

United States History

EOC Review Packet

Cold War



1950s/Post World War II Era

- 1950s were marked by the beginning of the space race, suburbanization and a continuing baby boom
- **Baby Boom:** population burst caused by the delay in marriages during WWII (soldiers came home from the war, got married and had lots of kids, causing a population burst)
- Immediately after WWII, white, middle-class Americans migrated from the cities to the suburbs
- After WWII, the US was better able than its allies to adjust its economy from wartime to peacetime because the US had suffered no widespread wartime destruction (the war was not fought on US soil, so US cities and factories were not destroyed, unlike Europe and Japan)
- **Interstate Highway Act, 1956:** increased suburban growth
- Population increases that resulted from the baby boom of the 1950s and 1960s contributed to a rise in demand for consumer goods
- The post-WWII baby boom affected American society between 1945-1960 by increasing the need for educational resources

Cold War (1946-1989)

- An era of political tension and military rivalry between the US and Soviet Union (Communist Russia) after WWII, that stopped short of full-scale war (the two nations never directly fought each other in a war)
- After WWII, the US and Soviet Union were no longer allies because each nation believed that the other was a threat to its national security
- Developed mainly as a result of the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe (after WWII, the Soviets did not withdraw their troops from Eastern Europe)
- **Iron Curtain:** nickname given to the boundary of Soviet domination in Europe during the Cold War.
- During the Cold War era, the US and Soviet Union were hesitant to become involved in direct military conflict because of the **potential for global nuclear destruction**. The superpowers supported opposing sides in conflicts, but did not confront each other directly
- **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):** formed in 1949 in order to protect Western Europe from the Soviet Union and provide collective security against Communist aggression
- **Marshall Plan (1948):** US plan to economic aid to European nations threatened by communism
- **Sputnik Launch (1957):** Soviet Union launched the first satellite into space. Led to American fears that the Soviets had achieved technological superiority. Heightened the space race as a form of Cold War competition
- **Containment:** US policy dedicated to **stop Communist influence from spreading**. NATO, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Korean War, Vietnam War, and the Eisenhower Doctrine were examples of the US foreign policy of containment (started by President Truman)
- **Truman Doctrine:** originally designed to contain communism by giving aid to Greece and Turkey
- **Eisenhower Doctrine:** Expanded the principles of the Truman Doctrine by extending Middle East military assistance in order to offset communist influence in the region.
- **Berlin Airlift:** Soviet forces cut off Berlin from the Western world, causing the US to airlift supplies to West Berlin
- **Fall of the Berlin Wall** is most closely associated with the end of the Cold War

McCarthy Era: resulted from charges that Communists had infiltrated the US government

- **Senator Joseph McCarthy:** led a “witch hunt” for Communist spies in the US government during the early 1950s
- **McCarthyism:** fear of communist influence in the US. The term has since been applied to events that are related to reckless accusations unsupported by evidence
- Opponents of the Senate hearings led by McCarthy during the 1950s argued that these investigations **violated the constitutional rights of many people**
- House Un-American Activities Committee
- The reputations of many people were ruined by false accusations of disloyalty
- Execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg reflected the post-WWII concern over spying by communists in the US (the Rosenbergs were executed in the US for being Soviet spies)

Korean War (1950-1953): Civil war between Communist North Korea (supported by Communist China and Soviet Union) and South Korea (supported by the US and United Nations)

- US intervened in the war because of its policy of containment (stop the spread of communism)
- Marked the first time that the United Nations used military force to oppose aggression
- General Douglas MacArthur was relieved of his command in the Korean War because he threatened constitutional principle of civilian control of the military
- Presidential wartime powers were expanded
- Major outcome of the Korean War was that Korea continued to be divided nation (neither side was able to win)

Vietnam War: Civil war between Communist North Vietnam and US backed South Vietnam

- US became involved to prevent the spread of communism in Southeast Asia/Indochina (following the policy of containment)
- **Domino Theory:** idea that if one country falls to communism, others around it will as well. Used by the US as a **justification for the Vietnam War**
- Different from World War II because the Vietnam War **caused** a significant amount of **protest in the US**. The Berkeley demonstrations, riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, and the Kent State protest all reflect student disapproval of the war. Protests against the Vietnam war grew in the late 1960s and early 1970s because many Americans believed that the war was unjust
- The ratification of the 26th Amendment, which lowered the voting age to 18, was a result of the participation of the US in the Vietnam War (many 18 year olds went to war, causing the people to feel they deserved the right to vote)
- Presidential wartime powers were expanded **during** the war (but limited after)
- US pulls out of Vietnam in 1975 resulting in a North Vietnam victory and all of Vietnam falling to communism

Effects of the Vietnam War

- **The War Powers Act (1973):** limited the president's ability to send troops into combat abroad (asserted the role of Congress in the commitment of troops). Passed by Congress as a response to the US involvement in the Vietnam War
- The US questioned its role as a police officer of the world
- Caused a reluctance to commit US troops for extended military action abroad
- Showed that foreign policy can be altered by public opinion
- Led to greater public distrust of government al policies
- US experience in the war showed that superior military technology does not guarantee victory

President Dwight D. Eisenhower

- Eisenhower Doctrine (1957): an effort by the US to counter the influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East
- Used the "Domino Theory" to justify US involvement in Vietnam
- In a farewell message to the American public, Eisenhower warned of the growth of the "military-industrial complex" referring to the influence of defense contractors on Congress

President John F. Kennedy

- **Bay of Pigs Invasion, 1961** – an effort supported by Kennedy to remove a communist dictator (Fidel Castro) from power in Cuba. Kennedy's most significant foreign policy failure
- **Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962** – the Soviet Union placed nuclear weapons in Cuba (only 90 miles off the US coast). Kennedy attempted to deal with the situation by imposing a naval blockade to isolate Cuba from the Soviet Union. Eventually led to Kennedy negotiating the limited Nuclear Ban Treaty with the Soviet Union.
- **New Frontier:** program that was successful in expanding the US space program. The Soviet Union launched the Sputnik satellite which led Kennedy to set a goal of landing a man on the Moon and increase funding for science and math education.

President Lyndon B. Johnson

- **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** – increased US involvement in the Vietnam War and provided justification for Johnson's involvement in Vietnam
- Vietnam War reduced Johnson's domestic reform programs (Great Society could not accomplish as much because the US was distracted by the Vietnam War)
- Decided not to run for reelection in 1968 because his **Vietnam War policies had reduced his popularity** with voters

President Richard Nixon

- Détente – policy to ease tensions between the US and Soviet Union
- Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) – part of the presidential policy of détente. Attempt to reduce world tensions.
- Expanded economic relations with communist nations
- Nixon visits the Peoples Republic of China in 1972 in order to reduce tensions between the US and Communist China. Attempted to counteract growing Soviet power and influence in Asia

Cold War Review Questions

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was created
 - Nation Defense Education Act passed
 - Increased federal money was provided to improve schools, especially in math and science
 - More money was appropriated by Congress for research and development
1. Which event sparked these changes? (SS.912.A.6.8)
 - a. The Soviet Union launched its satellite, Sputnik.
 - b. Mao Zedong led a successful Communist revolution in China
 - c. North Korea crossed the 38th parallel to invade South Korea
 - d. Senator Joseph McCarthy announced the discovery of "Reds" in the State Department
 2. Most opponents of the Senate hearings led by Senator Joseph McCarthy during the 1950s argued that these investigations (SS.912.A.6.8)
 - a. weakened the armed forces of the nation
 - b. violated the constitutional rights of many people
 - c. undermined the powers of the president
 - d. encouraged the spread of communism
 3. Which political trend characterized the era of McCarthyism? (SS.912.A.6.8)
 - a. the effort to end the welfare system and remove regulations on US business
 - b. the willingness to provide political asylum to persecuted people worldwide
 - c. the effort to transform the United States into a society based on civil equality
 - d. the use of false accusation of communism as a weapon against political opponents
 4. What international organization was created immediately after the Second World War to promote world peace and cooperation among nations? (SS.912.A.6.9)
 - a. the Atlantic Charter
 - b. the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
 - c. the United Nations
 - d. the League of Nations
 5. How did the formation of the United Nations resemble the formation of the League of Nations? (SS.912.A.6.9)
 - a. it was created to prevent the spread of communism
 - b. it was set up to promote international efforts to stop war
 - c. it was intended to prevent another global Great Depression
 - d. it was boycotted by both the United States and the Soviet Union
 6. According to this excerpt, for what was President Truman arguing? (SS.912.A.6.10)

Truman Doctrine

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted (conquest) by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

President Harry Truman, 1947

- a. the United States must keep current alliances with foreign nations
 - b. the United States must help protect independent nations from communist aggression
 - c. the United States must support rebels fighting for freedom in foreign nations
 - d. the United States must avoid establishing alliances with foreign nations
7. A goal of the Marshall Plan (1948) was to (SS.912.A.6.10)
 - a. rebuild Japan after World War II
 - b. provide military aid to the Warsaw Pact
 - c. establish a Pan-American military alliance system
 - d. provide economic aid to European nations threatened by communism
8. The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were all part of the foreign policy of (SS.912.A.6.10)
 - a. Isolationism
 - b. Détente
 - c. Colonialism
 - d. Containment

9. Which foreign policy decision by President Harry Truman is an example of the policy of containment? (SS.912.A.6.10)
 - a. relieving General MacArthur of his Korean command
 - b. recognizing the new nation of Israel
 - c. supporting the trials of war criminals in Germany and Japan
 - d. providing military aid to Greece and Turkey
10. How did many US families respond to the threat of a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union as the Cold War intensified? (SS.912.A.6.11)
 - a. they moved from US cities to the Canadian wilderness
 - b. they urged the US president to improve relations with the Soviet Union
 - c. they organized trips to Moscow to meet with Soviet leaders
 - d. they constructed bomb shelters in their backyards
11. Which statement best summarizes the outcome of the Korean War? (SS.912.A.6.12)
 - a. North Korea made minor gains in the south but lost territory in the north to China.
 - b. A majority of North Koreans fled southward causing a collapse of the North Korean government.
 - c. North and South Korea remained divided at the 38th parallel, just as they had been before the war.
 - d. Korea was reunited under a coalition government consisting of both Northerners and Southerners.
12. The primary reason given by US leaders to justify military involvement in Vietnam was that it would (SS.912.A.6.13)
 - a. promote reconstruction after World War II
 - b. maintain the policy of détente
 - c. fulfill prior United Nations obligations
 - d. keep communism from spreading throughout the region
13. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964) provided congressional support for (SS.912.A.6.13)
 - a. withdrawing from the United Nations
 - b. expanding the Alliance for Progress
 - c. escalating military action in Vietnam
 - d. reestablishing trade with Cuba
14. The policy of détente was used by President Richard Nixon in an effort to (SS.912.A.6.13)
 - a. decrease tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States
 - b. improve relations with Latin America
 - c. promote democratic government in China
 - d. create stronger ties with Western Europe
15. United States involvement in the Vietnam War was based in part on a desire to (SS.912.A.6.13)
 - a. prevent renewed Japanese expansion in the Pacific
 - b. assure access to an adequate supply of oil from the Middle East
 - c. contain communism in Southeast Asia
 - d. protect American business interests in China
16. What was the significance of President Nixon's visit to Communist China in 1972? (SS.912.A.6.14)
 - a. It led to the reunification of Taiwan with Communist China
 - b. It persuaded Chinese leaders to introduce capitalism into the marketplace
 - c. It showed that the Cold War between the "Free World" and Communism was over
 - d. It opened the way for China's entry into the United Nations and trade with the United States
17. What was an important consequence of the Cuban Missile Crisis? (SS.912.A.6.14)
 - a. The Soviet Union secretly kept nuclear missiles in Cuba pointed at Florida.
 - b. The United States kept missiles in Turkey and Greece pointed at the Soviet Union.
 - c. Fidel Castro was removed from power in Cuba and all nuclear weapons were taken out of Cuba.
 - d. Soviet and American leaders established an emergency "hot line" and negotiated a partial test ban treaty.