Unit: Using Primary Documents to Look Gains and Strides during Post War Prosperity: 1945-1960

Introduction
The end of World War II brought thousands of young servicemen back to America to pick up their lives and start new families in new homes with new jobs. We also experience the Cold War, which was a period in American History where the United States really asserted to the world what it stood for, democracy and diplomacy. The beginnings of Civil Rights demonstrations from African Americans who want the basic human rights that are guaranteed to them by the Constitution also begins to take precedence. Though this was a decade of great prosperity, we did face economic hardships upon the return of our soldiers but we achieved great strides in the name of discrimination. The study of this decade will show us how president’s dealt with issues that arose during this time period and how a family was able to provide a basic need for our returning soldiers.

Time Requirements
- 4 50-minute class periods (if on block schedule, 2 days) *These days do not have to be consecutive. Fit the assignments in when needed but most will take a full day or 2 to complete.

Lesson Objective
- Using primary documents, students will develop a basic understanding of economical, political and civil actions that helped to make changes during the decade of prosperity.

Strand
- Time, Continuity and Change

Standard
- Students develop a sense of historical time and historical perspective as they study the history of their community, state, nation and world.

Benchmarks
- H-1B-H14 examining and summarizing key developments and issues in foreign and domestic policies during the Cold War era; (1, 2, 3, 4)
- H-1B-H15 analyzing the economic, political, social, and cultural transformation of the United States since World War II; (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- H-1A-H2 explaining and analyzing events, ideas, and issues within a historical context; (1, 2, 3, 4)
- H-1A-H3 interpreting and evaluating the historical evidence presented in primary and secondary sources; (1, 2, 3, 4)

Grade Level Expectations
- Compare historical periods or historical conflicts in terms of similar issues, actions, or trends in U.S. history (H-1A-H1)
- Contrast past and present events or ideas in U.S. history, demonstrating awareness of differing political, social, or economic context (H-1A-H1)
- Evaluate and use multiple primary or secondary materials to interpret historical facts, ideas, or issues (H-1A-H3)
- Analyze causes and effects in historical and contemporary U.S. events, using a variety of resources (H-1A-H6)
• Analyze the conflicts that resulted from Cold War tensions (e.g., Vietnam War, Korean War) (H-1B-H14)

Essential Question
• What are some events that occurred during the period of post war prosperity that has helped to shape America positively or negatively then and now?

Materials Required
• Primary sources (see following websites for documents):

1. Letters from Eisenhower to Faubus (for use with E.O. 10730)

2. Primary documents- E.O. 9981 and E.O. 10730
   http://www.ourdocuments.com

3. Copy of newspaper article for use with E.O. 9981
   http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aaghtml/exhibit/aopart9.html

4. Korean War documents
   http://www.military.com/Content/MoreContent1?file=index
   http://www.koreanwar.org/
   http://www.rt66.com/~korteng/smallarms/
   http://korea50.army.mil/history/index.shtml

5. Levittown Documents
   http://www.fandm.edu/levittown/imageslg_jpegs/F23G1.jpg
   http://tigger.uic.edu/~pbhales/Levittown/glevi28.gif
   http://kclibrary.nhmccd.edu/levittown.gif

6. Document Analysis form
   http://www.archives.gov

7. Internet connection
8. Reference Material
9. Textbook

Instructional Strategies Used
• Lecture and discussion
• Cooperative activities
• Individual activities

Directions for the Lesson
• Days prior to the introduction of the use of primary sources, the teacher would have ended a unit on WWII and introduced the students to the onset of the Cold War and other changes that began to take place during this time. You could introduce them to the fashions, music, literature, art and TV of the 50’s as well as other fads that develop during that time that we still see today. You then direct your students to some plights that were face during this time: discrimination, housing issues as well as several conflicts overseas as a result of the cold war. You then use the following primary documents over the course of 4 days to introduce those students to these plights.
Day One: Why Fight the Same Fight if we don’t have the same Rights?
The teacher will lead a discussion of some of the discriminations African Americans faced after returning from war. Students may say that blacks were treated like second-class citizens. You could bring to their attention that Blacks fought in WWII just like their white counterparts, but were forced to fight in segregated units. Point out to students that society begins to see the emergence of protests to change the discrimination not only in the armed forces but also in all aspects of life.

Present the students with Executive Order 9981, which set up committees to integrate the armed forces. You can have students analyze the document. Have them think about what were Truman’s feelings about the issue and what did he do to try to have this issue resolved. Also, point out what they see wrong with this document or who was left out. They will soon come to see that women were left out of the equation. This could lead into a discussion about women’s rights. Then, show students the newspaper article that came out in a newspaper in Chicago after the order came out and have them take a look at the headlines. Have them discuss how the newspaper portrayed the event.

Students will then use the Internet and reference material to research current issues where people’s civil rights are being violated today. They could use this information to set up a resolution of the current issues and design a poster with their platform as to how to solve the problem to the class. This could also be done as a group activity.

Day Two: We fixed the Armed Forces, Now fix the Schools
Use time in the beginning of class to let students present their posters to the class. The teacher will then introduce the students Brown v. Board or reintroduce the court case to students. You will let them know that it did away with “separate but equal”. You can then introduce the students to the “Little Rock Crisis” and how the little rock 9 was not permitted to enter Central High School in Arkansas. You can also show students the steps that president Eisenhower took to make sure these students were able to enter the school. The first primary document you can present is a telegram that the governor of Arkansas sent to Eisenhower after the president requested a meeting to discuss the issue. Then, you can show the students the president’s statement and Gov. Faubus statement in regards to their meeting.

You then show them the proclamation that Eisenhower issued to try to resolve the problem and try to pull out of the students why this may not work. Last, you show the students Executive Order 10730, which shows that Eisenhower had to step in to restore order in Arkansas by sending National Guard troops to the area and controlling the National Guard in the state of Arkansas. Using a document analysis form, have students analyze the order. Present the students with some footage of the incident in Arkansas so they can see first hand what the students faced.

The concluding assignment would be to write an essay imagining that they were one of those black students trying to enter Central High. They can explain ho they would have felt. Also ask them to address in their essay what if Brown had not won his case? How would they feel about separate facilities?

Day Three: Why get involved In a Problem that’s not ours?
Begin the class by reading a poem called “Korea” which was written by a soldier who served during the Korean War. Then, lecture to the students about the so-called “Forgotten War”. Let the students know that this war is also called the first conflict of the cold war. You can go back to the U.S. first initial interest in Korea and their efforts to create a democracy in the South part of Korea. Then, let students know how the war started. After going through all of the history, present the students with 2 documents. The first is the U.N. Resolution to have North Korea withdraw their troops from S. Korea.

Divide the students into groups based on the number of computers you have in your classroom. The students should analyze document 1. The student can use the internet to research which countries are apart of the U.N.
and point out to them the issue with the Soviet Union. Have the students write an essay stating why they think the Soviets supported the invasion or what were their motives for joining the U.N. in the first place.

Present them with Truman’s statement of support for Korea, which came out the day after the invasion. Have the groups do a comparing and contrasting assignment comparing the similar and different reasons the U.S. enters into wars. They could compare this war against WWI, WWI, and Vietnam. Have students give their perspective as to why the U.S always seems to get involved in oversea conflicts and present this information to the class.

Day Four: Why not help others as Well as Help Ourselves?
The students could brainstorm, as a class, some of the hardships that soldiers faced upon returning home. They may say jobs, segregation, healthcare issues and housing. Then, you ask the students what is a suburb? You then tell them the first subdivision was created after WWII to create housing for soldiers. You introduce them to the Levitts.

Abraham Levitt, who was a real estate lawyer, created the whole concept of Levittown originally but he also did investments. He purchased the land that he sold off to developers but the depression hit and the developers he sold the land to went out of business. So, to protect his investment, he and his 2 sons, none of whom had construction experience, completed the development themselves. They continued to purchase and develop land during the depression. This eventually led to a contract with the navy to build homes for shipyard workers in Norfolk, Virginia. They bettered their techniques of building as well as mass production.

For senior Levitt, it started out as a way to protect his investments but after the War, soldiers were in need of housing. The war created a shortage of construction materials so housing was hard to come by. William Levitt saw that his family could capitalize on this shortage because they had cheap land they purchased when the potato crops were wiped out by the golden nematode. So, Levitt and Sons divided the filed into small lots and massed produce homes that soldiers paid for with GI loans.

The houses were built cheaply, and they came with kitchen appliances and washer and dryers. Some even came with televisions. The communities had their own schools, post office and phone service. They all in all constructed about 17000 homes.

You can then show the students the photos and house plans. You could have the students research Levittown on the computer and look for modern day Levittown, which still exists and compare and contrast the look of the house today as compared to the first ones built. They could also research which subdivisions were built in New Orleans for our returning soldiers.

Assessment (Constructed Response)

Possibility One: “Separate but Equal” did away with segregation in schools. Discuss the precursor to the separate but equal decision.

Possibility Two: African American soldiers pushed for desegregation in the armed forces. Think of 3 more protests, marches, conflicts, sit-ins, etc. that led in protest against discrimination for African Americans. Also, discuss the outcomes.

Possibility Three: The United States got involved in the conflict in Korea after the invasion of southern Korea. Looking back at previous conflicts the U.S. have been involved in, explain the events that led to the United States involvement in these conflicts.
*When grading constructed responses, use the rubric that is used in the sample GEE21 question booklet. When grading in-class essays and presentations, use a rubric that may contain all of the elements you look for in an essay or group presentation.

**Enrichment Activity**
Have students reflect on the post war decade either in an essay form or they could construct a graphic organizer or timeline highlighting significant events of the post war with a reflection piece attached.

**Attachments**
See web addresses for necessary material.