### Lesson 1: Origins of the Cold War

The United Nations was established in June, 1945. It is a peacekeeping body made up of delegates from nations around the world to try to solve problems through peace and diplomacy.

At the Potsdam Conference, Harry Truman (U.S.); Winston Churchill (Great Britain, later replaced by Clement Atlee); and Joseph Stalin (U.S.S.R) met to discuss the partitioning of Germany.

Germany would be divided into four zones of occupation. The USSR would occupy the East; the U.S., Great Britain, and France each occupied a zone in the West.

The Soviets instituted puppet communist governments in the Eastern European countries it occupied. Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Hungary, and Poland became satellite nations - countries dominated by the Soviet Union.

Faced with the Soviet threat, Truman's diplomat in Moscow, George F. Kennan proposed a policy of containment - not allowing communism to spread to any country it didn't already exist.

Winston Churchill coined the phrase "iron curtain" to describe the line that existed between communist and democratic countries in Europe.

The conflict between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. resulted in a Cold War, a conflict in which neither nation confronted the other on a battlefield.

**Truman Doctrine**: Truman's declaration that the U.S. should support free peoples who are resisting communism. He sent $400 million in aid to Greece and Turkey.

The Marshall Plan - The U.S. sent $13 billion in aid over four years to rebuild the economies of western Europe.

The U.S., Great Britain, and France unified their zones of occupation in Germany to create the democratic government of West Germany. Stalin maintained his troops and created the communist government of East Germany. The city of Berlin, which lies wholly in East Germany was divided into West Berlin (democratic) and East Berlin (communist).

In June 1948 Stalin closed off all roads and railroads into West Berlin. In order to break the blockade, the U.S. and Great Britain instituted the Berlin Airlift to fly food and supplies into West Berlin. For 327 days, supply planes flew 227,000 flights into West Berlin to deliver goods. In May 1949 the Soviet Union lifted the blockade.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed on April 4, 1949. It was a defensive alliance made up of Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United States, and Canada. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952; and West Germany joined in 1955.

### Lesson 2: The Cold War in Asia

**China**

China was undergoing a civil war between communists, led by Mao Zedong, and the Nationalist government, led by Chiang Kai-shek. The civil war was suspended during World War II when the Japanese invaded China.

After World War II it resumed. The United States supported the democratic Nationalist government, sending $3 billion in aid. Many in the U.S. wanted to do more, including military intervention. The U.S. did not, however, and the communists eventually overthrew the Nationalist government, who withdrew to Taiwan (Nationalist China). The communists established the People's Republic of China on the mainland.

Many Americans were angry over the lack of U.S. enthusiasm in supporting the Nationalists. Truman's containment policy had failed.

**Korea**

Japan had also ruled the Korean Peninsula before and during World War II. During the war, Korea north of the 38th parallel was occupied by Soviet troops. The Soviets instituted a communist government there. It was led by Kim Il Sung. Its capital was Pyongyang.

Korea south of the 38th parallel was occupied by U.S. forces. After the war the U.S. helped establish a democratic government there. It was led by Syngman Rhee. Its capital was Seoul.

By June 1949 the U.S. had withdrawn all but 500 troops from South Korea. The Soviets concluded the U.S. would not fight to defend it. In June 1950, North Korean forces launched a surprise attack. Within a few days they had captured most of the Korean Peninsula. South Korea called on the United Nations to stop the invasion.

Sixteen nations sent 520,000 troops to aid South Korea. Ninety percent of them were American. South Korea added 590,000 troops. The combined forces were placed under the command of General Douglas MacArthur.

MacArthur launched a surprise attack behind enemy lines at Inchon. About half the North Korean troops were captured. The rest fled back to North Korea. UN forces drove the North Koreans up to the Yalu River on the border between Korea and China.

In November 1950, 300,000 Chinese troops joined the North Koreans. They drove UN forces back across the 38th parallel.

MacArthur called for taking the war into China. Truman rejected his request. He was afraid that would get the Soviet Union involved and set off World War III. MacArthur went over the Presidents head, speaking to the media and to Congress to press for support for an attack on China. Truman fired MacArthur. Many Americans supported MacArthur - polls showed 69% favored his plan.

Truce talks began in 1951. In 1952 Dwight Eisenhower won the presidential election, replacing Truman. In July 1953 the two sides signed an armistice one again establishing the dividing line at the 38th parallel.
## Lesson 3: The Cold War at Home

After World War II a **Red Scare** spread through the United States as Americans became concerned that Communists were infiltrating American society.

President Truman instituted the **Loyalty Review Board**, which ran background checks on government employees and dismissed those who were found to be disloyal. It dismissed 212 employees. Another 2,900 resigned to avoid the investigations.

Congress began investigating communist influences through the **House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)**. They made headlines investigating the movie industry. Those who testified included Gary Cooper. The **Hollywood Ten** were ten witnesses who refused to cooperate because they felt the hearings were unconstitutional. Approximately 500 actors, producers, and directors were "blacklisted," having their careers ruined because no one wanted to hire them.

The **McCarren Act**, passed over Truman’s veto, made it illegal to plan any action that might lead to a totalitarian government in the U.S.

In 1948 **Alger Hiss** was accused of spying for the Soviet Union. This high profile case made Richard Nixon. Hiss was accused by Whittaker Chambers, a former communist spy. He was never convicted of spying, but he was for perjury.

In 1950 **Julius and Ethel Rosenberg** were convicted of spying and sentenced to death. They claimed they were being persecuted for being Jewish and holding radical ideas. Despite pleas for clemency, they were executed by electric chair in 1953.

The most famous anti-Communist activist was Republican senator **Joseph McCarthy**. He claimed to have lists of the names of active communists within the government. He also charged the Democratic Party of “twenty years of treason.” In his hearings he bullied witnesses and created a witch hunt. He not only went after government officials, he also went after Hollywood. In 1954 when he began investigating the military, he lost credibility.

In 1951 the federal government produced a public information film called **Duck and Cover**, which was created to educate school children on how to protect themselves in the event of a nuclear attack. Schools across the country regularly practiced “duck and cover” drills.

The Cold War had an effect on American culture in the 1950s and 1960s as movies, television shows, and music adopted themes revolving around nuclear war, radiation, and space exploration.

## Lesson 4: Brinkmanship

On November 1, 1952 the United States was first to test a **hydrogen bomb**. A year later the Soviet Union successfully tested their own thermonuclear device.

President **Dwight Eisenhower**’s secretary of state, **John Foster Dulles** proposed containing communism by being prepared to use full force, including nuclear weapons, against aggressor nations. The willingness of the Eisenhower administration to go to the edge of all-out war became known as **brinkmanship**.

Eisenhower relied heavily on the **Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)** to gather intelligence and to conduct covert (secret) operations. The CIA conducted operations in Iran and Guatemala to get American supported leaders at the head of governments.

In response to the formation of NATO, in 1955 the Soviet Union formed an alliance with seven eastern European nations known as the **Warsaw Pact**.

In July, 1955 at the **Geneva Summit**, Eisenhower proposed the “open skies” plan, in which each country would allow the other to fly over their territory to avoid any surprise attacks. The Soviet Union rejected that proposal.

Egypt’s leader Gamal Abdel Nasser played the U.S. and the Soviet Union against each other to obtain more aid from each. When the U.S. withdrew its support, Nasser nationalized the canal. In the **Suez Crisis**, Egypt refused to allow ships headed to Israel to pass through the Suez Canal, even though it was supposed to be open to all nations. Israel, Britain, and France prepared for war against Egypt. The UN intervened and convinced them to withdraw.

To discourage increased support for Egypt by the Soviet Union, Eisenhower issued a statement saying the U.S. would defend the Middle East against attack by any communist country. This became known as the **Eisenhower Doctrine**.

In 1956 Soviet tanks rolled into Hungary in order to overthrow the new government led by **Imre Nagy**. Nagy was attempting to throw off Soviet domination. The Soviets overthrew the Nagy government in a brutal crackdown and installed Soviet leaders. Hungarians were hoping for more help from the United States, but did not receive any. The **Hungarian Uprising** was an example to other eastern European nations as to what would happen if they tried to resist Soviet control.

On October 4, 1957, the Soviets launched **Sputnik**, the first man-made satellite in space. It was a wake up call to Americans who suddenly realized the Soviets were ahead in the space race. In January, 1958 the U.S. launched its own satellite.

In 1960 Soviets shot down an American U-2 spy plane and captured the pilot, **Francis Gary Powers**. At first Eisenhower denied it was spying on the Soviet Union. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev withdrew from the Geneva Summit and canceled an invitation to Eisenhower to visit the Soviet Union. The 1960s began with tensins between the two superpowers at a high level.
Lesson 5: Kennedy and the Cold War

In the election of 1960, John F. Kennedy, a young senator from Massachusetts defeated Eisenhower's Vice President, Richard Nixon. It was a very close election and may have been affected by the first televised presidential debate between the two candidates. Kennedy projected a strong, youthful image while Nixon projected a much weaker image. This launched the television age in presidential politics.

The Kennedy White House, with his young, fashionable wife and two young children embodied what became known as the Age of Camelot.

Kennedy attempted do away with the brinkmanship policy of Eisenhower in favor of a policy of “flexible response.” His intent was to modernize and update American conventional forces, so if war break out it wouldn’t have to be nuclear.

Fidel Castro became the communist leader of Cuba before Kennedy took office, overthrowing the government led by Fulgencio Batista. Eisenhower cut off diplomatic relations with Cuba. Castro began relying more and more on Soviet aid and his regime became more oppressive to the people of Cuba.

On April 17, 1961 Kennedy launched the Bay of Pigs invasion. Approximately 1500 Cuban exiles, armed and trained by the U.S., landed on the beaches. They were met by 25,000 Cuban soldiers. Air support and decoy operations to be supplied by the CIA failed to materialize. The exiles were killed or captured. It was a massive embarrassment to the new Kennedy administration. Kennedy negotiated with Castro for the release of prisoners and sent $53 million in food and medical supplies to Cuba.

On August 13, 1961 East Germany began construction on the Berlin Wall, which would separate East Berlin from West Berlin. In the previous 11 years almost 3 million East Germans (20% of the population) had fled to West Berlin. Previously the Soviets had attempted to block roads and air routes to West Berlin to prevent people from fleeing. That led to a diplomatic confrontation between the U.S. and Soviets, known as the Berlin Crisis.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev promised to defend Cuba with Soviet arms. On October 14, 1962 a U-2 spy plane photographed Soviet missile installations being built in Cuba. These were offensive weapons.

In the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy implemented a naval blockade around Cuba and instructed the Soviet Union to discontinue its missile program. For thirteen days the world stood at the brink of nuclear war. Through diplomatic channels, the Soviet Union agreed to stop its missile program in Cuba if the U.S. would dismantle some weapons in Turkey and pledge not to invade Cuba.

In 1963 Kennedy announced that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. had established a hotline, a direct phone line, between the White House and the Kremlin. This would allow the leaders to communicate with each other immediately if a crisis should arise.

Later in 1963 the U.S. and Soviet Union agreed to a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty that barred nuclear testing in the atmosphere.

Kennedy’s Assassination

On November 22, 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Police captured a suspect named Lee Harvey Oswald. At one time Oswald had defected to the Soviet Union. He had also been a Castro supporter. This led many to believe the Soviet Union had something to do with the assassination. The mystery deepened when Oswald was gunned down by Jack Ruby two days later has he was being transferred from the city jail to the county prison.