

## The Invasion of Iraq

### About the Film:

FRONTLINE marks the first anniversary of the Iraqi war with a two-hour documentary investigation that recounts the key strategies, battles, and turning points of the war from both sides of the battlefield. Through firsthand accounts from many of the war's key participants -- from strategists in Washington to the soldiers who actually fought the battles -- "The Invasion of Iraq" promises to be a definitive television history of America's most recent war.

### A Note To Teachers:

For classes in Journalism, Social Studies, Language Arts and Current Events; Grade level 9th – 12th

On Jan. 29, 2002, in his State of the Union address, President George W. Bush declared that the countries of Iraq, Iran and North Korea constituted "an axis of evil" that threatened world peace. One year later, in his Jan. 28, 2003 address, the president announced that the U.S. would "lead a coalition to disarm" Saddam Hussein even without a United Nations mandate should the Iraqi leader refuse to give up his weapons. The interval between these two speeches was filled with debate both within and outside of the U.S. government over the number of troops needed to invade Iraq, the expense of the war and the process of rebuilding of Iraq after the fall of Baghdad. The documentary, "The Invasion of Iraq" examines the time period from the buildup to war to the fall of Baghdad and the post-war continuation of violence through the eyes of the war's strategists and combatants.

The program and accompanying teacher's guide allow students to:

- Learn about the circumstances leading up to the invasion; the war's major battles; and the post-war situation on the ground
- Study world opinion on the invasion of Iraq
- Consider the attitudes of soldiers and their families about the war
- Examine the individuals and political entities involved in the decision to go to war

### Lesson Plans:

PRE-VIEWING LESSON PLAN:

Iraq Timeline: 2002-Present: A Crossword Review

Students will examine major events in the buildup to the

invasion of Iraq and complete a crossword to review what they've learned.

**VIEWING LESSON PLAN:**

Student Viewing Guide

Students will be divided into four groups and take notes while viewing the film. Each group will answer questions about the film after viewing.

**POST-VIEWING LESSON PLAN:**

A "catastrophic success"

Students will analyze this description of the Iraqi invasion, made by military historian Frederick Kagan.

World Opinion on the Invasion of Iraq

Students will explore how newspapers in several countries reported a major event in post-war Iraq.

Letters from Iraq

Students will look at the war through the eyes of U.S. soldiers.

Purchasing the Video

"The Invasion of Iraq" can be purchased from **ShopPBS for**

**Teachers:**

<http://teacher.shop.pbs.org/product/index.jsp?productId=1731922&cp>

Credits

This teacher guide was developed by Simone Bloom Nathan of Media Education Consultants. It was written by Pat Grimmer, chair of the Social Studies Department at Carbondale Community High School in Carbondale Illinois. Ellen Greenblatt of University High School San Francisco was an adviser.

PRE-VIEWING LESSON PLAN:  
Iraq Timeline: 2002-Present

**Lesson Objectives:**

In this lesson students will:

- Review the events leading up to and after the invasion of Iraq
- Identify major events and individuals involved in the conflict

**Materials Needed:**

- Internet access or a printed copy of the timeline.
- A copy of the crossword puzzle
- Writing materials.

**Time Needed:**

25 – 35 minutes

**Procedure:**

This lesson is divided into two steps:

Step One

Infoplease.com offers a timeline of the Iraqi crisis from 2002 through the present that highlights the key events of the invasion of Iraq starting with the president's Jan. 29, 2002 State of the Union address in which he declared Iraq, Iran and North Korea to be an "axis of evil." The timeline provides the information students will need to complete the crossword puzzle in this activity.

Allow students eight to 10 minutes to read the major events on the timeline. It would be easier for students to have a printed copy of the timeline when they do their crossword review. However, they can read it online at:

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/iraqtimeline2.html>

Step Two

Instruct students to use the information from the timeline to answer the questions on the crossword. Allow 15 to 20 minutes for this activity.

**Method of Assessment:**

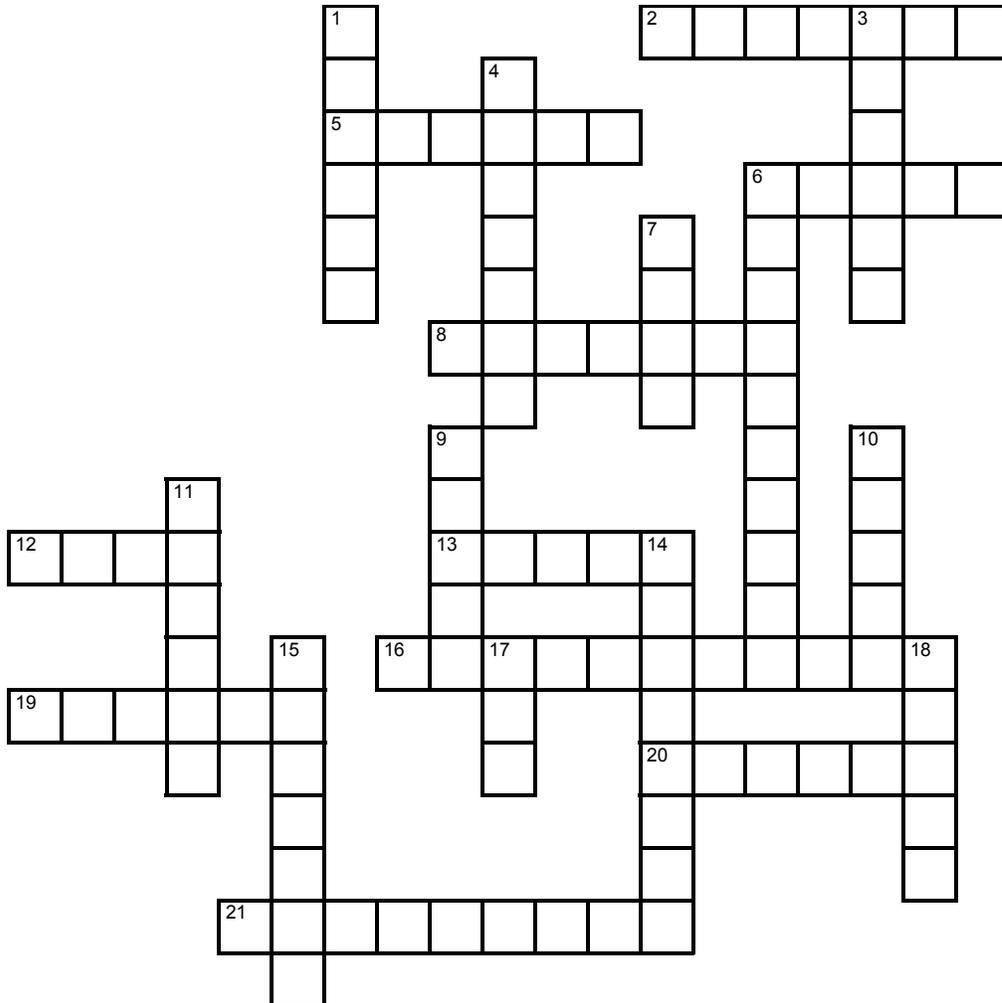
Completion of the crossword

**Extending the Lesson:**Iraq: How did we get here?

This three-part lesson plan, which outlines how the U.S. government makes war decisions, who the key decision-makers are and what the role of the United Nations is, can be found in the teacher's guide that accompanies FRONTLINE's film "Truth, War and Consequences" at:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/truth/previewing.html>

**STUDENT HANDOUT**  
**Crossword Review**  
**Iraq Timeline**



**Crossword Clues**

**Across**

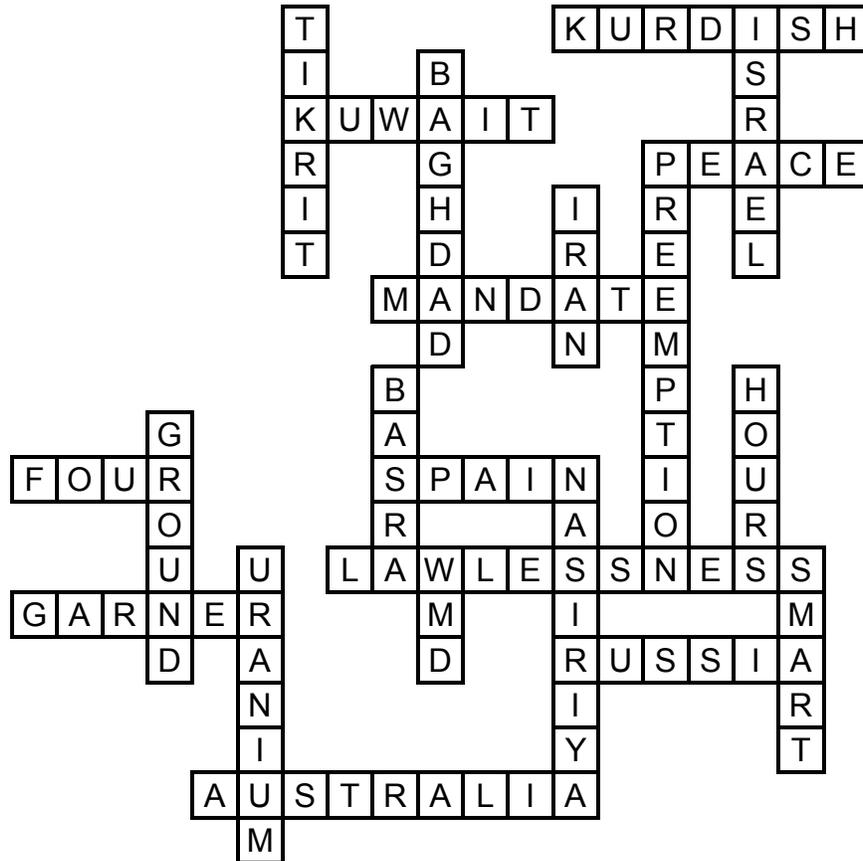
- 2.** The northern front of Iraq is controlled by these people.
- 5.** U.S. ground troops entered southern Iraq from this country.
- 6.** After Chief UN Inspector Hans Blix said that slight progress had been made in Iraq's cooperation, massive \_\_\_\_\_ demonstrations occur around the world.
- 8.** In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush said that he is ready to attack Iraq even without a UN \_\_\_\_\_.
- 12.** On Nov. 18, 2002, UN inspectors returned to Iraq for the first time in \_\_\_\_\_ years.

- 13.** This country, along with U.S. and Britain, submitted a resolution to the UN Security Council that said it was time to take action against Iraq.
- 16.** Gen. Jay Garner lost his job to Paul Bremer because of the continuation of this in Iraq.
- 19.** On April 18, 2003, this general was put in charge of running post-war Iraq until a new government could be created.
- 20.** This country was joined by France and Germany in submitting an informal counter-resolution to the UN to make military options against Iraq a last resort.
- 21.** Britain, the United States and this country deployed 200,000 troops to Iraq.

### **Down**

- 1.** The city of Saddam Hussein's birth and also the last city to exhibit strong Iraqi resistance.
- 3.** UN weapons inspector Hans Blix attempted to protect this country when he told Iraq to destroy its Al Samoud 2 missiles.
- 4.** Operation Iraqi Freedom begins with an attack on this city.
- 6.** The name of the doctrine that argues the U.S. must strike first to prevent a potential threat from growing into an actual one.
- 7.** President Bush identified North Korea, Iraq and \_\_\_\_\_ as being part of an "axis of evil."
- 9.** This is the second largest city in Iraq. Forces from Great Britain occupied it.
- 10.** President Bush said that Saddam Hussein had 48 of these to get out of Iraq.
- 11.** Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has been criticized for not deploying enough \_\_\_\_\_ troops.
- 14.** Pfc. Jessica Lynch was rescued from a hospital in this city.
- 15.** President Bush has stated that the evidence supporting the claim that Iraq tried to buy this metal from Africa was unsubstantiated and he should not have included this information in his State of the Union address.
- 17.** When none of these were found, both U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and British Prime Minister Tony Blair said they did not distort evidence to justify an attack on Iraq.
- 18.** These sanctions would allow more civilian goods to enter Iraq while restricting the entry of military supplies.

### Crossword Solution



## **VIEWING LESSON PLAN:**

Student Viewing Activity: The Invasion of Iraq

### **Lesson Objectives:**

In this lesson students will:

- Watch the documentary "The Invasion of Iraq" and answer questions about its content
- Practice critical thinking skills as they view the film and take notes
- Evaluate the actions, motivations and results for the group they are assigned to monitor

### **Materials Needed:**

- The film "The Invasion of Iraq"
- A copy of the Student Viewing Guide for each student

### **Time Needed:**

Students will need two hours to view the documentary.

### **Procedure:**

1. Tell students that they will be watching a documentary that examines the successes and failures of the U.S. invasion of Iraq and that they will each be watching from the point of view of an assigned group. Divide the class into the following four groups:
  - British ground troops
  - U.S. ground troops
  - Iraqi ground troops and leaders
  - U.S. political and military leaders
2. Hand out the Student Viewing Guide Part 1 and instruct students to take notes during viewing. Also hand out Student Viewing Guide Part 2 and instruct students to answer the questions in their assigned group after viewing the film. Afterwards, each group should present a summary statement to the class analyzing its impact in the invasion of Iraq.

### **Method of Assessment:**

Students should be prepared to submit their notes from the viewing guide and their summary statements.

## STUDENT HANDOUT

### The Invasion Of Iraq: Student Viewing Guide: Part 1

#### Directions:

As you watch the video, take notes in the spaces below based on the point of view of the group you have been assigned. Look carefully to see which individuals from your group had the most impact on the successes and/or failures of your group in Iraq. After viewing, your group will answer the questions listed on part two of this handout.

Viewing notes:

My group \_\_\_\_\_

The geographic area of Iraq where my group operated:

My group's successes:

My group's failures:

Differences between my group and other groups:

Changes in my group's actions during the film:

How Iraqi religious, ethnic or political groups influenced my group's actions:

Surprises:

Other:

STUDENT HANDOUT  
The Invasion Of Iraq: Student Viewing Guide: Part 2

Directions: Use the notes you made individually during viewing to answer the following questions as a group. Each group should be prepared to present a summary to the class.

Questions:

In what geographical areas of Iraq did your group operate? What was unique about this area? How did it influence your group's behavior?

What are some successes of your group?

What are some major mistakes made by your group of participants? What accounts for these mistakes?

How and why are the actions of your group different from other groups?

How did the actions of your group change during the course of the film? What accounts for these changes?

What Iraqi religious, ethnic or political groups had an impact on your group's effectiveness? How and why?

How do you view the actions of your group of participants?

Which of your group's actions did you find to be surprising?

## POST-VIEWING LESSON PLANS

### A "Catastrophic Success"

#### **Lesson Objective:**

- Students will analyze the phrase "catastrophic success" as a description of the invasion of Iraq.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- Writing materials, Internet access, butcher paper and markers.
- If students completed the Student Viewing Guide, their notes may be helpful.

#### **Time Needed:**

30 minutes.

#### **Procedure:**

1. Military historian Frederick Kagan has called the post-war situation in Iraq a "catastrophic success." Ask the class:
  - What does this statement mean?
  - Do you agree or disagree?
  - Why or why not?
2. If students watched the film and completed the viewing guides, have them work in their assigned groups from the viewing activity to categorize the actions, events and/or people that contributed to the successes or failures of their group as "successes" or "failures" on a piece of butcher paper. Students should use the notes from their viewing guides for this activity.
3. Have each group summarize their conclusions for the class.
4. Invite students to reconsider the meaning of "catastrophic success" using the information from the different groups' reports.

#### **Method of Assessment:**

Participation in classroom discussion.

Notes from the Student Viewing Guide after the class discussions.

POST-VIEWING LESSON PLAN:  
**Examining World Opinion**

**Lesson Objective:**

- Students will examine world opinion about the invasion of Iraq and its aftermath

Operation Iraqi Freedom is the name given to the invasion of Iraq. When President Bush went to Baghdad on Thanksgiving Day, 2003, he gave a speech in support of this operation. The White House has posted a copy of the speech at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031127.html>

**Materials Needed:**

- Computer with Internet access

**Time Needed:**

30 minutes

**Procedure:**

1. Have the students read the speech and list the major points made by the president.
2. Break the class into four groups. Assign each group one of the following newspaper articles. Ask them to read their assigned article and summarize the differences and/or similarities between the president's speech and the newspaper accounts they read.

**The Bird Was Perfect, But Not For Dinner** (*The Washington Post*)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A33090-2003Dec3?language=printer>

**Bush's Surprise Visit to Baghdad Decried by Military Families As Re-election Photo Op** (*Between the Lines*)

<http://www.btlonline.org/btl121203.html#2hed>

Note: *Between the Lines* is a weekly radio program designed to provide "a platform for individuals and spokespersons from progressive organizations generally ignored or marginalized by the mainstream media."

**A Review of Operation Iraqi Freedom** (Al Jazeera)  
<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/A37F985C-2C1C-4B0B-AE0D-AACEE6D75580.htm>

**Bush Visit Showed Washington's Fear of Iraqis**  
(*Tehran Times*)  
<http://www.tehrantimes.com/archives/Detailview.asp?Keyword=bush&Da=11/29/2003&Cat=2&Num=16>

3. Have each group report their findings to the class.
4. Assign a one-page paper as homework in which students answer the following question, using information from the class discussion:
  - How do you decide what happened when you have read different accounts of an event?

**Method of Assessment:**

- Participation in classroom discussion
- Homework assignment

POST-VIEWING LESSON PLAN:  
Letters From the Troops

**Lesson Objective:**

- Students will explore U.S. soldiers' accounts of the war and its aftermath

**Materials Needed:**

- Chalkboard or overhead machine with transparency

**Time Needed:**

30 minutes

**Procedure:**

1) Put the following question on the board or an overhead.

- What topics do you think are most often discussed in letters from the U.S. ground troops in Iraq?

2) List student responses.

3) Ask students to choose an Internet search engine to find information on "Letters from soldiers in Iraq." Students should check three separate sites and read at least four letters with no more than two from the same site.

4) Students should summarize the main points in the letters and then write a one-page paper in which they answer the following questions:

- How do these letters compare to what the class expected to find?
- What insight about the war do I gain from the letters?

**EXTENDING THE LESSON**

**Guest Speaker**

Invite a veteran from Iraq or another war into the classroom to discuss their experiences.

- Be sure to talk with the veteran prior to the presentation and prepare the class for the kinds of things that may be covered.

- Tell the students that some of the veterans' accounts may elicit powerful emotions -- both in the veterans themselves as well as the students.

**Extra Credit**

Students can examine another war through the eyes of soldiers by reading sections of *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien. Recommended are the chapters entitled "The Things They Carried" and "How to Tell a True War Story."

*The Things They Carried* is author Tim O'Brien's unique vision of the Vietnam War. Neither a novel nor a short-story collection, this powerful work presents an arc of fictional episodes, which take place in the childhoods of its characters, in the jungles of Vietnam, and back home in America two decades later.

**Method of Assessment:**

Participation in classroom discussion  
Paper about soldiers' letters  
Written summaries of extra credit readings

### INTERNET AND OTHER RESOURCES:

In addition to the Web resources that are included in the guide, students and their teachers might want to look further.

#### Media Literacy Note:

Students need to be aware that Web sites sometimes present only one view of an issue. They should be encouraged to interrogate Web sites even as they are reading. Guiding questions as they work through these activities should be: What did you learn from this site? What didn't you learn from this site? Who sponsors this source? What bias might the sponsor have?

#### **Letters Home: Iraq**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/3354937.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3354937.stm)

Here, as part of the BBC World Service's World Today program's look at "end of year letters of ordinary people who lived through extraordinary events in 2003," is a letter from Yanar Mohammed, who runs the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq. In her letter, addressed to her mother, Mohammed explains why she felt the need to return to Baghdad.

#### **Low Morale Letters From Iraq**

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/07/17/eveningnews/main563822.shtml>

Within this story from CBS News, about family members of U.S. troops serving in Iraq, are excerpts from two letters in which soldiers express their low morale about the war and their mission.

#### **War In Iraq**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/iraq/front.htm>

This site, from *The Washington Post*, provides comprehensive coverage of the war with pictures, letters, interviews, and opinion. The section titled "From the Heart: Final Words" reprints the last letters from soldiers who died in the war.