
War with Iran?

Link:

<https://stosselintheclassroom.org/both-sides-war-with-iran/>

Guide:

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on either side of a contentious topic. Because these questions often touch upon statements made briefly in the videos, we recommend reading the questions before watching each video.

Students are encouraged to take notes during the videos, and it may be helpful for students to break into groups, each taking responsibility for only a few questions, before coming together for discussion.

Analysis Questions:

1. What are the opposing ideas in these two videos?
2. In the ABC News video, Vice President J.D. Vance said: “[W]e’re not at war with Iran...we’re at war with Iran’s nuclear program.” What did he mean by this? Is it reasonable for the U.S. to attack a foreign country and then claim it’s not at war with that country? Why/Why not?
3. In the CBS video, Margaret Brennan said that Rep. Thomas Massie and Rep. Ro Khanna are on "completely different ends of the political spectrum." Why do you think politicians from both ends of the political spectrum agree on this topic? Is it significant that there's some bipartisan agreement? Why/Why not?
4. Vice President Vance said that the strike on Iran accomplished “a very core American national objective: Iran cannot have a nuclear weapons program.” Should this be a “core American national objective”? Why/Why not?
5. In the CBS video, Rep. Massie talked about reigning in the executive branch. What did he mean by this?
6. Vice President Vance said that the strike on Iran stopped Iran from enriching uranium to weapons grade uranium. Is that goal worth the risk of a war with Iran? Why/Why not?
7. Rep. Massie said that congress has the "sole authority to declare a war and to engage or authorize the engagement of acts of war." Were you aware that congress has this sole authority? Has the executive branch respected this authority? Why/Why not?
8. Vice President Vance said: “[W]e’re going to have a serious conversation about how to get rid of Iran’s nuclear weapons program permanently.” What did he say that would entail?
9. Rep. Massie used the term "imminent threat." What is an "imminent threat"? Does that term apply to Iran? Why/Why not?

10. What two things did Vice President Vance say would result in “overwhelming force from the Americans”?
11. In the CBS video, Rep. Khanna said: "The tragedy in this country is that we keep entering this overseas wars...and then we're left with Americans bearing the consequences for decades." Do you agree that this is a tragedy? Why/Why not?
12. In the ABC News video, we saw a clip of President Trump saying: “We will measure our success not only by the battles we win, but also by the wars that we end and—perhaps most importantly—the wars we never get into.” What did he mean by this? Is his statement consistent with the strike on Iran? Why/Why not?
13. Rep. Massie said: "I wouldn't call my side of the MAGA base 'isolationists'.... We're non-interventionists." What is an isolationist? What is a non-interventionist? What are the key distinctions?
14. Vice President Vance said: “[W]e believe the way that you achieve peace is through strength.” What did he mean by this? Do you agree with him? Why/Why not?
15. Rep. Massie expressed skepticism that the U.S.'s involvement would be limited to three bombings. Is his skepticism justified? Why/Why not?
16. Vice President Vance mentioned “regime change.” What is regime change?
17. Rep. Khanna said that U.S. foreign policy has created a "generation of hate." What did he mean by this?
18. Did these two videos share any common ground? Were there any points on which they agreed? If so, what were they?
19. Should one of the arguments we heard carry more weight than the other? If so, which one? Why?
20. Did you have an opinion on this topic before watching these videos? If so, what was it? Has your opinion changed? If so, how? What did you learn from these videos that affects your views on this topic?
21. What else would you like to learn about this topic?
22. For more on this topic, see “[Both Sides: Foreign Policy.](#)”