

Leadership c.1945-1965 - Activity 2

The leaders meet: Reporting from Potsdam

Aims

- To understand why Cold War tensions began to emerge at Potsdam
- To apply the techniques of the historian to a public memorial and draw information and insights from it
- Demonstrate the ability to select key events and present them in a compelling narrative

Resources

coldwarLDA2.lgfl.net is your one-stop link to curriculum resources for this activity; you will find videos, photographs and links to the relevant main Cold War sections.

Your task

In July 1945, the leaders of Britain, the USA and the USSR met in Potsdam, a suburb of Berlin, to talk about the shape of the post-war world. The world's media was closely focused on this momentous event and journalists reported on every detail they could get their hands on. Your task is to examine how the media presented the Potsdam Conference at the time and compare this with what was really happening.

Step 1 – How did the media present the Potsdam Conference?

Study the photographs and the links to British Pathé videos from the 1945 Potsdam Conference at coldwarLDA2.lgfl.net.

Is it fair to say that the media presented a positive picture of relations between the leaders? Select three or four examples of images or sections from the clips which suggest the relations between the leaders were good and make notes on your findings.

Step 2 – What was really happening?

As historians, we have the benefit of hindsight. Study the LGfL videos and sections of the main resource references at coldwarLDA2.lgfl.net to see how the private picture was different from the public one – take notes in bullet form.

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Step 3 – Create your own Potsdam report

Photocopiable task instructions

You are going to produce a short report for a documentary on the Potsdam Conference. Your teacher will tell you which digital tools to use, but your report must cover:

- The Potsdam venue
- Media interest in the Potsdam talks
- How the media represented relations between the leaders
- What was really happening in the discussions

You could use the images at coldwarLDA2.lgfl.net to illustrate your report, which you could create within j2e5 (via j2launch.lgfl.net – allows you to blog once completed), or make a photo video with narrated voiceover to upload into videocentralhd.lgfl.net for easy sharing, or simply a PowerPoint or Prezi. The choice is yours, so pick your photos and start writing your captions/voiceover.

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