

Extended Controversial Issue Lesson Plan

The Pearl Harbor Controversy

**Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to
December 7, 1941?**



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Extended Controversial Issue Discussion Lesson Plan

Lesson Title: The Pearl Harbor Controversy

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Appropriate for Grade Level: 8-12

US History Standard(s)/Applicable CCSS(s):

H1.[6-8].11 Explain the effects of WWI and WWII on social and cultural life in Nevada and the United States.

H.4.[6-8].8 Discuss the effects of World War II on American economic and political policies.

CCSS:Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS:Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS: Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Discussion Questions: Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Lesson Grabber:

1. Students should answer and write on the Pearl Harbor Scenario worksheet. Students can then share answers with class or small groups.
2. Show students clip from WWII documentary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Clip shows the confusion and miscommunication that took place prior to the attack. Clip can be accessed from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nt13c3olXkU>

Engagement Strategy: *Structured Academic Controversy.*

1. Show the video “The Pearl Harbor Controversy” Video can be accessed in segments from You Tube or ordered from the History Channel. You Tube:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yBd-gZvvsK>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HESlrW-tYSA&feature=relmfu>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yl23uHg0QFI&feature=relmfu>
The video is from the History Channel and examines some of the evidence of the controversy surrounding the Pearl Harbor attack. Have students read through and sort the evidence from the Pearl Harbor Controversy worksheet after viewing the video.
2. Have students read through the documents. Students can read together, on their own, or read as a whole class. Have students answer the questions with each document.
 - a. Students will be placed into groups of 4. The students will be placed on 2 teams.
 - b. Team 1 students will argue that FDR **did not** know about the Pearl Harbor attack prior to December 7, 1941.
 - c. Team 2 students will argue that FDR **did** know about the Pearl Harbor attack prior to December 7, 1941.

3. Students will use the Conspiracy organizer to collect data for their side. Students will site the specific document and line numbers.
4. Team 1 will present their evidence to Team 2. Team 2 will collect evidence and present their argument back to Team 1.
5. Team 2 will present their evident to Team 1. Team 1 will collect evidence and present their argument back to Team 2.
6. Students will then complete the Final Scenario Writing Assignment.

Student Readings (list):

- Video clip from a documentary about the attack on Pearl Harbor. Shows the confusion and miscommunications before and during the attack. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nt13c3oIXkU>
- FDR Controversy video available from the History Channel or in segments from You Tube.
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yBd-qZvvsK>
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HESlrW-tYSA&feature=relmfu>
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yI23uHg0QFI&feature=relmfu>
- Document 1 Navy Department Memo
- Document 2 War Department Memo
- Document 3 Dorn Report Investigations
- Document 4 Message from Roosevelt, December 6, 1941
- Document 5 Editorial WW2 Entry was inevitable

Total Time Needed: 5 class periods of approximately 50 minutes each.

Lesson Outline:

Time Frame (e.g. 15 minutes)	What is the teacher doing?	What are students doing?
Day 1 10-15 minutes	Pass out Pearl Harbor Controversy Scenario worksheet. Read and allow students to respond to the questions.	Students answer questions on the worksheet the Pearl Harbor Controversy. When finished students can share their answers with the class or with a partner.
Day 1 10 minutes	Show the video clip from the WWII documentary about the attack on Pearl Harbor.	Watch the video clip to give students further background knowledge of the day of the attack.
Day 1 10 minutes	Read through the Background knowledge. Students can read on their own first.	Students read and get background knowledge about the day Pearl Harbor was attacked.
Day 2 45 minutes	Teacher shows students the video "Pearl Harbor Controversy" Video	Students receive a copy of the worksheet and while watching the video they can highlight the quotes from the video. Students can highlight those that show FDR knew "pink" and highlight those that show FDR did not know about the attack, "yellow". Students can also jot notes during the video on the worksheet.
Day 2	Partner students up to sort quotes into	Students sort their highlighted quotes

5-10 minutes	those that show FDR knew about the attack ahead of time and those that did not.	into the two categories indicated on the "Pearl Harbor Controversy" video worksheet.
Day 3 50 minutes	Teacher leads students through the documents. Students discuss and ask questions as necessary.	Students read through documents first, and then the teacher reads through the documents. Students annotate as necessary to help with understanding. Students answer the document questions at the bottom of each document.
Day 4 25 minutes	Divide students into 4. Then divide the 4 students into 2 teams. Team 1 and Team 2. Assign Team 1 to discuss and find evidence that shows that FDR did know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941. Assign Team 2 to discuss and find evidence that shows FDR did not know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941. Have students complete the graphic organizer that shows documentary evidence of FDR knowing and not knowing about the attack ahead of time.	Students work together on their teams to find evidence in the documents to support each side of the question. Students will site evidence and write document numbers and line numbers on their organizer.
Day 4 10 minutes	Students from Team 1 will now present their evidence, citing documents and lines as necessary to Team 2. Students will use the Structured Academic Controversy format.	Team 1 discusses the evidence that shows FDR did know about the attack prior to December 7, 1941. Team 2 writes down information on their graphic organizer sheet.
Day 4 10 minutes	Students from Team 2 will now present their evidence, citing documents and lines as necessary to Team 1.	Team 2 discusses the evidence that shows FDR did NOT know about the attack prior to December 7, 1941. Team 1 writes down information on their graphic organizer sheet.
Day 4 5 minutes	Teacher gives the instructions that students should discuss and find points that they agree on. They should also discuss additional questions that they may have.	Students discuss and find points that they agree on. They write these on their graphic organizer. They also discuss and find questions they still may have.
Day 5 20-30 minutes	Teacher reads through the scenario writing assignment.	Students write on a claim they make from the discussion question.

Description of Lesson Assessment: Students will be assessed during when they write their final paragraph. Students will follow the guided organizer, and will be graded according to the rubric.

How will students reflect on the process and their learning? Students will reflect on the Structured Academic Controversy discussion format in a written summary question.

Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Background Information

Tensions between the United States and Japan had begun to become more serious in the 1930's when Japan invaded Manchuria. Japan continued to expand into China over the decade, while the United States began to send supplies to China to assist in the war. In 1940, Japan invaded French Indochina, and the U.S. ceased all shipments, but continued to send oil. However, the relationship was growing tenuous. In July 1941, the U.S. did cease all shipments of oil to Japan. Japan began to plan an attack to discourage U.S. Naval interference as it continued to expand into resource rich areas.

The Japanese began preparing for the attack many months prior to December 7, 1941. On November 26, the Japanese began their journey across the Pacific. The attack force was set to happen in waves. The residents and military personnel were not prepared for this attack that happened on an early Sunday morning. The attack focused on the battleships, but also concentrated efforts on destroying cruisers, vessels, and destroyer ships. The military was greatly unprepared for the attack, and could do little to respond. Over 2,400 casualties were lost that day. President Roosevelt officially asked Congress for a declaration of war on December 8, 1941.

Pearl Harbor Controversy Scenario

You are part of the committee appointed to investigate the evidence surrounding the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Before the investigation begins you must tell the information you already know to the committee. Please write as many facts you know about the attack on Pearl Harbor below:

The committee also must decide if you are a good candidate to aid the investigation. Answer the following question. Do you think FDR knew about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941? Why or Why not?

Pearl Harbor Controversy Video

- *The intelligence agencies distrusted each other and didn't share information that could have prevented an attack*
- *The "Bomb Plot Message" a decoded Japanese cable of October 9, 1941, specifically asks for the position of warships and airplanes guarding Pearl Harbor.*
- *The committee (that investigated the attack on Pearl Harbor) lays much of the blame on the commanders at Pearl Harbor and largely exonerates FDR and his top advisors.*
- *Robert Stinnet's findings suggest that the U.S. also cracked the operational codes of the Japanese Navy. This proves that FDR's top military advisors must have known when and where the attack would occur.*
- *The bomb plot message, the cracking of the secret Japanese Naval operations code, the breaking of radio silence by the attack fleet; these 3 crucial pieces of evidence, according to some researchers, suggest that highly placed members of FDR's administration knew in advance of the attack on Pearl Harbor.*
- *David Kennedy, "The war against Japan was a distraction, and it actually depleted resources from the main theater of conflict, which was Europe. It propels us to understand how absolutely outrageously impossible is the notion that there was a conspiracy."*

1. *What is the Bomb Plot Message and what did it do?*

2. *Who was to blame for the attack on Pearl Harbor?*

3. *What evidence shows that FDR's administration knew in advance of the attack on Pearl Harbor?*

Sort the quotes into the following categories:

<i>FDR knew about the attack on Pearl Harbor in advance.</i>	<i>FDR did not know about the attack on Pearl Harbor in advance.</i>

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Navy Department Memo

Document 1

1 Chances of favorable outcome of negotiations with Japan very doubtful. This situation
2 coupled with statements of Japanese Government and movements of their
3 naval and military forces indicate in our opinion that a surprise aggressive
4 movement in any direction including attack on Philippines or Guam is a possibility.
5 Chief of Staff has seen this dispatch concurs and requests action addressees to
6 inform senior Army officers their areas. Utmost secrecy necessary in order
7 not to complicate an already tense situation or precipitate Japanese action.
8 Guam will be informed separately.”

Precipitate- to bring
about suddenly

From: Navy Department To: CinCUS, Pearl Harbor Date: 24 Nov. 41

1. What date was this memo written?
2. What indicates that a surprise aggressive movement was a possibility?
3. Where do they believe an attack may happen?
4. What may happen if the message is not kept secret?

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War Department Memo

Document 2

1 War Department Msg No. 472 " Negotiations with Japan appear to be
2 terminated to all practical purposes with only the barest possibilities that
3 the Japanese Government might come back and offer to continue. Japanese
4 future action unpredictable but hostile action possible at any moment. If hostilities
5 cannot, repeat cannot be avoided the United States desires that Japan commit the
6 first overt act. This policy should not, repeat not, be construed as restricting you
7 to a course of action that might jeopardize your defense. Prior to hostile Japanese
8 action you are directed to undertake such reconnaissance and other measures as you
9 deem necessary but these measures should not be carried out so as not, repeat not,
10 to alarm civil population or disclose intent. Report measures taken. Should hostilities
11 occur you will carry out the tasks assigned in Rainbow Five [the Army's basic war plan]
12 so far as they pertain to Japan. Limit dissemination of this highly secret information
13 to minimum essential officers.

Reconnaissance-survey
of the area for
information

Dissemination-
spreading, giving out

From: War Department, Washington To: Army Hq. Hawaii Date: 27 Nov. 1941

1. What is the date of this memo?
2. What does the United States want to happen if hostilities cannot be avoided?
3. What should happen if hostilities occur?
4. According to the memo, why should this information be limited?

Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Dorn Report Investigations

Document 3

1 “Various conspiracy theories [90] have been advanced, but no evidence has
2 been offered to support those theories. Rather, the evidence of the
3 handling of these messages in Washington reveals some ineptitude, some
4 unwarranted assumptions and misestimates, limited coordination,
5 ambiguous language, and lack of clarification and follow-up at higher levels.”

6 Together, these characteristics resulted in failure by senior Army and
7 Navy leadership to appreciate fully and to convey to the commanders in
8 Hawaii the sense of focus and urgency that those intercepts should have
9 engendered. The Service reports and the Joint Congressional Committee
10 properly recognized and criticized those failures as errors of judgment
11 which must take their place alongside the errors of judgment by
12 Admiral Kimmel and General Short.

13 Advocates for Admiral Kimmel and General Short argue, in effect, that
14 the failure of Washington officials to provide the critical intercepts
15 to the Hawaiian commanders excuses any errors made in Hawaii. It does
16 not. No war-fighting commander ever has enough information or enough
17 resources. It is the job of the commander to carry out his or her
18 mission as best he or she can with the information and resources
19 available to him or her. Indeed, placing exclusive reliance on
20 Washington for tactical as well as strategic warning of air attack
21 was an act of misplaced faith.

22 In summary, this review of the Pearl Harbor investigations and of the
23 available evidence provides no reason to reverse the conclusions of the
24 Services and the Joint Congressional Committee that Admiral Kimmel and
25 General Short made errors of judgment in the use of the information and
26 the employment of the forces available to them.

Ambiguous- having
several possible
meanings.

Engendered-caused

Source: The Dorn Report, Part III-Page 16, investigating the attack on Pearl Harbor

1. What does the handling of the messages reveal?
2. What failures did the senior Army and Navy leadership commit?
3. What is the job of the commander?
4. What was the judgment of the Joint Congressional Committee?

Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Message from President Roosevelt

Document 4

1 Almost a century ago the President of the United States addressed to
2 the Emperor of Japan a message extending an offer of friendship of the
3 people of the United States to the people of Japan. That offer was accepted, and in
4 the long period of unbroken peace and friendship which has followed,
5 our respective nations, through the virtues of their peoples and the wisdom
6 of their rulers have prospered and have substantially helped humanity.
7 Only in situations of extraordinary importance to our two countries need I
8 address to Your Majesty messages on matters of state. I feel I should now so
9 address you because of the deep and far-reaching emergency which appears to be in
10 formation.
11 Developments are occurring in the Pacific area which threaten to deprive each
12 of our nations and all humanity of the beneficial influence of the long peace
13 between our two countries. Those developments contain tragic possibilities.
14 The people of the United States, believing in peace and in the right of nations
15 to live and let live, have eagerly watched the conversations between our two
16 Governments during these past months. We have hoped for a termination of the
17 present conflict between Japan and China. We have hoped that a peace of the Pacific
18 could be consummated in such a way that nationalities of many diverse peoples
19 could exist side by side without fear of invasion; that unbearable burdens of
20 armaments could be lifted for them all; and that all peoples would resume
21 commerce without discrimination against or in favor of any nation.
22 I am certain that it will be clear to Your Majesty, as it is to me, that in seeking
23 these great objectives both Japan and the United States should agree to eliminate
24 any form of military threat. This seemed essential to the attainment of the high
25 objectives.

Source: Message from President Roosevelt to the Emperor of Japan, December 6, 1941.

Consummated-
completed

Armaments-arms
and equipment for
a military

1. What happened almost a century ago between the two nations?
2. In which situations does President Roosevelt feel it necessary to address the Majesty (Japan)?
3. Which conflict is the United States concerned about? What does the United States want to happen?
4. Is there any indication of the impending attack? If so, what?
5. What military threat does Roosevelt seem to be suggesting?

Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Document 5 U.S. entry into WW2 was inevitable

1 Would the United States have entered the war if Pearl Harbor had not been
2 attacked? Every indication is that it would. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had
3 already engaged in a shooting war with German U-boats in the Atlantic and sent
4 tremendous amounts of Lend-Lease aid to Great Britain. Could even the staunchest
5 isolationist have stood by and ignored the atrocities occurring on such a massive
6 scale in Nazi-occupied Europe? As for the Japanese, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto
7 had been against war with the United States...Yamamoto knew the risks of war
8 with the United States, but saw the sneak attack as the only option for Japan to win
9 a negotiated peace and retain its empire in the Far East. Had Yamamoto been
10 allowed to resign and the Japanese government continued to pursue a policy of
11 expansion in Asia and the Pacific, there is little doubt that the harsh exchange of
12 diplomatic notes between the Japanese and U.S. government that occurred right up
13 to December 7 would have ceased and that war would have been declared. It is
14 likely that the Japanese would have struck first in the Philippines or Malaya.

Atrocities-cruel acts

Source: WW2 History Early Winter 2012 Michael E. Haskew Editorial p. 6

1. What question is this edition asking and answering?
2. What acts had already occurred that indicated that the United States would have entered the war?
3. According to the editorial, how did Yamamoto feel about the attack?
4. What does the author feel would have happened eventually?

Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Cite evidence from the documents for each side of the question. Be sure to include the document and the line numbers in your citations.

Roosevelt did NOT know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941.	Roosevelt DID know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941.

Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?

Organize the Evidence

Roosevelt DID know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941	Roosevelt DID NOT know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941
Evidence: Document:	Evidence: Document:
Evidence: Document:	Evidence: Document:
Evidence: Document:	Evidence: Document:
Evidence: Document:	Evidence: Document:

We can agree that:

We have more questions about:

Final Writing Assignment

As part of the committee investigating the attack on Pearl Harbor, you have seen a variety of evidence. Based on this evidence answer the question, ***Did Roosevelt know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941?*** Support your claim with evidence from the documents. Use the organizer to organize your paragraph prior to writing.

	Exceeds	Meets	Approaches	Below	Inadequate Progress
Claim	A claim was written correctly. You have argued one side of the question clearly.	A claim was mostly written correctly. You have mostly argued one side of the question.	A claim was written. You have argued both sides of the questions it is not evident what argument you are making.	A claim may have been written. It is not evident what argument you are making.	No claim has been written.
Evidence	You have several pieces of evidence (4 or more) to support your claim. Your evidence is organized and clear.	You have 3 pieces of evidence to support your claim. Your evidence is mostly organized.	You have only 2 pieces of evidence to support your claim. Your evidence may not be organized.	You have only 1 piece of evidence to support your claim. Evidence may not be organized.	You have no evidence to support your claim.

Student Reflection

- 1. Which part of the discussion lesson did you learn the most from? (reading the documents, video, or the discussion)?**
- 2. Why do you think that part of the lesson was most helpful to your learning?**
- 3. What were the positive parts of the discussion process? Why?**
- 4. What were negative parts of the discussion process? Why?**

Did FDR Know About The Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor Before December 7?

Vallarie Larson

Over 60 years after the attack on Pearl Harbor, controversy continues to surround the events of that day. Prior to December 7, 1941, relations had deteriorated between Japan and the United States. Japan had invaded China and French Indochina in its efforts to continue its imperialistic ambitions of dominance of Eastern Asia. This, along with other events, prompted the United States to embargo all oil exports and other exports as well as freeze Japanese assets. Japan was growing more desperate and would not give in to an agreement with the United States. Negotiations between the United States and Japan broke down as Japan began planning the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Questions arise whether Roosevelt had deliberately provoked the attack with Japan in order to get into World War 2. Additionally, the larger controversial question is whether Roosevelt had prior knowledge of the attack and chose to disregard it. Historical papers outline deliberate steps that were planned and implemented to elicit the overt action that catapulted American into the war. Conspiracy theories have arisen; however, many historians have analyzed these theories and the documents that support these theories. The conspiracy theories began to be revealed within days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the subsequent years that followed the attack, historians continue to discuss the events surrounding that infamous day.

One of the most well-known researchers on the controversy surrounding Pearl Harbor is Robert Stinnett. Newly declassified documents serve as a basis for his research surrounding the Pearl Harbor attack. He begins by citing a memo sent by Lieutenant Commander McCollum on October 7, 1940. The memo outlines eight actions that McCollum advocates would lead to a Japanese attack on the United States. These actions include making arrangements with Britain and Holland for use of bases, giving China aid, sending submarines to the Orient, keeping the U.S. fleet in Hawaii, to embargo all trade with Japan and insisting that the Dutch refuse to grant Japanese demands. According to Stinnett, these actions were systematically put into effect by FDR deliberately provoking the war. (Stinnett)

The strongest piece of evidence that FDR knew that the Japanese may attack came when in November of 1941, Yamamoto sent radio messages to his Pearl Harbor force which was en route to Pearl Harbor. These messages were intercepted and the Japanese were located by American communication intelligence units according to Stinnett. The President also received these intelligence reports. In his book, Stinnett also reveals that the cryptanalysts discovered most of Japan's Hawaii force. The cryptanalysts then forwarded the messages to Pearl Harbor, which were then ignored by Admiral Kimmel. Additionally, Stinnett states that President Roosevelt in a meeting with his cabinet announced on November 26 that America might be in a war with Japan in the next few days. (Stinnett)

Roosevelt did not adhere to the advice of the commanding officers in charge of the Pacific fleet in Hawaii, seemingly putting the fleet in danger. Slackman in his book, Target: Pearl Harbor, discusses how Admiral Richardson who commanded the Pacific fleet in Hawaii,

objected to keeping the Pacific fleet in Hawaii due to the dangers of the port's location among other reasons. He argued with President Roosevelt and was soon dismissed of his command and Admiral Kimmel replaced him. Admiral Kimmel was also not pleased with the Pacific fleet being stationed at Pearl Harbor. However, he continued his command and was in command during the December 7, 1941 attack. (Slackman)

Doenecke, systematically refutes the evidence presented by Stinnett in his research. He cites evidence presented by David Kahn. He accuses Stinnett of making assumptions. Among the assumptions he indicates Stinnett made was exaggerating the impact of the McCollum memo, and assuming that the messages that were received from the Japanese before the attack were deciphered before the attack.(Doenecke) Drea, in his review of Stinnett's findings, points out that Japan had changed their codebook on December 1, 1941, making it impossible for U.S. code breakers to decipher. (Drea)

In his review essay, Melosi, does not accept the idea that the Roosevelt administration deliberately tried to cover up events leading to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Instead he argues that it was a foreign policy issue. He also cites the work of Prange in his book, At Dawn We Slept. He states that, "Pearl Harbor resulted from a vast combination of interrelated, complicated and strange historical factors...bountiful human errors of great variety, false assumption, fallacious views, a vast store of intelligence badly handled."(Melosi)

The conspiracy theories have existed since the attack. Steven Rabe in reviewing the research of Hans L. Trefousse, found that there was, "no conclusive evidence to substantiate any charge of conspiracy". He continues stating, "President Roosevelt did not force the

Japanese into war. His coercive measures were intended to curb Japanese expansionism". He also points out that none of the intercepted messages indicate that there would be an attack on any military base. (Rabe)

Since the attack on December 7, 1941 historians have continued to address the conspiracy issue, however, no hard evidence seems to prove that FDR did know about the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to December 7, 1941. Like any crisis situation, misunderstandings and misinterpretations seem to have resulted. Most evidence does support the idea that FDR did want to enter the war. However, it seems that looking at the evidence and documents does not indicate, as many historians have suggested, that a conspiracy did occur. Investigative committees have determined that the real problem seems to be developing a better and more efficient way to deliver intelligence when similar situations occur.

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