

*The*  
**HISTORIAN'S  
APPRENTICE**

**1989**

**What Kind of Turning Point  
for the World?**

**Sourcing  
Contextualizing  
Finding Bias  
Corroborating  
Interpreting**

*Students learn the historian's craft by  
analyzing primary and secondary sources*

**MindSparks**  
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

D. MARTIN LUTHER  
Zu Ehren/

# 1989

## What Kind of Turning Point for the World?

by Jonathan Burack

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Each unit in *The Historian's Apprentice* series deals with an important historical topic. It introduces students to a five-step set of practices designed to simulate the experience of a historian and make explicit all key phases of the historian's craft.

### ***The Historian's Apprentice: A Five-Step Process***

**1. Reflect on Your Prior Knowledge of the Topic.**

Students discuss what they already know and how their prior knowledge may shape or distort the way they view the topic.

**2. Apply Habits of Historical Thinking to the Topic.**

Students build background knowledge on the basis of five habits of thinking that historians use in constructing accounts of the past.

**3. Interpret the Relevant Primary Sources.**

Students apply a set of rules for interpreting sources and assessing their relevance and usefulness.

**4. Assess the Interpretations of Other Historians.**

Students learn to read secondary sources actively, with the goal of deciding among competing interpretations based on evidence in the sources.

**5. Interpret, Debate and Write About the Topic Yourself.**

Students apply what they have learned by constructing evidence-based interpretations of their own in a variety of ways.



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# Teacher Introduction

## ★ *Teaching the Historian's Craft*

The goal of *The Historian's Apprentice* units is to expose students in a manageable way to the complex processes by which historians practice their craft. By modeling what historians do, students will practice the full range of skills that make history the unique and uniquely valuable challenge that it is.

Modeling the historian's craft is not the same as being a historian—something few students will become. Therefore, a scaffolding is provided here to help students master historical content in a way that will be manageable and useful to them.

Historical thinking is not a simple matter of reciting one fact after another, or even of mastering a single, authoritative account. It is disciplined by evidence, and it is a quest for truth; yet, historians usually try to

clarify complex realities and make tentative judgments, not to draw final conclusions. In doing so, they wrestle with imperfect sets of evidence (the primary sources), detect multiple meanings embedded in those sources, and take into account varying interpretations by other historians. They also recognize how wide a divide separates the present from earlier times. Hence, they work hard to avoid present-mindedness and to achieve empathy with people who were vastly different from us.

In their actual practice, historians are masters of the cautious, qualified conclusion. Yet they engage, use their imaginations, and debate with vigor. It is this spirit and these habits of craft that *The Historian's Apprentice* seeks to instill in students.

## ★ *The Historian's Apprentice: Five-Steps in Four Parts*

*The Historian's Apprentice* is a five-step process. However, the materials presented here are organized into four parts. Part I deals with the first two of the five steps of the process. Each of the other three parts then deals with one step in the process. Here is a summary of the four parts into which the materials are organized:

**Teacher Introduction.** Includes suggested day-by-day sequences for using these materials, including options for using the PowerPoint presentations. One sequence is designed for younger students and supplies a page of vocabulary definitions.

**Part 1.** A student warm-up activity, an introductory essay, a handout detailing a set of habits of historical thinking, and two PowerPoint presentations (*Five Habits of Historical Thinking* and *1989: What Kind of Turning Point for the World?*). Part 1 (including the PowerPoints) deals with *The Historian's Apprentice* Steps 1 and 2.

**Part 2.** A checklist for analyzing primary sources, several primary sources, and worksheets for analyzing them. Part 2 deals with *The Historian's Apprentice* Step 3.

**Part 3.** Two secondary source passages and two student activities analyzing those passages. Part 3 deals with *The Historian's Apprentice* Step 4.

**Part 4.** Two optional follow-up activities enabling students to write about and/or debate their own interpretations of the topic. Part 4 deals with *The Historian's Apprentice* Step 5.

## ★ Suggested Five-Day Sequence

Below is one possible way to use this *Historian's Apprentice* unit. Tasks are listed day by day in a sequence taking five class periods, with some homework and some optional follow-up activities.

**PowerPoint Presentation: *Five Habits of Historical Thinking*** This presentation comes with each *Historian's Apprentice* unit. If you have used it before with other units, you need not do so again. If you decide to use it, incorporate it into the **Day 1** activities. In either case, give students the “Five Habits of Historical Thinking” handout for future reference. Those Five Habits are as follows:

- History Is Not the Past Itself
- The Detective Model: Problem, Evidence, Interpretation
- Time, Change, and Continuity
- Cause and Effect
- As They Saw It: Grasping Past Points of View

**Warm-Up Activity: Homework assignment:** Students do the “Warm-Up Activity.” This activity explores student memories and personal experiences shaping their understanding of the topic.

**Day 1:** Discuss the “Warm-Up Activity.” Then either have students read or review the “Five Habits of Historical Thinking” handout, or use the *Five Habits* PowerPoint presentation.

**Homework assignment:** Students read the background essay “The Revolution of 1989.”

**Day 2:** Use the second PowerPoint presentation, *1989: What Kind of Turning Point for the World?*, to overview the topic for this lesson. The presentation applies the Five Habits of Historical Thinking to this topic. Do the two activities embedded in the presentation.

**Homework assignment:** Students read the “Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist.” The checklist teaches a systematic way to handle sources:

- Sourcing
- Contextualizing
- Interpreting meanings
- Point of view
- Corroborating sources

**Day 3:** In class, students study some of the ten primary source documents and complete “Source Analysis” worksheets on them. They use their notes to discuss these sources. (Worksheet questions are all based on the concepts on the “Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist.”)

**Day 4:** In class, students complete the remaining “Source Analysis” worksheets and use their notes to discuss these sources. Take some time to discuss briefly the two secondary source passages students will analyze next.

**Homework assignment:** Students read these two secondary source passages.

**Day 5:** In class, students do the two “Secondary Sources” activities and discuss them. These activities ask them to analyze the two secondary source passages using four criteria:

- Clear focus on a problem or question
- Position or point of view
- Use of evidence or sources
- Awareness of alternative explanations

**Follow-Up Activities** (optional, at teacher discretion):

Do as preferred: the DBQ Essay Assignment and/or the Structured Debate.



## ★ *Suggested Three-Day Sequence*

If you have less time to devote to this lesson, here is a suggested shorter sequence. The sequence does not include the PowerPoint presentation *Five Habits of Historical Thinking*. This presentation is included with each *Historian's Apprentice* unit. If you have never used it with your class, you may want to do so before following this three-day sequence.

The three-day sequence leaves out a few activities from the five-day sequence. It also suggests that you use only six key primary sources. Yet it still walks students through the steps in the *Historian's Apprentice* approach: Clarifying background knowledge, analyzing primary sources, comparing secondary sources, and debating or writing about the topic.

**Warm-Up Activity. Homework assignment:** Ask students to read or review the “Five Habits of Historical Thinking” handout and read the background essay “The Revolution of 1989.”

**Day 1:** Use the PowerPoint presentation *1989: What Kind of Turning Point for the World?*. It overviews the topic for this lesson by applying the Five Habits of Historical Thinking to it. Do the two activities embedded in the presentation.

**Homework assignment:** Students read or review the “Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist.” The checklist teaches a systematic way to handle sources.

**Day 2:** In class, students study some of the ten primary source documents and complete “Source Analysis” worksheets on them. They use their notes to discuss these sources. We suggest using Documents 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9.

You may wish to make your own choices of primary sources. Use your judgment in deciding how many of them your students can effectively analyze in a single class period.

**Homework assignment:** Students read the two secondary source passages.

**Day 3:** In class, students do the two “Secondary Sources” activities and discuss them. These activities ask them to analyze the two secondary source passages using four criteria.

**Follow-Up Activities** (optional, at teacher discretion):

Do as preferred: the DBQ Essay Assignment and/or the Structured Debate.

## ★ *Suggestions for Use with Younger Students*

For younger students, parts of this lesson may prove challenging. If you feel your students need a somewhat more manageable path through the material, see the suggested sequence below.

If you want to use the *Five Habits of Historical Thinking* PowerPoint presentation, this sequence takes four class periods. If you do not use this PowerPoint, you can combine **DAY 1** and **Day 2** and keep the sequence to just three days. We suggest using six primary sources only. The ones listed for **Day 3** are less demanding in terms of vocabulary and conceptual complexity. For **Day 4**, we provide some simpler DBQs for the follow-up activities.

**Vocabulary:** A list of vocabulary terms in the sources and the introductory essay is provided on page 7 of this booklet. You may wish to hand this sheet out as a reading reference, you could make flashcards out of some of the terms, or you might ask each of several small groups to use the vocabulary sheet to explain terms in one source to the rest of the class.

### SUGGESTED FOUR-DAY SEQUENCE

**Warm-Up Activity. Homework assignment:** Students do the “Warm-Up Activity.” This activity explores student memories and personal experiences shaping their understanding of the topic.

**Day 1:** Discuss the “Warm-Up Activity.” Show the *Five Habits of Historical Thinking* PowerPoint presentation (unless you have used it before and/or you do not think it is needed now). If you do not use this PowerPoint presentation, give students the “Five Habits of Historical Thinking” handout and discuss it with them.

**Homework assignment:** Ask students to read the background essay “The Revolution of 1989.”

**Day 2:** Use the PowerPoint presentation *1989: What Kind of Turning Point for the World?*. This introduces the topic for the lesson by applying the Five Habits of Historical Thinking to it. Do the two activities embedded in the presentation.

**Homework assignment:** Students read or review the “Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist.” The checklist teaches a systematic way to handle sources.

**Day 3:** Discuss the “Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist” and talk through one primary source document in order to illustrate the meaning of the concepts on the checklist. Then have students complete “Source Analysis” worksheets after studying primary source documents 2, 3, 5, 6A & 6B, 8, and 10.

**Homework assignment:** Students read the two secondary source passages.

**Day 4:** Students do *only* “Secondary Sources: Activity 2” and discuss it. This activity asks them to choose from among the sources the two that best back up each secondary source passage.

**Follow-Up Activities** (optional, at teacher discretion):

Do as preferred: the DBQ Essay Assignment and/or the Structured Debate.

Here are some alternate DBQs tailored to the six primary sources recommended here:

**“Ordinary citizens in Russia and Eastern Europe had more to do with ending the Cold War than the leaders did.” Explain why you do or do not agree with this statement.**

**“The end of the Cold War made the world much safer.” Explain why you do or do not agree with this statement.**

## Vocabulary: The Introductory Essay

- **communism:** System of government based on a classless society in which all productive resources are socially owned and controlled
- **dissident:** Someone who openly disagrees with public authorities, especially where it is not allowed
- **regime:** A particular governing group or system of government
- **spontaneous:** Unplanned, usually sudden actions or expressions of opinion
- **utopia:** An imaginary perfect society

## Vocabulary: The Primary Sources

- **antagonists:** People strongly opposed to one another
- **hypocrite:** A person who acts in a way that undercuts that person's own stated values or moral beliefs
- **ingratiate:** Try to win favors by praising or helping someone else
- **irreconcilable:** Unable to find agreement
- **"militia":** In this case, local police officials
- **propaganda:** Ideas and information meant to sway others, often by giving only one point of view
- **unprecedented:** Without precedent; never done before

## Vocabulary: The Secondary Sources

- **cornucopia:** A huge supply of some good, such as food
- **euphoria:** Extreme, often unwarranted happiness
- **perverse:** Strange and unexpected in a negative way
- **skeptic:** Someone who doubts the truth of a claim



## Part 1: The Year 1989—Providing the Context

**Note to the teacher:** The next pages provide materials meant to help students better understand and evaluate this topic. The materials also seek to teach students the Five Habits of Historical Thinking.

This section includes the following:

- **PowerPoint presentation: *The Five Habits of Historical Thinking***

This presentation illustrates five habits of thought or modes of analysis that guide historians as they construct their secondary accounts of a topic. These five habits are not about skills used in analyzing primary sources (those are dealt with more explicitly in another handout in the next section). The Five Habits are meant to help students see history as a way of thinking, not as the memorizing of disparate facts and predigested conclusions. The PowerPoint uses several historical episodes as examples to illustrate the Five Habits. In two places, it pauses to ask students to do a simple activity applying one of the habits to some of their own life experiences.

If you have used this PowerPoint with other *Historian's Apprentice* units, you may not need to use it again here.

- **Handout: “The Five Habits of Historical Thinking”**

This handout supplements the PowerPoint presentation. It is meant as a reference for students to use as needed. If you have used other *Historian's Apprentice* units, your students may only need to review this handout quickly.

- **Warm-Up Activity**

A simple exercise designed to help you see what students know about the topic, what confuses them, or what ideas they may have absorbed about it from popular culture, friends and family, etc. The goal is to alert them to their need to gain a clearer idea of the past and be critical of what they think they already know.

- **Introductory essay: “The Revolution of 1989”**

The essay provides enough basic background information on the topic to enable students to assess primary sources and conflicting secondary source interpretations. At the end of the essay, students get some points to keep in mind about the nature of the sources they will examine and the conflicting secondary source interpretations they will debate.

- **PowerPoint presentation: *1989: What Kind of Turning Point for the World?***

This PowerPoint presentation reviews the topic for the lesson and shows how the Five Habits of Historical Thinking can be applied to a clearer understanding of it. At two points, the presentation calls for a pause and students are prompted to discuss some aspects of their prior knowledge of the topic. Our proposed sequences suggest using this PowerPoint presentation after assigning the introductory essay, but you may prefer to reverse this order.

# Warm-Up Activity

## *What Do You Know About the Events of 1989?*

This lesson deals with the dramatic events of 1989. Whenever you start to learn something about a time in history, it helps to think first of what you already know about it, or think you know. You probably have impressions. Or you may have read or heard things about it already. Some of what you know may be accurate. You need to be ready to alter your fixed ideas about this time as you learn more about it. This is what any historian would do. To do this, study this illustration and take a few notes in response to the questions below it.



This photo shows U.S. President Ronald Reagan speaking in front of Berlin's Brandenburg Gate on June 12, 1987. What do you know about his role in the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union?

In his speech, Reagan called on the Soviet Union's leader to "tear down this wall." He was not speaking about the Brandenburg Gate. What wall was he speaking about, and to what Soviet leader was he directing his appeal?

Reagan's speech was a major news story in the context of ongoing events in Europe then. Why do you think this call was seen as such an important event? What else do you know about the upheavals of which this episode was one part?

## ***The Revolution of 1989***

In 1789, the French Revolution set in motion changes that transformed Europe, and in time most of the world. Every historian agrees on the momentous importance of that turning point. Two hundred years later, in 1989, another upheaval transformed the world as well. It was also a revolutionary upheaval, one that overthrew governments and an entire system of ideas and political institutions.

Was it as important as the French Revolution? So far, it does not seem to have taken that same place in our historical understanding or imagination, perhaps because its impact is still unfolding, still yet to be felt fully. Yet 1989 was an amazing year, one that saw a cascading series of astounding changes that no one expected, including even its cast of main characters—Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev, Lech Walesa, Pope John Paul II, Václav Havel, and several others.

The upheaval in question here was the sudden collapse of communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe in 1989 and, two years later, throughout the Soviet Union itself.

The Soviet Union's control over Eastern Europe began at the end of World War II in 1945, when victorious Soviet armies swept Germany's Nazi regime from the region. For the people of Eastern Europe, however, relief was fleeting. It soon became clear that Nazi tyranny was only to be replaced by communist tyrannies fashioned by Joseph Stalin's Soviet Union. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria all came to be dominated by communist one-party systems under the control of the Soviet Union. Germany meanwhile was split in two, into an independent West Germany and an East Germany under communist control. Inside East Germany, the city of Berlin was divided into zones controlled by the victorious Allies, including a Soviet zone. To keep people within East Germany, officials in the Soviet zone of Berlin built the Berlin Wall in 1961, a wall that would be a symbol of an entire system of oppression and control.

Communist domination of these nations often required brutal suppression of all dissent. In time, bloated police-state bureaucracies were successful enough that open brutality was largely replaced by a

dull, routine, less visible but nearly total control over people's lives, public and private. Uprisings against these regimes did occur—in Hungary in 1956, for example, and during the so-called “Prague Spring” in Czechoslovakia in 1968. But by the 1970s, most people, both in Eastern Europe and in the West, assumed the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe was here to stay for a long, long time.

The Soviets also soon became engaged in a spiraling arms race with the United States, one in which each side amassed ever more nuclear weapons in a dangerous game known as “mutual assured destruction”—the notion that as long as each side could annihilate the other, neither would dare launch an all-out war. In fact, no such war was ever fought. Instead, the world was locked into a tense and constant stalemate that seemed unlikely ever to break.

Yet in the late 1970s, something did begin to change. The Helsinki Accords of 1975 fostered small groups of dissidents throughout the Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe. They appeared at a time of growing economic stagnation and indebtedness in the entire region. The utopian promises of communism never looked less likely than they did in the 1980s, when an aging Soviet leadership seemed incapable of harnessing its nation's own productive resources to meet even the most basic needs of its people.

As leaders began to flounder, new forces erupted from below. In Poland in the early 1980s, Solidarity, the region's first truly independent trade union, emerged under the guidance of an electrician named Lech Walesa. It was given a huge boost by the support of another Pole, the new head of the Catholic Church, Pope John Paul II. For a while, Polish officials tried to shut down Solidarity by declaring martial law. However, without Soviet tanks to back up the order, the nation simply became deadlocked and more economically desperate than ever. Martial law was lifted, and in 1989 Solidarity won fairly held elections in a massive landslide. In other nations, religion played less of a role in fostering dissent than it had in Poland. But whatever form mass protests took, they seemed to catch everyone by surprise, especially the ruling communist elites.

What is astounding is how at every stage of these events, the uncontrollable spontaneous actions of the people, not the plans of leaders, made the revolution—Solidarity and the Catholic Church in Poland, dissatisfied youth and even rock music during Czechoslovakia’s “Velvet Revolution,” crowds of East Germans “vacationing” in Hungary so that they could cross the border into Austria and circle around to West Germany, a carefully controlled crowd in Romania nevertheless booing the startled dictator Nicolae Ceausescu (only days away from his execution after the upheaval there), and masses suddenly appearing on top the Berlin Wall, signaling its doom.

This uprising might not have succeeded had the Soviets energetically crushed it, as they had in the past. But the aging Soviet elite had lost its nerve and confidence in its own system. Accepting and acting on this fact may have been Mikhail Gorbachev’s

greatest accomplishment. He became the top Soviet leader in 1985, and his role in the events of 1989 was, above all, the man who this time did not send in the Soviet tanks.

Gorbachev and Reagan soon began a series of summit meetings at which each worked to achieve a reduction in nuclear arms and an end to the Cold War. In 1991, the forces of national and ethnic assertion spread from Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union itself, which split into its various republics by the end of that year. As a result, the Cold War indeed came to a close.

What that would mean for the rest of the world was suddenly a big question. The sources for this unit should help you better understand the amazing events of 1989 and its possible meaning for the future of the world.

## Points to Keep in Mind

### Historians’ Questions

Historians have debated endlessly many aspects of the Cold War and the end of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European empire. Arguments have swirled about which side was more to blame for starting the Cold War, what role nuclear weapons played in the 45-year stalemate, how much of a threat the Soviet Union’s imperial ambitions were, et cetera.

In recent years, Francis Fukuyama’s book *The End of History and the Last Man* has been the focus of heated debates. As Fukuyama puts his thesis, “What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”

Some agree with his view. Many others strongly disagree. They often point out that the Cold War may actually have suppressed other conflicts and battles artificially as the two superpowers checked each other. Now, these historians say, history is not only not ending, but it may be starting up again in all kinds of ways—some good, some very bad.

### The Primary Source Evidence

For this lesson, you will study ten primary source documents. Some of them deal with the nature of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe; others deal with the dramatic events in that region in the late 1980s. Still others are assessments of those events by major participants such as Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. Together they should give you a better sense of the nature of the upheavals of 1989, the reasons for them, and the consequences they have had for a post–Cold War world.

### Secondary Source Interpretations

After studying and discussing the primary sources, you will read two short passages by two different historians. The historians who wrote these passages differ somewhat in their views about the end of the Cold War and, in particular, about the ideas Fukuyama offered about this in his book *The End of History and the Last Man*. You will use your own background knowledge and your ideas about the primary sources as you think about and answer some questions about the views of these two historians.

## Five Habits of Historical Thinking

History is not just a chronicle of one fact after another. It is a meaningful story, or an account of what happened and why. It is written to address questions or problems historians pose. This checklist describes key habits of thinking that historians adopt as they interpret primary sources and create their own accounts of the past.

### *History Is Not the Past Itself*

When we learn history, we learn a story about the past, not the past itself. No matter how certain an account of the past seems, it is only one account, not the entire story. The “entire story” is gone; that is, the past itself no longer exists. Only some records of events remain, and they are never complete. Therefore it is important to see all judgments and conclusions about the past as tentative or uncertain. Avoid looking for hard-and-fast “lessons” from the past. The value of history is in a way the opposite of such a search for quick answers; that is, its value is in teaching us to live with uncertainty and see even our present as complex, unfinished, open-ended.

### *The Detective Model: Problem, Evidence, Interpretation*

Historians can’t observe the past directly. They must use evidence, just as a detective tries to reconstruct a crime based on clues left behind. In the historian’s case, primary sources are the evidence—letters, official documents, maps, photos, newspaper articles, artifacts, and all other traces from past times. Like a detective, a historian defines a very specific problem to solve, one for which evidence does exist. Asking clear, meaningful questions is a key to writing good history. Evidence is always incomplete. It’s not always easy to separate fact from opinion in it, or tell what is important from what is not. Historians try to do this, but they must stay cautious about their conclusions and open to other interpretations of the same evidence.

### *Time, Change, and Continuity*

History is about the flow of events over time, yet is not just one fact after another. It seeks to understand this flow of events as a pattern. In that pattern, some things change while others hold steady over time. You need to see history as a dynamic interplay of both change and continuity together. Only by doing this can you see how the past has evolved into the present—and why the present carries with it many traces of or links to the past.

### *Cause and Effect*

Along with seeing patterns of change and continuity over time, historians seek to explain that change. In doing this, they know that no single factor causes change. Many factors interact. Unique, remarkable, and creative individual actions and plans are one factor, but individual plans have unintended outcomes, and these shape events in unexpected ways. Moreover, individuals do not always act rationally or with full knowledge of what they are doing. Finally, geography, technology, economics, cultural traditions, and ideas all affect what groups and individuals do.

### *As They Saw It: Grasping Past Points of View*

Above all, thinking like a historian means trying hard to see how people in the past thought and felt. This is not easy. As one historian put it, the past is “another country,” in which people felt and thought differently, often very differently, from the way we do now. Avoiding “present-mindedness” is therefore a key task for historians. Also, since the past includes various groups in conflict, historians must learn to empathize with many diverse cultures and subgroups to see how they differ and what they share in common.

## Part 2: Analyzing the Primary Sources

**Note to the teacher:** The next pages provide the primary sources for this lesson. We suggest you give these to students after they read the background essay, after they review the “Five Habits of Historical Thinking” handout, and after they watch and discuss the PowerPoint presentation for the lesson.

This section includes the following:

- **Handout: *Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist***

Give copies of this handout to students and ask them to refer to it when analyzing any primary source.

- **Ten Primary Source Documents**

The Documents are as follows:

- Document 1. Communism’s dream of the perfect society
- Document 2. Romania’s decree regulating the sale of typewriters
- Document 3. A graph of nuclear stockpiles during the Cold War
- Document 4. Part of Václav Havel’s open letter, “Dear Dr. Husak”
- Document 5. Part of Ronald Reagan’s “Evil Empire” speech
- Document 6A & 6B. Two photos of the Berlin Wall
- Document 7. Parts of Reagan’s 1988 speech at Moscow State University
- Document 8. Part of Mikhail Gorbachev’s 2003 speech at American University
- Document 9. George H.W. Bush in 1991 on the concept of a “new world order”
- Document 10. The World Trade Center, September 11, 2001

- **Ten “Source Analysis” Worksheets for Analyzing the Primary Sources**

Each worksheet asks student to take notes on one source. The prompts along the side match the five categories in the “Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist.” Not every category is used in each worksheet, only those that seem most relevant to a full analysis of that source.

You may want students to analyze all of the sources. However, if time does not allow this, use those that seem most useful for your own instructional purposes.

Students can use the notes on the “Source Analysis” worksheets in discussions, as a help in analyzing the two secondary sources in the next part of this lesson, and in follow-up debates, DBQs, and other activities.



## Interpreting Primary Sources Checklist

Primary sources are the evidence historians use to reach conclusions and write their accounts of the past. Sources rarely have one obvious, easily grasped meaning. To interpret them fully, historians use several strategies. This checklist describes some of the most important of those strategies. Read the checklist through and use it to guide you whenever you need to analyze and interpret a primary source.

### *Sourcing*

Think about a primary source's author or creator, how and why the primary source document was created, and where it appeared. Also think about the audience it was intended for and what its purpose was. You may not always find much information about these things, but whatever you can learn will help you better understand the source. In particular, it may suggest the source's point of view or bias, since the author's background and intended audience often shape his or her ideas and way of expressing them.

### *Contextualizing*

"Context" refers to the time and place of which the primary source is a part. In history, facts do not exist separately from one another. They get their meaning from the way they fit into a broader pattern. The more you know about that broader pattern, or context, the more you will be able to understand about the source and its significance.

### *Interpreting Meanings*

It is rare for a source's full meaning to be completely obvious. You must read a written source closely, paying attention to its language and tone, as well as to what it implies or merely hints at. With a visual source, all kinds of meaning may be suggested by the way it is designed, by such things as shading, camera angle, use of emotional symbols or scenes, etc. The more you pay attention to all the details, the more you can learn from a source.

### *Point of View*

Every source is written or created by someone with a purpose, an intended audience, and a point of view or bias. Even a dry table of numbers was created for some reason, to stress some things and not others, to make a point of some sort. At times, you can tell a point of view simply by sourcing the document. Knowing an author was a Democrat or a Republican, for example, will alert you to a likely point of view. In the end, however, only a close reading of the text will make you aware of point of view. Keep in mind, even a heavily biased source can still give you useful evidence of what some people in a past time thought. But you need to take the bias into account in judging how reliable the source's own claims really are.

### *Corroborating Sources*

No one source tells the whole story. Moreover, no one source is completely reliable. To make reasonable judgments about an event in the past, you must compare sources to find points of agreement and disagreement. Even when there are big differences, both sources may be useful. However, the differences will also tell you something, and they may be important in helping you understand each source.

## The Primary Sources for the Lesson

### Document 1

**Information on the source:** The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 turned Russia into the world's first communist nation. Communism's utopian vision of a harmonious society without private property, economic competition, inequality, and class strife is well illustrated by this Soviet poster.

### Document 2

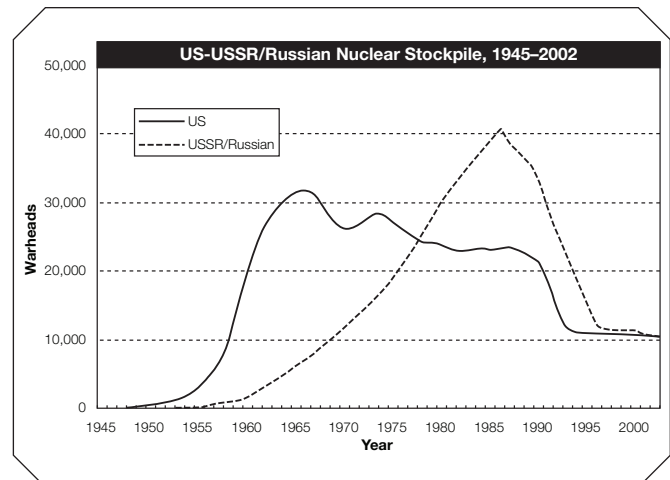
**Information on the source:** Ruled by Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania may have been the most oppressive of all of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe. Here is Decree 98 of 1983, a decree regulating the sale of typewriters. As reproduced in John Sweeney, *The Life and Evil Times of Nicolae Ceausescu* (London: Hutchinson, 1991), p. 132–34.

*The renting or lending of a typewriter is forbidden. Every owner of a typewriter must have for it an authorization from the militia, which can be issued only after a request is made. All private persons who have a typewriter must, in the next few days, seek to be issued with such an authorization. Such a request, in writing, must be sent to the municipal militia, or the town or community militia, wherever the applicant happens to reside, and the following details must be supplied: first and second names of the applicant; names of his parents; place and date of birth; address; profession; place of work; type and design of the typewriter; how it was obtained (purchase, gift, inheritance); for what purpose it is being used. If the application is granted, the applicant will receive an authorization for the typewriter within 60 days. On a specified date, the owner of the typewriter must report with the machine to the militia office in order to provide an example of his typing. A similar example has to be provided every year, specifically during the first two months of the year, as well as after every repair to the typewriter . . . Defective typewriters which can no longer be repaired must be sent to a collection point for such material, but only after the typewriter's keys, numbers and signs, have been surrendered to the militia. If the owner of a typewriter should change his address, he should report to the militia within five days.*



### Document 3

**Information on the source:** The Cold War remained “cold” because neither side ever dared use all of the nuclear weapons it had amassed to threaten or at least deter the other side from using its weapons. Of course the Cold War also was “hot” in the sense of many smaller wars with nations allied with one or the other side, such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War. This graphic of total stockpiles of nuclear weapons conveys the frightening nature of the Cold War arms race.



## Document 4

**Information on the source:** Playwright Václav Havel became a key leader in opposition to Czechoslovakia's communist government. After the fall of communism, he would become his nation's president. Here are some brief passages from "Dear Dr. Husak," an open letter Havel published in April 1975. It is directed to the general secretary of the Czech Communist Party, Gustave Husak. It has appeared in many anthologies. Here it is from *Open Letter*, by Václav Havel, selected and edited by Paul Wilson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991).

*If it is fear which lies behind people's defensive attempts to preserve what they have, it becomes increasingly apparent that the chief impulses for their aggressive efforts to win what they do not yet possess are selfishness and careerism.*

*Seldom in recent times, it seems, has a social system offered scope so openly and so brazenly to people willing to support anything as long as it brings them some advantage; to unprincipled and spineless men, prepared to do anything in their craving for power and*

*personal gain; to born lackeys, ready for any humiliation and willing at all times to sacrifice their neighbors' and their own honor for a chance to ingratiate themselves with those in power . . .*

*The number of people who sincerely believe everything that the official propaganda says and who selflessly support the government's authority is smaller than it has ever been. But the number of hypocrites rises steadily: up to a point, every citizen is, in fact, forced to be one.*

## Document 5

**Information on the source:** U.S. President Ronald Reagan (1981–1989) at first took a very hard line against the Soviet Union. On March 8, 1983, he gave a speech to the National Association of Evangelicals in which he referred to the Soviet Union as an "evil empire." The passages here are from that speech. Reagan sought to build up the military to keep ahead of the Soviet Union's capabilities. Later, however, he began to seek agreements to reduce nuclear weapons actively, especially after the Soviets chose a young new leader who wanted to reform the Soviet Union and reduce its military might.

*So, I urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority. You know, I've always believed that old Screwtape [a Devil figure in a C.S. Lewis novel] reserved his best efforts for those of you in the church. So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride—the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire,*

*to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.*

*I ask you to resist the attempts of those who would have you withhold your support for our efforts, this administration's efforts, to keep America strong and free, while we negotiate real and verifiable reductions in the world's nuclear arsenals and one day, with God's help, their total elimination.*



## Documents 6A & 6B

**Information on the sources:** The Berlin Wall was constructed in 1961 to keep East Germans from escaping into West Germany across the boundaries that separated sections of the city of Berlin. When the upheavals began in 1989, they took many forms. Among the most dramatic were the people who filled the streets on November 9th to cross over and take down the wall. They acted when an East Germany official misstated plans for a controlled opening of the wall the next day, saying it would be opened immediately. By the time authorities realized their mistake, the crowds were far too great to control, as photo 6B makes clear. East Germans were no longer willing to use the force it would have taken to stop them.

6A



6B



## Document 7

**Information on the source:** Once Gorbachev became the top Soviet leader in 1985, President Reagan and he began holding “summit” meetings with each other. On a visit to the Soviet Union in May 1988, Reagan gave a speech to students and faculty at Moscow State University. It is considered one of his most famous speeches. These passages are from that speech.

*Americans seek always to make friends of old antagonists. After a colonial revolution with Britain we have cemented for all ages the ties of kinship between our nations. After a terrible civil war between North and South, we healed our wounds and found true unity as a nation. We fought two world wars in my lifetime against Germany and one with Japan, but now the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan are two of our closest allies and friends.*

*Some people point to the trade disputes between us as a sign of strain, but they're the frictions of all families, and the family of free nations is a big and vital and sometimes boisterous one. I can tell you that nothing would please my heart more than in my lifetime to see American and Soviet diplomats grappling with the problem of trade disputes between America and a growing, exuberant, exporting Soviet Union that had opened up to economic freedom and growth.*

*Is this just a dream? Perhaps. But it is a dream that is our responsibility to have come true.*

*Your generation is living in one of the most exciting, hopeful times in Soviet history. It is a time when the first breath of freedom stirs the air and the heart beats to the accelerated rhythm of hope, when the accumulated spiritual energies of a long silence yearn to break free.*

*We do not know what the conclusion of this journey will be, but we're hopeful that the promise of reform will be fulfilled. In this Moscow spring, this May 1988, we may be allowed that hope—that freedom, like the fresh green sapling planted over Tolstoy's grave, will blossom forth at least in the rich fertile soil of your people and culture. We may be allowed to hope that the marvelous sound of a new openness will keep rising through, ringing through, leading to a new world of reconciliation, friendship, and peace.*

## Document 8

### Information on the source:

The Soviet Union itself collapsed in 1991 as many of its former republics broke away to form nations of their own. Years later, former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev gave a lecture about “International Cooperation in a Post–September 11th World,” on September 30, 2003, at American University. These passages are from that speech.

*Today, I believe we need a new intellectual breakthrough that will follow up on the ideas of the new thinking in the post Cold War period, when we are facing new unexpected challenges, challenges that we have not yet fully understood. The situation that we are facing today is complex and contradictory. On the one hand the Cold War ended, and for the first time in many decades it created conditions for real and productive cooperation of great powers. Between these great powers today there are no irreconcilable differences . . .*

*The non-confrontational character of relations between the major powers is a new development, and I would say an unprecedented development in international relations, and we can say that it is holding out very favorable prospects to the world. But that is all in the realm of possibility. . . . And recently, it has become clear, that the structure of world order is being tested. We were not able to fully use the possibilities that opened up at the end of the Cold War in order to solve the most difficult crisis, particularly the Middle Eastern crisis. And we did not use those possibilities in order to end poverty and backwardness in the world.*

## Document 9

**Information on the source:** Shortly after the Soviet Union fell apart, Iraq invaded Kuwait. U.S. President George H.W. Bush assembled a coalition of nations that forced Iraqi troops back out of Kuwait in early 1991. The Soviets did not oppose the U.S. in that effort. On March 6, 1991, President Bush expressed some views on a “new world order” he saw as emerging in the wake of the end of the Cold War. These passages are from that speech.

*Until now, the world we’ve known has been a world divided—a world of barbed wire and concrete block, conflict and cold war.*

*Now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a “world order” in which “the principles of justice and fair play . . . protect the weak against the strong . . .” A world where the United Nations, freed from cold war stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations.*

*The Gulf war put this new world to its first test, and, my fellow Americans, we passed that test.*

*For the sake of our principles, for the sake of the Kuwaiti people, we stood our ground. Because the world would not look the other way, Ambassador [Saud Nasir] al-Sabah, tonight, Kuwait is free.*

## Document 10

**Information on the source:** The spread of international terrorism as a major threat to any supposed “new world order” was made dramatically clear by the events of September 11, 2001.



## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 1

A Soviet poster depicting the communist dream of a perfect society

### Contextualizing

This poster was meant to depict a huge change in Russian society that took place in 1917. Can you explain that change?

### Interpreting meanings

Karl Marx, at the end of the *Communist Manifesto*, wrote: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!" What did the word "proletarian" mean to Marx? In what way does this poster illustrate the idea and sentiment Marx expressed with these words?

What visual features of the poster seem most realistic? Which seem least realistic? How do both combine to convey the idea of a perfect or ideal and harmonious society?



## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 2

Romania's 1983 decree regulating the sale of typewriters

### Contextualizing

What do you know about Romania and Nicolae Ceausescu in the 1980s? What happened to Ceausescu and his wife in the upheavals in Eastern Europe in 1989?

### Interpreting meanings

Why do you think the Romanian government wanted its citizens to register all typewriters?

Why do you suppose owners had to bring their typewriters to the police once a year to provide a sample of the typing?

From this source, what room for a truly private life do you think there might have been in Romania under its communist government?

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 3

A graph showing nuclear stockpiles during the Cold War

### Contextualizing

Some people say that the way World War II was fought in Europe practically guaranteed that a cold war would follow the peace settlement there. What do you think they mean? Do you agree with them? Why or why not?

### Interpreting meanings

The sheer size of each nuclear arsenal, as shown here, meant that each side had more than enough to destroy the other many times over. A concept known as “mutual assured destruction” guided both sides for much of the Cold War in building up these arsenals. Can you explain how?

Some say that the fact that no nuclear war ever broke out during the Cold War, was proof that mutual assured destruction was a good idea, however frightening it may seem. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 4

Part of Václav Havel's open letter, "Dear Dr. Husak"

### Contextualizing

In 1968, Czechoslovakia experienced what came to be called the "Prague Spring." But the way the Soviet Union reacted to that had a big impact on ordinary Czech citizens and their willingness to speak up and criticize their leaders. What do you know about the Prague Spring and its outcome?

### Interpreting sources

What do you think Havel meant by saying every citizen was forced to be a hypocrite?

Communist ideology claims to stress a spirit of communal sharing over individual selfishness. In what way would Havel challenge that claim?

### Corroborating sources

Does Primary Source Document 2 support the view Havel offers here of Eastern Europe under communist control? Why or why not?

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 5

Part of Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire" speech, 1983

### Contextualizing

This speech surprised people in part because U.S. policy for a decade or so had been to pursue "detente" with the Soviet Union. Why might that fact have lead even many U.S. officials to find Reagan's tone and point here surprising for a U.S. president?

Reagan might have said that events since the late 1970s had proved detente was not working. What would have led him to see things this way?

### Interpreting meanings

Many took issue with Reagan for using the stark moral language of "good" and "evil" to describe the Cold War conflict. Do you think he was right to use this language in describing the Soviet Union? Why or why not?

In this speech, Reagan also expressed a desire to seek real reductions in the nuclear weapons arsenals of the two sides. Does this wish fit with his moral condemnation of the other side? Do you think he was sincere in this or only saying this to look and sound good? Explain your answer.

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 6

Two photos of the Berlin Wall

### Contextualizing

In the years leading up to 1989, a new Soviet leader had informed communist officials in Eastern Europe that the Soviet Union would no longer send in military forces to help them deal with challenges to their authority. Can you name that Soviet leader?

Why might that decision by the Soviet leader have shaken the Eastern European communist elites and led them to hesitate to use force in the face of popular protests such as the one shown in photo 6B?

### Interpreting meanings

Photo 6A is a view over the Berlin Wall into East Germany. Why do you think there was a wide empty space between the Wall and the other smaller fence on the left?

Photo 6B helps illustrate what a symbol of the entire Cold War the Berlin Wall had become by 1989. Why do you think it became such a symbol?

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 7

Parts of Reagan's 1988 speech at Moscow State University

### Contextualizing

What developments in the Soviet Union from 1985 on led Reagan to change his tone and approach to the Soviet Union in such a major way between 1983 and 1988?

Considering events in Russia and the world since 1988, do you think Reagan's optimistic tone here was foolish, or might it still have been considered realistic? Explain your answer.

### Interpreting meanings

What are some phrases here that contrast most starkly with Reagan's "Evil Empire" speech, an excerpt of which forms Primary Source Document 5?

Aside from tone and emphasis, does the substance of this speech greatly differ from the substance of the speech excerpted in Primary Source Document 5? Why or why not?



## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 8

Part of Mikhail Gorbachev's 2003 speech at American University

### Interpreting meanings

Gorbachev says the situation facing the post–Cold War world is “complex and contradictory.” In your own words, sum up what he meant.

### Corroborating sources

When Gorbachev speaks of “the possibilities that opened up at the end of the Cold War,” in what ways was he expressing the same sort of hopefulness as Reagan did in Primary Source Document 7? In what ways might he have meant something different?

### Contextualizing

Do you agree that as of 2003 there were no “irreconcilable differences” between the major world powers? Why or why not?

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 9

George H.W. Bush in 1991, on the concept of a “new world order”

### Contextualizing

The context for this speech was the Gulf War, which the first President Bush depicted as an example of a “new world order” working together to resolve a dangerous situation. Sum up what the Gulf War was all about, and explain why you do or do not agree with Bush’s views of it here.

### Interpreting meanings

Why did Bush feel that the end of the “cold war stalemate” would free the United Nations to finally fulfill the promise of its founders?

### Point of view

Some might say it was natural for a U.S. president to view a “new world order” with such optimism, since the U.S. was on its way to being the only superpower left. What do you think they meant by saying this, and do you agree with them?

## Source Analysis: Primary Source Document 10

Photo of the World Trade Center, September 11, 2001

### Contextualizing

On September 11, 2001, images like this showed the world a very different sort of “new world order” from the one Reagan, Bush, and Gorbachev had envisioned. Can you explain?

Had the Cold War not come to an end, do you think radical Islamic terrorism as practiced by the 9/11 plotters would have become the problem it has? Why or why not?

### Interpreting meanings

Some observers say photos like this have taken on a symbolic meaning that goes beyond the horrible events of that day themselves. What do you think they mean? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

## Part 3: Analyzing the Secondary Sources

**Note to the teacher:** This next section includes passages from two secondary source accounts dealing with the impact of the Industrial Revolution on daily life, along with two activities on these sources. We suggest you first discuss the brief comment “Analyzing Secondary Sources” just above the first of the two secondary sources. Discuss the four criteria the first activity asks students to use in analyzing each secondary source. These criteria focus students on the nature of historical accounts as 1) problem-centered, 2) based on evidence, 3) influenced by point of view and not purely neutral, and 4) tentative or aware of alternative explanations.

Specifically, this section includes the following:

- **Two secondary source passages**

Give copies of these passages to students to read, either in class or as homework. The two passages are from *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World*, by Walter Russell Mead (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), pp. 335–336, and from “After the Cold War,” by Walter Laqueur, an April 1, 2006, article posted on America.gov, a Web site of the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of International Information Programs.

- **Two student activities**

Activity 1

Students analyze the two passage taking notes on the following questions:

- How clearly does the account focus on a problem or question?
- Does it reveal a position or express a point of view?
- How well does it base its case on primary source evidence?
- How aware is it of alternative explanations or points of view?

Activity 2

In pairs, students select two of the primary sources for the lesson that best support each author’s claims in the secondary source passages. Students discuss their choices with the class.

## The Secondary Sources for the Lesson

### Analyzing Secondary Sources

Historians write secondary source accounts of the past after studying primary source documents like the ones you have studied on the events of 1989. However, they normally select documents from among a great many others, and they stress some aspects of the story but not others. In doing this, historians are guided by the questions they ask about the topic. Their selection of sources and their focus are also influenced by their own aims, bias, or point of view. No account of the past is perfectly neutral. In reading a secondary source, you should pay attention to what it includes, what it leaves out, what conclusions it reaches, and how aware it is of alternative interpretations.

\* \* \* \*

### Secondary Source 1

**Information on the source:** The passage in the box below is an excerpt from *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World*, by Walter Russell Mead (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), pp. 335–336. In this passage, Mead describes the views of Francis Fukuyama, taken from the book mentioned in the introductory essay, *The End of History and the Last Man*. Therefore, the passage should be seen as a summary of Fukuyama’s views, not necessarily Mead’s own views.

In Fukuyama’s view, liberal democratic society finally achieved the goal that all humanity has been seeking for thousands of years. This is not because it produces a cornucopia of very attractive consumer goods. It is because liberal democracy provides a solution to the problem of recognition. Liberal democracy honors the equality and dignity of all people—unlike earlier systems of feudalism or slave societies. People in Western societies are not just equal in theory; they are equal at the polls and equal before the law.

But people don’t just want to be recognized as equal, Fukuyama notes. They also want to compete, to win, and to enjoy the

rewards of success. Liberal democratic society squares the circle; it allows people to compete for honor, glory, and wealth in political and economic competition—but losers aren’t utterly crushed.

Liberal capitalist democracy is a better fit for human nature than competing economic and political systems; that is why it wins. The collapse of the Soviet Union represented, Fukuyama argued, the last attempt by a great power to organize itself on any other basis than liberal democratic capitalism. The Soviet defeat showed the futility of trying to oppose the system once and for all.

## The Secondary Sources for the Lesson

### Secondary Source 2

**Information on the source:** The passage in the box below is an excerpt from “After the Cold War,” by Walter Laqueur, an April 1, 2006, article posted on America.gov, a Web site of the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of International Information Programs.

When the Cold War came to an end in 1989 with the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, when the countries of Eastern Europe regained independence, and when finally the Soviet Union disintegrated, there was widespread feeling throughout the world that at long last universal peace had descended on Earth. The fear of a war in which weapons of mass destruction would be used had vanished. A leading political scientist wrote a book titled *The End of History*; this did not, of course, imply that history had come to a standstill, but he meant that serious, major conflicts between nations no longer existed and that on certain essentials all were now in agreement.

It was a beautiful moment but the euphoria did not last long. Skeptics (which included this writer) feared that there was plenty of conflict left in the world, which had, however, been overshadowed or suppressed by the Cold War. In other words, as long as the confrontation between the two camps continued, all kinds of other conflicts, which seemed minor at the time, would not come into the open. On the contrary, the Cold War had in a perverse way been responsible for the preservation of some order in the world; it had been a stabilizing factor.



## The Secondary Sources: Activity 1

In this exercise, you read two short passages from much longer secondary sources dealing with the upheavals of 1989. For each secondary source, take notes on the following four questions (you may want to underline phrases or sentences in the passages that you think back up your notes):

1. How clearly does this account focus on a problem or question. What do you think that problem or question is? Sum it up in your own words here.

*God and Gold*, Mead

"After the Cold War," Laqueur

2. Does the secondary source take a position or express a point of view about the upheavals of 1989? If so, briefly state that point of view or quote an example of it.

*God and Gold*, Mead

"After the Cold War," Laqueur

3. How well does the secondary source seem to base its case on primary source evidence? Take notes about any specific examples, if you can identify them.

*God and Gold*, Mead

"After the Cold War," Laqueur

4. Does the secondary source seem aware of alternative explanations or points of view about this topic? Underline points in the passage where you see this.

*God and Gold*, Mead

"After the Cold War," Laqueur

**In pairs, discuss your notes for this activity.**

## The Secondary Sources: Activity 2

This activity is based on the passages from *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World*, by Walter Russell Mead, and from “After the Cold War,” by Walter Laqueur. From the primary sources for this lesson, choose two that you think best support each source’s point of view about the events of the year 1989 and their aftermath. With the rest of the class, discuss the two secondary source passages and defend the choice of sources you have made.

1. From this lesson, choose two primary sources that best back up the interpretation in Mead’s *God and Gold*. List those sources here and briefly explain why you chose them.
2. From this lesson, choose two primary sources that best back up the interpretation in Laqueur’s “After the Cold War.” List those sources here and briefly explain why you chose them.
3. Does your textbook include a passage describing the dramatic events of the year 1989 and their aftermath? If so, with which of the two secondary source passages (*God and Gold* or “After the Cold War”) does it seem to agree most? What one or two primary sources from this lesson would you add to this textbook passage to improve it?

**Discuss your choices with the rest of the class.**

## Part 4: Follow-Up Options

**Note to the teacher:** At this point, students have completed the key tasks of *The Historian's Apprentice* program. They have examined their own prior understandings and acquired background knowledge on the topic. They have analyzed and debated a set of primary sources. They have considered secondary source accounts of the topic. This section includes two suggested follow-up activities. Neither of these is a required part of the lesson. They do not have to be undertaken right away. However, we do strongly recommend that you find some way to do what these options provide for. They give students a way to write or debate in order to express their ideas and arrive at their own interpretations of the topic.

Two suggested follow-up activities are included here:

- **Document-Based Questions**

Four document-based questions are provided. Choose one and follow the guidelines provided for writing a typical DBQ essay.

- **A Structured Debate**

The aim of this debate format is not so much to teach students to win a debate, but to learn to listen and learn, as well as speak up and defend a position. A more interactive and more civil debating process is the goal.

## Document-Based Questions

Document-Based Questions (DBQs) are essay questions you must answer by using your own background knowledge and a set of primary sources on that topic. Below are four DBQs on the upheavals of the year 1989. Use the sources for this lesson and everything you have learned from it to write a short essay answer to one of these questions.

### Suggested DBQs

**Using the documents for this lesson, explain why the communist systems the Soviet Union imposed on Eastern Europe collapsed so suddenly, even after seeming so stable for so long.**

**“The Cold War was cold in another way—it froze the superpowers in place, as well as their allies, and thereby at least kept the peace for over 40 years.” Assess the validity of this statement (that is, explain why you do or do not agree with it).**

**“The Revolutions of 1989 were pure revolutions from below. The leaders and elites played no role and could have done nothing to stop them.” Assess the validity of this statement (that is, explain why you do or do not agree with it).**

**Using the documents for this lesson, assess the notion that the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union represented some sort of “end of history,” in that no real rival concept to liberal democracy could then survive.**

### Suggested Guidelines for Writing a DBQ Essay

- **Planning and thinking through the essay**

Consider the question carefully. Think about how to answer it so as to address each part of it. Do not ignore any detail in the question. Pay attention to the question’s form (cause-and-effect, compare-and-contrast, assess the validity, etc.). This form will often give you clues as to how best to organize each part of your essay.

- **Thesis statement and introductory paragraph**

The thesis statement is a clear statement of what you hope to prove in your essay. It must address *all* parts of the DBQ, it must make a claim you can back up with the sources, and it should be specific enough to help you organize the rest of your essay.

- **Using evidence effectively**

Use the notes on your “Source Analysis” activity sheets to organize your thoughts about these primary sources. In citing a source, use it to support key points or illustrate major themes. Do not simply list a source in order to get it into the essay somehow. If any sources do *not* support your thesis, you should still try to use them. Your essay may be more convincing if you qualify your thesis so as to account for these other sources.

- **Linking ideas explicitly**

After your introduction, your internal paragraphs should make your argument in a logical or clear way. Each paragraph should be built around one key supporting idea and details that back up that idea. Use transition phrase such as “before,” “next,” “then,” or “on the one hand . . . , but on the other hand” to help readers follow the thread of your argument.

- **Wrapping it up**

Don’t add new details about sources in your final paragraph. State a conclusion that refers back to your thesis statement by showing how the evidence has backed it up. If possible, look for nice turns of phrase to end on a dramatic note.

## A Structured Debate

**Small-group activity:** Using a version of the Structured Academic Controversy model, debate alternate interpretations of this lesson's topic. The goal of this method is not so much to win a debate as to learn to collaborate in clarifying your interpretations to one another. In doing this, your goal should be to see that it is possibly for reasonable people to hold differing views, even when finding the "one right answer" is not possible.

Use all their notes from previous activities in this lesson. Here are the rules for this debate.

1. Organize a team of four or six students. Choose a debate topic based on the lesson *1989: What Kind of Turning Point for the World?*.

(You may wish to use one of the DBQs suggested for the "Document-Based Questions" activity for this lesson. Or you may want to define the debate topic in a different way.)

2. Split your team into two subgroups. Each subgroup should study the materials for this lesson and rehearse its case. One subgroup then present its case to the other. That other subgroup must repeat the case back to the first subgroup's satisfaction.
3. Then the two subgroups switch roles and repeat step 2.
4. Your team either reaches a consensus which it explains to the entire class, or it explains where the key differences between the subgroups lie.

# Answers to “Source Analysis” Activities

## Source Analysis: Document 1

*Contextualizing:* The change was the Bolshevik Revolution, which brought to Russia the world’s first communist government.

*Interpreting meanings:* Proletarians are wage-earning workers who do not own the means of production they must use. Answers will vary regarding the poster and should be discussed.

Answers will vary on this, but students should note the realistic way the human figures are drawn, yet all with somewhat unrealistic expressions and postures, all meant to convey a heroic attitude, etc.

## Source Analysis: Document 2

*Contextualizing:* Nicolae Ceausescu was a brutal dictator whose state was among the most oppressive of the Soviet-controlled Eastern European regimes. He and his wife were executed in December 1989.

*Interpreting meanings:* To make sure they could know who all potentially dissident writers were.

To be able to trace any writing they did not approve of to the very typewriter it was written on.

Answers will vary, but clearly there was very little room to do anything that could truly be trusted to be completely private.

## Source Analysis: Document 3

*Contextualizing:* The democratic and capitalist nations fighting Germany moved in from the west as the Soviet Union fought from the east. By the time the two sides stopped, Europe was split, under the control of two very different social systems.

*Interpreting meanings:* Under “mutual assured destruction,” the sheer number of weapons held by either side made it easier to “assure” the destruction of the other and thereby deter any attack.

Answers to this last question will vary and should be discussed.

## Source Analysis: Document 4

*Contextualizing:* The Prague Spring of 1968 was an effort by reformers within the Czech communist government to ease the harshness of the system. Popular support for reform was strong in Czechoslovakia, but the Soviets took military action and crushed the reform movement.

*Interpreting meanings:* People were forced to express enthusiasm for the official communist view on events just to survive, keep their jobs, places in schools, etc. To do this, they had to deny their own true feelings and views about many things.

Havel’s view was that in fact communism forced people to retreat into whatever private life they could have and not get involved in anything public or civic.

*Corroborating sources:* Answers will vary and should be discussed.

## Source Analysis: Document 5

*Contextualizing:* Detente was a time of easing of tensions with the Soviets, during which arms control treaties and other agreements were worked on. Reagan’s tone would have been seen as undermining at least the spirit of detente.

New Soviet missile deployments in Europe, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980, etc.

*Interpreting meanings:* Answers will vary and should be discussed.

Again, answers will vary and should be discussed. Reagan did in fact work out arms reduction agreements later with the new Soviet leadership after 1985.

### Source Analysis: Document 6

*Contextualizing:* Mikhail Gorbachev

These regimes were never popular, and without Soviet force backing them up they would have been very uncertain of their ability to control their own people.

*Interpreting meanings:* It created an empty zone in which it would be easy to shoot those trying to escape. Answers will vary and should be discussed.

### Source Analysis: Document 7

*Contextualizing:* A reformer, Mikhail Gorbachev, took over as the top Soviet leader in 1985. He announced a new approach, summed up by the words *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness); he reduced Soviet involvement with its satellite states in Eastern Europe; he began meeting with Reagan to discuss nuclear arms reductions, etc.

Answers will vary and should be discussed. Some may feel that troubles in Russia showed that Reagan's optimism was misplaced; others may feel it was still too early to tell.

*Interpreting meanings:* Choices will vary and should be shared and discussed.

Answers will vary here also, but some may see Reagan as consistent in his belief that the Soviet Union as it was had to change drastically (in 1983) and was indeed now changing drastically (1988).

### Source Analysis: Document 8

*Interpreting meanings:* It is contradictory in that the major powers are less belligerent, but they have not solved many big problems that endanger peace in the world.

*Corroborating sources:* Answers here will vary and should be discussed.

*Contextualizing:* Some may feel that U.S. disagreement with China and with Russia is growing, but whether these differences are "irreconcilable" is debatable.

### Source Analysis: Document 9

*Contextualizing:* Iraq invaded the smaller nation of Kuwait on its southern border. The U.S. led a coalition that forced the Iraqis out and restored Kuwait's independence. Some may disagree as to whether the way that conflict was resolved reflected something new or was simply a failure of diplomacy to prevent war to begin with.

*Interpreting meanings:* During the Cold War both the U.S. and the Soviets had a veto in the UN Security Council, making united action nearly impossible.

*Point of view:* Answers will vary, but some may feel it would be easy for the U.S., as the only remaining superpower, to view the post-Cold War era favorably.

### Source Analysis: Document 10

*Contextualizing:* The attack represented a marked escalation in the nature of terrorist attacks and forced the world to recognize a new reality in which non-state actors like Al-Qaeda could have a major impact on stability and order.

Answers will vary and should be discussed.

*Interpreting meanings:* Answers will vary and should be discussed.

## Evaluating Secondary Sources: Activity 1

**These are not definitive answers to the questions. They are suggested points to look for in student responses.**

1. How clearly does this account focus on a problem or question? What do you think that problem or question is? Sum it up in your own words here.

*Mead* in this passage from *God and Gold* is seeking to summarize the main point made by Francis Fukuyama in his book *The End of History and the Last Man*. In this book, Fukuyama tries to show how liberal democracy is the system likely to eventually triumph everywhere and bring fundamental historical change to a stop.

*Laqueur* in his brief article also sums up Fukuyama's thesis, but takes a different view of it from the one summarized by Mead—namely, that the end of the Cold War resulted in a universally “peaceful” world.

2. Does the secondary source take a position or express a point of view about the impact of the events of 1989? If so, briefly state that point of view or quote an example of it.

*Mead* summarizes Fukuyama by focusing on what Fukuyama sees as the unique strength of liberal democracy, its ability to satisfy people's longing for recognition and acceptance as equal and equally dignified. Fukuyama sees the collapse of the Soviet Union as the last contest between liberal democracy and all other possible systems. In this passage, Mead simply summarizes these views, which he deals with in greater depth later on in his book.

*Laqueur* sees Fukuyama's thesis as implying that, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, “serious, major conflicts between nations no longer existed.” *Laqueur* regards this as reflecting a brief moment of “euphoria” that could not last. In fact, in his view, the Cold War created a kind of bipolar stability that is now gone, making the world more dangerous and violent, not less, with more conflict over basic principles than before.

3. How well does the secondary source seem to base its case on primary source evidence? Take notes about any specific examples, if you can identify them.

Many of the sources for this unit do bear on Fukuyama's thesis and the two different views of it here. However, neither of these passages refers to specific sources, except that each of course does refer to Fukuyama's book itself.

4. Does the secondary source seem aware of alternative explanations or points of view about this topic? Underline points in the passage where you see this.

*Mead* refers specifically only to Fukuyama's views. *Laqueur* implies that Fukuyama's views were similar to those of many others immediately after the fall of communism in the Soviet Union. In a way, he is dealing with a broader range of views or a mood, than with the thesis of one man only.



