

Standard 5-6: The student will demonstrate an understanding of developments in the United States since the fall of the Soviet Union and its satellite states in 1992.

5.6.1 Use a map to identify the regions of United States political involvement since the fall of the communist states, including places in the Middle East, Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Balkans in Europe, and Asia. (P, G, H)

Taxonomy Level: A 1 Remember /Factual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

In 2nd grade, students identified the continents and major nation-states of the world on a map (2-4.1). However, the concepts associated with the fall of the communist states as well as the other areas of United States involvement throughout the world are new for 5th grade students. While these concepts are further addressed in 7th grade, high school global studies, and in United States History, no future standard and/or indicator will require the students to identify these regions specifically on a map.

It is essential for students to know:

Students must be able to use a map to identify the various regions of United States political involvement since the fall of the communist states. Students should be able to identify the Middle East, Central America, Africa, and Asia. The indicator implies that students should know these regions because of United States' political involvement, so it is important that students understand why and how the United States was/is involved in these regions.

The United States is involved in the **Middle East** [Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq] because of this region's reserves of oil and the U.S.'s economic dependence on oil. Religion (Islam, Judaism, and Christianity) has also played a role in the conflict in the Middle East and in the role of the United States in the region [Israel]. As a result of the atrocities of World War II against the Jews, the United States supports the Jewish state of Israel through diplomatic recognition and military aid. Opposition to the state of Israel by the Palestinians, who are Muslims, has led to wars and terrorist activities in the region. When Iraq invaded Kuwait to take their oil fields in the early 1990s, the United States led the international community in its liberation of Kuwait. The presence of the American military in the Muslim country of Saudi Arabia in preparation for this war led to the formation of the al Qaeda terrorist group against the United States. Al Qaeda masterminded the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. This led the United States to overthrow the governments of Afghanistan, which was harboring al Qaeda, and Iraq, which the United States mistakenly believed was developing weapons of mass destruction. The United States continues to support the creation of democratic governments in Afghanistan and Iraq with American troops and to support Israel's right to exist.

The United States has been involved in **Central America** [Mexico] and the **Caribbean** [Haiti and Cuba] since the 19th century. American economic investments in the region led to American military interests and involvement. The United States has a military base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. Immigrants from Central American and Caribbean countries regions have impacted American policy.

The United States has limited its involvement to diplomacy and humanitarian aid to drought-stricken and war-torn areas in **Africa** [Somalia, Darfur].

The United States took a military and diplomatic leadership role in stopping the human rights violations and ethnic cleansing in the **Balkan region of Europe** [Serbia and Croatia].

The United States has also been involved in **Asia**: the Far East [China], the near east [Russia] and southwest Asia [Afghanistan]. The Chinese economy is quickly increasing to rival the United States' economy and the U.S. trade relations with China are of concern. Russia also represents a growing economy and a nuclear power. The United States continues to have troops in Afghanistan.

It is not essential for students to know:

This indicator is not intended to be a survey of current events. Rather, a general understanding of the major issues affecting the United States and its relationship with many nations throughout the world is the goal. Knowledge of specific countries is not required and will not be specifically tested. However, including the countries with a brief discussion of the events associated with each gives relevance to the process of identifying the region on a map. Students will be asked in indicator 5-6.5 to summarize the changes that have taken place in United States foreign policy since 1992, including the globalization of trade and the war on terrorism. Several of these countries will be pertinent to this future study.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments require students to **identify** the regions of United States' political involvement since the fall of the communist states, including places in the Middle East, Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Balkans in Europe, and Asia. Therefore, the primary focus of assessment should be to **locate** this information on a map. Students should also be able to **summarize** the reasons and/or purposes for U.S. involvement in these regions and **compare** the role of the United States in these regions.

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