

Vietnamese American Experiences Model Curriculum
California Department of Education
“The Civilizing Mission”: French Colonialism in Vietnam (1858–1954)
Grade: 9–10

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Area of Study: Social & Political Transformations in 20th Century Vietnam

Compelling Question: How did French colonialism, political ideologies and geopolitics shape the internal divisions of Vietnam?

Lesson Question (Supporting Question):

- How did colonialism increase tensions between different religious and ethnic groups?
- What were the impacts of French colonialism on Vietnamese society and political identity?
- How did colonialism impact the daily lives of individuals? How was this experience different or the same in rural and urban areas? How did these experiences shape political identities and social relations in the colonial and postcolonial periods?

Lesson Materials:

- Supplies:
 - Access to laptop device
 - A map of the Imperial Powers of the Pacific, 1939-09-01
- Video:
 - “1274 - Gabriel Veyre - Enfants annamites ramassant des Sapèques devant la pagode des dames (1899)”
- Handouts:
 - Documents Handout
 - Link to handouts:
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/hxqhu8ef05sy4yhmu9m32mbexbauk9xm>

Lesson Objective: Students will trace and explain the causes and consequences of French colonialism of Vietnam from 1858–1954 by gathering information in primary sources to write a short response.

Ethnic Studies Theme: This lesson connects to the ethnic studies theme of *power and oppression* from the Asian American Studies Curriculum Framework (Asian American Research Initiative, 2022). Students will consider war, migration and imperialism as contexts shaping citizenship and racialization. Students explore the connections and impact of imperialism and colonialism on Southeast Asian countries.

For additional guidance around ethnic studies implementation, refer to the *Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum* (2021) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmc.asp>.

Historical Thinking Skills: This lesson will facilitate student proficiency in *historical significance*, one of Seixas' historical thinking skills (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Students make personal decisions about what is historically significant, and then consider the criteria they use to make those decisions. Students consider how historical significance varies over time and from group to group.

Standards Addressed:

HSS-10.4.1 Describe the rise of industrial economies and their link to imperialism and colonialism (e.g., the role played by national security and strategic advantage; moral issues raised by the search for national hegemony, Social Darwinism, and the missionary impulse; material issues such as land, resources, and technology).

HSS-10.4.3 Explain imperialism from the perspective of the colonizers and the colonized and the varied immediate and long-term responses by the people under colonial rule.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson Assessment: Students will use the information they gather from analyzing primary sources to formulate a written or recorded response to the prompt: “Consider the tremendous impacts that French colonization had on Vietnamese people and Vietnamese society. In a written paragraph, explain at least three outcomes you believe are the most significant in terms of their impact on Vietnam.” Alternatively, students can create a (digital or hand drawn) mind map, or storyboard that illustrates the three most significant outcomes.

Suggested Amount of Time: 55–70 minutes

Lesson Background: The age of New Imperialism in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries began an unprecedented pursuit and acquisition of colonies all over the world, as colonial powers that included most of Western Europe, the United States, and Japan began to scramble for territories in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. There were several

reasons for the French invasion of Vietnam. First, there were incidents where European missionaries were expelled and even killed. In the name of defending the church and Europeans in Vietnam, Napoleon III ordered his navy to invade Vietnam in July 1857. Modern historians understand this as a convenient excuse to expand France's colonial power. Second, as France was competing against other European powers for economic and military superiority, they wanted to secure more strategic geographic positions to promote their international trade and capitalism. Because the Vietnamese lacked the weapons and technology to effectively resist the new western invaders, its leaders had little choice but to sign peace treaties with France in 1862. This treaty gave control of southern Vietnam to France, which was then renamed Cochinchina. However, it would take another 21 years before the French were able to finally conquer northern Vietnam. After doing so in 1883, they renamed that region Tonkin and combined with Cochinchina and central Vietnam (renamed Annam), Vietnam officially became a French colony, known as Indochina. As a colonized nation, Vietnam's natural resources were exploited, its people were treated with disdain and impoverished, and its leaders were rendered powerless. Resistance movements began to develop almost immediately.

The French were motivated to colonize Vietnam during the era of New Imperialism for two main reasons: (1) the desire for raw materials and markets spurred by nineteenth century industrialization, and (2) belief in the civilizing mission, or the duty of supposedly superior white races to uplift non-white savages, as described by those on this mission. This resulted in paternalistic colonial policies that had enduring impacts on Vietnamese society.

This lesson contains content that may be sensitive for some students. Teachers should exercise discretion in evaluating whether the resources are suitable for their class and provide a sensitive content warning to their students at the beginning of each day of the lesson.

Lesson Procedures:

- a. Warm-Up (five minutes)
 - i. Ask students what they know about the French, and to consider what experiences or information has led to that understanding and schema for them.
 1. Have students do a pair-share.
 2. Solicit student responses to the class.
 - ii. Share lesson questions and objectives.
- b. Starter Activities: “History Mystery” (10–15 mins)

- i. Project these two sources without any context for the students. Ask them what they see in the video and on the map. Direct them to talk with their groups and share any historical or contextual knowledge they have that might help them make sense of what they are looking at
- ii. Project this video from YouTube: “1274 - Gabriel Veyre - Enfants annamites ramassant des Sapèques devant la pagode des dames (1899)”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=wd30KcCsans>
 1. Discussion questions:
 - a. What do you see happening? Take a guess as to what is happening.
 - b. What do you think is happening?
 - c. What does this video make you wonder about?
 - d. Answer: This is two white people (Europeans) throwing coins at non-white kids.
 2. Where is this taking place? Why is this taking place?
- iii. Project this map: A map of the Imperial Powers of the Pacific, 1939-09-01,
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/pbfwhd38i3cxshorkj74che3xh351rxv> (Original website source:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pacific_Area_-_The_Imperial_Powers_1939_-_Map.svg)
 1. Discussion questions:
 - a. What is this a map of? What does it show? (Answer: This is a map of New Imperialism.)
 - b. What time period does this map depict? What has already happened? What is about to happen?
 - c. Why are these areas in Southeast Asia color coded in this way?
- c. Provide historical context for this lesson on French Colonialism. Use information from the lesson background above.
- d. Pass out documents handout
(<https://app.box.com/file/1544397128562?s=hxqhu8ef05sy4yhmu9m32mbexbauk9xm>) and have students annotate notes onto the documents as they read (20–30 mins).

- i. For photographs and images:
 1. Discussion questions (have students share in pairs or groups before calling on them to elicit responses):
 - a. What do you notice or wonder about this image?
 - b. What does this image tell about?
 - c. What does this image tell you about the causes OR effects of French colonialism in Vietnam?
 2. Direct students to take notes about what this source tells them about the causes and effects of French colonialism in Vietnam. Have students mark specific sections of the sources to use as evidence for their written assessment.
- ii. For text documents, use two reads.
 1. First read: Skim to find unknown words and define them with the class.
 2. Second read: What does the source tell you about? What is it explaining or describing? Summarize the main ideas of this document
 - a. After the second read, ask: “What does this image tell you about the causes or effects of French colonialism in Vietnam?”
 3. Direct students to take notes about what this source tells them about the causes or effects of French colonialism in Vietnam.
 - a. Have students mark specific sections of the sources to use as evidence for their written assessment.
 - b. Teachers are welcome to edit the longer documents to reduce their length to less than half a page for each document
 - c. Teachers can also go through the documents and create a glossary of difficult words for students to use as they read
 - d. Optional: As the teacher, read out the documents out loud to the students through direct instruction. If a document

camera is available, use it to model how students should annotate documents.

- e. The documents are presented in chronological order and present a complete narrative history of French colonialism in Vietnam. As you go through the documents, it will help students to create a running timeline of events on a whiteboard or large piece of butcher paper. Teachers should provide a content warning prior to sharing the document sources with students. Some images may solicit strong emotions and if students feel uncomfortable or distressed, provide them the opportunity to step outside or skip that photo.
 - f. Use sentence frames or sentence starters for the written response at the end of the lesson.
- e. Processing and Synthesis (10–15 mins)
- i. Have students create a brief list (written or recorded) of the causes and effects of French colonialism individually for 3–5 minutes.
 - ii. Next, have them share with a partner or their group. They can add onto their list as they hear other students share out.
- f. Cultural Production (15–20 mins)
- i. Have students write out their response to the lesson assessment prompt: “Consider the tremendous impacts that French colonization had on Vietnamese people and Vietnamese society. In a written paragraph, explain at least three outcomes you believe are the most significant in terms of their impact on Vietnam.”
 - ii. Alternatively, students can create a (digital or hand drawn) mind map, or storyboard that illustrates the 3 most significant outcomes. The final product can be open to a written, visual, or audio narrative.

Scaffolding:

- **Engagement:** Consider the following method to support with lesson engagement:
 - Differentiate the degree of difficulty or complexity within which core activities can be completed

- **Representation:** Consider the following method to support with multiple means of representation:
 - Pre-teach vocabulary and symbols, especially in ways that promote connection to the learners' experience and prior knowledge.
 - Embed support for vocabulary and symbols within the text (e.g., hyperlinks or footnotes to definitions, explanations, illustrations, previous coverage, translations).
- **Action and Expression:** Consider the following method to support in presenting their learning in multiple ways:
 - Provide models or examples of the process and product of goal-setting.

For additional ideas to support your students, check out the UDL Guidelines at CAST (2018) <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>.

Multilingual Learner Supports:

- **Emerging:** Consider the following method to support with emerging students:
 - Writing: Provide sentence frames with word and picture banks
 - In response to a prompt, the teacher offers a sentence frame orally and/or in writing to support expression of student thinking. Frames are adjusted based upon specific grammatical structure, key vocabulary, content learning, and language proficiency level descriptors, etc. Frames are a temporary scaffold that require modification.
- **Expanding:** Consider the following method to support with expanding students:
 - Writing: Teach signal words (comparison, chronology, cause-effect, listing) for academic writing.
- **Bridging:** Consider the following method to support with bridging students:
 - Writing: Require academic writing and the use of target academic vocabulary.
 - Apply domain-specific vocabulary and general Academic vocabulary in open sentence frames to perform functions, like describing or explaining, that target specific grammatical structures.

For additional guidance around scaffolding for multilingual learners, please consult the following

resources:

- *English Learner Toolkit of Strategies*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/ujkdc2xp1dqjzrlq55czph50c3sq1ngu>
- *Providing Appropriate Scaffolding*
<https://www.sdcoe.net/educators/multilingual-education-and-global-achievement/oracy-toolkit/providing-appropriate-scaffolding#scaffolding>
- *Strategies for ELD*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/dcp15ymah51uwizpmmt2vys5zr2r5reu>
- *ELA / ELD Framework*
<https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/resources/6537/ela-eld-framework>
- *California ELD Standards*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/vqn43cd632z22p8mfzn2h7pntc71kb02>

Enrichment Opportunities:

1. Teachers can take a deep dive with their students to help them understand colonialism throughout the world and its impact on indigenous people. This lesson comes to an end as the First Indochina War (French Indochina War) is heating up. Students who are interested in the topic should be encouraged to investigate what happens during the rest of this war and how it ends with the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu.
2. Some students might be interested in the revolts and rebellions against French colonial rule referenced in a few of the sources. There were numerous uprisings not mentioned in the lesson that students may be interested in studying in more depth, the most famous being the Thái Nguyên uprising in 1917.
3. The film *Indochine* is set in 1930s Vietnam and shows the complex interactions between colonizer and colonized. It would be an excellent followup to this lesson if time permits. It is rated PG-13 for partial nudity, implied sex scenes, and mild language and drug use. These scenes can be skipped without losing the narrative of the film.
4. If students have also studied other aspects or areas under New Imperialism, they can be asked to compare French Indochina to these other regions.

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A map of the Imperial Powers of the Pacific, 1939-09-01. Dates shown indicate the approximate year that the various powers gain control of their possessions.

Japanese control of territory in China was tenuous. 2008, August 1. Wikimedia Commons.

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<https://web.viu.ca/davies/H479B.Imperialism.Nationalism/Ferry.Fr.imperialism.1884.htm>

SOURCE 2: *Tonkin — Hongay — Mines de charbon à ciel ouvert à Hatou (Coll. Dieulefils, Hanoi)*. (n.d.). Picryl.

<https://picryl.com/media/tonkin-hongay-mines-de-charbon-a-ciel-ouvert-a-hatou-coll-dieulefils-hanoi-7e9e57>

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