



Teacher's Guide

Iran-Iraq War: 1980-1988 **World At War**

Grade Levels:

7 - 12

Subject Areas:

World History

Synopsis:

A British narrator explains that Iraq invaded Iran in 1980 to establish control over the oil trade and also to reassert control of the vast oil reserves located in Kurdish areas of northern Iraq. He explains that although the Iraqi army was well supplied with armaments and officers and men geared up for the attack, Saddam Hussein's instructions to attack on seven fronts ultimately resulted in a prolonged war. Iran rallied to present a strong and resourceful counteroffensive led by Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. When the war finally draws to a close in 1988, the death toll is high on both sides and the oil fields are in ruin.

Learning Objectives: Students will:

- Understand that this war was fought for control of the international petroleum trade.
- Understand the intensity of fundamentalist Islam in Iran.
- Compare the leadership of Saddam Hussein and Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.
- Understand the background to the present-day situation in Iraq and Iran.

Vocabulary:

sporadic war, Blitzkrieg, intransigent, pragmatic, sanctioning

Pre-Viewing Discussion:

Where is Iran located? Why is this location such a strategic one?

What's the basis of the economy in Iran? What is the basis of the economy in Iraq?

In 1980, who was the leader in Iraq? What kind of power did he exert over his people?

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Post-Viewing Discussion:

Why did Iraq invade Iran?

Why did the war last so long?

Who were the better fighters, Iraqis or Iranians? What makes you think so?

What did this war achieve?

What were the lasting negative effects of this war?

Further Activities:

Investigate the influence of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, as it was in 1980 and as it is today.

Compare Saddam Hussein's leadership in this war with his leadership during the recent Gulf War.

Find out what kind of biological weapons are stockpiled today and which nations have them. Present your opinion about whether they will ever be used in a modern war.

Investigate how the international oil trade was influenced by this war.

Related New Dimension Media Titles:

Carter, Reagan and G.H.W. Bush
Iran Today