

Revolutions and Reforms: A Case Study of Iran

Created by Ryan Hauck, Glacier Peak HS in Snohomish, WA

September 2015

GRADE LEVEL	BACKGROUND
9-12	<p>The Islamic Cultural Revolution of 1979 had a significant impact on Iranian society. As citizens became increasingly frustrated and disenchanted with the decisions made by the Shah's government, a movement began to support a revolution against the current regime. Led by the Ayatollah Khomeini, a religious figure living in exile, Iran's population supported a revolution to oust the Shah due to corruption, authoritarian rule, economic issues, and policies restricting religious expression. In this lesson, students will explore the reasons why the Islamic Revolution occurred, its effect on Iranian society, and analyze how revolutions represent a distinct form of political change as opposed to reforms.</p> <p>As the Shah of Iran grew increasingly authoritarian, corruption plagued the political system, and policies restricted religious expression, citizens of Iran moved toward changing the regime through revolution. The Shah's secular regime utilized the secret police, SAVAK, to enforce compliance with government mandates. Nationalist groups who were concerned about the Westernization of Iranian society gradually developed support against the regime and sought political change.</p> <p>When the Ayatollah Khomeini, known as the Supreme Leader, returned to Iran, a theocracy was created and new statutes were implemented. He urged citizens to support the new political structure which placed the highest power in the hands of a religious figure under the principle of jurist guardianship. This revolution is perceived to be unique as it was not based around economic crisis, but cultural reform. Although supported widely by Iranian citizens, many ended up leaving the country for the West during the 1980s.</p>
KEY QUESTIONS	
<p>What are the causes of revolutions and what impact do they have on society?</p> <p>How are revolutions different from reforms as an example of political change?</p> <p>How did the Islamic Cultural Revolutions of 1979 affect Iran politically, socially, and economically?</p>	
CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS	
<p>Revolutions and their causes</p> <p>Political change</p> <p>Iran and theocracy</p> <p>History of revolution from a comparative perspective</p>	
COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS	
<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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 science</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.</p>	

GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

Investigate the world

Recognize diverse perspectives

Communicate ideas effectively

DOCUMENTS

Ayatollah Khomeini Speech

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1979khom1.asp>

'Remembering Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution'

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=111944123>

'The 1979 Iranian Revolution: A Personal Story'

<https://itdawnedonme.wordpress.com/2009/06/13/the-iranian-revolution-a-personal-story/>

'1978: One Last Fling in Iran Before the Revolution'

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/iran-blog/2015/feb/04/sp-amerians-in-iran-eve-1979-revolution>

'Iranian Revolution: Your memories'

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7879434.stm

'From Shah to Supreme Leader: What the Iranian Revolution Revealed'

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/shah-supreme-leader>

KEY TERMS

Islamic Cultural Revolution (1980-1987): a period following the Iranian Revolution when the academia of Iran was purged of Western and non-Islamic influences to bring it in line with the revolutionary and political Islam.

Theocracy: a form of government in which God is recognized as the supreme civil ruler and God's laws are interpreted by ecclesiastical authorities like priests.

Reform: to make changes in order to improve.

Political Change: when rulers in a country lose power or when the type of governance in the country changes.

SAVAK: (Organization of Intelligence and National Security) The secret police, domestic security and intelligence service established by Iran's Reza Shah with the help of the USA's Central Intelligence Agency.

Reza Shah: The Shah of Iran from 1941 - 1979, who maintained a pro-western foreign policy and fostered economic development in Iran.

Ayatollah Khomeini: founder and supreme religious leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979.

PRE-LEARNING ACTIVITY

Materials

Student composition book or notebook

Images of the Iranian Revolution (see handout/links)

Procedure

Brainstorming Activity: Ask students to define the concept "revolution" in their own words and come up with examples of revolutions they have heard of. Have students share their responses with a partner (think, pair, share) and then as a large group. Write student responses on the board as you discuss the concept.

Ask students the question: Why do you think revolutions occur?

Show images of the Iranian Revolution to students – What do they see?

ACTIVITY

Materials

Personal stories from the Iranian Revolution

BBC Video – Islamic Revolution (10 Minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s5pRsCWW9k>

Procedure

1. Break students into groups of three and provide them with one of the primary source documents on the Iranian Revolution of 1979. These documents present different perspectives on the Revolution, from a speech by Ayatollah Khomeini, articulating why the Revolution is necessary, to individual stories from those affected by efforts to oust the Shah. These readings will provide students with diverse perspectives on the Revolution and help them to understand the variety of opinions present in Iranian society.
2. In each group, students will utilize literacy strategies (highlighting key points, writing questions in the margin, identifying points of view) to analyze the reading. Each student will then write one statement synthesizing the reading. Upon completion of the reading, have students share their conclusions from each reading with the class.
3. Have students watch the video clip of the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979. Students should identify causes of the Revolution and look for different perspectives. At the conclusion of the video, discuss student ideas with the class (focus on the essential question: What events and decisions led to revolution?)
4. Cubing Activity (literacy strategy): Based on class discussions, readings, and video clip, have students complete the cubing chart (see handout). Students process the concept of “revolution” based on their previous learning. This is a great way for students to break down a concept. Have students share their “cube” with a partner. Then, have students share ideas as a large group.
5. Comparing “revolution” to “reform” as a method of “political change.” Ask students “how do you think revolution is different from a reform?” Ask students to identify different kinds of reforms in our country, such as health care reform, education reform, economic reform, etc. Emphasize to students the difference between initiating specific policies to address specific issues as compared to complete regime change. Ask students: What would lead to revolution versus reform?
6. Additional Activity: Have students compose a poem or visual (poster, graffiti art, propaganda piece) that represents key ideas from the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The poem could be written from the perspective of someone for or against the revolution. The visual could advocate support for the revolution or support for the current regime. Have students attempt to imagine as though they are one of the key stakeholders during the Revolution as they complete the activity.
7. Give students the opportunity to share their work with the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Option 1

Have students compare and contrast the Islamic Revolution in Iran with other revolutions in world history (for example, the American or French Revolution). What similarities or differences exist? You may also give students the opportunity to compare the revolution in Iran to more contemporary movements for change, such as the Arab Spring or the movement for democracy in Hong Kong. Students could write a compare and contrast paper examining the concept of revolution and applying it to two distinct contexts. Students could also explain the consequences of each revolution.

Option 2

Students could research and analyze revolutionary songs. After analyzing the lyrics of the songs, students could compose their own and share them with the class.

Option 3

Students could compare and contrast revolutionary figures, using the Ayatollah Khomeini as a starting point. What characteristics do these revolutionary leaders have in common? What are their personalities like? What strategies do they use? To what extent are they able to influence citizens to support their cause? After completing research on two or three different revolutionary figures, create a collage of the characteristics that help to define these personalities.

Modern History Sourcebook:

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1900-89):

The Uprising of Khurdad 15, 1979

Born Ruhollah Hendi, the Ayatollah (the word signifies religious leader) took the name in 1930. He taught in the major Shi'ite theological school at Qom, but was exiled for his opposition to the government of the Shah. Living in Paris after 1978 he orchestrated the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran. He became the effective political and religious leader of the country until his death in 1989.

Those who are ignorant must be guided to a correct understanding. We must say to them: "You who imagine that something can be achieved in Iran by some means other than Islam, you who suppose that something other than Islam overthrew the Shah's regime, you who believe non-Islamic elements played a role--study the matter carefully. Look at the tombstones of those who gave their lives in the movement of Khurdad 15. If you can find a single tombstone belonging to one of the non-Islamic elements, it will mean they played a role. And if, among the tombstones of the Islamic elements, you can find a single tombstone belonging to someone from the upper echelons of society, it will mean that they too played a role. But you will not find a single tombstone belonging to either of those groups. All the tombstones belong to Muslims from the lower echelons of society: peasants, workers, tradesmen, committed religious scholars. Those who imagine that some force other than Islam could shatter the great barrier of tyranny are mistaken. As for those who oppose us because of their opposition to Islam, we must cure them by means of guidance, if it is at all possible; otherwise, we will destroy these agents of foreign powers with the same fist that destroyed the Shah's regime.

Your opponents, oppressed people, have never suffered. In the time of the *taghut*, they never suffered because either they were in agreement with the regime and loyal to it, or they kept silent. Now you have spread the banquet of freedom in front of them and they have sat down to eat. Xenomaniacs, people infatuated with the West, empty people, people with no content! Come to your senses; do not try to westernize everything you have! Look at the West, and see who the people are in the West that present themselves as champions of human rights and what their aims are. Is it human rights they really care about, or the rights of the superpowers? What they really want to secure are the rights of the superpowers. Our jurists should not follow or imitate them. You should implement human rights as the working classes of our society understand them. Yes, they are the real Society for the Defense of Human Rights. They are the ones who secure the well-being of humanity; they work while you talk; for they are Muslims and Islam cares about humanity. You who have chosen a course other than Islam--you do nothing for humanity. All you do is write and speak in an effort to divert our movement from its course.

But as for those who want to divert our movement from its course, who have in mind treachery against Islam and the nation, who consider Islam incapable of running the affairs of our country despite its record of 1400 years---they have nothing at all to do with our people, and this must be made clear. How much you talk about the West, claiming that we must measure Islam in accordance with Western criteria! What an error! It was the mosques that created this Revolution, the mosques that brought this movement into being. The *mihrab* was a place not only for preaching, but also for war--war against both the devil within and the tyrannical powers without. So preserve your mosques, O people. Intellectuals, do not be Western-style intellectuals, imported intellectuals; do your share to preserve the mosques!

Source: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1979khom1.asp>

Images: Revolutions and Reforms

Appendix 1:



<http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1616658/thumbs/o-MOHAMMAD-REZA-PAHLAVI-900.jpg?6>

Appendix 2:



<https://encrypted-tbn2.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQb4k3MM5brsK-3S7fEQA-Uco2GQLq02AZ5eIU8IFXI-xUmMn-bqQ>

Appendix 3:



<http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2012/04/12/world/middleeast/iran-timeline-1979-khomeini-arrives/iran-timeline-1979-khomeini-arrives-articleInline.jpg>

Appendix 4:



<http://www.cynical-c.com/archives2/bloggraphics/statue.jpg>

Appendix 5:



http://www.aljazeera.com/mritems/Images/2011/2/6/2011261514287472_20.jpg

Appendix 6:



https://www.google.com/search?q=iranian+revolution+political+cartoons&safe=active&biw=1280&bih=879&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAWoVChMIwtCfnsSBYAIvAIWlCh1DcgP_#safe=active&tbn=isch&q=iranian+revolution+&imgsrc=eCLndf-iGXx4iM%3A

Cubing

Directions: Write for three to five minutes on each side of the cube.

	Describe it	
Associate it	Compare it	Apply it
	Analyze it	
	Argue for or against it	

Cubing

Cubing requires students to look at a topic from six different angles. Teachers often create a visual cube that serves as a starting point when they want students to analyze or consider various aspects of a topic. Cubes can be used as an after-reading strategy that requires students to think critically about a topic. When students work with cubes, they apply information in new ways. Cubes can be differentiated by interest and readiness.

Introducing the Strategy to Students:

One of the best ways to introduce cubing is to apply the activity to a common or familiar object. For example, students enjoy learning to cube with a chocolate Kiss. Simply distribute the Kiss candies to students and then assign groups to look (or study) the Kiss from several angles.

(Decide ahead of time when you are going to allow students to eat their candy.) Students work in assigned pairs or groups. If desired, the groups can be created by readiness levels since the cubing perspectives below begin at the least complex level and become increasingly complex. Using the Kiss as the topic, ask students to:

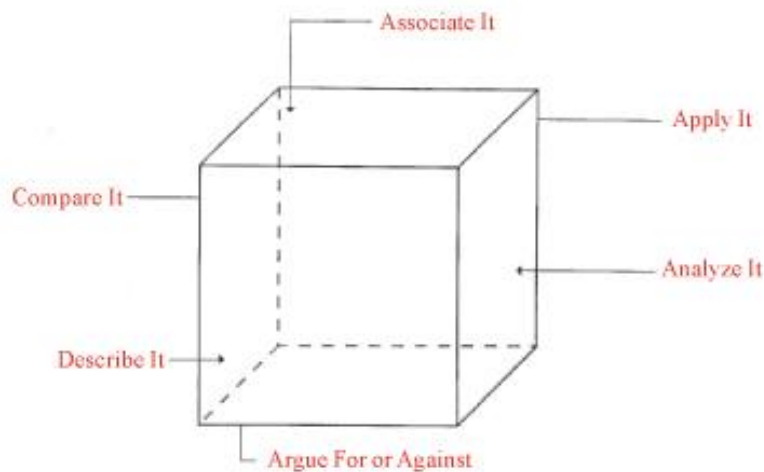
- Describe It: What does the Kiss look like?
- Compare It: Compare the chocolate Kiss with something else. What is it similar to or different from?
- Associate It: What do you associate chocolate Kisses with? What does it make you think about?
- Analyze It: Describe the Kiss's ingredients. What are its parts? How is it made?
- Apply It: What can you do with a chocolate Kiss? How can you use a Kiss?
- Argue For or Against It: Present an argument for or against chocolate Kisses.

Give students about 10 minutes to build a mini-presentation. One student in each group presents to the class.

Steps:

1. Select a topic. For example, the Civil War. Decide in advance how much time you want to devote to the cubing process. Informal cubing activities can easily be accomplished within a class period. However, activities can be extended if research is required.
 2. Create groups based on readiness or interest.
 3. Assign each group a perspective from which to explore the topic.
 - Describe the Civil War.
 - Compare the Civil War to another war.
 - Associate the Civil War with other issues, topics, or concerns.
 - Analyze the Civil War by discussing the events and decisions that led to the war.
 - Apply the lessons you've learned from studying the Civil War. How does learning about the Civil War help you understand events, issues, topics, and decisions that still exist today?
 - Argue for or against the Civil War. Should the war ever have been fought? Take a stand and list your reasons.
 4. After the designated amount of time, ask representatives from each group to present their perspectives.
-

Cubing



Adaptations:

- Design cubes based on interest or learning profiles.
- Use the cubes for independent work. Require students to complete each element on the cube but allow them to pick and choose the order in which they complete the activities.
- Use the cubes as dice which students roll.
- In math, create problems for students to solve. One problem is printed on each side of the cube.
- Author Rick Wormeli suggests incorporating Bloom's Taxonomy:
 - Knowledge—Students recall and cite content.
 - Comprehension—Students demonstrate their understanding of the content.
 - Application—Students use their knowledge and skills in a different way or situation.
 - Analysis—Students break down topics into pieces and analyze them.
 - Synthesis—Students consider aspects that seem to contradict each other and form something new.
 - Evaluation—Students use their previous learning to judge the value or success of something. Students follow specific criteria.

Sources:

Cowan, G., and E. Cowan. *Writing*. New York: John Wiley, 1980.

"Cubing: Reading Strategy of the Month." *Florida Online Reading Professional Development*. June 04. 26 June 06
<http://www.itrc.ucf.edu/forpd/strategies/stratCubing.html>.

Gregory, Gayle H. *Differentiating Instruction with Style: Aligning Teacher and Learner Intelligences for Maximum Achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2005, pages 99-105.

Gregory, Gayle H., and Carolyn Chapman. *Differentiated Instructional Strategies: One Size Doesn't Fit All*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2002, pages 12-15, 94.

"Literacy Strategies: Cubing." *Literacy and Learning: Reading in the Content Areas*. Louisiana Public Broadcasting, Baton Rouge, LA. 26 June 06

http://www.litandlearn.lpb.org/strategies/strat_cubing.pdf.

Wormeli, Rick. *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2006, page 66.
