

The Vietnam Era

Lesson 1 Kennedy's Foreign Policy

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What motivates people to act?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *Why did President Kennedy seek new ways to deal with the challenges and fears of the Cold War?*
2. *How did the Kennedy administration respond to the Cold War crises in Cuba and Berlin?*
3. *Why did the United States force the Soviet Union to remove missiles placed in Cuba?*

Terms to Know

guerrilla warfare fighting by small groups using tactics such as the ambush

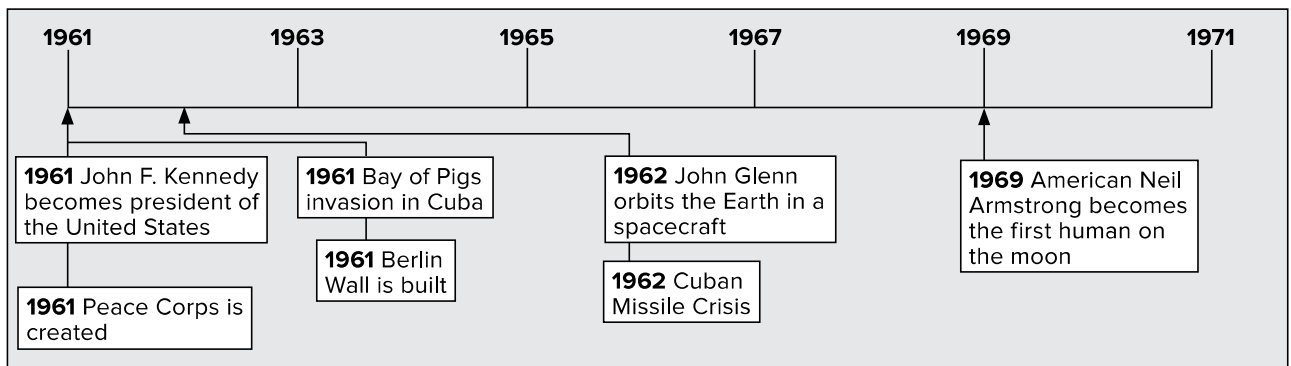
flexible response President Kennedy's plan to help nations fighting Communist movements by providing special military units trained to fight guerilla warfare

blockade to block or obstruct

Where in the world?



When did it happen?



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Lesson 1 Kennedy’s Foreign Policy, *Continued*

A New Leader

John F. Kennedy became the U.S. president in 1961. This was during the Cold War. A “Cold War” is a period when there is no active fighting, but both sides have weapons and troops ready in case a war begins.

During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union were enemies. The Soviet Union was a powerful Communist nation. Communism is a system where the people are controlled by their government. The government makes choices for how people can live. People have few rights and freedoms. The leader of the Soviet Union was Nikita Khrushchev.

This was a dangerous time for the world. If the U.S. and the Soviet Union started a war, they might use nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons could cause massive destruction on Earth.


President Kennedy wanted to stop communism from spreading. In some places Communist groups tried to take over governments with help from the Soviet Union. They used **guerrilla warfare**. This means fighting with small groups using tactics such as the ambush. Kennedy had a plan called **flexible response**. Special military units such as the Green Berets were trained to fight guerrilla wars.

Kennedy also tried to help poorer countries. He wanted to make sure they could resist Communism. He sent money and other aid. He started the Alliance for Progress to help the economies in Latin American countries. He also started the Peace Corps, which sent Americans to teach and work with people in poor countries.

Country	United States	Soviet Union
Leader	John F. Kennedy	Nikita Khrushchev


Cold War Crises

President Kennedy faced many challenges. One major challenge was in the small country of Cuba. Cuba had been taken over by Fidel Castro. Castro turned Cuba into a Communist dictatorship. Cuba was friendly with the Soviet Union. This worried Kennedy because Cuba is only 90 miles from the United States. Before Kennedy became president, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had a plan to get rid of Castro. Kennedy approved the plan. Cubans living in the United States would invade Cuba. They would land at the Bay of Pigs. But the plan failed, partly because




Marking the Text

1. Underline the definition of *guerrilla warfare*.




Reading Check

2. What was the purpose of the Alliance for Progress?



Explaining

3. What do people in the Peace Corps do?



Marking the Text

4. Who made the plan to invade Cuba? Draw a circle around the answer in the text. Who approved the plan?

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Lesson 1 Kennedy's Foreign Policy, *Continued*



Reading Check

5. What was the purpose of the Berlin Wall?



Marking the Text

6. Underline the names of the nations involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis.



Explaining

7. Why were people all over the world frightened by the Cuban Missile Crisis?



Reading Check

8. How did the Cuban Missile Crisis end?

Kennedy chose not to give air support. As a result, Latin American countries lost trust in the United States. Also, the Soviet leader Khrushchev thought Kennedy was not a strong leader.

Another challenge was in Germany. After World War II, Germany had been divided into two parts. East Germany was ruled by Communists. West Germany was free. The capital of Berlin was also divided. It was located in East Germany. Many people in East Germany wanted to leave. They wanted to live free lives in West Germany. Many fled to West Berlin. So the Communist leaders of East Germany built a wall in Berlin to keep people in. The Berlin Wall cut the city of Berlin in two. It became a symbol of communism.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

In 1961, an American spy plane flying over Cuba found something serious. The Soviet Union was building missile launch sites in Cuba. Because Cuba is so close to Florida, these sites would let the Soviet Union attack the United States very quickly. Kennedy made a plan to **blockade** Cuba. This closed off Cuba from the rest of the world. He warned that the U.S. would destroy any Soviet ship that tried to go through the blockade. He also warned he would attack the Soviet Union with nuclear bombs if any missiles were fired from Cuba. Kennedy said he would end the blockade when the Soviets removed their missiles.

This was a very dangerous time. It seemed that a nuclear war might start at any moment. The entire world waited in fear to see what would happen. Finally the Soviet Union agreed to remove its weapons. There was no nuclear attack.

After the crisis, the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union decided to make some changes. They set up a "hot line" so they could talk any time there was a problem. This would help stop problems before they got worse. Both sides also agreed to stop testing nuclear weapons.

The space race was a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. Both nations wanted to be the first to explore space. The Soviet Union was first to have a pilot orbit the earth in 1961. American astronauts followed. Kennedy set a goal for the United States to land on the moon by the end of the 1960s. In 1969, American Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the moon.

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Cause	Effect
Kennedy wanted to stop the spread of communism.	Troops trained to fight Communist forces; aid given to poor countries; Alliance for Progress created; Peace Corps created
Kennedy wanted to get Fidel Castro out of Cuba.	CIA made the Bay of Pigs plan to invade Cuba. The plan failed, and Castro stayed in power.
Communists wanted to keep people from leaving East Germany.	Berlin Wall built to close off East Berlin from the West
Americans found Soviet missile launch sites in Cuba.	The Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world close to nuclear war; the crisis ended when the Soviets agreed to remove their missiles from Cuba.

Glue Foldable here

Check for Understanding

What motivated Kennedy to set up plans to help poor countries?

Why did the United States force the Soviet Union to remove missiles placed in Cuba?

FOLDABLES®

- Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover the Check for Understanding. Write the title *The Kennedy Administration* on the anchor tab. Label the two tabs *Alliance for Progress and Peace Corps* and *Cuban Missile Crisis*. On both sides of the tabs, list what you remember about the cause and effect of each program. Use your Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.