learning more about this time period it would be my hope that the students would enjoy such a project.