



## ***The Philippines Online Lesson Plan***

### **Overview of Lesson:**

*Students will research the rationale for U.S. involvement in the Philippines. Then they will create a timeline that highlights this impact.*

### **Objectives:**

*By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:*

1. Voice their opinions about foreign and domestic policies of the United States, as well as the United States' history of getting involved in rebuilding other nations.
2. Reflect on the roles of a helper country in rebuilding and reshaping a nation in need of change or support.

### **Materials**

- Enough copies for each student of *The Philippines* by Patricio Abinales in *Great Decisions* 2004
- Research materials with information about various aspects of Philippine society (education, religion, economy, government, terrorist groups, human rights violations, international relations) see also Resource section
- Journals
- Pens, pencils, paper
- Poster board

### **Activities/Procedures:**

#### **Warm Up**

Provide students with the following details one by one and ask them to guess the country being described:

- This country experiences cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis, and destructive volcanic action.
- 83% of the population is Roman Catholic.
- This country gained independence from the United States on July 4, 1946.
- 40% of people in this country live on less than a dollar a day.
- It is comprised of about 7,100 islands.
- The aboriginals of the islands are called the Aetas and are a pygmy people.
- There are approximately 70 distinct indigenous languages in use throughout the country.
- The navigator Ferdinand Magellan was killed while trying to lay claim to the islands in the name of Spain. Spain eventually controlled the islands for nearly four centuries.

Once you have divulged that the country in question is the Philippines, ask students which of these facts surprise them. What comes to mind when they think of the Philippines?

### **Activity One – [Article Reading]**

Pass out the “Precedents” section in the article *The Philippines* by Patricio N. Abinales. Have students independently read the selection. Reinforce that the United States has had a long relationship with the Philippines, first, as the latter’s colonizer, and after World War II as its close ally and patron. The relationship however has been often criticized for favoring the interests of the Filipino elite and only marginally the middle class and the poor. In the past this bias was influenced by the need to keep the American military bases. Conditions, however, have changed. The bases are not there anymore, and the U.S. has become less interested in the Philippines as an ally. Recently, however, the advent of the war on terror, the two countries have seen it fit to renew their ties. After the students are done reading have them respond to the following questions.

*--What are the positive and negative aspects of U.S. involvement in the Philippines? Who benefits, who loses? Why?*

*-- In this revival of ties, how can the U.S. make sure that it would not repeat its past mistakes?*

### **Activity Three – [Group Research]**

Explain to students that today they will be examining the process of restructuring with involvement by the United States. First, ask students to suggest areas needed to be rebuilt or redefined in a country in need of rebuilding. Students should consider examples from the article read in class, as well as other examples of countries that have been rebuilt or are currently in the process, such as Iraq. Topics may include education, the economy, social relations between rival groups, and government. Narrow the list to six of the most critical areas, divide students into six groups, and assign each group a topic for their focus.

Explain that each group will be researching their topic as it applied both before and after United States involvement in the Philippines.

Using all available resources, students research the answers to the following questions (written on the board or copied into a handout for easier student access):

*--What was your assigned aspect of Philippine society like prior to United States involvement there?*

*--What were the major problems or issues (if any) concerning this aspect of society prior to United States involvement?*

*--Who felt that this aspect needed to be changed, and who did not?*

*--What American organizations, if any, are currently involved in reforming your assigned aspect of Philippine society?*

*--What progress or setbacks have arisen in this aspect of society since United States involvement?*

### **Activity Four – [Timelines]**

After research is completed, each group creates a timeline on a piece of poster board that focuses on their

research. Students should include events that illustrate what was happening in Philippines prior to United States involvement, what steps the United States has taken (or attempted to take) to improve or change aspects relating to the assigned aspect of Philippine society and a description of the current state of affairs.

Timelines should be presented and displayed so that students can see the whole picture of why the United States became involved in Philippines and how the United States has helped (or not) to improve and stabilize the lives of people in this country and/or how our involvement served the United States foreign policy needs.

### **Wrap Up and Suggested Homework Tasks:**

Individually, students write reflective essays considering the roles that a country like the United States should play in the rebuilding and reshaping of a nation in need of change or support. Students should consider the following: What information should the helping country have before going into another country to help rebuild it? What concerns should the helping nation consider? What type of power might be necessary to facilitate the changes? What type of power could have a negative impact? How might lessons learned in the article read in class, be applied to nation-building in Iraq or in other countries that the United States is currently helping to rebuild?

### **Further Questions for Discussion:**

--How do countries like the United States decide how much money and other aid to send to the Philippines?

--If the American "war on terror" is to succeed in Southeast Asia, it may be necessary for the U.S. to go beyond simply provide military assistance to allied countries in the region. Given that some countries like the Philippines are riddled with corruption and inefficiency, and have militaries that are not to par as partners, should the U.S. expand its assistance beyond military and logistic support? Should it be involved in "political reforms," that may include campaigns against corruption and criminality, and for improved governance?

### **Evaluation / Assessment:**

Students will be evaluated based on participation in class and group discussions, completion of group research and timelines on assigned aspects of Philippine society before and after United States involvement there, and thoughtfully written reflections considering the roles that helper countries like the United States should play in nation re-building.

### **Extension Activities:**

1. Write a letter to President George W. Bush proposing how to stabilize Iraq after the war against Saddam Hussein.
2. Research current American rebuilding activities around the world. Why are American troops or groups there? How long have they been there? What are they doing? How does the nation being rebuilt feel about the United States' presence in their country? Write a newspaper article sharing your findings.
3. Create a chart comparing various types of governments, such as democracy, communism, dictatorship, monarchy and oligarchy. Then, indicate on a world map where different governments are practiced,

assigning a different color to each type of government and shading in the countries with that government structure (alternately, colored dots or pushpins might be used.)

4. Create a pie chart illustrating how the national budget spends its money on foreign aid. Which country receives the most money? The least money? On what is foreign aid spent? From where does the money come? Write a brief paper considering whether or not these amounts should decrease when there are domestic problems.

5. Ask students to define a "splendid little war". Is there ever such a thing? What other wars might some people remember as "splendid little" ones? (Students might mention the Persian Gulf War of 1990, which was over very quickly and ended in an overwhelming victory for the United States.) Who might think these wars were not so splendid? Who usually suffers most in a war? Who has to bear the long-term effects of a war?

### **Resources:**

#### **Manila Bulletin Online**

**URL:**<http://www.mb.com.ph/index.php>

This Philippines daily is available online and contains news and current affairs, articles of opinion and insights into contemporary Filipino culture and society.

#### **History of the Philippines**

**URL:**<http://www.ualberta.ca/~vmitchel/>

A summary of the history of the Philippines from prehistoric times up to the development of Filipino democracy in the 1990s.

#### **Welcome to the Philippines**

**URL:**<http://www.bergen.org/AAST/projects/Philippines/index2.html>

A simple, accessible and interesting introduction to the Philippines, including geography, history, fine arts, current events, music, literature and flora and fauna.

More Philippine related web sites:

**URL:**<http://www.aems.uiuc.edu/HTML/AsianResources/Philippines/PhilippinesWeblinks.htm>