Cold War
Essential Questions

• What conditions and issues led to mistrust between the U.S. and USSR, thereby leading to the Cold War?
• What methods did the U.S. use to attempt to stop the spread of communism in eastern Europe?
• Why did the U.S. turn to military action to stop communist aggression in Korea and Vietnam?
• Why did Americans respond in the manner they did to perceived internal threats, such as “blacklisting” and “McCarthyism”?
• How did the Cuban Missile Crisis change the scope of the Cold War?
• How did the Nixon and Ford Administrations approach the evolving nature of the Cold War in the late 1960s and 1970s?
• What role did the Reagan and Bush Administrations play in the eventual end of the Cold War in the late 1980s?
U.S. and USSR: Allies Become Enemies

- Different economic systems
- Ideological differences
- Growing mutual suspicions

A U.S. government poster from WWII portraying the Soviets as friendly
The Yalta Conference

The “Big Three”: Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin meet at Yalta, February 1945
Yalta: Significant Events

- Creation of the United Nations
- Demand for Germany’s unconditional surrender
- Postwar Germany split into four zones of occupation
- Stalin agreed to enter war against Japan
- Status of Poland
- Demilitarization of Germany

A WWII-era poster celebrating the UN
Truman Takes Over

- FDR died suddenly in April 1945
- Vice President Harry Truman sworn in
- Had served as VP for just 82 days
- Truman previously unaware of the Manhattan Project

President Harry S. Truman at his desk
The Potsdam Conference

- Truman, Stalin, and Churchill (later Attlee)
- Restated agreement to partition Germany
- Agreed to prosecute war criminals
- Set new boundary line for Poland
- Truman hinted at atomic bomb to Stalin
The Soviet Bloc

- The USSR felt that by controlling “satellite” nations, it could stop future western invasions
- Communist governments installed in much of central and eastern Europe
1. What reasons existed for the distrust and suspicion between the U.S. and USSR? Why did the WWII alliance between the two nations fall apart?

2. Did FDR “give away” too many concessions to Stalin at the Yalta Conference? Explain your answer.

3. Should Truman have given Stalin any advanced knowledge about the atomic bomb during the Potsdam Conference? Why or why not?

4. Should the United States have taken military action to stop the development of the Soviet Bloc? Why or why not?
The “Iron Curtain”

- Popularized by a 1946 Churchill speech
- Metaphor for the divide between Western Europe and the Soviet Bloc
- Stalin called speech a “call to war”
Containment

• First suggested by George F. Kennan in the “Long Telegram”
• Made public in a *Foreign Affairs* article
• Kennan asserted that the goal of the U.S. should be to “contain” communism within its present borders
The Truman Doctrine

• Designed to contain communism
• Truman announced he would give economic aid to Greece and Turkey
• “Truman Doctrine” extended to anywhere aid was given to support a non-communist government

President Truman spells out the terms of the Truman Doctrine before a joint session of Congress.
The Marshall Plan

- Western Europe struggled to revive after the war
- Millions in refugee camps
- Winter of 1946 the coldest in memory
- Marshall proposes aid plan to all European nations to rebuild
Discussion Questions

1. Did Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech heighten or lessen Cold War tensions? Explain your answer.

2. Why do you think Kennan wrote an anonymous article describing containment in *Foreign Affairs*, rather than using his name?

3. How did the Truman Doctrine solidify the idea of “containment”?

The Berlin Airlift

American C-54s await orders to take off from Tempelhof Air Base, Berlin
Origins of the Berlin Airlift

- Germany divided after WWII
- City of Berlin lay in Soviet zone
- Soviets closed all rail and highway routes into city
- Air corridors remained open
“Operation Vittles”

- U.S. code name for the airlift
- U.S., British forces dropped supplies into Berlin
- Many Germans called planes *Rosinenbombers* (raisin bombers)
- Germans and Americans became allies
The Partitioning of Germany

- Western part of Germany became the Federal Republic of Germany in May 1949
- Eastern part of Germany became the German Democratic Republic
- Berlin lay entirely within East Germany
NATO and the Warsaw Pact

• NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
• Twelve original member states in a mutual defense alliance (now 26)
• Soviets developed the Warsaw Pact in response
The Chinese Civil War

- Nationalists and Communists had fought Japan together in WWII
- American aid to Nationalists and Chiang Kai-shek ineffective
- Mao Zedong’s forces victorious
- Chiang’s forces fled to Formosa (Taiwan)

This map shows the final push by Chinese Communist forces against Chiang’s Nationalist armies
Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Truman was right in not using military force to reopen roads and rail routes into West Berlin? Why?

2. Why was the Berlin Airlift such a great propaganda victory for the U.S.?

3. What are some alternatives that might have kept Germany united in the late 1940s?

4. What were some benefits to U.S. membership in NATO? Drawbacks?

5. What could the U.S. have done to help ensure that China did not fall to the communists?
The Korean War

- Korea divided after World War II
  - North Korea (communist)
  - South Korea (non-communist)
- North Korea invaded South Korea in June 1950
- UN forces supported South Korea
UN Forces Advance

- North Korean forces drove UN forces to Pusan
- MacArthur’s daring invasion at Inchon forced North back
- UN forces pushed to Yalu River (border between North Korea and China)
Truman vs. MacArthur

- Truman supported “limited war” policy
- MacArthur assured Truman that China wouldn’t enter war
- China joined war in late 1950
- MacArthur critical of Truman’s policies
- Truman fired MacArthur

Truman meets with MacArthur at Wake Island, October 1950
Stalemate

- UN and Chinese forces launched various offensives near 38th parallel
- War dragged on in a stalemate
- Stalin died; Eisenhower elected president
- Armistice signed in 1953
Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the U.S. declined to use military forces during the Berlin crisis but chose to intervene militarily on behalf of South Korea?

2. Some historians call Korea “the forgotten war.” Is this a fair statement? Explain.

3. On an A–F grade scale, how would you rate MacArthur as commander of UN forces in Korea? Explain.

4. Do you think Truman’s policy of “limited war” in Korea was reasonable? Why?

5. Critique the armistice that ended the Korean War in 1953. Do you think the UN thought its terms were suitable? Explain.
Responses to “Internal Threats”

- House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)
- Blacklisting
- McCarran Act
- Alger Hiss
- Julius and Ethel Rosenberg

Arrest photos of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg
“McCarthyism” and the “Second Red Scare”

- Period of intense anti-communist suspicion in the late 1940s and early 1950s
- Many innocent people accused of communist ties
- Solid evidence against accused never produced

A 1950 publication that claimed to identify communists in the media
Joseph McCarthy

- Republican senator from Wisconsin
- Claimed that communists had infiltrated several government agencies
- Army–McCarthy hearings led to censure by Senate
- Died in 1957
Part of McCarthy’s telegram to Truman after the Wheeling speech

McCarthy and Truman

Truman’s reply (probably never sent)
Murrow on McCarthy

• Noted CBS newscaster Edward R. Murrow ran an exposé on McCarthy
• McCarthy appeared on Murrow’s show a few weeks later
• McCarthy did not come across well
The Army–McCarthy Hearings

- Centered on McCarthy and chief counsel Roy Cohn
- Army charged both with pressing for “favorable treatment” for former staffer
- Hearings televised
- Beginning of McCarthy’s downfall
Censure of McCarthy

• McCarthy’s popularity plummeted after hearings
• Senator Margaret Chase Smith spoke out against McCarthy
• Senate voted to censure McCarthy in December 1954

Senator Margaret Chase Smith
The Hydrogen Bomb
Dulles and Brinksmanship

- Policy established by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles
- Policy included threat of using all U.S. military force, including nuclear weapons
- Both U.S. and USSR expanded their air power
- Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)
Creation of the CIA

- Office of Strategic Services gathered intelligence during World War II
- OSS disbanded after the war
- Truman realized importance of centralized intelligence system
- Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Council created in 1947
Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the U.S. was so concerned about the possibility of internal communist threats?

2. Do you think a political figure today could wield the kind of influence that McCarthy did in the 1950s? Why or why not?

3. Why do you think that Murrow felt it necessary to take on McCarthy? What risks did he assume by his broadcast?

4. Do you think that brinksmanship was too dangerous a policy to follow in relations with the Soviet Union? Why or why not?
United States Civil Defense

- Origins of Civil Defense go back to 1916
- Post–World War II CD focused on dealing with threat of nuclear war
- CD encouraged building fallout shelters and storing supplies to survive a nuclear attack

The U.S. Civil Defense emblem
Civil Defense Posters

Serving YOU in time of emergency
Support CIVIL DEFENSE

you can protect yourself from...
RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT

GET THE FACTS!
FREE COURSE ON FALLOUT
place date time
Fallout Shelters

- CD provided plans for backyard shelters
- Of questionable effectiveness
- Made public, believe a nuclear war was survivable

Cutaway view of CD-designed shelter
CIA Coup: Iran

• Mossadegh nationalized Iranian oil fields in 1953
• U.S. feared that Iran would ally with USSR
• CIA staged coup by anti-Mossadegh supporters
• Mossadegh government overthrown; Shah of Iran returned to power
CIA Coup: Guatemala

- CIA suspected communist control of government under President Arbenz
- Arbenz also “antagonized” United Fruit Company
- CIA-sponsored coup (Operation PBSUCCESS) overthrew Arbenz government
- PBSUCCESS became the model for attempted coups in Cuba and Chile
The Eisenhower Doctrine

- Suez Crisis raised Soviet popularity in Middle East
- To counter this, Eisenhower issued a warning to the Soviets
- Doctrine stated that the U.S. would help any country threatened by a communist nation

Egyptian President Nasser

The Suez Canal
“Open Skies” Proposal

- Proposed by Eisenhower at 1955 Geneva summit
- Would allow U.S. flights over Soviet territory—and vice versa—to guard against surprise nuclear attack
- Popular response was favorable
- Soviets rejected the idea

Cold War
The U-2 Incident

- U-2 used for high-altitude photographic surveillance
- U.S. began secret flights over Soviet territory
- Francis Gary Powers shot down on May 1, 1960
- Increased tensions between U.S. and USSR
Sputnik I

- First man-made satellite
- Launched by the USSR in 1957
- Orbited the earth every 96 minutes
- Major blow to U.S. prestige
- U.S. launched first satellite in 1958
Discussion Questions

1. What purposes did Civil Defense serve during the Cold War era? Do you think it was successful? Why or why not?
2. Why did the Soviet launch of Sputnik strike such a great blow to American prestige?
3. Do you believe that CIA policies in Iran and Guatemala were justified? Why or why not?
4. Critique Eisenhower’s handling of the U-2 incident. Do you believe he should have been more up front in explaining why the plane was in Soviet airspace? Explain.
Flexible Response

- Kennedy Administration policy
- Allowed for more options for dealing with Soviet threats
- U.S. would respond with similar force, not just with nuclear weapons

Kennedy takes the oath of office, January 1961
Bay of Pigs Invasion

- Unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the Castro regime in Cuba
- Failed due to poor planning and lack of support of Cuban people
- Foreign policy defeat for Kennedy Administration
Berlin Crisis

- Attempt to stop mass migration from East to West Berlin
- Construction began in August 1961
- East German forces ordered to shoot defectors
- Nearly 5000 successful escapes; nearly 200 killed
Kennedy at the Berlin Wall

- 1963 speech by JFK at the Berlin Wall
- Famous quote: “Ich bin ein Berliner”
- Kennedy’s speech set tone of defiance against Soviet oppression in Berlin
The Cuban Missile Crisis

- Soviet missiles discovered in Cuba by U.S. reconnaissance flights
- Deemed an unacceptable threat to U.S. security
- JFK convened EXCOMM to develop plan for dealing with missiles

Arrows indicate suspected Soviet missile installations
Why Missiles in Cuba?

- Bay of Pigs invasion
- Attempts by U.S. to remove Castro
- Placement of U.S. missiles in Turkey
- USSR lagged behind U.S. in number of missiles

Map showing the range of targets reachable by Soviet missiles in Cuba
Feeling Out the Soviets

- JFK met with Foreign Minister Gromyko
- Gromyko asserted that all Soviet aid to Cuba was defensive in nature
- Kennedy did not acknowledge missiles
- Gromyko probably did not know about missiles

Kennedy meets with Gromyko (third from left, on the couch)
Decision to Quarantine Cuba

• EXCOMM continued debating policy while JFK left for campaign trip
• Agreement made to suggest quarantine to JFK
• Kennedy feigned illness, returning to Washington to confer with EXCOMM
The Blockade Begins

- Kennedy went on TV to announce his decision
- Blockade took effect next morning
- Most Soviet ships approaching Cuba stopped; some turned back

Kennedy signs the document authorizing the blockade
Showdown at the UN

- U.S. began to apply diplomatic pressure
- Ambassador Stevenson argued with his Soviet counterpart
- Stevenson presented photographic evidence to UN Security Council

Ambassador Adlai Stevenson shows evidence of Soviet missiles in Cuba to the UN Security Council
The Crisis Ends

- Khrushchev sent letter to JFK setting terms for removing missiles
- Second letter much harsher
- JFK answered first letter and ignored second
- Secret deal made to remove U.S. missiles from Turkey
- The “hotline”

JFK’s statement at the end of the crisis
Limited Test Ban Treaty

- Negotiations between U.S., UK, and USSR began in June 1963
- Allowed only underground nuclear testing
- JFK signed treaty in October
- Treaty signaled start of improved relations between the superpowers

President Kennedy signs the Limited Test Ban Treaty
Discussion Questions

1. In your view, which was the more successful policy: brinksmanship or flexible response? Explain.

2. If you were president in August 1961, what action would you have taken to stop the construction of the Berlin Wall? Explain.

3. Why did Kennedy decide not to take military action to remove the missiles from Cuba? Do you think this was the best decision? Why or why not?

4. Do you think the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis decreased tensions between the U.S. and USSR? Why or why not?
The Vietnam War: Prelude

- “Domino theory”
- French surrendered control of Vietnam in 1953
- Vietnam partitioned into North, led by Ho Chi Minh, and South, headed by Ngo Dinh Diem
- Unification elections set for 1956 cancelled by South Vietnam and supported by the U.S.
Vietnam: Early U.S. Involvement

- Vietcong began attacks against Diem government
- Eisenhower took little action against Vietcong
- Kennedy followed same policy, but sent more money and military “advisers”
- Diem government overthrown in November 1963; Diem assassinated in coup
Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

• LBJ also concerned about appearing soft on communism

• Gulf of Tonkin “incident” led to escalation of U.S. involvement

• Johnson pushed through resolution for protecting U.S. forces and interests
Protest Movements

- Rise of the “New Left”
- SDS and FSM formed
- Protest movement grew on college campuses
- “Hawks” vs. “doves”

Protestors demonstrate against the war in Vietnam
The Tet Offensive

- Major North Vietnamese/Vietcong offensive in 1968
- Timed to coincide with lunar New Year celebration
- Attacks unsuccessful militarily, but highly successful as propaganda
“Vietnamization” and Withdrawal

- Nixon’s Vietnamization policy entailed removing U.S. troops as South Vietnamese began to fight.
- North Vietnam took Saigon in 1975 and reunified Vietnam under a communist government.
Realpolitik

- A German word meaning “political realism”
- Promoted by Henry Kissinger
- U.S. should conduct foreign policy based on practicality, not ideology
- Change in philosophy from communist containment
Détente

- “Thawing” of Cold War tensions during Nixon Administration
- Included visits by Nixon to China and USSR
- Several arms limitation treaties ratified during period
- Ford continued détente into his presidency
Discussion Questions

1. What made the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty an important step towards détente?
2. Why do you think it was important for JFK and LBJ to appear tough on communism? What impact did this have on the conduct of the Vietnam War?
3. Why do you think such a powerful protest movement arose against the Vietnam War?
4. How effective was the policy of détente in dealing with Cold War tensions in the 1970s? Explain.
The “Evil Empire”

• From a speech delivered by Reagan in 1983
• Described the supposed moral divide between U.S. and USSR
• Called the Cold War a struggle of “right and wrong and good and evil”
Strategic Defense Initiative

- Proposed by Reagan in 1983
- Nicknamed “Star Wars”
- Would provide a “space shield” against nuclear attack
- Shift away from mutually assured destruction
- System never fully deployed
Glasnost and Perestroika

- Policies initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev
- **Glasnost**: “openness” in addressing political issues
- **Perestroika**: “restructuring” of the Soviet economy

Gorbachev and Reagan meet informally at Camp David
Iran-Contra Affair

- Dealt with sales of weapons to Iran to gain release of hostages held in Lebanon
- Money from the sales of weapons went to Nicaraguan Contras
- Oliver North and John Poindexter convicted on charges of obstructing justice; both later overturned
Fall of the Berlin Wall

- East German tourists fled to Austria through Hungary and Czechoslovakia
- Public demonstrations began in East Germany
- East Germany allowed passage to West Germany, including West Berlin
End of the Cold War

- Soviet economy stagnated; defense spending cut
- Bush and Gorbachev announced end to Cold War in 1989
- Communist Party lost political power in USSR
- USSR dissolved in December 1990
Discussion Questions

1. What impact do you think Reagan’s “evil empire” speech had on U.S.-Soviet relations? Would you have recommended he give the speech? Explain.

2. Why was Reagan’s vision for SDI considered a major shift in Cold War policy?

3. What did Gorbachev hope to achieve in instituting the policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*?

4. What made the fall of the Berlin Wall such a significant event of the Cold War era?