

## When Governments Collapse: Current Event Analysis

### Lesson Overview:

This set of activities combines reading for understanding with summarizing, predicting, and other key literacy skills. Additionally, there is an extension activity that allows students to practice historical comparison using the current event they have already examined. Depending on your curriculum, you may want to compare a current governmental collapse with a past one of significance like the French Revolution or a coup in Latin America or an independence movement in Africa.

### Duration of the Lesson:

1 or more class periods (45 minutes - +120 minutes)  
[Students' reading levels may strongly influence the amount of time dedicated to the lesson]

### Materials List:

- Access to print or digital news media
- Copies of Current Event Analysis worksheets or digital version for students

### Oregon Social Sciences Academic Content Standards & Social Science Analysis Standards

#### State Social Studies Standards

- K.18 Compare and contrast past and present events or practices.
- 2.23 Describe the connection between two or more current or historical events.
- HS.74 Analyze an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon, critiquing and evaluating characteristics, influences, causes, and both short- and long-term effects.
- HS.52 \* Evaluate continuity and change over the course of world and United States history.

#### Common Core History Social Science:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

### Learning Objectives:

#### Students will be able to... (SWBAT)

- Accurately summarize a current event from close reading of a news article
- Predict consequences in a logical sequence
- Recognize patterns in history and disruptions in those patterns by comparing two events (Optional)

### Essential Questions:

- What are the different ways the power of a government can change hands?
- What circumstances lead to the collapse of a government?
- How do modern events compare with those of the past?

## Procedure:

Time	Activity
15 min	<p><b>Opener:</b> Watch the video on the fall of Assad in Syria here: <a href="#">How did the Assad regime fall to rebel forces in Syria?</a>, SkyNews, Dec 8, 2024</p> <p>Ask students these follow up questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Who lost power?</li> <li>● Who is gaining power?</li> <li>● What were the foundational problems that led to the collapse of this government?</li> <li>● Was this a non-violent governmental collapse or a violent one?</li> </ul>
5 min	<p><b>Direct instruction:</b></p> <p>Inform students that 2024 was a year with MANY changes in who runs countries. All of the government collapses in the past year reflect people dissatisfied with the status quo, however the HOW of each governmental collapse is quite different. Some were full scale revolutions, some were the culmination of a civil war, and some were procedural votes done with no violence at all. Some were even failed ‘self-coups’ that showed the stability of the current government.</p> <p>Distribute the Current Event Analysis worksheet and the steps outlined for the students so they understand what is expected. Address any questions students may have about the task, and emphasize that the article the students choose needs to be able to address all the questions in the worksheet. Options for teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jigsaw: Different student groups examine different governmental collapses. The <a href="#">CLP current event</a> When Governments Collapse from Jan 9, 2025 features many of these, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bangladesh</li> <li>○ Syria</li> <li>○ South Korea</li> <li>○ France</li> <li>○ Germany</li> <li>○ Senegal</li> <li>○ Mozambique</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Focus: Pick the governmental change that best fits your curriculum and have the class all focus on the same place, but use different articles.</li> <li>● Perspectives: Do either of the above but assign students to use articles from opposing sides of the governmental change and then compare points of view.</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: Given the plethora of misleading information on the internet, we suggest you as the teacher either curate the list of articles students can choose from or pre teach source evaluation methods before setting them loose on the Web.</p>
Will vary	<p><b>Guided Practice:</b> Students work independently to select then read their articles. The teacher should circulate the classroom to give assistance if students encounter words or concepts they are unfamiliar with or don’t understand.</p> <p>NOTE: American students may be unfamiliar with how Parliamentary systems use no confidence votes and coalitions in forming governments. The CLP Current Event provides some background resources on that to help you teach this foundational information. The first half of this video is particularly useful: VIDEO: <a href="#">Political Institutions SIMPLIFIED</a>, A PUSH Towards Success, April 2022</p>

Will vary	<b>Independent Practice:</b> Students fill out the Current Event Analysis sheet to summarize the news article.
5-7 min for partner sharing 30 min if you do the jigsaw version	<p><b>Assessment:</b> Students should demonstrate an understanding of these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Where is the country on a map?</li> <li>● Who lost power?</li> <li>● Who is gaining power?</li> <li>● What were the foundational problems that led to the collapse of this government?</li> <li>● Was this a non-violent governmental collapse or a violent one?</li> </ul> <p>Students can partner up to compare two different perspectives on the same events and write up their observations of the different points of view. If you did the Jigsaw version, students can give an oral summary of their topic to the whole class or to mixed groups.</p>
Depends if you have to preteach historical event.	<p><b>Extension:</b> To incorporate historical context, and self-guided research practice, have students, individually, in pairs, or small groups, complete the “Current Events: Then &amp; Now” worksheet. Students are tasked with comparing, contrasting, and analyzing their current events topic with a historical event of their choosing. OR You choose the historical event and and pre-teach it.</p>

### Assessment(s):

- Formative: The Current Event Analysis worksheet
- Summative: Student orally share how government changed and why, according to the article they read
- Optional summative: Using the Then and Now worksheet as a pre-writing activity, students could write an essay comparing the two events to declare if they see more continuity or more change.

### Modifications/Variations:

- Literacy levels of the class will determine which news sources you use as well as how long the reading and summarizing takes. There are some lexile adjusting tools that can help with this.
- The Jigsaw variation of this activity could be longer term, using more sources.

### Lesson Recommendations:

- It’s important to set clear expectations on what news topics and sources you want students to use, rather than setting them completely free on the Internet.
- Tie in to a unit of study so topics are related for increased comprehension.

### Lesson Plan Adapted From:

Amy Sabbadini’s Current Event Worksheet



## When Governments Collapse: Current Event Analysis

**Directions:** Read a news item (e.g., web-published story, news article, magazine article, newspaper, etc.) and then complete the questions below.

Article Title:

Author:

Publication:

Date of Publication:

1. According to the article, what is changing in the government of this country?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who are the people involved? (leaders and groups they represent)
  - Who is losing power?
  
  
  
  
  
  - Who is gaining power?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Where is this occurring? Find on a map and describe the location:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How long has this conflict been going on?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Does this change seem to be expanding democracy or threatening democracy in that country? Explain.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Has this governmental collapse been a violent one, or was it done through peaceful elections?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What questions do you still have about this issue?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What is your prediction about what will happen next?



## Current Events: Then & Now

**Directions:** Compare the news item to a historical event(s) and evaluate the similarities and differences between the two events.

NOTE: Pick a historical event from AT LEAST ten (10) years ago.

### Vocabulary

**Continuity** refers to things that stay the same over time, showing a continuous pattern.

**Change** refers to a break from the ways things happened in the past.

1. What historical event(s) did you pick? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What happened during the event(s)?
3. When and where did this event happen?
4. Who was involved in the event?
5. How did the event influence the years after?

6.

Continuity	Change
What aspects of the two (2) events show continuity?	What aspects of the two (2) events show change?

7. Based upon your understanding of the historical event, what advice would you share with people dealing with the current event?