



SNOW DAYS



US HISTORY PRACTICE PACKET



MSCS SOCIAL STUDIES TEAM



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Cold War Rivals: Cuba and the United States

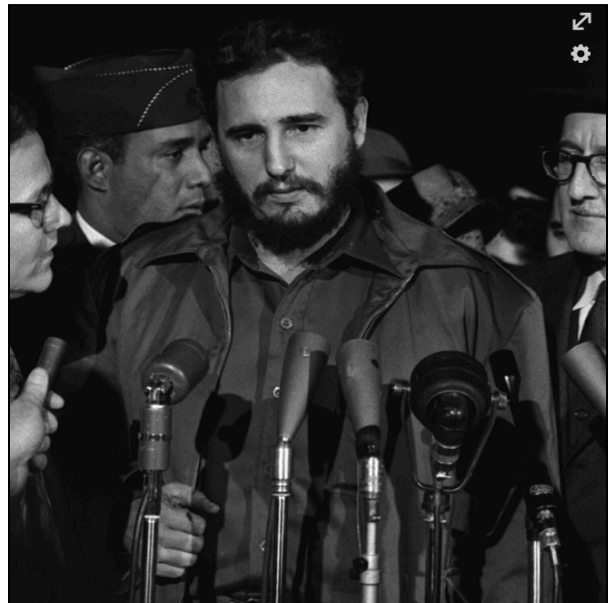
By Mike Kubic

2016

Mike Kubic is a former correspondent of Newsweek magazine. As of the early 2000s, steps have been taken to normalize the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba, and thus thaw the lingering 50-plus years of Cold War tensions. The following article covers Cuba's participation in the Cold War, focusing on the rise of its former leader Fidel Castro. As you read, take notes on how the United States' relationship with Cuba has evolved over the past 75 years.

[1] T.S. Eliot's famous vision: "This is the way the world ends. Not with a bang, but a whimper"¹ seemed to be all wrong on November 9, 1989. On that wintry day, the world created by the four decades-old Cold War² between the United States and the Soviet Union exploded with a huge bang: the destruction of the massive Berlin Wall, a Communist-built barrier to prevent the people of Eastern Germany from crossing into the free world.

Within a few months, the Communist Union of 15 Soviet Socialist Republics³ and its eight Moscow-controlled European satellites⁴ began disintegrating into 24 independent countries that had two things in common: a profound relief to be rid of their Communist satraps,⁵ and the ability to join the more liberal and prosperous world.



["Fidel Castro - MATS Terminal Washington 1959"](#) by Source: U.S. News & World Report is in the public domain.

1. a quote from the poem "The Hollow Men" (1925)
2. The Cold War refers to the state of intense political and military tension between the Western and Eastern Blocs, namely between the United States and the Soviet Union, following WWII until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.
3. the USSR, which was the official name of the Soviet Union
4. A satellite state refers to a formally independent country that is under heavy political and military control from another country, often within close geographical range. However, this term can be used more loosely to describe not direct control but influence; for example, Cuba, though far from the Soviet Union, was considered an ally and fell within the sphere of

Only one country in the former Soviet orbit didn't join the family of pro-western nations. Cuba, one of the Caribbean nations that during the 1900s suffered under brutal rightist despots⁶ with close economic and political ties to the United States, remained a Communist dictatorship. The reason for the survival of this vestige⁷ of the Cold War was the forceful leadership of a notable 20th Century revolutionary and Latin American strongman: Fidel Castro.

Castro's Revolution

Castro was an unlikely person to make Cuba a prominent⁸ — and impoverished⁹ — pawn of the Soviet crusade against the free world. He had no visceral¹⁰ hatred of the United States, and as described by Tad Szulc, a *New York Times* correspondent who followed Castro's career for almost 20 years, he greatly admired President John F. Kennedy. The son of a wealthy land owner, Jesuit-educated, and a lawyer, Castro initially had one main goal: it was to overthrow General Fulgencio Batista, a typical Caribbean tyrant who took control of the island in 1940 and, with the support of American government, criminals and corporations, turned it into an El Dorado¹¹ of corruption, gambling, prostitution and illegal drug business.

- [5] Outraged by the regime's iniquity¹² and the poverty of ordinary Cubans, Castro and a small band of his followers set out in 1953 to topple Batista through guerrilla warfare.¹³ After six years of enormously difficult and heroic fighting — and eventually, with indirect support from the U.S., which in 1958 imposed an arms embargo¹⁴ against the Cuban government — the young revolutionary and his rapidly growing supporters generated crippling strikes, demonstrations, and Cuban army desertions¹⁵ that eventually stripped Batista of all power.

At 3:00 a.m. on January 1, 1959, Batista fled, with \$300 million in cash, to the protection of an

Soviet influence.

5. a local or subordinate ruler
6. **Despot** (*noun*) a ruler with absolute power, typically one who uses it in a cruel or oppressive way
7. **Vestige** (*noun*) a trace of something that no longer exists; a relic
8. **Prominent** (*adjective*) important or famous
9. **Impoverished** (*adjective*) poor
10. **Visceral** (*adjective*) strong or deeply-rooted feelings
11. a mythical kingdom of gold and riches sought after by European explorers in America; place of fabulous wealth;
12. **Iniquity** (*noun*) immoral or grossly unfair behavior
13. Guerrilla warfare is a type of warfare in which a group of combatants use irregular military tactics (such as ambushes and raids) to attack a larger less mobile, traditional military group.
14. an official ban on trade or other commercial activity with a particular country
15. the action of leaving or abandoning a person, cause, or organization

equally rapacious¹⁶ Rafael Trujillo, the despotic boss of the Dominican Republic. The same day, Castro and his ragtag guerrilleros descended from the Escambray Mountains into an enthusiastic welcome in Havana, the capital of Cuba.

The U.S. immediately recognized the revolutionary government and in the spring of 1959, Castro paid a three-day visit to New York and Washington, where he had a nearly four-hour meeting with Vice President Richard Nixon.

From Allies to Enemies

Afterwards, he dramatically changed his course. By the end of the summer, the CIA reported the arrival of two colonels of KGB, the Soviet top security agency, in Havana. They were followed by dozens of Spanish-speaking military advisors who had fought with the Soviet army during WWII, and by Soviet-trained Communist veterans of the Spanish Civil War.

As official Washington saw it, this was a most alarming development, and it was taking place during one of the coldest periods of the Cold War. Two years after the pugnacious¹⁷ Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev publicly put the Western nations on notice that “we will bury you!”¹⁸ Castro invited droves of Soviet security and military advisers to Cuba. On top of it, he made scores of decisions that, he must have known, would antagonize the U.S.

- [10] By the end of its first year in power, Castro’s government seized Cuban and foreign privately-owned land, nationalized hundreds of companies and subsidiaries of U.S. corporations, and levied¹⁹ prohibitively high taxes on American imports. Most disappointing was the establishment of a one-party regime that — although focused on improving the life of millions of Cubans — was no more free and democratic than its predecessor.²⁰ In fact, it was just as brutal: one of its first acts was the execution of 500 Batista supporters.

With the Cuban-Soviet ties growing rapidly stronger and more public, President Dwight D. Eisenhower first tried to show Castro that provoking Uncle Sam was not without a cost. He temporarily embargoed American exports to Cuba except for food and medical supplies. When Castro responded by signing a trade treaty with Moscow, Eisenhower raised the ante. Faced with the prospect of the establishment of a Soviet-dominated Communist regime mere 90 miles

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16. **Rapacious** (*adjective*) aggressively greedy or hungry
 17. **Pugnacious** (*adjective*) eager or quick to argue, quarrel, or fight
 18. In 1956, Khrushchev used this phrase while addressing Western ambassadors at the Polish embassy in Moscow. Some have argued that an alternate translation would be the English equivalent of “it’s your funeral.”
 19. **Levy** (*verb*) to impose (a tax, fee, or fine)
 20. a person who held a job or office before the current holder [i.e. Batista held office before Castro]

from the coast of Florida, he made two major decisions:

- In March, 1960, Eisenhower authorized the CIA to begin preparing an invasion of Cuba by training anti-Castro refugees who had fled to the U.S.
- And on January 3, 1961, a few weeks before the inauguration of his successor, John F. Kennedy, President Eisenhower cut all diplomatic relations with Cuba.

President Kennedy, who was no more willing to tolerate a Soviet-allied Cuba than was Eisenhower, took the next long step, which turned out to be one of the great blunders of Cold War: he gave the CIA a go-ahead to launch the invasion.

The Bay of Pigs Invasion

The attack on the Cuban Island's Bay of Pigs, launched by 1,400 Cuban exiles on April 17, 1961, was a boondoggle of historic proportions. The invasion's pilots, who were supposed to destroy Castro's small air force, found the airports empty. The landing, which was to be secret, took place near a Cuban radio station that reported on the fighting, blow by blow, from the very beginning.

Coral reefs near the beach sank some of the exiles' ships; paratroopers landed in the wrong place, and the main invasion force ran out of ammunition. Without a U.S. air support, which President Kennedy refused to authorize, and with 114 of them killed, the exiles surrendered after less than a day of fighting. Over 1,100 were taken prisoner, to be released after the U.S. paid a humiliating ransom in food, medicines and trucks.

[15] President Kennedy acknowledged his responsibility for the debacle and Fidel Castro's brother, Raúl, agreed. "Kennedy vacillated,"²¹ he said. "If... he had decided to invade us, he could have [drowned] the island in a sea of blood.... Luckily for us, he vacillated."

But the president did not remain indecisive after Fidel Castro announced in December 1961 that Cuba's new Communist party under his leadership would no longer be a "secret" and have "a Marxist-Leninist"²² program adjusted to the precise conditions of our country."

The CIA received an OK to launch several attempts on Castro's life, which was another White House decision that flopped. But a permanent embargo on U.S. trade with Cuba that Kennedy issued in February 1962 was devastatingly effective. Deprived of the U.S. market for Cuban

21. **Vacillate** (*verb*) to be indecisive; to change opinions several times

22. Marxist-Leninism is a political-economic philosophy that seeks to establish and develop socialist states. It supported common communist ideas such as one-party states and state-dominated economies. It formed the foundation of the Soviet Union.

sugar and without imports of American food, electronics and spare parts, the island — despite expensive aid from Moscow — become an economic basket case in just two years.

Castro was concerned about Cuba's fast-rising debt to Moscow and the empty shelves in Cuban stores, but what bothered him more than the shortages was his fear that the U.S. will launch another invasion to make up for the Bay of Pigs debacle.²³

The Cuban Missile Crisis

In his book *Fidel*, a “critical portrait” of the Cuban leader, Szulc quotes Castro saying that negotiations with the Soviet Union for “the strengthening of our armed forces and dispatch of strategic missiles to our country” took place already in June 1962, well before the Kennedy embargo of American exports took full effect.

- [20] The result of these secret talks was Khrushchev's decision that was far more reckless than any mistake made by Kennedy. In the fall of 1962, Soviet troops began placing in Cuba medium-range nuclear missiles capable of reaching American cities as far as Washington — a nightmare that Eisenhower and Kennedy had tried to prevent through the hapless invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

The discovery of the Soviet crews and atomic weapons by a U.S. spy plane triggered on October 15, 1962 the most dangerous episode of the Cold War: a 13-day face-off during which the world was appallingly²⁴ close to nuclear warfare.

What came to be known as the Cuban Missile Crisis plunged the top leaders in Washington and Moscow into sleepless round of nerve-wracking third-party contacts and negotiations during which, as the U.S. Secretary of State famously said, “We're eyeball to eyeball, and I think that the other guy just blinked.” The upshot was the Soviet removal of the atomic weapons from Cuba and, eventually, improved communications and other steps that significantly eased the Soviet-U.S. tensions.

The only participant of the crisis that did not celebrate its outcome was Castro. Furious at the Soviet retreat without even consulting him, he continued to support Moscow, but he focused on building up his reputation as a revolutionary leader. At home, he expanded Cuban health care and education while introducing state-run economy, tightening the press censorship and suppressing his opponents.

Abroad, he sought to gain international stature by aiding leftist revolutionaries in Latin America and Africa, and by presiding from 1979 till 1983 over the so-called Non-Aligned Movement of

23. **Debacle** (*noun*) a disastrous failure

24. **Appallingly** (*adverb*) to a horrifying or shocking degree

Third World nations.²⁵ After the Soviet empire fell apart, Castro adopted another losing cause — a campaign against the economic globalization²⁶ — but his health began to fail and in 2006 he transferred his leadership to his brother Raúl, who took over the presidency of Cuba in 2008.

The “Cuban Thaw”

[25] With the island no longer a potential security threat, the U.S. began easing its restrictive policies:

- In 2001, it resumed supplying Cuba with food.
- In 2003, Washington established a commission to “explore ways the U.S. can help hasten and ease a democratic transition in Cuba.”
- In 2009, the U.S. began lifting the ban on travel to Cuba.
- In 2015, the two countries resumed their diplomatic relations; and
- In 2016, President Barack Obama became the first U.S. chief executive to visit Cuba since President Calvin Coolidge in 1928.

Despite the Cuba-U.S. conflict almost coming to nuclear warfare in the 1960s, roughly 50 years later, President Obama was watching baseball and starring on local media alongside President Raúl Castro — who was a confidant and deputy to Fidel for decades.

Thus the final “end of the world” created by the Soviet-U.S. Cold War came very much the way the great English poet imagined: not with a bang, but a whimper. Ex-president Fidel Castro’s vision for a smooth Cuban “transition: to socialism [and] to communism” isolated from the U.S. now seemed a distant dream. In 2015, then in his late 80s, Fidel Castro released a letter on the U.S.-Cuba diplomatic thaw. In it, he states: “I don’t trust the policy of the US, nor have I exchanged a word with them, but this does not mean I reject a peaceful solution to conflicts.”

The Cuban dictator’s life and career encapsulated the rise and fall of the Marxist doctrine in Latin America. He died in November, 2016, just six months after President Obama’s historic visit to his country.

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25. The Non-Aligned Movement is a group of states which are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. As of 2012, the movement consists of 120 members.
 26. Economic globalization is the increasing economic integration and interdependence of international economies.

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. According to the text, why did Cuba remain a communist state following the collapse of communism in the USSR?
 - A. American aid, which promoted democracy and the free market, did not reach Cuba.
 - B. Fidel Castro was an authoritative leader who maintained control in Cuba.
 - C. The drive for political change in Cuba was not strong enough to replace Castro.
 - D. Cuba maintained distance from the USSR due to Castro's dislike of other world leaders.

2. PART A: According to the text, what was the main cause of hostility between the U.S. and Cuba during the Cold War?
 - A. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, the U.S. cut off all aid to Cuba, so Cuba instead turned to the USSR for support.
 - B. The U.S. has always feared Cuba's relative proximity and attempted to make it an American territory during the Cold War.
 - C. The U.S. supported the Cuban dictator Batista and resented Castro's takeover of Cuba in the 1950s.
 - D. Castro began developing ties with the USSR, which was America's major opponent during the Cold War.

3. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "Castro initially had one main goal: it was to overthrow General Fulgencio Batista, a typical Caribbean tyrant who took control of the island in 1940" (Paragraph 4)
 - B. "Castro invited droves of Soviet security and military advisers to Cuba... he made scores of decisions that, he must have known, would antagonize the U.S." (Paragraph 9)
 - C. "President Dwight D. Eisenhower... temporarily embargoed American exports to Cuba except for food and medical supplies." (Paragraph 11)
 - D. "The result of these secret talks was Khrushchev's decision that was far more reckless than any mistake made by Kennedy." (Paragraph 20)

4. PART A: What does the term "boondoggle" most likely mean as used in paragraph 13?
- A. a declaration of war
 - B. a mistake
 - C. a success
 - D. a secret mission
5. PART B: Which of the following phrases best supports the answer to Part A?
- A. "one of the great blunders of Cold War" (Paragraph 12)
 - B. "go-ahead to launch the invasion" (Paragraph 12)
 - C. "launched by 1,400 Cuban exiles" (Paragraph 13)
 - D. "which was to be secret" (Paragraph 13)
6. Which of the following statements best describes Cuba's reaction to the Cuban Missile Crisis?
- A. Cuba broke off all ties to the Soviet Union in order to appease the United States and prevent further American retaliation.
 - B. Cuba became more hostile towards the U.S. with Castro threatening to use the remaining nuclear weapons, though he never followed through on this threat.
 - C. Castro, upset with the Soviet Union's retreat, began seeking international alliances elsewhere and building his reputation as a leader in Cuba.
 - D. Castro, upset with the Soviet Union's retreat, broke off support to Moscow and immediately began to heal political rifts with the U.S.
7. How does the structure of the section called "The 'Cuban Thaw'" (Paragraphs 25-28) contribute to the effectiveness and clarity of the author's overall argument?

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. Why was the United States so afraid of Cuba-USSR relations? How do you think U.S. policies would have changed, if at all, towards Cuba if Castro did not interact with the Soviet Union? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
2. Was the United States justified in its invasion of Cuba (i.e. the Bay of Pigs)? What U.S. values or policies do you think motivated this event?
3. In the context of this passage, how does power corrupt? Consider the three major players—the U.S., the Soviet Union, and Cuba—in your answer. Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
4. After Fidel Castro died, some people celebrated his legacy while others condemned him. In the context of this article, why do you think Castro's legacy proved so controversial? How can we evaluate his legacy as a leader?

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Did World War II Launch the Civil Rights Movement?

By Annette McDermott
2018

World War II drastically changed the world. Not only did African Americans get drafted and go off to fight, but they also took on incredibly important responsibilities and jobs in America to help out the war effort. However, when the war ended, the country returned to treating African Americans as second-class citizens. The war really impacted the perspectives of African Americans who were unwilling to tolerate racism after fighting for their country. As you read, take notes on how World War II launched the Civil Rights movement.

- [1] The Civil Rights movement was a fight for equal rights under the law for African Americans during the 1950s and 1960s. Centuries of prejudice and discrimination fueled the crusade, but World War II and its aftermath were arguably the main catalysts.¹

A. Philip Randolph's crusade against discrimination prodded Roosevelt into action.

On January 6, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave a State of the Union speech outlining the need for America to help Europe fight against Hitler's tyranny.

He spoke famously of Four Freedoms for all: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. It was an admirable vision, but few American blacks of the era enjoyed true freedom of any kind.

As America prepared for war, civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph threatened to organize a march on Washington to protest segregation and discrimination in the armed forces and defense industries.



"Untitled" by United States Navy is in the public domain.

1. **Catalyst** (*noun*) an agent that causes change

- [5] The threat brought increased attention to race relations and compelled Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802 which prohibited, “discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries and in Government because of race, creed, color, or national origin.”

Black Americans served admirably in the war.

Prior to World War II, about 4,000 blacks served in the armed forces. By the war’s end, that number had grown to over 1.2 million, though the military remained segregated.

Black Americans served their country with distinction:² At first, they worked as support troops, but as casualties increased many became infantrymen, airmen, medics and even officers.

All-black or mostly black units such as the 320th Anti-Aircraft Barrage Balloon Battalion, the 761st Tank Battalion and the Tuskegee Airmen fought their way through Europe and earned reputations as courageous, honorable soldiers.

Yet, according to John C. McManus, Ph.D., Curators’ Distinguished Professor of U.S. Military History at the Missouri University of Science and Technology, “... quite commonly black soldiers found themselves confronted with ugly discrimination and segregation during off-duty hours in military towns, especially in the South.

- [10] “Probably the most famous instance of this was when Lt. Jackie Robinson³ refused to comply with the bus segregation at Ft. Hood. Many other incidents led to confrontations and significant violence and much social activism. At times, there were riots between white and black soldiers, even overseas as well.”

As whites at home went to war, blacks left behind had access to manufacturing jobs previously unavailable to them. They learned new skills, joined unions and became part of the industrial workforce.

The ‘Double V Campaign’ fought for victory at home and abroad.

In 1942, African American James G. Thompson wrote a letter to the Pittsburgh Courier titled, “Should I Sacrifice to Live Half American?” which questioned if he should fight for a country that discriminated against him.

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2. exceptionally well; in a way worth recognizing
 3. Jackie Robinson (January 31, 1919 – October 24, 1972) was an American professional baseball player who, in 1947, became the first African American to play in Major League Baseball.

Thompson initiated the “Double V” campaign to encourage others to fight for victory and freedom abroad and at home.

The double V slogan took hold. “By serving their country, [black soldiers] earned a great deal of respect from fair-minded whites and blacks alike. This in turn gave them a greater political voice than they otherwise might have had,” said McManus.

Black veterans led the postwar Civil Rights charge.

[15] Blacks returned home from the war to a life of bigotry⁴ and injustice. “[Blacks] had just helped destroy some of the most homicidal, racist regimes in human history and yet they had served in an armed force that was segregated on the basis of race,” said McManus.

“They were victimized by the same sort of racist views that had animated America’s enemies. This made zero sense and it created a powerful moral imperative⁵ for domestic change.”

The blatant injustice motivated blacks and unprejudiced whites to fight discrimination. Many blacks moved to large cities to find jobs using skills they’d learned in the military.

Others became civil rights activists and lent their powerful voices to organizations such as the NAACP,⁶ CORE,⁷ the Regional Council of Negro Leadership and the Deacons for Defense and Justice. In 1948, their efforts paid off when President Harry Truman issued an executive order to desegregate the military.

According to McManus, “World War II led to an explosion of racial reform, issues that the Civil War failed to solve and that had been festering for nearly a century. In my opinion, World War II was the most significant event in American history, to a great extent because of the racial change it helped foster.”

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4. **Bigotry** (*noun*) strong, unreasonable beliefs, especially hatred for those of a different race or religion
 5. an urgent need to do something
 6. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is an organization founded in 1909 to fight for the rights and safety of Black people in the United States.
 7. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) is an American organization established in 1942 to fight racial prejudice.

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What connection does the author make between World War II and the Civil Rights Movement?
 - A. Black people's military service in World War II inspired and strengthened their fight for equality.
 - B. Black people's service in World War II inspired President Roosevelt to abolish segregation in the military.
 - C. Black people fighting for equal rights during World War II were inspired by A. Philip Randolph's leadership.
 - D. Black people had to struggle for equality while serving in the military and factories of World War II America.

2. How does paragraph 7 contribute to the development of ideas in the text?
 - A. It reveals that Black soldiers served in segregated units during the war.
 - B. It reveals that Black soldiers played an essential role during the war.
 - C. It reveals that Black soldiers sacrificed their lives during the war.
 - D. It reveals that Black soldiers were mistreated during the war.

3. How does the section "The 'Double V Campaign' fought for victory at home and abroad." contribute to the central ideas in the article?
 - A. It reveals how Black soldiers were punished for their political activism during the war.
 - B. It reveals how Black soldiers fought major battles both overseas and in the United States.
 - C. It reveals how Black soldiers turned admiration for their military service into political power.
 - D. It reveals how Black soldiers were sent into more dangerous situations than white soldiers were.

4. Which detail from the article best demonstrates how World War II changed some white Americans' view of Black Americans?
- A. "Prior to World War II, about 4,000 blacks served in the armed forces. By the war's end, that number had grown to over 1.2 million, though the military remained segregated." (Paragraph 6)
 - B. "All-black or mostly black units such as the 320th Anti-Aircraft Barrage Balloon Battalion... fought their way through Europe and earned reputations as courageous, honorable soldiers." (Paragraph 8)
 - C. "Many other incidents led to confrontations and significant violence and much social activism. At times, there were riots between white and black soldiers, even overseas as well." (Paragraph 10)
 - D. "Others became civil rights activists and lent their powerful voices to organizations such as the NAACP, CORE, the Regional Council of Negro Leadership and the Deacons for Defense and Justice." (Paragraph 18)
5. What key details best support the author's contention that World War II launched the Civil Rights Movement?

Name: _____

Class: _____

Introduction to the Vietnam War

By USHistory.org

2016

The Vietnam War began on November 1, 1955, and ended on April 30, 1975. It was fought between North Vietnam (supported by the Soviet Union, China and other communist allies), and the government of South Vietnam (supported by the United States, the Philippines and other anti-communist allies). As you read, identify why the United States entered into the Vietnam War and what effects U.S. involvement had.

- [1] The Vietnam War was the longest and perhaps most unpopular war in United States history. It lasted twenty years, from November 1, 1955 to April 30, 1975. Despite the decades of resolve,¹ billions of dollars, nearly 60,000 American lives and many more injuries, the United States failed to achieve its objectives.



["U.S. Marines in Operation Allen Brook in 1968"](#) by U.S. Marines (Official Marine Corps Photo #371490) is in the public domain.

The U.S. Enters the War

The Vietnam War was fought between the pro-Communist North Vietnamese² and the anti-Communist South Vietnamese.³ The United States entered the war to support South Vietnam in order to stop the spread of communism⁴ and the threat of the communist

1. **Resolve (noun)** a firm determination to do or accomplish something
2. This is a reference to the inhabitants of North Vietnam, officially known as The Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The DRV was a state in Southeast Asia that existed from 1945 to 1976. The state began when Vietnamese revolutionary Ho Chi Minh declared independence from France on September 2, 1945, and announced the creation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
3. This is a reference to the inhabitants of South Vietnam, officially known as the Republic of Vietnam. The Republic of Vietnam was a state governing the southern half of Vietnam from 1955 to 1975. It received international recognition in 1949 as the "State of Vietnam" (1949–55), and later as the "Republic of Vietnam" (1955–75).
4. Communism is a way of organizing a society in which the government owns everything that

revolutionary Ho Chi Minh. At the time the United States decided to enter the war, Ho Chi Minh had risen to become a popular leader in North Vietnam. He used his army to defeat the French, which had colonized Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh declared that he wanted to push out the French and unite all of Vietnam under Communist rule. He got the support of the Soviet Union, an enemy of the United States.

On August 2, 1964, gunboats of North Vietnam allegedly fired on ships of the United States Navy stationed in the Gulf of Tonkin.⁵ When reports came in that further firing occurred on August 4, President Johnson quickly asked Congress to respond. At the time, the United States subscribed to the "Domino Theory" of communism — a communist victory in Vietnam might lead to communist victories in Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Such a scenario was unthinkable to American diplomats.

So, with nearly unanimous consent, members of the Senate and House told Johnson to "take all necessary measures" to repel North Vietnamese aggression. The Tonkin Gulf Resolution⁶ gave the President a "blank check" to wage the war in Vietnam as he saw fit.

A Difficult Battlefield

- [5] Between 1965 and 1968, the fighting escalated. Thousands of American soldiers were sent to fight in the unforgiving jungles of Vietnam, which had been booby-trapped by the Viet Cong, a pro-communist guerilla⁷ force led by Ho Chi Minh. The Viet Cong was hard to identify because they were not a conventional army force. They blended in with the native population and struck American forces by ambush, often at night.

Operation Rolling Thunder

In February 1965, the United States began a long program of sustained bombing of North

is used to make and transport products (such as land, oil, factories, ships, etc.) and there is no privately owned property. Many Americans saw communism as a threat to capitalism – in which individuals own their own property – and thus their way of life. Many Americans feared that if communism spread, it would make capitalism less powerful, therefore undermining Americans' power and influence in the world.

5. The Gulf of Tonkin is a body of water located off the coast of northern Vietnam and southern China.
6. The resolution granted President Lyndon B. Johnson the authority to assist any Southeast Asian country whose government was considered to be jeopardized by "communist aggression."
7. A guerilla is a member of an usually small group of soldiers who do not belong to a regular army and who fight in a war as an independent unit.

Vietnamese targets known as Operation Rolling Thunder. At first only military targets were hit, but as months turned into years, civilian⁸ targets were also hit.

The United States also bombed the Ho Chi Minh trail, a supply line used by the North Vietnamese to aid the Viet Cong. The trail meandered⁹ through Laos and Cambodia, so the bombing was kept secret from the Congress and the American people. More bombs rained down on Vietnam than the Allies used on the Axis powers during the whole of World War II.

The United States used defoliating agents such as Agent Orange and napalm (essentially gasoline in gel form) to remove the jungle cover. However, this intense bombardment did little to deter¹⁰ the communists. They continued to use the Ho Chi Minh trail despite the grave risk. They burrowed underground, building 30,000 miles of tunnel networks to keep supply lines open.

An Unpopular War

One factor that influenced the failure of the United States in Vietnam was lack of public support. Night after night, Americans turned on the news to see the bodies of their young flown home in bags. Young men were drafted¹¹ to fight in the war, many of them having to defer a college education. The average age of the American soldier in Vietnam was nineteen. As the months of the war became years, the American public became impatient for a resolution. Some young people took to the streets to protest the war, and others — although only a very small percentage — came to sympathize with the Viet Cong.

- [10] By the late 1960s, many began to feel it was time to cut losses and leave Vietnam. Even the iconic CBS newscaster Walter Cronkite questioned aloud the efficacy¹² of pursuing the war. He said, “We should be very careful believing that what we think is right in America is necessarily right for the rest of the world.”

The End of the War

President Nixon signed a ceasefire in January 1973 that formally ended the hostilities. In 1975,

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8. **Civilian** (*noun*) a person who is not a member of the military, police, or firefighting force
 9. **Meander** (*verb*) to move in a direction with a lot of curves instead of going in a straight or direct line
 10. **Deter** (*verb*) to cause someone to decide not to do something or to prevent something from happening
 11. Drafting is when a person is ordered to serve in the armed forces, versus signing up voluntarily.
 12. **Efficacy** (*noun*) the power to produce a desired result or effect; effectiveness

communist forces from the north overran the south and unified the nation. Neighboring Cambodia and Laos also became communist dictatorships.

At home, returning Vietnam War veterans struggled to readjust to normal life; many suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).¹³ Tens of thousands of Vietnamese people lost their homes and were shipped to refugee camps in the United States. In Vietnam, those that survived the war struggled to overcome the effects of Agent Orange, which, according to the Red Cross of Vietnam, caused health problems, disabilities, and birth defects in nearly 1 million people. The use of Agent Orange also destroyed 5 million acres of forests and crops, contributing to widespread famine and leaving hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese people malnourished or starving.

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13. PTSD is a mental health condition triggered by experiencing or seeing a terrifying event. Symptoms include anxiety and flashbacks.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which of the following statements best describes a central idea of the text?
 - A. Although the U.S. was victorious in the Vietnam War, the American experience was long and painful.
 - B. The war was catastrophic for the Vietnamese, and the U.S. failed in its mission to halt the spread of communism.
 - C. The American public did not know what was happening during the Vietnam War, so people widely supported it.
 - D. The Vietnam War had serious implications for the Vietnamese people, though it remained popular with the American public.

2. PART A: Which of the following best describes the relationship between public support of the war and the war's outcome?
 - A. As public support for the war increased early on, the U.S. made mistakes that would cost them a final victory.
 - B. After public support for the war ended amid protests, the U.S. was forced to surrender.
 - C. As public support for the war decreased, the U.S. was forced to end the war without a decisive victory.
 - D. As public support for the war increased later on, the U.S. acted more aggressively, leading to a victory.

3. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports your answer to Part A?
 - A. "Night after night, Americans turned on the news to see the bodies of their young flown home in bags." (Paragraph 9)
 - B. "Some young people took to the streets to protest the war, and others — although only a very small percentage — came to sympathize with the Viet Cong." (Paragraph 9)
 - C. "By the late 1960s, many began to feel it was time to cut losses and leave Vietnam." (Paragraph 10)
 - D. "President Nixon signed a ceasefire in January 1973 that formally ended the hostilities." (Paragraph 11)

4. According to the text, which of the following factors was a risk posed by "the threat of the communist revolutionary Ho Chi Minh" (Paragraph 2)?
- A. the "Domino theory" of communism
 - B. French colonization of Vietnam
 - C. separating North and South Vietnam
 - D. the rise of support for capitalism
5. How does the quote by Walter Cronkite in paragraph 10 contribute to the central ideas of the text? — "We should be very careful believing that what we think is right in America is necessarily right for the rest of the world."

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. In the context of this article, what makes people go to war? Why? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

2. According to the case of the Vietnam War, what do you think is the role of media in influencing public opinion? Do social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram play a unique role? How has the media impacted public opinion of wars going on in the world today?

3. Given what you now know about Vietnam, how do you think other countries might feel about our approach to foreign relations? Does this differ from or mirror opinions you've heard from your friends or at home?

4. Do you agree with Walter Cronkite? Should we "be very careful believing that what we think is right in America" is right for everyone else? Have you ever questioned whether our government and way of life is the right way? Why?

Name: _____

Class: _____

The Cold War

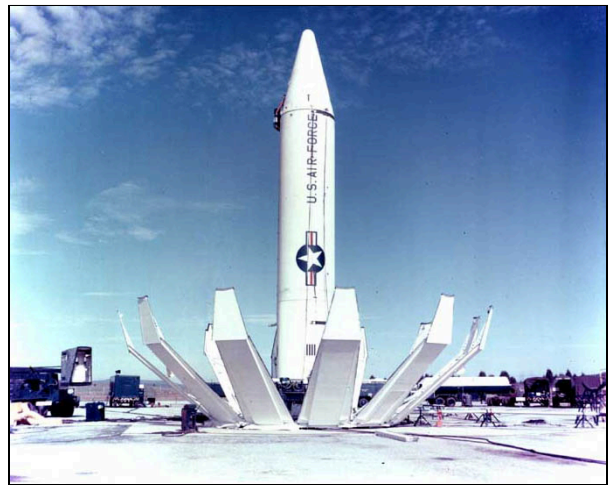
By Jessica McBirney

2017

The Cold War was a time of political and military tension between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II. In this informational text, Jessica McBirney details the various events of the Cold War and the effects they had both domestically and internationally. As you read, identify how the events of the Cold War affected the United States.

- [1] The Cold War is a part of world history that stretched over a period of more than 50 years. It embodied many military, political, cultural, and scientific tensions that had been building between nations for decades. Although it primarily involved the United States and the Soviet Union, the conflict affected dozens of other countries on almost every continent in the world.

The Cold War was a complex web of conflicts, so it is easiest to understand it by asking some big-picture questions.



"Jupiter IRBM" by U.S. Army is in the public domain.

What is a Cold War?

When we normally think of war, we think of what scholars call "hot war." A hot war is a military conflict between two countries who go directly into combat with each other.

On the other hand, a "cold war" happens when two countries are openly hostile towards each other without using violence. They might promote negative opinions about the enemy, threaten each other without actually following through, or do anything else (short of military action) to tear down the enemy.

Who Fought the Cold War?

- [5] The two main actors were the United States and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union stretched across modern-day Russia, into eastern Europe, and down near the Middle East. Both countries wanted to be the dominant world power.

Where did the Cold War Happen?

Because it was a cold war, the two countries never directly fought with each other. Instead, they supported opposite sides of other wars they believed could promote their own beliefs. So really, the Cold War happened all over the world. It stretched to countries on almost every continent, including Cuba, Korea, Hungary, Guatemala, Congo, and more.

When Did It Happen?

The Cold War started shortly after World War II ended, in 1947. In the aftermath of the war, Germany was defeated, but both the U.S. and the USSR were world superpowers who wanted control. They decided to split control of the old German territory in half. Soon, a wall went up separating the two territories; this Berlin Wall became the most famous physical icon of the Cold War. The destruction of the Berlin Wall, and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, ended the War.

Why?

Arguably, the central reason for the Cold War was the conflict between capitalism¹ and communism.² Both the U.S. (the capitalists) and the Soviet Union (the communists) believed their economic and governmental systems were superior, and both believed the other side's way would seriously harm the world.

As a result, the U.S. devised a policy of "containment," which said the U.S. would not try to fight existing communist countries, but they would do anything they could to stop new countries from becoming communist. Since this policy went directly against the USSR's goal to expand communism globally, the two superpowers often found themselves fighting on behalf of smaller countries.

[10] Nuclear weapons complicated this ideological³ tension. The U.S. first showed the world the power of nuclear missiles in 1945; it wasn't long before the Soviet Union developed its own nuclear weapons. Now, either country could wipe the other one out with the push of a button.

-
1. an economic system that relies on individualism, property rights, and competition
 2. an economic system that relies on community, distribution, and cooperation
 3. **Ideology** (*noun*) the set of ideas and beliefs of a group or political party

How was it Fought?

The Cold War was made up of many smaller incidents across the world. Each incident was unique, but a few are more famous than the rest.

One example of the indirect warfare between the U.S. and the USSR was the Vietnam War, from 1957 to 1975. In 1957 the communist-led North Vietnamese army began attacking South Vietnam. They hoped to gain control of the whole country. The U.S. saw this as a communist threat and, because of the containment policy, began sending troops to support South Vietnam in 1964. The Soviet Union, in turn, provided significant monetary⁴ support to North Vietnam. Unfortunately, the war essentially turned into a stalemate;⁵ U.S. troops pulled out in 1973, and South Vietnam fell to the Northern communist forces two years later.

Tensions were always high between the U.S. and the USSR. The best example is the Cuban Missile Crisis, which occurred in 1962 and was one of the tensest moments in the Cold War. U.S. spies discovered that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles on the coast of Cuba, only a few hundred miles away from Florida. For several days, as President John F. Kennedy and his advisors debated what to do, it looked as if the incident might escalate into a nuclear world war. However, President Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev both made some courageous decisions to hold back and rely on diplomacy⁶ instead of war. They agreed not to attack each other.

The Cold War was not just military; in fact, the famous space race of the 1960s was largely a scientific competition between the U.S. and the Soviets. In 1961 President Kennedy declared the U.S. would reach the moon by the end of the decade. The competition that followed led to some incredible scientific discoveries in both countries. In the end, the Soviets were first to launch a man into space (Yuri Gagarin in 1961), but the U.S. did accomplish its goal and was first to land on the moon, in July of 1969.

The Cold War and the U.S.

[15] The Cold War clearly influenced many international events, but it also influenced daily life in the United States. One very real fear was nuclear war. Regular citizens in the U.S. were aware that a nuclear bomb could potentially fall at any moment. Some families constructed underground bomb shelters and kept them stocked with food just in case of nuclear fallout. Public schools

4. **Monetary** (*adjective*) of or relating to money

5. **Stalemate** (*noun*) a situation in which further action or progress from either side seems impossible

6. **Diplomacy** (*noun*) the art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations without damaging relations or creating ill will

conducted nuclear fallout drills, much as we have fire drills today, in which students would practice hiding under their desks if they saw a bomb go off.

The fear of communism also had tangible⁷ effects on the home front. Particularly during the 1950s as the policy of containment became more well-known, people began to see communism as a threat in their own communities as well. Anyone with possibly communist-leaning ideas was suspicious. Congress got involved when Senator Joseph McCarthy started seeking out people who had been affiliated with communism in any way; he even worked with the FBI to obtain information on people's backgrounds and whereabouts. "McCarthyism" swept the nation, and many people, especially actors in Hollywood, were put on watch-lists without much evidence.

The Cold War slowly declined as the U.S. and the Soviet Union formed better relationships and agreed to get rid of some of their nuclear weapons. It officially ended in 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed and its communist government dissolved. The tense relationship between the two countries defined much of world history for almost half a century; even today the U.S. and Russia have a complicated relationship. The Cold War also showed how much ideas can influence countries and their actions.

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7. **Tangible** (*adjective*) clear and definite

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement expresses the central idea of the text?
 - A. The atmosphere of the Cold War led to some of the most important technological and scientific discoveries to date.
 - B. While tension was high between many nations during the Cold War, leaders were able to keep life relatively normal for citizens in their countries.
 - C. While the Cold War lasted several decades, it had less severe effects because there was no actual violence.
 - D. The Cold War was a time of conflict and fear between nations that affected America's relationship with many other countries.

2. PART B: Which TWO details from the text best support the answer to Part A?
 - A. "They might promote negative opinions about the enemy, threaten each other without actually following through, or do anything else (short of military action)" (Paragraph 4)
 - B. "They decided to split control of the old German territory in half. Soon, a wall went up separating the two territories" (Paragraph 7)
 - C. "The U.S. first showed the world the power of nuclear missiles in 1945; it wasn't long before the Soviet Union developed its own nuclear weapons." (Paragraph 10)
 - D. "U.S. spies discovered that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles on the coast of Cuba, only a few hundred miles away from Florida." (Paragraph 13)
 - E. "the famous space race of the 1960s was largely a scientific competition between the U.S. and the Soviets." (Paragraph 14)
 - F. "people began to see communism as a threat in their own communities as well. Anyone with possibly communist-leaning ideas was suspicious." (Paragraph 16)

3. How does the author primarily structure "How Was It Fought?" (Paragraphs 11-14)?
 - A. The author describes the events of the Cold War in the order that they took place.
 - B. The author breaks down the complex event by defining key terms for readers.
 - C. The author gives three examples of major historical events from the Cold War period.
 - D. The author groups the events of the Cold War together based on location to minimize confusion.

4. How do paragraphs 3-4 contribute to the development of ideas in the text?
 - A. They compare cold wars to typical military conflicts.
 - B. They dissect the various types of military strategies used in war.
 - C. They illustrate how the United States and Soviet Union fought the Cold War.
 - D. They detail why the Cold War is a time period as much as it was a war.

5. Explain the relationship between the Cold War and Americans' everyday lives. Cite evidence from the text in your response.

Name: _____

Class: _____

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

By National Park Service

2017

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. This informational text further discusses the parameters of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as the events leading up to the passing of this law. As you read, take notes on the challenges leaders faced as they worked to improve civil rights protections.

- [1] The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the nation's premier civil rights legislation. The Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, required equal access to public places and employment, and enforced desegregation of schools and the right to vote. It did not end discrimination, but it did open the door to further progress.



"Lyndon B. Johnson signing Civil Rights Act, July 2, 1964" by Cecil Stoughton is in the public domain.

Although the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments outlawed slavery, provided for equal protection under the law, guaranteed citizenship, and protected the right to vote, individual states continued to allow unfair treatment of minorities and passed Jim Crow laws¹ allowing segregation of public facilities. These were upheld by the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1895), which found state laws requiring racial segregation that were "separate but equal" to be constitutional. This finding helped continue legalized discrimination well into the 20th century.

Following World War II, pressures to recognize, challenge, and change inequalities for minorities grew. One of the most notable challenges to the status quo² was the 1954 landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* which questioned the notion of "separate but equal" in public education. The Court found that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" and a violation of the 14th Amendment. This decision polarized³

1. state and local laws enforcing racial segregation in the Southern United States
2. the existing state of affairs
3. **Polarize (verb)** to divide or cause to divide a population into two sharply opposing groups

Americans, fostered debate, and served as a catalyst⁴ to encourage federal action to protect civil rights.

Each year, from 1945 until 1957, Congress considered and failed to pass a civil rights bill. Congress finally passed limited Civil Rights Acts in 1957 and 1960, but they offered only moderate gains. As a result of the 1957 Act, the United States Commission on Civil Rights was formed to investigate, report on, and make recommendations to the President concerning civil rights issues. Sit-ins, boycotts,⁵ Freedom Rides, the founding of organizations such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), local demands for inclusion in the political process, all were in response to the increase in legislative activity through the 1950s and early 1960s.

- [5] 1963 was a crucial year for the Civil Rights Movement. Social pressures continued to build with events such as the Birmingham Campaign,⁶ televised clashes between peaceful protesters and authorities, the murders of civil rights workers Medgar Evers and William L. Moore, the March on Washington, and the deaths of four young girls in the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church. There was no turning back. Civil rights were firmly on the national agenda and the federal government was forced to respond.

In response to the report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, President John F. Kennedy proposed, in a nationally televised address, a Civil Rights Act of 1963. A week after his speech, Kennedy submitted a bill to Congress addressing civil rights (H.R. 7152). He urged African American leaders to use caution when demonstrating since new violence might alarm potential supporters. Kennedy met with businessmen, religious leaders, labor officials, and other groups such as CORE⁷ and NAACP,⁸ while also maneuvering behind the scenes to build bipartisan⁹ support and negotiate compromises over controversial topics.

Following Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, both Martin Luther King, Jr. and newly inaugurated President Lyndon B. Johnson continued to press for passage of the bill — as King noted in a January 1964 newspaper column, legislation “will feel the intense focus of Negro interest... It became the order of the day at the great March on Washington¹⁰ last summer. The

4. an event causing a change
5. **Boycott** (*noun*) an organized action taken by a group to stop buying or using a particular product in order to send a message.
6. a movement organized by the SCLC to bring attention to integration efforts in Birmingham, Alabama
7. the Congress of Racial Equality
8. the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
9. **Bipartisan** (*adjective*) involving members of two parties
10. The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was a political demonstration held in Washington, D.C. by civil rights leaders to protest racial discrimination and show support for civil rights legislation.

Negro and his white compatriots¹¹ for self-respect and human dignity will not be denied.”

The House of Representatives debated H.R. 7152 for nine days, rejecting nearly 100 amendments designed to weaken the bill. It passed the House on February 10, 1964 after 70 days of public hearings, appearances by 275 witnesses, and 5,792 pages of published testimony.

The real battle was waiting in the Senate, however, where concerns focused on the bill’s expansion of federal powers and its potential to anger constituents¹² who might retaliate in the voting booth. Opponents launched the longest filibuster¹³ in American history, which lasted 57 days and brought the Senate to a virtual standstill.

- [10] Senate minority leader Everett Dirksen nurtured the bill through compromise discussions and ended the filibuster. Dirksen’s compromise bill passed the Senate after 83 days of debate that filled 3,000 pages in the Congressional Record. The House moved quickly to approve the Senate bill.

Within hours of its passage on July 2, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson, with Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Height, Roy Wilkins, John Lewis, and other civil rights leaders in attendance, signed the bill into law, declaring once and for all that discrimination for any reason on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin was illegal in the United States of America.

"Civil Rights Act of 1964" by National Park Service (2017) is in the public domain.

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11. a fellow citizen of a country
 12. **Constituent** (*noun*) a voter
 13. A filibuster is an action that prevents progress in a legislative assembly. The most well-known form of filibustering is taking control of the floor and giving a long speech, which takes up time and prevents proceedings from moving forward.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following identifies the central idea of the text?
 - A. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was notable for being the first major government action taken to address discrimination on the basis of race.
 - B. While state governments were overwhelmingly supportive of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the federal government continued to obstruct the progress of any legislation.
 - C. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 successfully ended racial discrimination, but people continued to experience discrimination based on other identifying traits.
 - D. The important protections promised by Civil Rights Act of 1964 were the result of significant activism by advocates, as well as the leadership of elected officials.

2. PART B: Which section from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "These were upheld by the Supreme Court in Plessy v. Ferguson (1895), which found state laws requiring racial segregation that were 'separate but equal' to be constitutional." (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "Each year, from 1945 until 1957, Congress considered and failed to pass a civil rights bill. Congress finally passed limited Civil Rights Acts in 1957 and 1960, but they offered only moderate gains." (Paragraph 4)
 - C. "Kennedy met with businessmen, religious leaders, labor officials, and other groups such as CORE and NAACP, while also maneuvering behind the scenes to build bipartisan support and negotiate compromises over controversial topics." (Paragraph 6)
 - D. "legislation 'will feel the intense focus of Negro interest... It became the order of the day at the great March on Washington last summer. The Negro and his white compatriots for self-respect and human dignity will not be denied.'" (Paragraph 7)

3. PART A: How do paragraphs 8-9 contribute to the development of ideas in the text?
 - A. They prove that the bill was altered to allow discrimination to continue on a state level.
 - B. They emphasize the obstacles the bill encountered before it became a law.
 - C. They reveal how disorganized the United States government was during the 1960s.
 - D. They show how the United States government unfairly infringed upon the rights of local government.

4. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
- A. "The House of Representatives debated H.R. 7152 for nine days" (Paragraph 8)
 - B. "The real battle was waiting in the Senate, however, where concerns focused on the bill's expansion of federal powers" (Paragraph 9)
 - C. "[I]ts potential to anger constituents who might retaliate in the voting booth." (Paragraph 9)
 - D. "Opponents launched the longest filibuster in American history, which lasted 57 days and brought the Senate to a virtual standstill." (Paragraph 9)

5. How was the Civil Rights Act of 1964 different from earlier attempts to establish equality in the United States?
