

Cordell Hull

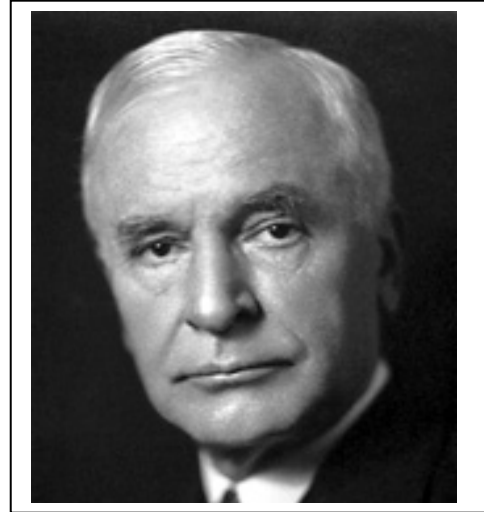
1945

“Never insult an alligator until you have crossed the river. ...”

Cordell Hull is a little known hero of peace.

He was a quiet man who worked very hard. His life was almost completely dedicated to his political career and international work, not marrying until the age of 46. He and his wife Rose Frances Witz had no children.

Hull was born in a log cabin in 1871 in a small town in Tennessee. He was the only one of five brothers who wanted to go to school. He went to school in a one- room schoolhouse built by his father. After his graduation, he received a law degree at the age of twenty in 1891 from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee.



After practicing law for only a little over a year, Hull ran and won election to the Tennessee House of Representatives. In 1903 he was a captain of the Fourth Tennessee Regiment in the Spanish-American War. When he returned to Tennessee, he was appointed as a judge. In 1907 he ran and won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Hull is known as the “Father of the United Nations”

- **There is a 52 mile-long highway named after Hull in Kentucky**
- **He was born in a log cabin**

A hard worker and dedicated politician, Hull advanced quickly in Washington and sponsored tax laws. He served for three years in the Senate until Franklin Delano Roosevelt asked him to serve as his Secretary of State in 1933.

As Secretary of State, Hull thought that money issues were important everywhere in the world. He headed the American Delegation to the Monetary and Economic Conference in London in July 1933, a conference which ended in failure. Despite this failure, in November of that year he headed the American Delegation to the Seventh Pan-American Conference, held in Montevideo. Here he won the trust of the Latin American diplomats, laying the foundation for the “Good Neighbor Policy.”

He wrote **reciprocal** trade agreements with numerous countries, lowering **tariffs** and encouraging trade.

After World War II broke out in Europe Hull encouraged the US to help for the Allies. He recommended **revision** of the Neutrality Act, which kept the United States out of being involved in the war. After U.S. entry into the war, he worked to improve cooperation the US and the Allies. In 1943, Hull began to **formulate** a peace plan that backed the establishment of a world organization to maintain peace. He knew that Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations had failed because people in the United States could not agree on it.

In August, 1943, Hull created a new international organization called the "Charter of the United Nations." Before the Charter could even be **ratified** in 1944 in San Francisco, Hull had to resign office due to failing health. Tuberculosis and heart disease made it impossible for him to continue the work he wanted to do.

The Roosevelt administration received much of credit and praise for the establishment of the United Nations, Roosevelt had offered Hull the chance to run as his vice president on the ticket, but Hull declined because of his health.

Roosevelt nominated Hull for Secretary of State to thank him for the work he had done for peace. Then he nominated Cordell Hull, his Secretary of State, for the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1945, the Nobel Committee awarded Cordell Hull the Prize for his work in the Western Hemispheres, for his International Trade Agreements, and for his efforts in establishing the United Nations.

Classroom Activities

Cordell Hull

Introduction/Warm-Up:

Teacher should introduce the programs and goals of the United Nations. It would be helpful to have some newspaper clippings or online articles to illustrate the work the UN does.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Hull think that a “United Nations” was a good idea? (Level 1)
2. Why did Hull have to stop pursuing his career as a world statesman? (Level 1)
3. What are the duties of a Secretary of State today? (Level 2)
4. How does Hull show that a person can learn from past failures (even if they aren’t his own)? (Level 2)
5. Is the United Nations still a good idea today? Explain your point of view. (Level 3)
6. Has Cordell Hull gotten the recognition he deserves, in your opinion? What can be done, if anything, to get him more recognition?

Vocabulary Terms:

1. Minimally
2. Ultimately
3. Stint
4. Reciprocal
5. Tariffs
6. Revision
7. Formulated
8. Ratified

Activities:

- 1a. Students work in small groups to design a “Good Neighbor Policy” between classrooms.
- 1b. After all groups have completed the first exercise, they will come together as a whole to present their draft policies.
- 1c. Students will work together to try to unify the drafts into a final proposal to which everyone can agree.
2. Same as 1, except:
 - 2.a. The policy is to apply to the different working groups, treating each as a separate “political” entity.
 - 2.b. Each group is to appoint “ambassadors” or negotiators to attempt to negotiate agreements with the other groups. Ratification between all groups is required for successful completion of the exercise.

3. Same as 1, except
 - 3.a. The policy is presented to another classroom within the school. The presentation should be designed by a committee of students and presented by no more than two or three of them.
 - 3.b. The process of proposal and counter-proposal is to ensue, continue until an agreement is reached between the two classrooms.

Technology Option:

Go to http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medals/ to find pictures of the Nobel Peace Prize medal. Design a medal based on that design (it should have both a front and a back!) for the person who has contributed the most to making your school a better place. (Optional: as a class, actually choose the person who students feel most deserves the award and present the most appropriate medal that is designed to the winner at a ceremony designed by the class)

Resources:

The Cordell Hull Institute Foreign Policy think-tank that has many interesting articles for more advanced students: <http://www.cordellhullinstitute.org/news/Hagel.html>

Friends of Cordell Hull Online site of the Cordell Hull Museum in Tennessee:
<http://www.cordellhullmuseum.com/about.htm>

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medals/