

GREAT DECISIONS

Lesson Plan: Brazil

Prepared by Kevin Jamison, Education Intern, FPA

Students will need either internet access or handouts of the applicable information below.

Subject of Lesson:

In this lesson students will come to understand major issues regarding South America's largest country - Brazil. Brazil's relationship with the UN, the U.S. and other world powers will be discussed. Brazil's economy and its role on the Latin American political stage will also be discussed. After an introduction and discussion of the issues, students will be broken into groups, and asked to come up with a presentation using discussion and resource materials listed below.

Instructional Aids, materials, or tools needed:

Maps – South America and Brazil -

www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/profiles/brazil.html

Nuclear treaties, agreements – CNTBT - <http://disarmament2.un.org/wmd/ctbt>

NPT - <http://disarmament2.un.org/wmd/npt/index.html>

Economic Crisis - <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/sgabriel/brazil.htm>

Great Decisions 2006 Article on Brazil

References/handouts:

Country statistics - www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/profiles/brazil.html

Brazilian debt crisis –

www.cfr.org/publication/4717/brazil_hurtles_toward_a_debt_crisis.html

Relationship with the IMF - www.imf.org/external/country/BRA?type=42

Lesson Outline/Discussion:

This lesson will be best taught with the prior reading of Great Decisions 2006 in order to initiate the below discussions.

First, ask students to discuss whether or not they think that Brazil is an important country in the international system. If so what makes Brazil, or any country for that matter, important? Ask for facts they may already know about Brazil's history.

Next, guide a brief discussion on Brazil's current place on the international stage and how it has evolved, based on the Great Decisions 2006 article. Talk about Brazil's relationship with the UN and its hopes to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Should Brazil be allowed to sit on the Security Council? Why or why not? What would the implications be? Does Brazil represent Latin America, or are its objectives different from other countries in the region?

Talk about Brazil's nuclear ambitions. Can Brazil obtain nuclear weapons, if yes from where? Can the world accept a nuclear Brazil? Would they be honoring treaties which they are a part of, such as the NPT or the CNTBT? Bring up Iran's attempts to obtain nuclear power and compare and contrast the two situations.

In Class Assignment:

After discussing Brazil's history and current situation, etc, ask students for suggestions on what the international community can do to help the current economic situation there. Also, give suggestions on what the Brazilian government can do to foster a more stable social and political environment. Ask students the following questions:

- Being the biggest country in South America, what responsibility does Brazil have to other South American countries?
- Does Brazil deserve a permanent place on the United Nations Security council?
- What must Brazil do in order to be taken more seriously in matters such as Security Council membership?
- Is Brazil poised to lead developing countries in the fight for more beneficial trade agreements at the WTO?

After this concluding discussion, create groups and assign a topic from below to each group. Each group must come up with a five minute presentation, derived from discussion and additional resource materials below, on their specific topic, and one question for each other group's topic to ask at the end of each presentation. Encourage students to work as a team, one work as the presenter, one the writer, one the researcher, yet all must contribute. Ask that the presentations be brief, to the point, and broad spanning.

Nuclear issues in Brazil

Economic situation (WTO, Plano Real, BRIC)

Brazil and the UN, Security Council

Cultural aspects – Portuguese history

President Lula's election, scandal, his strengths and weaknesses as a leader

Additional resources:

Brief History – Economist

<http://www.economist.com/countries/Brazil/profile.cfm?folder=History%20in%20brief>

Official website of the Brazilian Government

www.brasil.gov.br

CIA World Fact Book

www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/br.html

Wikipedia resources

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil>

Economist article on Brazil

www.economist.com/countries/Brazil

Brazil and Nuclear Weapons

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/brazil/nuke.htm>

Brazil and the IMF

www.imf.org/external/country/BRA

President Lula and Scandal

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4147814.stm>

Brazil and the UN

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20060106/wl_afp/brazilunreform

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/3693802.stm>

Lula and Chavez

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4263025.stm>

After the presentations, have the students take the Great Decisions 2006 quiz on Brazil.

Homework Assignment:

Now that each student has become knowledgeable in a specific area regarding Brazil, have them create a one to two page research report on their specific subject. While the in-class presentation was short and broad, the research paper should be a bit longer and more specific. Require the use of at least three sources, cited. Encourage the use of reliable sources such as scholarly journals, encyclopedias, and major news outlets.