

Name: _____

Class: _____

Korean War

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then answer the corresponding questions completely.

In the early 1900s, Japan had begun to expand their control in a quest to become a global imperial power; and by 1910, they had successfully colonized Korea. Korea remained a Japanese colony until the end of World War II in 1945. As part of peace agreements between the Soviet Union and the United States, Japan lost its control of Korea and it was divided into two occupied zones: North Korea (USSR) and South Korea (USA) divided at 38th parallel of latitude.



Shortly after the conclusion of World War II, a new conflict emerged between the United States and Soviet Union. Both countries looked to expand and protect their post-war goals and ideologies. The United States wanted to support democratic countries around the world, and on the other hand, the USSR looked to expand communism. In June 1950, North Koreans, supported by the USSR, invaded South Korea with the intent to unify the country under a communist regime. Lacking anticipation and preparation, the capital of South Korea, Seoul, was quickly occupied by North Koreans.



Prior to the invasion, the United States had adopted a foreign policy of containment, which sought to stop the spread of communism throughout the world. Therefore, United States President, Harry Truman, quickly looked to the United Nations for guidance as to how to handle the North Korean act of aggression and support the US efforts of containment. Truman was convinced that the aggression of North Korea was similar to the aggression previously displayed by Hitler and Japan prior to World War II. The UN agreed to support South Korea and send in a military force in opposition of North Korea under the leadership of American General, Douglas MacArthur, who had also led American troops in the Pacific against Japan. Although the Soviet Union was a member of the UN, they were absent during negotiations due to conflicting opinions regarding China, and therefore were not able to veto UN intervention in Korea.



During the initial stages of the Korean War, the UN was badly outnumbered and ill-equipped in comparison to the North Koreans, who were heavily equipped by the Soviet Union. This enabled

North Korea to push south and occupy most of South Korea. However, MacArthur was eventually able to lead successful counterattacks that pushed back North Korea past the 38th parallel line (original border). Despite the UN's success with reestablishing the Korean border, Truman wanted to take the opportunity to occupy North Korea and unite Korea under a non-communist government.

While pushing north into North Korea, UN forces were warned and then eventually attacked by neighboring communist China. China's fresh forces were able to push back UN forces south of the 38th parallel line, where a bloody deadlock was ultimately established by 1951. MacArthur believed that the only way that UN forces would successfully control all of Korea was to invade China from the north. Truman, however, adamantly disagreed with going to war with China and eventually fired MacArthur as general of the Korean War. The firing of MacArthur angered many Americans who viewed MacArthur as a well-respected military general and war hero.

For more than a year after MacArthur's firing, the deadly fighting in Korea continued in a deadlock. Vicious fighting brought both sides' short lived gains, until they were pushed back. Although peace talks began in 1951, no agreements were able to be made. By 1952, the United States elected a new president, Dwight Eisenhower, an American war hero and leader during World War II (D-Day). Eisenhower promised Americans that he would personally go to Korea and end the war if he was elected, which was what he did. By July 1953, peace was established with the signing of an armistice and the border between North Korea and South Korea was redrawn at 38th parallel. Along with the border, a demilitarized zone (DMZ) was set up on both sides of the border. This two and a half mile area would have no military presence from either side, although on either side of the DMZ, both sides stationed heavily armed troops.



All in all, the Korean War took the lives of over five million soldiers and civilians, which included over 50,000 American soldiers. For many soldiers and Americans, news of the Korean War was devastating, as families had started to rebuild from World War II. The US government brought back the military draft, and thousands of Americans were sent back to war. Korean War soldiers endured treacherous conditions in the hot Korean climate, which was a breeding ground for infections and diseases. In addition, the war did not result in a gain for either side, and instead, the previous border and governments were maintained. The division in Korea at 38th parallel still remains today. The Korean War ultimately proved that the United States was willing to support its foreign policy of containment, even if that meant utilizing military force.

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1. Why was Korea occupied by the US and USSR after World War II?

2. What caused the conflict in Korea?

3. How could the actions of North Korea be compared to the actions of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan?

4. Why did the US want to support South Korea?

5. How did the US become involved in the Korean conflict?

6. Why did China involve itself in the Korean War?

7. Who was elected as President of the United States during the Korean War?

8. What was the outcome of the Korean War?

9. What was/is the DMZ?

10. What did the Korean War prove about the US?

THE VIETNAM WAR

N. Griffin
World Geography
2000-01

~~ TIMELINE ~~

1946 – Start of the war between Ho Chi Minh's Vietnamese nationalists and French colonial troops.

1954 – Vietnamese communists defeat the French. The country is divided into North Vietnam and South Vietnam.

1961 – South Vietnamese ask for military advice from the US to combat Viet Cong guerrillas.

1963 – South Vietnamese government is overthrown. Viet Cong increase their activities.

1964 – War breaks out between North Vietnam (backed by the Soviets) and South Vietnam (backed by the US).

1965 – The US sends combat troops to South Vietnam.

1966 – Australian troops arrive in Vietnam to fight with the Americans. The first antiwar demonstrations take place in US.

1967 – First efforts are made toward peace, but they fail. Antiwar demonstrations increase and spread to other countries.

1968 – North Vietnamese & Viet Cong launch the Tet offensive against the South.

1969 – US withdraws 25,000 of its 540,000 troops. The fighting, and the antiwar protests, continues.

1970 – US invades Cambodia to support an anticommunist government & prevent supplies from reach North Vietnam.

1971 – Fighting spreads to Laos.

1972 – Peace talks begin again.

1973 – Cease-fire is agreed and the US withdraws its troops. Vietnamese continue to fight.

1975 – Communists take control of the whole of Vietnam.

1976 – Vietnam is reunited under a communist government.



Vietnam, together with Cambodia and Laos, was part of the French colony of Indochina. It was occupied by the Japanese in World War II and during this time the Viet Minh league, led by the communist Ho Chi Minh, declared Vietnam independent.



After World War II, France refused to recognize Ho Chi Minh's government and war broke out between the French and Vietnamese. This war ended in defeat for the French at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. An international agreement then divided Vietnam into communist North and noncommunist South.

Almost immediately civil war broke out between the two countries. From 1959, communist guerrillas in the South, known as the Viet Cong, were helped by North Vietnam. The US, worried about the spread of communism, sent military aid to help the South Vietnamese. As the conflict escalated, the US began sending troops to help the South from 1965. The Viet Cong's guerrilla tactics made it very difficult to defeat them. In an attempt to cut off their supply lines, US planes began bombing North Vietnam. At the same time, whole villages in the south and vast areas of forest were sprayed with chemicals to destroy the Viet Cong hiding places.

By 1966, antiwar demonstrations had begun and in 1968, the Viet Cong's major Tet offensive on the South convinced Americans that the war could not be won. In 1969 the US began to withdraw its troops and a cease-fire was agreed upon in 1973. Fighting continued until 1975, when the North brought the South under its control.

Viet Cong soldiers used guerrilla warfare to defeat the enemy. One tactic was to dig a maze of secret tunnels. More than 16,000 soldiers lived underground, attacking US troops from their hiding place. US soldiers were expecting to fight a traditional war, with large scale battles between two sides. They had to adapt to the Viet Cong's guerrilla tactics using small groups to mount surprise attacks.

The Vietnam War was the first to be covered on television. People through the world, but especially in the U.S. were able to see events as they happened. As growing numbers of troops were killed or injured and large parts of Vietnam destroyed, people took to the streets in protest. By 1967, the protests had spread beyond the U.S. and the strength of antiwar feeling helped persuade President Nixon to withdraw from the war.

From the Vietnam War reading, answer the following questions:

1. What European nation had colonized Vietnam?
2. When was Vietnam divided into two nations?
3. The communist Soviet Union backed _____ Vietnam in the war.
The United States backed _____ Vietnam war.
4. Why did the United States back the South Vietnamese?
5. What North Vietnamese (Viet Cong) tactics made it difficult for U.S. troops to defeat them?
6. What popular invention "brought the war into America's living rooms"?
7. What was the significance of television in the Vietnam War?
8. How did the war end?
9. In what year were North and South Vietnam reunited under one government?
10. What type of government does Vietnam now have?

End to the Cold War

When Bush became president, the Soviet empire was on the verge of collapse. Gorbachev's efforts to open up the USSR's economy appeared to be floundering. In 1989, the Communist governments in one Eastern European country after another simply collapsed, after it became clear that Russian troops would not be sent to prop them up. In mid-1991, hard-liners attempted a coup d'état, only to be foiled by Gorbachev rival Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian republic. At the end of that year, Yeltsin, now dominant, forced the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The Bush administration adeptly brokered the end of the Cold War, working closely with Gorbachev

and Yeltsin. It led the negotiations that brought the unification of East and West Germany (September 1990), agreement on large arms reductions in Europe (November 1990), and large cuts in nuclear arsenals (July 1991). After the liquidation of the Soviet Union, the United States and the new Russian Federation agreed to phase out all multiple-warhead missiles over a 10-year period.

The disposal of nuclear materials and the ever-present concerns of nuclear proliferation now superseded the threat of nuclear conflict between Washington and Moscow.

Directions: Read the passage above, then answer the questions below.

1. What was happening in Eastern Europe in 1989?
2. Who was Boris Yeltsin?
3. What country was reunited in September of 1990?
4. What superseded the threat of nuclear conflict following the collapse of the Soviet Union?



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The Persian Gulf War

Terms & People to Know

Cold War

President George H.W. Bush

economic blockade

economic sanctions

coalition forces

Osama bin Laden

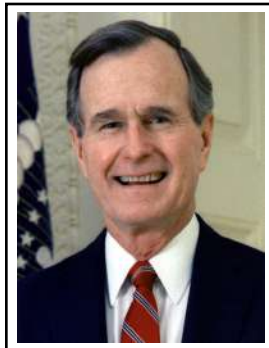
☀ On July 25, 1990, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, met with Saddam Hussein at the presidential palace in Baghdad. Their conversation focused on Saddam's complaint that Kuwait was pumping oil that rightfully belonged to Iraq from deposits along the Iraq-Kuwaiti border. The Iraqi dictator also complained that Kuwait was holding down oil prices to slow his country's economic recovery from the Iran-Iraq War.

☀ When Glaspie left the meeting, she believed that she had clearly warned Saddam of the dangers of using force to resolve his dispute with Kuwait. The conversation didn't make the same impression on Saddam Hussein. Eight days later, 100,000 Iraqi troops poured across the desert border into Kuwait.

☀ In the late 1980s the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War had given way to a spirit of cooperation. Under Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union had sought to build bridges to the West. Moreover, the Soviet Union was beginning to fall apart under the weight of an ailing economy.



☀ Iraq had been a close ally of the Soviets during the Cold War. But within hours of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Gorbachev stopped arms shipments to Saddam and joined the United States in supporting a UN Security Council resolution demanding Iraq's immediate withdrawal from Kuwait. With the Soviets on his side, President George H.W. Bush had an opportunity to steer the international system in a new direction.



☀ Bush spoke of building a "new world order" in which the world's leading powers would work together to prevent aggression and enforce the rule of law internationally. He intended to make Saddam Hussein's grab for Kuwait a test case. At the same time, America's traditional interest in oil and Israel continued to figure into Bush's considerations. Decisions made during the Persian Gulf crisis would have a lasting effect on U.S. policy in the Middle East.

☀ In the days immediately following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, President George H.W. Bush's top priority was to prevent Saddam Hussein's military from seizing the oil fields of northeastern Saudi Arabia.



☀ Iraq's occupation of Kuwait had given him control of 1/4 of the world's oil reserves. If Saddam was able to occupy Saudi Arabia, he would have nearly half of the world's oil under his control. Bush rushed American troops to the region to block the Iraqi army's path.

☀ Once Saudi Arabia was protected, the president carefully built domestic and international support for stronger measures against Iraq. First he pushed for an economic blockade against Iraq. (A blockade is an effort to isolate a particular area, by force. An economic blockade is a block or isolation of a country so they couldn't trade with other countries). In November 1990, Bush won UN approval to use "all necessary means" to force Iraq out of Kuwait. A deadline was set - January 15, 1991 - for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

☀ As the deadline approached, the United States positioned 540,000 troops in Saudi Arabia. American's European allies, as well as several Arab states, contributed forces as well. Bush favored attacking Iraq quickly. He doubted that economic sanctions, or bans on trade, alone would pressure Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait.



☀ President Bush also felt that the coalition of thirty-nine nations he had assembled would not hold together long. He was worried about Saddam's appeal in the Arab world and how this popularity would deepen hostility towards the United States throughout the Middle East.

☀ Within the United States, Americans were split about how the country should respond to Iraq's aggression. U.S. leadership was also divided. Opposition to using force was especially strong from some U.S. military leaders concerned about possible casualties (dead or wounded soldiers). Many warned that Iraq would use chemical weapons if attacked. There were worries that Iraq might even possess nuclear bombs. Others argued that economic sanctions should be given more time to take effect. When Bush asked the Senate to approve military action, his request passed by only five votes.

☀ In making his case, President Bush said, "Our jobs, our way of life and the freedom of friendly countries around the world would all suffer if control of the world's great oil reserves fell into the hands of Saddam Hussein."



☀ After the assault against Iraq began in mid-January 1991, Americans quickly rallied behind the war effort. Despite Saddam's prediction of "the mother of all battles," his army proved no match for the United States and its allies. For over a month, coalition warplanes pounded Iraqi targets. By the time allied ground troops moved forward in late February 1991, communication links within Iraq's army had been shattered. Coalition forces retook Kuwait's capital, Kuwait City, with little resistance.

☀ After 100 hours, President Bush brought the ground war to a halt. He decided not to destroy Iraq's retreating army, believing that a weakened and contained Saddam was better than an Islamic government in Iraq like the one in Iran.

☀ The Persian Gulf War was one of the most lopsided conflicts in history. While Iraq did launch Scud missiles into Israel and Saudi Arabia, they did not cause a lot of damage.

☀ Saddam inflicted his heaviest blows against the environment by ordering Iraqi troops to set 700 Kuwaiti oil wells on fire and to spill millions of gallons of oil into the Persian Gulf creating the world's largest environmental disaster.



☀ In all, 146 American troops were killed during the war. (Coalition forces suffered a total of 260 deaths.) Iraq lost as many as 100,000 people, both soldiers and civilians, in the war.

☀ Through a combination of power and persuasion, the United States had won greater influence in the Middle East. At the same time, there were fresh responsibilities. Once the fighting in the Persian Gulf ended, leaders in the region looked to the United States to maintain the new American-made order.

☀ The war against Iraq elevated the region's importance from the American perspective. It also convinced Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the smaller states of the Persian Gulf that an American military presence was needed in the region to safeguard their own security.



☀ Yet the presence of more than fifteen thousand American troops in the Persian Gulf created tensions of its own. Unlike the people of Western Europe, the Americans and the Arabs of the Persian Gulf do not share common values and culture. For the United States, increased involvement in the Middle East has not been without cost.

☀ From the Arab standpoint, the U.S. military presence represents



a painful reminder of the Arab world's weaknesses and divisions. It also angered many people, including extremists like Osama bin Laden and his followers, who believe that foreigners do not belong in Islamic countries. Bin Laden was especially upset over the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, the country where the prophet Muhammad (the founder of Islam) was born.

☀ In addition, the wealth that oil has brought to the kingdoms of the Persian Gulf has brought resentment from their Arab neighbors. For example, Kuwaitis did not receive much sympathy from most of the Arab world after their country was overrun by Iraq. At the time, more than 500,000 foreigners performed most of the work in Kuwait. Since Iraq's defeat, Kuwaitis have rebuilt their country with labor from outside the Arab world, while counting on the United States for protection.

☀ In addition to the physical presence of U.S. soldiers, the Middle East is also bristling with American weapons. The region is the world's largest market for arms exports, accounting for over half of the overseas sales of American weapons manufacturers. The Persian Gulf states buy billions of dollars worth of weapons every year.

Questions for Understanding:

1. Why did Saddam Hussein order his army to invade Kuwait?
2. How did Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev react when Iraq invaded Kuwait?
3. What was George H. W. Bush's "new world order?"
4. Why did President George H. W. Bush immediately send troops to Saudi Arabia after Iraq invaded Kuwait?
5. Why were some U.S. military leaders opposed to using force?

6. Why did President Bush decide to allow Saddam to stay in power?
7. What did the Iraqi troops do as they retreated from Kuwait?
8. Why does the presence of American troops in the Persian Gulf create tensions?
9. How do Arab nations regard the U.S. military presence?
10. Why was Osama bin Laden upset over the presence of U.S. troops?