

## Convene the Council Extension Pack with Supports for ELs/MLs



### TIME NEEDED

3 class periods

### MATERIALS NEEDED

[Extension Pack presentation](#) (available via Google Slides)

Access to [iCivics.org](https://www.icivics.org) for game play  
Interactive whiteboard (optional)

### HANDOUTS

Activities (4 pages; class set)

Foreign Policy Tools Graphic Organizer

Mini-Quiz (2 pages; class set)

Vocabulary Activities (3 pages; class set)

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Explain the basics of foreign policy-making in the United States.
- ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of various foreign policy options in a variety of situations.
- ✓ Distinguish among foreign policy tools such as aid, sanctions, and military force.
- ✓ Evaluate the potential effect of economic, military, and cultural influence on other countries.

\*\*View the English/Multilingual Learner (EL/ML) Extensions throughout the PDF.\*\*

## Step by Step

### Preparation

Familiarize yourself with the game and its built-in EL/ML supports. Then access the Google Slides which contain all the activities you need (plus teacher notes), but you can also print the paper versions from this PDF. Vocabulary pages can be used before or after game play.

### 1 Starter Activity

Display the Pre-Game Decision-making slides. Walk students through the questions about general decision-making processes as well as what kind of decisions a president makes. Have students look at the visuals and the text. Use this time to introduce or reinforce the terms *policy*, *domestic* and *foreign*. Help students come up with both domestic, and foreign policy decision ideas. Explain that foreign policy actions affect millions of people around the world, so foreign policy decisions aren't easy to make.

Then move on to asking the students to consider who may assist the president in making decisions in this area. After getting a wish list of these experts, introduce the National Security Council (NSC), establishing that this group of experts are gathered for this very purpose! Explain that they will learn a little more about the tools the president and the NSC can use before they get to take on the role of the president in the game, **Convene the Council**. If time permits, share the NSC factoids from the slide notes.

### 2 Mini-Lesson

Display the slides to introduce each foreign policy tool set. Ask students to find an example of a tool-in-action on their worksheet. These examples are drawn from U.S. foreign policy and have been simplified for the sake of instruction.

**Non-slide Option:** Distribute the reading and worksheet, asking students to complete both and discuss their answers. Before playing, have students refer to the Foreign Policy Tools Graphic Organizer to remind them of their options.

### 3 Game

Direct students to [iCivics.org](https://www.icivics.org) and have them play the game **Convene the Council**. Alternatively, try having the class play as a group using your interactive whiteboard and use our EL/ML Supports to enrich and enhance game play. Distribute the [Department and Agency Guide](#) for support while playing.

### 4 Post-Game Activities

Choose 2-3 activities, as time allows. All of the activities are included in the Extension Pack Google Slides and as paper handouts. There is also a "Discussion Questions" slide for post-game play. The "Let's check out the news" activity is a great way for students to connect the game to real-life foreign policy situations.

### 5 Assessment

Work through the "Mini Quiz" slides, pausing to discuss and review. Distribute and assign the paper assessment if you wish.



## 1 Starter Activity & Mini Lesson

You can adapt the Pre-Game activities to adjust for different English proficiency levels. Try these strategies: using electronic dictionaries or translation tools, providing a word bank or sentence starters to help answer questions, and asking students to discuss the illustrations. The game also has the option to play in Spanish. Have students use **Think-Pair-Share** to respond to the questions on the slides. Students think about what they know about the topic. Then they are paired with another student. They share their thoughts with a partner or the class.

**Vocabulary building:** Students will be building conceptual knowledge as they learn new vocabulary. As you go through the slides, have students create their own word maps (or use the ones in the Vocabulary section of this PDF) and make connections between words (i.e, opposites: domestic/foreign, word families: diplomat/ diplomatic). Definitions can be found in the slide notes and in the Vocabulary section.

Before playing, have students use the "Foreign Policy Tools" Graphic Organizer. As a class, brainstorm key words for each topic. Students can illustrate the words in each circle too.

## 2 Game

Allow students to play in pairs or small groups. If possible, place them in mixed-ability groups. While advanced students can play by themselves, we recommend partner play for increased speaking and listening opportunities. See the [Game Guide](#) for more information on how to navigate the game.

## 3 Post-Game Practice

Here are some suggestions for "Let's check out the news!" and "Talk about it":

- What is happening right now? Pick three news stories related to foreign policy that are topical and your students would find interesting and have them use one of those instead of having them search the web.
- What about other countries? Rather than focus on the U.S., students can choose an article from a newspaper from their home country. Encourage students to browse for articles in international newspapers in their home languages to provide a different perspective on foreign policy.
- For ELs, provide key search terms and have them outline what they will be doing for the 5 W + H questions and summary. Provide a chart like this that they can fill out before writing. Encourage ELs to use more visuals and less text in their summaries.

Summary structure	Facts from the news article
Beginning ( <i>First</i> )	Who/When/What?
Middle ( <i>Next, then</i> )	How? Where?
End ( <i>In conclusion</i> )	Why does it matter?

- **Variations:** instead of writing their summary, they could illustrate it in a cartoon strip, create an audio recording, or share with a partner instead of a formal essay.
- For the "Talk About It" activity, strategically group your students. Options include: type of foreign policy tool, countries, linguistic ability, home language, etc.

[Click here to access our EL/ML Guide for more tips on game-based learning and ELL.](#)

## Pre-Game Activities

### A. Decisions, decisions. Answer the questions.

1. Think about a time when you had to make an important decision. What did you do? Either write about it or talk to a partner.

---

---

2. What about when the decision just feels too big to make on your own? How do you figure out who to ask for advice?

---

---

**B. Situations.** A situation arises, the president is briefed by the National Security Council, and decisions are made, and action is **delegated** to the proper government agency or department. In most cases, the president's team will use something from their foreign policy toolbox to address the opportunity or challenge.



**No Action**

Sometimes the best option in a foreign policy situation is to take no action at all!

**Delegated?!?** To **delegate** means to assign or hand off to someone else to do. In this case, the president assigns, or delegates, policy decisions to other areas of the executive branch.

**Economic tools**

... include financial or trade policies, such as sanctions, trade deals, or foreign aid, that can encourage or discourage certain behaviors. These tools are most often used by the Department of the Treasury and sometimes through the State or Justice Departments.

**Diplomatic tools**

... seek to achieve U.S. goals through negotiations, treaties, and participation in global or regional organizations such as the United Nations (UN). These tools are most often used by the ambassadors, diplomats and staff under the guidance of the State Department.

**Domestic tools**

Sometimes foreign policy situations need to be addressed closer to home. Domestic tools can include investigations, legal actions, refugee admissions, and economic regulations. These tools may be used by a variety of departments, including Homeland Security and Justice.

**Military tools**

... achieve their goals through the use or threat of armed force. They include air strikes, ground invasions, troop patrols, and joint military exercises. These tools are used under the guidance of the Department of Defense.

**Unconventional tools**

... go beyond military, economic, and diplomatic action, and can be used in secret. They include cyberwarfare, espionage, or training foreign militaries and intelligence services. These tools are used under the guidance of the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community.

# Convene the Council

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Situations (Cont.)** Using the descriptions of the tools, review the foreign policy examples and write which one each example represents (diplomatic, economic, etc.). Then use the word bank to write which U.S. agency or department was involved. (Note: you can use the [Department Guide](#) for descriptions of the departments.

- |                        |                                 |                         |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Department of Defense  | Department of Homeland Security | Department of the State |
| Intelligence Community | Department of the Treasury      |                         |

Situation	Tool	Department
1. In 2021, the nation of Venezuela was designated for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months. This immigration policy allowed eligible people from the nation to remain and work in the U.S. due to the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.		
2. In 1990, the nation of Iraq invaded its neighbor Kuwait. After other actions failed to address the situation, the U.S. led a coalition of 35 nations to remove the occupying Iraqi forces.		
3. In 2015, the U.S. entered with 195 other nations into an international treaty on climate change called the Paris Agreement. In 2017, the Trump administration moved to withdraw from the treaty, and in 2021 the Biden administration requested to be readmitted.		
4. In 2021, the military of Myanmar seized power from the democratically elected government. The U.S. responded with economic sanctions targeted at those who played a leading role in the overthrow of the civilian government, not at the people of Myanmar.		
5. In 2010, a computer worm was discovered to be the cause behind significant damage to Iran’s nuclear program. While no one has claimed responsibility, the worm called Stuxnet is believed to be a cyberweapon built by the U.S. and Israel.		

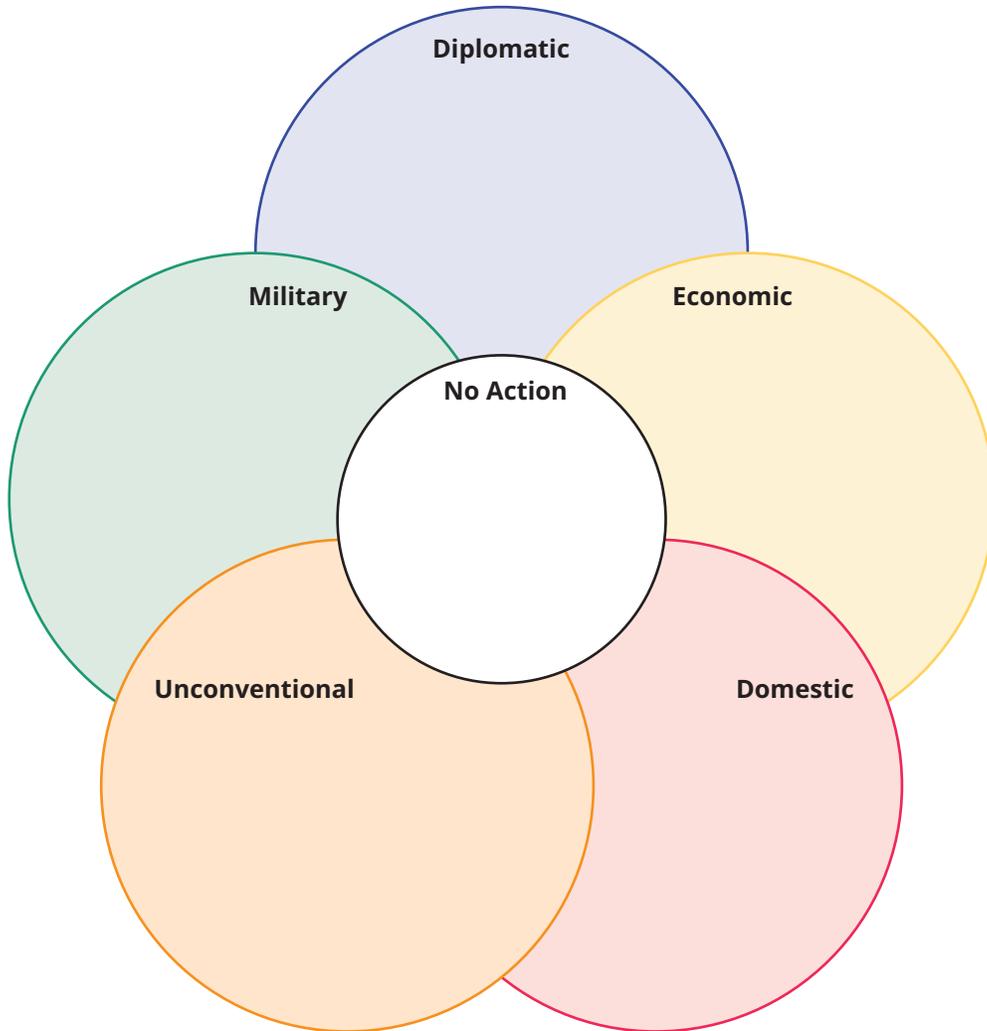
**C. Balancing priorities.** Each foreign policy decision is made after considering its impacts on many priorities Match the U.S. priority used in *Convene the Council* to its description.

	1. Security	A. State of global events and well-being
	2. Values	B. Being successful or thriving financially, growing wealth
	3. World	C. Safety; freedom from danger, risk, etc.
	4. Prosperity	D. Beliefs that are core to a democratic government

**While Playing**

**A. Foreign Policy Tools Graphic Organizer.** Use this graphic organizer to write keywords or draw pictures related to each foreign policy tool. Use the word bank for ideas and then come up with your own.

- |               |                      |                  |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| air strikes   | economic regulations | ground invasions | trade deals          |
| cyber warfare | foreign aid          | investigation    | treaties             |
| legal action  | negotiations         | sanctions        | global organizations |
| spying        |                      |                  |                      |



**Other notes:**

---

---

---

**Post-Game Activities**

**A. Delegation time.** Match the department to the request.

1. Ban travel between the US and Moldova.	 A. Defense
2. Use federal law to seize the patent from Better Lab.	 B. Energy
3. Set tariffs on goods from Nambutu in response.	 C. Homeland Security
4. Share technology that limits emissions and helps with adapting to the new climate.	 D. Justice
5. Pull out all remaining U.S. troops from Mypos.	 E. State
6. Oppose ransom payments and give emergency medical and technical support.	 F. Treasury
7. Closely monitor the terrorist.	 G. Intelligence Community

**B. True or False?** Decide if each statement is true or false. Correct the false statements.

- \_\_\_\_\_ The president is on his or her own to make foreign policy decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Members of the National Security Council are all Senators.
- \_\_\_\_\_ There are many different foreign policy tools that the president can use to address global events.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Not responding to a global event is sometimes the best option.



# Convene the Council

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Discussion Questions.** With a partner, discuss these questions. Write your answers.

1. What was the easiest part about making a decision in the game? The hardest?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How did you decide which policy to choose?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What role did the metrics play in your decision-making?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How did you use the information you received from the National Security Council?

\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Let's check out the news!** What is facing the president today? Research issues involving foreign policy in the U.S. in the news. Take notes in the chart, then write a summary about it

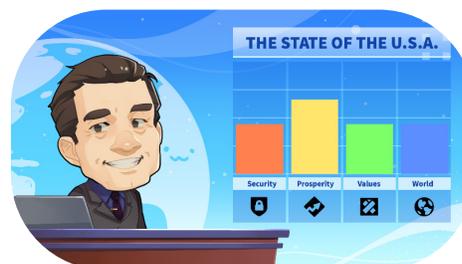
WHO?	
WHAT?	
WHEN?	
WHERE?	
WHY?	
HOW?	



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**E. Talk about it!** Work in groups of three to discuss one of the news stories from Activity D. Ask each other the following questions:

- What was the situation?
- What foreign policy tool did they use?
- Who was involved?
- If you were the president, would you make the same decision? Why or why not?



## Mini Quiz

### A. Departments. Answer the questions.

1. Which department or agency would oversee the treaty making process?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Economic sanctions are placed on the leaders of a nation. Which department or agency is delegated to carry out this foreign policy?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Who might be able to provide helpful insights on issues relating to the U.S. military bases around the world?

\_\_\_\_\_



### B. Multiple choice. Select the best answer for each question.

4. Who or what ends up making the final decision on foreign policy?

- a. National Security Advisor
- b. A vote of the National Security Council
- c. A national vote
- d. The president

5. Which is NOT considered when debating various foreign policy options?

- a. Cost
- b. Time
- c. Popularity of the policy
- d. Likelihood of success
- e. All of the above

6. Which word best describes this action: to assign or hand off a task for someone else to complete?

- a. Sanction
- b. Delegate
- c. Convene
- d. Debate

7. An official agreement between two or more nations is called a...

- a. Treaty
- b. Diplomat
- c. Aid Organization
- d. Policy



Mini Quiz

C. True or False? Decide if each statement is true or false.

- 8. \_\_\_\_\_ Economic tools are only used to punish other nations or groups.
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_ The United States is required to respond to every global crisis or opportunity.
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ Events that happen in other parts of the world can have impacts on people living in the United States.



D. Dig Deeper. Respond in your own words.

11. Explain the role of the U.S. in world affairs.

---

---

12. What is the difference between *foreign policy* and *domestic policy*?

---

---

13. Why do you think the metrics of U.S. Values, Security, Prosperity; and the World were selected for this game?

---

---

14. Why does the president need a council of advisors?

---

---





## Glossary of Game Terms

### Metrics

**prosperity** (n.) being successful or thriving financially, growing wealth.

**values** (n.) beliefs that are core to a democratic government

**security** (n.) freedom from danger, risk, etc.; safety

**world** state of global events and well-being

### Foreign Policy

**aid organization** (n.) an agency or charity that gives aid (help) to people who need it

**military** (n.) people who secure and defend the country; (adj.) related to the armed forces

**attack** (n.) a violent/harmful act against someone or something  
(v.) to try to hurt or destroy

**negotiate** (v.) to discuss something in order to come to an agreement

**cooperate** (v.) to work together to achieve a goal

**sanctions** (n.) actions taken to force a country to obey international laws by limiting trade with that country, not allowing economic aid, etc

**democracy** (n.) a government by the people

**surveillance** (n.) the act of carefully watching someone or something

**diplomacy** (n.) the work of maintaining good relations between the governments of different countries

**tariff** (n.) a tax on goods coming into or leaving a country

**domestic** (adj.) of, relating to, or made in your own country

**terrorism** (n.) the unlawful use of violence and intimidation to frighten people in an area for a political goal

**economic** (adj.) relating to an economy (financial resources within a country)

**training** (n.) a process by which someone is taught the skills that are needed for an art, profession, or job

**expert** (n.) a person who has special skill or knowledge relating to a particular subject

**treaty** (n.) official agreement between nations

**foreign policy** (n.) government actions related to or dealing with other nations

# Convene the Council

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Sort.** Cut and sort the words into different categories of your choice. When you are done, explain each category to a partner.



domestic	sanctions	treaty	terrorism
economic	negotiate	foreign policy	security
attack	values	cooperate	diplomacy

2. **Pictures.** Choose the best word from the glossary of game terms for each image. Then write a sentence using the word.

 <p>Word: _____ Sentence: _____</p>	 <p>Word: _____ Sentence: _____</p>	 <p>Word: _____ Sentence: _____</p>
 <p>Word: _____ Sentence: _____</p>	 <p>Word: _____ Sentence: _____</p>	 <p>Word: _____ Sentence: _____</p>

3. **Pairs.** In pairs, choose four vocabulary words or terms and write true or false statements for another pair to answer.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**4. My vocabulary.** This organizer will help you remember the vocabulary terms. Choose five vocabulary words and fill out the chart using your own definitions, drawings, and sentences.

WORD	DEFINITION (your own words)	VISUAL (drawing)	CONTEXT (sentence)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

**5. Charades.** In small groups, take turns acting out one of the words from the list. (Variation: have students draw instead of act out.)

cooperate	treaty	economic	military
security	aid organization	surveillance	tariff
domestic	negotiate	prosperity	

**6. Priorities.** Each foreign policy decision is made after considering its impacts on many priorities. Define these terms in your own words or write them in a sentence.

	1. security	
	2. values	
	3. world	
	4. prosperity	