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BEFORE READING

1. Have students view the summary of the insurrection in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021 at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHmTzFnymOM

2. After viewing, distribute 3 sticky notes to each student and have students write the following, each on a different note:
   - 1 word that sums up what they saw;
   - 1 emotion that they are feeling about what they saw;
   - 1 question that they have about what they saw.

3. Ask students to join with a partner to compare ideas. Then have each pair join with another to compare ideas.

4. Next, share as a class the words, emotions, and questions generated from the video.

5. Finally, invite students to set a purpose for reading the article, referring to the resource page Setting A Purpose Before Reading (p. 49) as needed.
International Insurrection in the United States

It was the kind of terrifying spectacle often witnessed in countries with weak or non-existent democracies. For several hours, swarms of violent rioters smashed windows, rampaged through government corridors, gleefully vandalized offices, and sent panicked lawmakers scurrying for protective cover.

The riled-up mob also called for the death of high-ranking politicians. Some even placed pipe bombs in strategic locations in a failed attempt to carry out those threats. Police trying to hold back the angry throng were woefully outnumbered.

A Powder-Keg Rally

Shockingly, that was the scene in early January in a nation that has long been hailed as a bedrock of democracy. The site of this chaos? Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States.

What led to this insurrection – an event that will likely go down in history as a major black mark against America? The riot, attended by thousands, occurred following a rally that U.S. President Donald Trump and his organizers held in Washington at 11 a.m. on January 6.

That date was chosen for the gathering because it is the traditional day when all members of the U.S. Congress gather to formally certify the results of the federal election that the country holds every four years.

The U.S. vice president – in this case, Mike Pence – presides over this symbolic ceremony that celebrates the peaceful transfer of power from one president to another. That’s what he was doing as the day unfolded.

The rally was a last-ditch attempt to stop this noble process. The reason? After the latest presidential vote in November, Joe Biden, a Democrat, defeated Mr. Trump by a large margin to become the president in 2021. However, Mr. Trump never accepted this outcome. For more than two months, he made false claims that the election was rigged and that the results were fraudulent.

Mr. Trump offered no evidence to validate these assertions. In fact, judges in more than 50 court cases ruled that the election was fair and square. Yet after exhausting every legal avenue, the U.S. president still insisted that the election was stolen from him.

‘Be there. Will be wild!’

Many of his followers became convinced this was true. They were egged on by extreme right-wing commentators, Republican politicians afraid to alienate Mr. Trump, and Internet conspiracy theories. So when Mr. Trump urged them to come to Washington to protest – ‘Be there. Will be wild!’ he tweeted – thousands from at least 36 states made the trip. Some even came from Canada.

In his remarks at the rally, President Trump appeared to encourage the crowd to take action against the government.

Definitions

Alienate: to cause someone to stop being friendly, helpful, etc.
Assertion: the act of expressing or defending your rights, claims, or opinions in a confident or forceful way
Bedrock: a strong idea, principle, or fact that supports something
Fraudulent: done to trick someone for the purpose of getting something valuable
Insurrection: a usually violent attempt to take control of a government
Preside: to be in charge of something, such as a meeting
Right Wing: the part of a political group that consists of people who support conservative or traditional ideas and policies
U.S. Congress: the legislature of the federal government of the United States that consists of the 435 members of the House of Representatives and 100 members of the Senate
“Republicans are constantly fighting like a boxer with his hands tied behind his back,” he exorted them. “We’re going to have to fight much harder... After this, we’re going to walk down [to Congress] and I’ll be there with you...Because you’ll never take back our country with weakness. You have to show strength.”

He also expressed his fury at Vice President Pence. Mr. Pence had faithfully backed the president for four years. But the vice president said he would not declare the election invalid during the symbolic January 6 ceremony, as President Trump had been urging him to do.

**VP in the Crosshairs**

After the rally, thousands of furious Trump supporters descended on the Capitol building where Congress meets. The mob easily broke through barriers as observers wondered why there was such little law enforcement.

Hundreds stormed the U.S. seat of power. Some shouted “Where’s Mike Pence” as they went looking for politicians to confront. For four hours, they ransacked files, displayed hate-filled messages, and took selfies that they uploaded to social media.

Frightened lawmakers sheltered in place or were whisked away through secret underground tunnels to safety. Staff in some offices barricaded their doors and hid under their desks.

Police shot and killed a woman in a standoff. When it was all over, five people were dead, including one police officer.

Hours into the chaos, Mr. Trump finally tweeted a video message to the rioters, urging them to go home. But he didn’t denounce the violence.

“This was a fraudulent election, but we can’t play into the hands of these people. We have to have peace. So go home, we love you, you’re very special,” he told the marauders.

Finally, reinforcements from several policing agencies brought the siege under control shortly after 6 p.m.

**Democracy Prevails**

This assault on democracy only made the lawmakers more resolute, however. Determined to perform their duty despite their fears, they returned to Congress at 8 p.m. Late in the night, a shaken but determined Mike Pence counted the ballots and declared that lawmakers had certified the election – including Republicans who had planned to challenge the process. That cleared the way for Joe Biden to become president on January 20.

“Violence never wins; freedom wins; and this is still the people’s house,” Mr. Pence said.

**The Aftermath**

Federal police have launched a nationwide search to track down the people who attacked the Capitol. Investigators already have more than 170 suspects who could face prosecution.

Meanwhile, expect a deep probe into why police failed to protect the Capitol building.
International Insurrection in the United States

Comprehension Questions

1. What is the U.S. Congress?

2. What was planned to occur at the U.S. Congress on January 6? What is the vice president’s role in this event?

3. Describe the event that was hosted by President Trump on January 6. What was the goal of this gathering?

4. What message did President Trump convey at the rally? How did he incite the protesters to take action?

5. Describe the actions of Trump supporters when they reached the Capitol building where Congress was meeting.

6. How did the police and lawmakers respond to this assault?

7. What happened after the demonstrators were removed from the Capitol building?

8. What did the House of Representatives do on January 12? What was the specific charge against Mr. Trump?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. The article shared the message that President Trump delivered from the White House to his supporters while the insurrection was happening at the Capitol: “This was a fraudulent election, but we can’t play into the hands of these people. We have to have peace. So go home, we love you, you’re very special.”

In any message, there are explicit ideas that are obvious and clear, and implicit ideas that are suggested or implied. In your opinion, what are the explicit and implicit ideas in President Trump’s message to his supporters? Give reasons to support your ideas.

2. Late on the evening of January 6, once the Capitol building was secured, Vice President Mike Pence presided over the certification of the election results. He stated, “Violence never wins; freedom wins; and this is still the people’s house.”

As you see it, what message was the vice president sending in this statement? Explain.

3. Throughout his presidency, Donald Trump has communicated directly to his supporters through social media. He has continually criticized mainstream media outlets as “fake news”, particularly when they don’t speak favourably of him or his actions.

Following the insurrection in Washington, D.C., social media platforms Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube took down President Trump’s accounts, saying that they did not support the president’s messaging that the election was stolen from him nor the violence that followed his January 6 speech. Some applaud this choice, saying that the President’s lies needed to be silenced; others are concerned that this is a direct attack on free speech, one of the key rights within any democracy.

As you see it, did these platforms make the right decision? Give reasons to support your ideas.
QUESTIONS FOR ONLINE EXPLORATION

Note: The links below are listed at www.lesplan.com/en/links for easy access.

1. President Trump has delivered many messages to the American people during and since the insurrection at the Capitol building, in different settings and circumstances. Visit the links below to watch the progression of these messages over time:

   January 6, rally: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6quOC6McLZU
   January 6, during the insurrection: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMeAE4GHmIE
   January 7, formal announcement: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFADopBnb_U
   January 8, formal announcement: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfNTxWjJhco
   January 12, on the White House lawn https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLjfWxy2qjo
   January 13, formal announcement: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDNiNdsPHNA

   As you see it, has the president been consistent with his messaging? Give reasons to support your ideas.

2. With just over a week left in Donald Trump's presidency, the U.S. Congress voted to impeach the president. Visit either of the sites below to learn about the impeachment vote and what it might mean for Donald Trump as he leaves office:

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crq196edW6M
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptsU235pU1k

   Do you agree with the U.S. Congress' decision to impeach President Trump? Explain.

3. In the aftermath of the slow police response to defend the Capitol building on January 6, there have been many concerns about the impending inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden on January 20 and potentially violent demonstrations led by Trump supporters in Washington, D.C., and around the United States in the days before, during, and after this event.

   Visit either of the links below to learn about the security measures being put in place for Joe Biden's inauguration:

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wflvPM1ivs
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQviYYcHcMs

   As you see it, is enough being done to ensure the safety of the American people during the inauguration? Explain.
YOUR TASK:

Examine the editorial cartoon. Then, use the questions below to help you decode the cartoon’s message. Be specific and include as many details as possible in your answers.

INITIAL READING: What can an initial look reveal?

1. Glance quickly at the cartoon. What is your first impression – your “gut response”?

2. Consider your background knowledge. What do you already know about the context of the cartoon – the time, place or situation? (List key facts.)

CLOSER LOOK: What’s happening in the cartoon?

3. What landmass is represented in the cartoon? What is unusual about how this landmass is presented?

4. Who or what do you suppose the talking elephant symbolizes? Why?

5. What is the talking elephant saying?

DRAW CONCLUSIONS: What overall impression can you draw?

6. Identify possible biases. Whose perspective or point of view is expressed in the cartoon?

7. Explain the overall message of the cartoon in a paragraph. (Remember, a good interpretation is specific and detailed.) ★
MAP ASSIGNMENT

U.S. SOUTHEAST

Complete this map assignment to better understand the article *Insurrection in the United States*.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Obtain the required resources and read all the instructions before starting.
2. Colour your map **after** all labelling is completed.
3. Print in pencil only first, then go over the printing in black ink.
4. Work carefully and neatly.

**Resources Required:** pencil, black pen, pencil crayons, ruler, eraser and an atlas.

**Part A** Locate and label the capital of the United States and **underline** this city name.

**Part B** Locate and label Georgia in CAPITAL letters and shade this state yellow.

**Part C** Locate and label the capital of Georgia and **underline** this city name.

**Part D** Locate and label the following U.S. states in CAPITAL letters and shade each as indicated:
- Florida (orange)
- North Carolina (purple)
- Kentucky (pink)
- Alabama (red)
- Virginia (yellow)
- South Carolina (pink)
- West Virginia (green)
- North Carolina (purple)
- Virginia (yellow)
- Kentucky (pink)

**Part E** Locate and label the capitals of these U.S. states and **underline** each city name.

**Part F** Locate and label the following U.S. states in CAPITAL letters and shade each as indicated:
- Louisiana (brown)
- Arkansas (yellow)
- Illinois (green)
- Ohio (purple)
- Delaware (brown)
- Mississippi (green)
- Missouri (red)
- Indiana (yellow)
- Maryland (red)
- New Jersey (pink)

**Part G** Locate and label the Bahamas in CAPITAL letters and shade this country yellow.

**Part H** Locate and label the capital of the Bahamas and **underline** this city name.

**Part I** Draw and label the following rivers and shade them light blue:
- Mississippi River
- Cumberland River
- Ohio River
- Tennessee River

**Part J** Locate and label the following and shade all salt water dark blue:
- Gulf of Mexico
- Atlantic Ocean
- Straits of Florida

**Part K** Complete your map with a frame, title and compass.
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

A. Write the letter that corresponds to the best answer on the line beside each question:

1. **On January 6, 2021, the U.S. Congress met to:**
   - a) impeach the vice president
   - b) certify the November election results
   - c) re-elect President Trump
   - d) challenge the results of the November election
   - e) swear in Joe Biden as president

2. **Who was in charge of the process that the U.S. Congress undertook on January 6?**
   - a) Nancy Pelosi
   - b) Anthony Fauci
   - c) Donald Trump
   - d) Barack Obama
   - e) Mike Pence

3. **The impeachment charge brought against President Trump was: ‘______ of insurrection’**
   - a) counseling
   - b) conspiracy
   - c) incitement
   - d) involvement
   - e) attempt

B. Mark the statements T (True) or F (False). If a statement is True, write one important fact to support it on the line below. If a statement is False, write the words that make it true on the line below.

4. **True or False?** The U.S. vice president supported President Trump's request to declare the election invalid.

5. **True or False?** On January 6 President Trump urged his supporters to take action against the U.S. government.

6. **True or False?** The impeachment process starts in the Senate and ends in the House of Representatives.

C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.

7. The House of Representatives + the Senate = the U.S. ________________________ .

8. Very few police officers were assigned to protect the U.S. ________________________ building on January 6.

9. Joe Biden is a member of the ________________________ Party.

D. Respond to the following question in paragraph form. *(Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.)*

10. **As you see it, should Donald Trump be held accountable for the insurrection on the Capitol carried out by his supporters?** Give reasons to support your response.
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