**The Global 1905:**

**Facets of a Year; Facets of an Era**

0.0 – Module Lesson Plan

This module is part of the History for the 21st Century project (H21). History for the 21st Century is a collaborative project designed to serve students in introductory college history courses and their instructors. Together, we build, assess, and progressively improve free, online educative, enquiry-based curriculum. You can find out more about H21 by visiting <https://www.history21.com/> .

**Module Overview**

How do we experience historical events, and how do we decide what is important in history? This module examines several co-incident and interconnected historical developments from the year 1905 in order to interrogate our relationship to events at the time they occur, how we make meaning of them later on, and how they fit into bigger historical pictures. Through six planned class meetings, students will explore the following events of 1905:

* + the Russo-Japanese War,
  + the Russian Revolution,
  + the British Parliament’s non-vote on women’s suffrage, and
  + the Partition of Bengal.

The conclusion also briefly covers Albert Einsten’s four ‘physics changing’ papers of 1905.

The goal of the module is to encourage students to consider how people experience and understand events and their significance at the time they occur, and how they reflect on them later on – in essence, to understand the production of history. In addition, it also aims to help students think both about the ways the events of this single year were connected to one another, as well as the ways they were illustrative of the broader changes of modernity.

To accomplish these goals, students will practice skills the following historical skills:

* Analyzing individual primary sources from different perspectives and moments in history.
* Synthesizing multiple historical sources to gain a fuller picture of a particular event.

The materials for the module include readings, primary sources, lecture slides, and instructor notes, as well as exercises and assignments for you to utilize or adapt as you think best.

**Module Map**

**Lesson 1: Introduction to 1905**

The lesson begins by introducing the module, its key questions and the events that will be covered, and by asking students to think about how they experience events today, and in personal historical reflection. The first day also introduces students to the major trends of the modern era (roughly, the last two hundred years): demographic shifts, the rise of global empires, urbanization and industrialization, popular participation in governance, accelerating communication and rapid transportation, globalization, and debates about whether Western ways and ideas were a universal path towards the future, or just one of many “modernities.”

**Lesson 2: The Russo-Japanese War**

The next lesson begins the module’s survey of historical events that occurred in 1905, beginning with the Russo-Japanese War. Students consider the historical context of the moment in order to better understand the perspectives of the war’s participants and observers, before diving in to an analysis of primary sources from before, during, and after the war’s conclusion. Students will think both about how interpretations of the conflict vary over time, and how the war reflects trends of the modern era.

**Lesson 3: A Russian Revolution**

Lesson 3 looks at the Russian Revolution of 1905. The main exercise of this lesson is a comparison between an imperial official and a participant in the revolution, both of which were written after 1905. This lesson encourages students to find similarities and differences in these accounts, in order to identify a synthesis of the Russian Revolution and its causes and consequences. The end of the lesson also asks students to compare the revolution to the Russo-Japanese War and to consider the Russian Revolution in the broader historical context of the modern era.

**Lesson 4: Women’s Suffrage in Britain**

Lesson 4 turns to Britain and the women’s suffrage movement. The lesson begins by considering the deeper historical context of the suffrage movement, and then consider arguments for and against women’s enfranchisement presented during parliamentary debates in 1905. Using the memoirs of Emmeline Pankhurst, students also consider how one of the key activists of the movement assessed the “failure” of 1905 to achieve women’s voting rights, and what consequences this had. The lesson concludes with a comparison to the Russian Revolution of 1905, to draw out similarities and differences in growing popular demands for a say in governance.

**Lesson 5: The Partition of Bengal**

In the fifth lesson, students consider the British empire in South Asia, and the Partition of Bengal of 1905. Students consider the motivations of imperial administrators, as well as the arguments they made to the Bengali public in favor of the partition. They also consider how local leaders interpreted this event, and its effects on popular resistance and ideas about identity in the region.

**Conclusion**

The final day of the module asks students to consider how the events of 1905 were connected to one another, as manifestations of the trends of modernity. Students are also encouraged to consider to what extent the feel the people writing about these events at the time, and looking back understood what was happening. The goal is to work towards a more complex understanding of the world in 1905 and its place in a longer historical narrative, as well as to reflect on the construction of history.