



Teacher Material

Managing Conflict in Europe in times of Change: 1648 - 1945

Learning activity Plan

The history of the first part of the 20th century Europe can seem like one long string of wars. Yet much effort was put into trying to bring stability to Europe and to manage conflict in this period. Aims and efforts like this were not new. Long before 1900 there had been varied attempts to try to manage conflict. How far back in time does the story start? The authors of this timeline have decided to start the search in 1648. They could have started earlier, they could have started later. The timeline in this section is just one interpretation of the long search for stability. You will find here activities for older / more knowledgeable students and activities for the younger and less knowledgeable. Optional and alternative activities are suggested that shift the focus of the activity enquiry and provide flexibility depending on the time you have to devote to this topic.

Preparation task for students – can be used by all students, with the teacher adapting the timeline if necessary (see above)

This task could be set for homework before the lesson. It is designed to help students to start working with the timeline 1648-1945; in particular the strand called 'events'. Their focus in the stage of the activity is 'how' Europeans have managed conflict. It is your choice if you give the students a simplified version of the timeline, or if they use the version online.

Give your students the two-sided activity sheet called: 'In what different ways have Europeans tried to manage conflict in Europe 1648 – 1945?' (This is called the 'preparation timeline' in the rest of the activity description). On one side of it they have a simple timeline of key events. On the other side of it they have a key of different ways that Europeans have tried to manage conflict (balancing power, making treaties, seeking to dominate the continent etc.). They have to colour code the key and then follow the instruction which are:

On the other side of this page you have a timeline of key events in the story of managing conflict in Europe 1648 – 1945.

1. Research these events using the timeline at: <http://www.tiki-toki.com/timeline/entry/444726/Managing-conflict-in-Europe-in-times-of-change/>
2. Decide for each event how you will colour-code it. That is, if you think an event is an example of making treaties, put that colour by the event. If you think it is an example of both treaties and alliances, then put both colours by the event. When you have completed this part of the task, you should have a timeline that is colour-coded to show different ways that conflict was managed in Europe.
3. It is now time to study your timeline and to ask yourself some questions. Which ways of managing conflict have been used the most? How much would you say that ways of managing conflict have stayed the same in

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**TEACHER NOTE 1:**

You might also want your students to indicate on their timeline when Europe was mainly at peace and when there was widespread war.

Europe? When were there times of change? How differently was conflict managed in Europe in 1648 as opposed to 1945? Can you suggest reasons for the differences? [TEACHER NOTE 1.](#)

An alternative way of getting students to interrogate the timeline in a preparatory phase:

Instead of using the timeline worksheet provided, you could divide up the timeline research by asking one student (or pair) to search for examples of alliances, another to search for examples of treaties and so on. You could then start the lesson by piloting all of these findings on different coloured post-it notes on a large pre-prepared timeline on your classroom wall. Students would be able to see where events were examples of more than one way of managing conflict. You could then ask students the part 3 questions: Which ways of managing conflict have been used most? When were there times of change? How differently was conflict managed in Europe in 1648 as opposed to 1945? Can you suggest reasons for the differences? (This is called the 'preparatory timeline' in the rest of the activity description).

Main Activity – Version for older and more knowledgeable students

Using the timeline once again, ask your students to investigate the question: 'What caused Europeans to try to manage conflict in different ways?'. This question is asking them to engage with thinking about the points of change and to account for why conflict management was handled differently at different points of time. Sometimes it was because a new leader emerged with a desire to dominate (such as Napoleon, or Hitler), but sometimes change was due to different ideas about the world (for example, the rise of nationalism and the rise of democracy).

Students will need to use the 'ideas' and 'wider context' strands, as well as 'events'. Give them time to research in pairs and encourage them to bring in their existing knowledge to events.

Then put students into groups of four and ask them to discuss the question. They should be challenged to produce an oral, or written summary of their groups consensual view on the question: 'What caused Europeans to try to manage conflict in different ways?'

Summary activity ideas – version for older or more knowledgeable students.

A suggested summary activity would be to ask students to write a briefing paper for a politician in 1945. This politician has a foreign policy brief and is attending European negotiations, but the politician has no knowledge of European history. What would be the key briefing points the students would want to make to be sure that the politician is informed enough about the topic 'managing conflict in Europe'? As part of their briefing students should cover the following points"

- Why was conflict management in a particular way at a particular time?
- What was the impact of the attempt to manage conflict?
- What makes Europeans adopt new/alternative ways of managing conflict?



A variation on this summary activity would be to ask some students to advise a politician in 1815, others a politician in 1919 and the others a politician in 1945. Students could then peer review each other's' briefings and identify the similarities and differences.

Optional summary activity for the older / more knowledgeable.

If you have time and/or you want to focus your students specifically upon an aspect of historical thinking, you could use a summary activity that considers the timeline as one interpretation of the past. You could pose the question: Does it matter when the timeline begins and ends? The creator of the timeline chose to start in 1648 in order to explain the search for stability in Europe. Ask your students to discuss and feedback how differently they would start the timeline. Would you understand the position of Europe in 1945 if the timeline began in 1878? They could write an E-mail to the creator of the timeline explaining why they agree or disagree with the decision to start the timeline in 1648, and/or what they would add or miss out in the story of how Europeans have tried to manage conflict 1648-1945. The purpose of this activity is to develop students' understanding that all chronologies are constructed; they are all interpretations.

Main activity – version for younger and less knowledgeable students

By doing the preparation timeline (either on their own, in pairs, or as a whole class – see above) your students have engaged with *how* conflict was managed in Europe. This part of the activity moves them onto considering *why* ways of managing conflict changed in Europe 1648 -1945. Print of the resources called 'Changed in Europe' There are five changes described with questions underneath. The changes are:

- Monarchs and their interests
- Enlightenment ideas
- The growth of democracy
- The rise of the nation state
- The shock of the World Wars and the rise of the USA

These five changes are summarised from the 'ideas' and 'wider context' strands of the timeline resource. Stick the five reasons up on the walls around your classroom. There is also a page that reminds students of the different ways that conflict has been managed to remind them of the thinking behind their preparation timeline. You may also want to display this. Give students post-it notes. Ask them to work their way from change to change. They are promoted to write a sentence on their post-it about each change. The post-its should be stuck around the preparation timeline. The aim is for students to see that the changes impact upon the way that European people try to manage conflict

To conclude this section, put your students into small groups (it is best to have mixed groups for this). Ask them to stand up. Tell them that they have to agree an answer to the question "Why did ways of managing conflict change in Europe 1648 – 1945?" they cannot sit down until they have all agreed on a form of words to answer this question and they are sure that every person in the room can say and understand the answer. If a group sits down, ask the most quiet or the least able student for the answer. If they cannot give it, get the group to stand up again until the whole group is confident.



Summary activity idea – version for younger and less knowledgeable students

The timeline 1648-1945 resource is an interpretation. The author chose to start the timeline in 1648 and selected specific events, ideas and context points to include. Another author would have produced a different timeline. It is important, even for young students, to understand that we select from the past when we produce timelines, displays, textbooks, historical novels, academic works, museum displays, national curricula for schools etc. There is not one right interpretation of the past. There are debates about more or less valid interpretations, using evidence to substantiate discussions. This can be a tricky concept for our younger students to understand. This summary activity is designed to help them think about the timeline as an interpretation.

Students return to their preparation timeline and think about the five changes of Europe. They may also want to refer to the full timeline 1648- 1945. Tell them to produce a timeline for a school textbook. The title of the timeline is, 'Managing conflict in Europe in times of Change'. The editors of the textbook have said that the timeline must only contain ten points. These can be events and/or changes. Which ten points are they going to choose and why? To decide this, they need to discuss, which are the most important events and changes that must be included, and why? What is the overall learning message that they want someone to get from reading their timeline? When they have discussed and agreed these ideas, then they are ready to produce their timelines. They need to be prepared to justify their thinking orally, or on paper, as you prefer.

To conclude: ask students how and why the ways we manage conflict in Europe today differ from those we find in the past.

Teacher guidance

Managing Conflict in Europe in times of Change: 1648 - 1945

What is the historical research that accompanies this activity?

The historical resource is a timeline called 'Managing conflict in Europe in times of change: 1648 – 1945'. It is a multi-stranded timeline. That means it has three pathways through the time period:

1. Events – a selection of the key events between 1648 – 1945 has been presented.
2. Ideas – some of the ideas that influenced people at specific times and across the period.
3. The wider context – this is given to help students learn about other events and changes that were relevant to the management of conflict in Europe.

As a timeline it is a historical interpretation. That is, it is constructed to give meaning to the time period. Its purpose is to provide students with



comprehensive (but not exhaustive) information so that they can engage with the complexity of the period and use it to make their own inquiries.

The timeline is presented in two formats. There is an embedded format that can be viewed in 2D or 3D. There is also an excel spreadsheet of the same information. It is therefore possible for you, as the teacher who knows your students best, to adapt the timeline to suit their learning needs. This might be to focus upon a specific aspect. It might also be to reduce the amount of text, or to focus on one pathway. The excel version could be cut up and used in parts of the classroom. This version also has the key points highlighted in bold text. We have provided a complex version that can be cut down as necessary, but that will also help teachers to improve their knowledge of a broad sweep of European history.

We have presented this timeline as part of a unit on the European Union. However, the timeline will also be useful for other units of study in the history classroom. For example, students engaged with a study of the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War One may use the timeline to set that conference in context. It is possible to add in more country-specific information to the Excel version of the timeline. You might like your students to use this timeline at the end of a study topic, when you feel that they have a good amount of knowledge and that this timeline will enable them to join up their historical knowledge and to think about it over a longer sweep of time.

There are also other resources available for you”

- ‘Changes in Europe’ – how to use this is explained in the section ‘main activity for younger and less knowledgeable students’.
- Glossary of key terms.
- Maps of Europe are not provided due to copyright issues. However, students can find that weak geographical knowledge hinders their historical understanding. You may want to display maps of Europe in 1648, 1815, the 1920s and 1945. These are widely available on line via an image search.