Sample Modern US History Review Outline (formative assessment)

*The [Early] Cold War (1945 – 1961)*

\*General Origins of the Cold War\*

- Following the war, the US & USSR developed a tremendous rivalry. This was for several reasons…

* *Power Vacuum* – Following the collapse of Germany and Japan and the devastation of much of Europe, there was the question of how rebuilding would commence, and who would have hegemony in the areas where the Axis once dominated.
* *Decolonization* – Another source of instability was the disintegration of the big empires and the creation of the new “Third World” countries, which both the US and USSR hoped to win over as military bases and markets.
* *Failure of Diplomacy* – Diplomacy was largely ignored b/c both countries were thoroughly convinced they were completely right, and weren’t willing to accept “appeasement.”
* *US Economic/Strategic Needs* – The US knew that its economic well being depended on exports, and therefore wanted to continue the trend towards economic expansionism through an active foreign policy. Also, the increasingly interconnected world (faster travel, etc.) made the US feel it was important to establish defense away from home.
* *Truman’s Tough Style* – Truman was not a good diplomat.
* *US Suspicion of Soviet Intentions* – Throughout the Cold War the US obsessed over what the USSR could and wanted to do. They really weren’t as much of a menace as we thought, but we still were concerned they could take over our interests in Western Europe.

- Basically, only US influence was allowed, so as soon as the USSR started taking interest in new territory we lost it…

\*The Cold War under Truman\*

- After the war ended, the US & USSR lost no time in getting each other mad. As follows:

* *Soviet Expansion*: In 1945 The USSR didn’t allow the Polish gov’t that had been in exile in London to join their new communist gov’t in Lublin (as they had promised). They also took over *Romania*, and encouraged coups in *Hungary* (1947) and *Czechoslovakia* (1948). The Soviets claimed the US was doing the same thing, and complained about the double standard.
* *Atomic Diplomacy*: The USSR whined that the US was trying to scare them into concessions b/c of their monopoly on the atomic bomb. Then Truman refused to turn the bomb over to an internat’l institution and backed the **Baruch Plan** instead – the US would give up its atomic monopoly if all the world’s fissionable materials were given to an agency. The Soviets felt this would let the US continue researching the bomb w/o letting anyone else…
* *World Bank/IMF*: After clashing on several fronts (reconstruction loans, Iran, etc.) in 1946, the USSR decided not to join the new institutions, believing them to be too US dominated (and also b/c they were capitalist). Still, the IMF opened and began making loans.

- This caused more paranoia and obsession on both sides, and we responded with the…

* *Truman Doctrine* (1947): After the British asked for US help in Greece (to defend their client gov’t against a leftist uprising) Truman gave a speech to sell the idea to Congress that defined the Truman Doctrine – “It must be the policy of the US to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” The US backed both Greece (gov’t won in 1949) and Turkey (because big US ally) as a result.
* *X Article*: After Truman’s speech, **George Kennan** (writing as “Mr. X”) published an article on *containment* of Soviet power – confronting the USSR with a strong counterforce anywhere they showed signs of expansion.
* *Marshall Plan* (1947): In order to prevent radicalism through the sponsorship of international prosperity, the US began a huge European recovery program – money was sent, but it had to be spent in the US on US-made products (to stimulate our economy). It was mixed success, as it caused inflation and divided Europe even more (East/West) in addition to spurring industrial progress. From our POV, though, it was excellent b/c it helped contain communism.
* *National Security Act* (1947): This act created the **Office of Secretary of Defense** (later the Dept. of Defense) and the **CIA** (“The Department of Dirty Tricks”).
* *Fulbright Program* (1948): This program of exchange students tried to blunt anti-Americanism and aid cultural exchanges – there was also the **Congress for Cultural Freedom**.
* *Rio Pact (1947)* & *Organization of American States* (1948): Both these military alliances were in Latin America and served to protect American interests and boost the militaries of LA states.

- Other key events in the early Cold War:

* *Recognition of Israel* (1948): Truman did this to gain Jewish votes and get another ally.
* *Berlin Blockade/Airlift* (1948): After the US, France and GB agreed to merge their German zones, the USSR cut off access to all of Berlin, prompting a US airlift of supplies there until May 1949 and the foundation of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany).
* *Point Four Program* (1949): This was an aid program for the Third World that helped to win allies onto our side. It later became part of the Mutual Security Agency.
* *NATO* (1949): We formed a Western Europe security pact, which caused some domestic debate (no alliances since 1778) since some felt it would force us into war. But it was ratified.
* *NSC-68* (1950): After the double shock of the USSR exploding its first bomb and China going communist, the Nat’l Security Council came up w/this report asking for more $ for the military.

\*The Cold War in Asia\*

- Like Europe, Asia became involved in the conflicts of the Cold War.

* *Japan*: In Japan, the US monopolized reconstruction through military occupation under **MacArthur**, who started a “democratic revolution from above.” In 1951, we signed a separate peace w/Japan that ended occupation. A **Mutual Security Treaty** the next year provided for the stationing of our forced on their soil.
* *China*: We didn’t do so well in China, where we insisted on backing Chiang against Mao, who we refused to talk to once he did come to power in 1949 (this pushed him over to the USSR, but that relationship didn’t last either – Stalin & Mao didn’t get along). Anyway, we didn’t recognize the actual gov’t of China in 1979.
* *Vietnam*: During WWII, Ho Chi Minh, while planning to free the nation from the French, also fought against the Japanese (with our help). Once we “lost China,” though, we decided to back a restoration of French rule in order to (1) gain French cooperation, (2) have more economic hegemony in the areas, and (3) Ho was a communist, so we thought he was Soviet-sponsored. Anyway, in 1950 we decided to recognize the puppet gov’t under **Bao Dai** and start sending weapons and advisers to the French. More on this later…

- Then there was the whole **Korean War** issue, which bears going into. The KW began as a civil war in 1950 when North Korea moved across into South Korea (the two parts had been divided in 1945 w/US & USSR approval). Both leaders hoped to reunify the nation, but Truman thought that the USSR had planned the whole thing (he hadn’t really, and had barely been convinced to help at all).

- Anyway, the United Nations then voted on helping South Korea, and since Stalin wasn’t there (he had walked out b/c of the China deal) it went through. MacArthur became commander of UN forces (90% US), and they fought until they not only passed the original boundary but went into NK (hoping to reunify).

- UN forces went deep into NK until they were stooped by a surprise counterattack by Chinese forces. This sent them back to the 38th parallel (original boundary) and e/t MacArthur wanted to go fight China, Truman told him off and then fired him as a result.

- Fighting went on as the POW issue stalled negotiations (US officials said only the prisoners that *wanted* to go back would be returned, and NK countered by saying they wouldn’t return *anyone*). An armistice was finally signed in **1953** – the POW question was handed over to a board of neutral nations, who ended up giving the prisoners their choice, and the border went to the 38th parallel again w/a demilitarized zone.

- Domestically, the war helped get Eisenhower elected, and also gave the President more power, since he had never asked Congress for a declaration of war prior to sending the troops.

- Overall, Truman’s legacy was a very militarized foreign “containment” policy on a global scale.

\*The Cold War under Eisenhower\*

- Eisenhower basically kept up Truman’s policies and made sure the more hawkish (to say the least) **John Foster Dulles** (Secretary of State) didn’t get out of control. Dulles was totally anti-communist (and anti-compromise) and called for “liberation” (instead of containment) & “brinksmanship” (taking the country to the edge of war and relying on **MAD**), and popularized the **Domino Theory** (if one goes they all will).

- Eisenhower, however, did rely increasingly on the CIA to buy out foreign leaders, labor unions, newspapers and political parties. The CIA also planted fake stories in newspapers, trained foreign military officials, experimented w/mind control drugs, and launched **covert operations** to subvert Third World gov’ts.

- The Eisenhower administration also tried to spread American culture in the USSR and the East (to spark discontent) through the **United States Information Agency**, which funded the Voice of America. There was also Radio Free Europe & Radio Liberty, funded by the CIA, which sent anti-Soviet messages, some of which got through.

- Meanwhile (“kitchen debates” notwithstanding) the arms race intensified under Eisenhower with the explosion of the Hydrogen bomb, the first ICBM (USSR), and then *Sputnik* (1957), which caused a big ruckus over here and got us to start **NASA** in 1958. E/t we actually had a lot more missiles & crap, we kept worrying about the (non-existent) “missile gap” and building more.

- In fact, this even got to be a bit much for Eisenhower (it was tough to balance the budget) so in 1957 some arms-control proposals were started like the “atoms for peace” initiative, the “open skies” proposal, and bans on testing. But none of these agreements really worked out despite talks in Geneva in 1955.

- Some specific incidents under Eisenhower include:

* *Hungary* (1956): When Khrushchev came to power he denounced Stalin and called for more toleration, which inspired revolts in Poland and Hungary. But after the new Hungarian gov’t decided to withdraw form the **Warsaw Pact** Soviet troops crushed the rebellion – and e/t we’d been sending all that liberation stuff over the radio, we didn’t do anything (we couldn’t w/o starting some huge war).
* *Khrushchev’s Ultimatum* (1958): The USSR got mad b/c we had bombers in West Germany, and announced that unless we began talks on German reunification and rearmament they would recognize East German control of all of Berlin. We refused to do anything, and he backed off – it was basically a test.
* *U-2 Incident* (1960): Well, in Dublin, Ireland, this really cool band was formed and then – oh crap, wrong U2, haha I’m obsessed! *Anyway*, this U-2 plane was flying over the USSR and it was shot down, leading to some embarrassment for us, esp. when we refused to apologize.
* *Jinmen-Mazu Crisis*: This was a dispute over two tiny islands off the Chinese coast with China (go figure) – we were allowing Chiang to use the islands to as outposts to raid the mainland, so China started bombing them. Eisenhower decided to defend the outposts, pushing the nation to the brink – the **Formosa Resolution** (1955) authorized the president to send US forces to defend the islands. The issue came up again in 1958, but this time we told Chiang to get rid of some of his troops, which led China to stop dropping bombs. China got the bomb in 1964.

- Meanwhile, Japan grew (economically) at an incredible rate – while remaining an uneasy Cold War ally. Western Europeans were also a little scared by McCarthyism, German rearmament and the Vietnam deal, and resented being treated as dependents by the US in the name of “community.”

\*The Emergence of the Third World\*

- Due to decolonization, a ton of new states were formed – and before long, once all the other countries declared their allegiances in the Cold War, US and Soviet attention shifted the Third World, which could provide markets, supplies of raw materials, and provide sites for military and intelligence bases.

- As this wasn’t exactly what most of the Third World had in mind the US began to turn a ton of resources towards it – and it wasn’t all aid (based on the views of MIT professor **Walt Rostow**, *Stages of Economic Growth*) and propaganda (the good ol’ **US Information Agency**) either – we supported nasty dictators, got into civil wars, and used CIA covert operations to squash revolutions.

- Nevertheless, some countries – India, Ghana, Egypt, Indonesia, and others – still managed to stay out of it by declaring themselves **non-aligned**. They then organized at the **Bandung Conference** (in Indonesia), which got Dulles all annoyed – hey, they *have* to take sides, our side, I mean.

- The US (as always) believed that the Third World needed some tutoring in how to establish a nice capitalist democracy (just like ours), and depicted Third World peoples as dependent, irrational, and weak. Race attitudes also hurt relationships – they made us look bad – as we weren’t exactly living up to all our ideals.

\*American Intervention in the Third World\*

- More specifically, here’s where and what we did:

* *Guatemala*: In 1951 leftist leader **Guzmán** was elected President, and once he deiced to expropriate all of United Fruit’s (big US company) unused land (he offered compensation) UF officials claimed he was a communist, which led to the generation of a CIA plot to overthrow him. In 1954 CIA-supported troops drove him from power, and the new pro-US regime returned the land before a huge civil war erupted.
* *Cuba*: In 1959 the **Cuban Revolution** erupted – Batista was ousted, and **Fidel Castro** took control. From the start Castro was anti-American, and got rid of a lot of our business interests, which (in addition to his growing popularity and authoritarianism) scared the crap out of Washington. And once the US cut purchases of Cuban sugar, Castro nationalized all our companies and asked the USSR for loans and more trade to hold off the US. Eisenhower broke diplomatic relations in 1961, leaving the whole Bay of Pigs debacle for Kennedy.
* *Puerto Rico*: In PR, **Operation Bootstrap** encouraged companies to invest in tourism and other industries.
* *Middle East*: In the Middle East we encountered challenges from Arab nationalists to our support of Israel and oil holdings (Iran was our special oil source in exchange for CIA help in the overthrow of the Shah’s nationalistic rival).
* *Suez Crisis*: Since we hated Egypt’s nationalist leader **Nasser** (non-alignment, pan-Arabism) we suddenly decided we wouldn’t help Egypt finance the Aswan Dam as promised. However, Nasser responded by nationalizing the Suez Canal (and using those profits), which caused the Israelis (w/GB & French support) to invade Suez in 1956. Fearing it would force the Egyptians into the arms of the USSR, Eisenhower told them to pull out, which they did – Egypt took control of the canal, the USSR built the Dam, and Nasser became a big hero.
* *Eisenhower Doctrine* (1957): To try to improve our position in the ME, Eisenhower declared that the US would intervene in the ME if any gov’t threatened by a communist takeover asked for help. This led to troops being sent to Lebanon in 1958.

- And then there was the big story: **Vietnam**. Here’s how it all started. Even though the US was helping them, the French were losing big time to the **Vietminh** (Ho’s forces). Finally, at **Dienbienphu** (1954) the French surrendered (despite US attempts to rally a coalition around them).

- France wanted out, so at the Geneva peace talks (US, USSR, GB, China, and the two Vietnamese regimes) the **Geneva Accords** were established, which temporarily divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel (military truce line) until unification via nat’l elections in 1956. Until then, no foreign troops or alliances.

- We didn’t *really* mean *that*, though, b/c as soon as the conference ended CIA teams went to Vietnam and began secret operations against the North. We also joined in **SEATO** (sort of like NATO) and made one of the goals be to protect Vietnam.

- Then we decided to get rid of Bao Dai (original puppet ruler) and replace him with **Diem**, who staged a phony election in the South and then refused the call for nat’l elections. We helped his army and gave tons of aid, but Diem insisted on acting dictatorially until *nobody* liked him anyway.

- Consequently, resistance began to build, and in early 1959 Ho finally started sending aid to the insurgents, who terrorized the area and organized the **National Liberation Front** (NLF) or **Vietcong**. This set off a civil war in which we backed Diem against Ho, who we thought was a global communist agent or something.

- And on that depressing note, to be continued…

Source:<http://www.historyteacher.net/USQuizMainPage.htm>

Sample feedback form for a formative assignment: Course- [Modern US History](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1S-8LKErhcciGZfaj4IkM2k4qiC0Iml3tcrM1Jijqyj4/edit)

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Expected | Impressive |
| Objective 1 (lower-level Bloom’s):  **Reading comprehension & content knowledge**  Definition: Material is read, basic points are summarized and accurately reported | E- Some issues with dates—events are listed out of order or with wrong dates. Most relevant information is present, but there are some gaps. Material is organized into clear points and sub-points. |  |
| Objective 2 (mid-level Bloom’s):  **Interpreting facts &**  **analyzing events**  Definition: Factual information, hypothetical situations, and real world events are examined critically and explained logically |  | I- Student has a solid grasp of the material and correctly analyzed important information. Connections are drawn between disparate events. |
| Objective 3 (higher-level Bloom’s):  **Forming, expressing &**  **supporting opinions**  Definition: Content is synthesized to draw unique conclusions, which are expressed clearly to an audience, and is supported by relevant information or theory | E- Student has no difficulty drawing conclusions that are mostly in line with accepted interpretation. Some information could be presented more clearly and succinctly; other areas require more elaboration and factual support. |  |
| Totals | 2 | 1 |

***C.O.G.S. Score: EIE***

*Final comments: It is clear that you have taken time to read and think about the material in this review outline. You covered a lot of important information and overall seem to have a decent understanding of the early Cold War period. There are some parts that needed elaboration and others were factual information was not presented accurately. Double check your dates and consider ordering your review guide chronologically within each sub-category for easier processing and retention.*