

# The Cold War & the 1950s

Decision Making in U.S. History

By Kevin O'Reilly



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*Decision Making in U.S. History*

**The Cold War & the 1950s**

By Kevin O'Reilly

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Printed in the United States of America.

ISBN: 978-1-56004-293-8

**Product Code: ZP346 v1.01**

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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My appreciation to the following for their help on this volume: Professor Nick Cullather for suggestions on Lesson 7; Dave Boschetto for suggestions on Lessons 2, 3, and 8; and Sean O'Reilly and Daniel Sargent for research and editing.

This book is dedicated to the History Department at Hamilton-Wenham: Ken, Vinnie, Lori, Ann, Kristen, Johann, Heather, Ron, Jim, and Vicki.

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# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

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Think of this book, and the other books in this series, not as a text, but as a menu. As a teacher, you select lessons from the menu. It was never intended that you would have everything on the menu—that would be overeating. [Take a look at the table of contents.] When choosing a lesson, look first at the problems on the student handout(s), and then at the student handout describing these problems’ historical outcomes. If you like what you see, take a look at the lesson plan for ideas on using the handouts. You can teach all of the lessons by giving students a problem handout, having them discuss what they would do, and finally distributing the outcomes handout. You may also consult the “Quick Motivator” section of a lesson plan to use the handouts as a short introduction to class.

On the other hand, you can think of this book as a “how-to” guide for teaching specific decision-making skills while also covering significant events in United States history. The book posits a general guideline of ten distinct skills, organized under the acronym **P-A-G-E** to help students remember these skills. Take a look at the explanation of **P-A-G-E** in the introduction to this book, under the section titled “Guide to Thoughtful Decision Making.” This section explains each of the ten skills and includes examples.

Every lesson in this series analyzes the historical topic in terms of **P-A-G-E**. Each lesson targets specific skills, letting the content and the actual decision in history determine the skills emphasized in the lesson. Take a look at the skills grid for each lesson on page 1 of this book. Handouts are frequently used to focus students on using specific skills. For example, many lessons include a list of questions designed to provoke more questions from students, as well as to give them ideas of the types of questions to ask. Other lessons give students a list of assumptions and ask which they assumed in making their decisions. The other skills have similar handouts.

Whether you try the problem-discussion-outcome approach or concentrate more on specific decision-making skills, I hope these books will help make you a more effective teacher and help your students learn United States history in a way that will help prepare them to make more thoughtful decisions as citizens.

Kevin O’Reilly

# INTRODUCTION

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## **RATIONALE: Hindsight Versus Foresight**

When we study history, it is all too easy to sit in judgment of those who came before us. We read it after the fact; we see it in hindsight. Given the benefit of such 20/20 hindsight, some historical figures seem to have been very misguided or downright silly in their decisions. Why didn't they anticipate the consequences of their choices? How could they have been so shortsighted? Sports enthusiasts call this sort of analysis "Monday morning quarterbacking."

However, it's not so easy to laugh at the follies of past decision makers if we are confronted with decisions in history before we learn the actual results. In such a situation, we find ourselves making some of the same mistakes that historical characters made, and we sometimes commit new errors they did not make. This method of studying history, which we might call "foresight history," is far more challenging—and engaging—than the traditional retroactive method to which we are inured.

In short, when we learn history by hindsight we risk becoming more arrogant and complacent. If, on the other hand, we learn history by *foresight*, by casting ourselves in the role of those historical figures and making decisions as they did—without knowing the outcome—we can learn humility and gain a great deal of empathy for them. Students in my classes constantly exclaim, "This is hard!" as opposed to, "This is boring!"

Foresight history also helps students improve key decision-making skills they will use again and again as citizens. Schools of law, medicine, business, and nursing, along with the military and many other institutions, use case-study methods, where students are forced to make decisions about a particular case and then analyze their thinking. If each of these varied disciplines values decision making so much, shouldn't we be training all our future citizens how to make good decisions?

History provides many benefits for those who study it. Historical knowledge can be liberating all by itself, letting us draw back the veil of ignorance and see the present with eyes enlightened by the past. The more knowledge of history we possess, the better we understand our societies and ourselves. Study and evaluation of primary sources, discussions of motives, debates about significance, analyzing causes and effects, and many other strategies are vital to history courses. The lessons here on decision making are meant to support and enhance these other methods of studying history, not replace them with a more "practical" type of history.

# OVERVIEW

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The lessons in *Decision Making in U. S. History* are to be used independently within a standard U.S. history course in middle school, high school, or college. Each book in this series comprises between eight and thirteen lessons. Each lesson includes the following:

1. Introduction: includes an overview of the topic, content vocabulary, and decision-making skills emphasized in the lesson.
2. Lesson plan: includes suggestions for how to use the handouts, how to focus on decision-making skills, how to connect the decision to the larger historical context, how to use video and other supplementary sources, and how to troubleshoot problems, should any arise.
3. Suggested answers: this section features teacher notes about outcomes (student versions of the outcomes are also provided—see number 6 below), references to historians’ interpretations of the topic, decision-making analysis, and suggestions for further research.
4. Sources: includes the specific sources used in the lesson.
5. Problem(s): reproducible handouts used by students to read and analyze the problem.
6. Historical outcome of the problem: what people in history actually did and the consequences thereof.
7. Primary sources and visuals (if any): these are integrated into the lesson itself and are not included merely as window dressing.

Each individual decision-making challenge is referred to as a “problem.” Some lessons have one problem to challenge students, while others contain numerous problems. The handouts for each lesson are reproducible; teachers can also decide to use only selected parts of the handouts, if so desired.

While decision making is the main point of the books, historical content is also very important. These lessons focus on real historical problems that convey powerful lessons about U.S. history. The problems involve important issues relevant both to America’s past and its present: taxation, foreign intervention, regulation of businesses and individuals, immigration, welfare, war, and so forth. In addition, not all of the problems come from the perspective of political leaders: many ask students to consider the perspectives of ordinary Americans such as workers, voters, farmers, African Americans, business owners, Native Americans, and women. Including problems from the perspectives of ordinary people prepares students for their roles as citizens in a democracy and encourages empathy for unfamiliar groups.

Most of the problems are brief—some as short as one paragraph—and can be used as class warm-ups lasting no more than ten minutes. Even with the shorter problems, however, the outcomes can often be quite complex, running on for several pages. The problems may appear deceptively simple, but analyzing them can be complicated. You

can best judge how much analysis to include for each problem, and for how long to run each problem and discussion.

On the other hand, some problems are more complicated. These problems deal with crucial turning points in the nation's history. Students will almost certainly need more background information before making decisions, and analysis of these problems could take several class periods. These more involved problems could form the organization for an entire unit of study. For example, in my classes the problem on the New Deal provides me with the bulk of the time and activities on my unit concerning the New Deal. Students learn about the basic New Deal programs, including their advantages and disadvantages, while simultaneously working to improve their decision-making skills.

## DECISION MAKING

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### **What is Decision Making?**

As explained in Student Handout 1, decision making involves making a choice when there is no clearly correct answer. Students can derive important lessons about decision making from encountering “messy” problems like these. Even where outcomes do not show a particular choice to be clearly right or wrong, students will still be surprised by some aspects of the outcomes and thereby gain insight into decision making.

### **Decision Making as Experience**

As argued in Student Handout 1, the most powerful way to teach good decision making is through experience. People learn to make good decisions just by making decisions, period. Bad decisions are more instructive, perhaps, in making us more skeptical decision makers, but that isn't stressed in Student Handout 1. Examples from the teaching profession illustrate this negative-reinforcement aspect of decision making. Teachers who just put students into groups without giving specific directions quickly learn not to do it again. Lessons that don't work well are dropped or modified the next time around. Good teaching is basically good decision making, and good decision making is shaped rapidly by previous decisions.

Ordinary people, including students, have an optimistic tendency simply to assume their decisions will result in positive outcomes, rather than making an estimate of the probabilities of certain outcomes. Decision-making experts, on the other hand, have a much more realistic view of these probabilities, due in part to their greater experience with the types of problem with which they often deal. Experience teaches us to be more realistic about outcomes.

Just encountering the problems and outcomes in these books, therefore, can help students improve their decision-making skills in general.

### **Targeting Decision-Making Skills**

As mentioned in Student Handout 1, these books go beyond just decision-making problems and their outcomes. They also provide teachers with a decision-making model and strategies for teaching the skills involved in decision making. Students learn a simple model that provides basic guidelines for making decisions. This model goes by the acronym **P-A-G-E** (as explained below and in Student Handouts 2 and 3), and it gives support and guidance for student decisions, allows for communication built around specific skills and a common vocabulary, and provides specific criteria for teachers to evaluate student progress on those skills.

It's crucial for the teacher to act as a coach and guide students as they encounter the decision-making problems, in what Reuven Feuerstein refers to as "mediated learning." The teacher's guidance and questions can help students make sense of what they are thinking when they make decisions about historical situations.

The debate among researchers about the relative power of experience versus instruction on decision making is not crucial to these books. Rather, the problems and lessons in these books allow teachers to combine experience and instruction in the form of mediated learning (coaching).

### **Repetition in Order to Master Skills**

These books are based on the hypothesis that several repetitions of decision-making problems and outcomes help improve decision making. That is, a person who has tried 50 problems will most likely have improved his/her decision-making skills more than a person who has tried only ten problems, simply because he or she has had more experience making decisions. There are many problems included in these books, and teachers are encouraged to use them regularly (once or twice per week, perhaps) as warm-ups to start classes or units. It isn't expected, however, that teachers will necessarily use all the problems.

Having experience with a large number of problems also provides students with more historical analogies upon which they can draw. It is striking how often decision makers base their thinking on an analogy (usually a recent one) in looking for ideas to help decide a problem. Having a broader range of analogies allows students to be more skeptical of any analogy suggested, since students are more likely to think of different analogies than the ones offered.

Though many experiences with decision making will help, it is essential that teachers coach students (mediated learning) and have time to reflect on their thinking during decision-making problems. Metacognition (thinking about our own thinking) is vital for improving thinking skills, according to numerous writers. Teachers should therefore allow "postmortem" time after each experience for students to reflect on their thinking, either verbally or in writing (see the section on evaluation for ideas). Teachers are also encouraged to use some of the lessons for lengthier (1–3 class periods), more in-depth analysis of student thinking and the historical topics involved; perhaps two or three lessons could be used for in-depth analysis per semester.

## Individual Choice Versus Historical Context

Research indicates that students generally view the role of individual choices as critical to historical events (for example, viewing Rosa Parks as an important catalyst for the civil rights movement), while professional historians stress the importance of underlying forces (for example, African Americans fighting in World War II, the Cold War, etc. as important causes of the civil rights movement). Students often miss the significance of these underlying forces and do not always recognize the extent to which historical context has constrained the actions of people in the past.

By focusing on decisions by individuals and by groups, the books in this series may seem to perpetuate an overemphasis on the individual vs. historical forces. However, the lessons in these books help students see more historical context, not less. In order to make good decisions, students need to learn a great deal of historical context. All lessons in this book require students to ask questions about context. Each lesson includes a short outcome and a question about why students think that option was tried (e.g., “The Congress rejected the 1790 petition to end slavery. Why do you think it was rejected? Which historical forces at the time led to this outcome?”). Each problem also asks students to think about the historical forces that made it difficult for the individual to make a good decision. In addition, many problems include multiple points of view, which enrich student understanding of context. Finally, students discuss the ways in which the actual historic decision was similar to or different from the decision they made; this emphasizes the role of context in shaping individual choices.

## STRATEGIES

The basic format of the lessons, as explained in the overview, is problem, decision, outcome, discussion. However, many of the subskills of decision making are difficult for students to master. In order to assist students, many lessons put these subskills in a sort of multiple-choice format. For example, to improve the “asking for more information” skill, some lessons include a list of questions from which students can select the ones they wish to ask. To improve “identifying underlying problems,” some lessons list possible underlying problems. To improve “considering other points of view,” some lessons include handouts that put students into different roles (for example, not just looking at labor strike problems from the point of view of the workers, but from the point of view of the owners as well).

## GOALS

The books in this series have four main goals:

### 1. **Make history more interesting:**

Simply giving students the problems, having them make decisions, and then telling them what the people involved actually did will keep student interest high. It’s exciting to make decisions before you know what the historical figures

actually did. It's dynamic, open-ended learning. Students enjoy comparing their decisions to those of their classmates and to the decisions actually made by the historical figures. Even if you decide to use the lessons without giving instruction on how to perform the skills involved in decision making, students will still enjoy learning history this way.

This increased interest should also lead to increased reading comprehension. After all, when students read their texts they will actively search for what actually happened and will want to compare it with what they chose.

## **2. Improve decision making through experience:**

The primary way people learn to make better decisions is through the process of making decisions, both good and bad. Students therefore become more sophisticated decision makers with every choice they make. By giving students many chances to make decisions where they can learn from mistakes and surprises, we can speed up the process of making them savvy decision makers. For example, students who decide to have a foreign government overthrown and see many negative consequences will think twice before trying that again, and will be skeptical of such a plan if proposed in the present day. Experience itself becomes the teacher.

## **3. More complex ethical thinking:**

Ethical questions will arise regularly, and by discussing their positions students will develop more complex ethical arguments and understandings. Please note, however, that these lessons are not aimed primarily at ethical reasoning. Teachers who want to focus primarily on this should consult *Reasoning with Democratic Values* (2 volumes; by Alan Lockwood and David Harris, New York: Teacher's College Press, 1985).

## **4. Improve the use of decision-making skills and reflection on those skills:**

As much as students can improve their decision making through experience, they will develop it that much more if they learn specific subskills, which can then become guidelines for thinking through decision-making problems more carefully. The instruction in these books is based on the skills of the **P-A-G-E** model. The specific elements of **P-A-G-E** are described in the section "Guide to Better Decision Making," and the strategies for teaching those skills are explained below in the section "Teaching Specific Decision-Making Skills."

One of the teaching strategies emphasizes journal writing, in which students reflect on the problems they encounter, including how they could improve their own decision making. If teachers can get them to reflect on how to improve upon decisions they've just made, students will learn to be more reflective in general.

Ideally, we want to train future citizens to approach decision-making problems by asking insightful questions, carefully probing for underlying problems, seeing a problem from a variety of perspectives, setting clear and realistic goals, and imagining consequences.

## EXPLANATION OF P-A-G-E FOR TEACHERS

(See Student Handouts 1–3)

Good decision making involves a number of subskills. The more students can use the subskills, the more complex their thinking will be when they make decisions. In order to help students recall the subskills involved in decision making, these books offer a simple acronym—**P-A-G-E**. The acronym is only meant to help students recollect the subskills rather than provide an actual formula for making decisions; decision-making problems are too complex and varied for step-by-step formulas. For instance, in one problem, students will need to focus on envisioning unintended consequences, while in another, historical context will be more important. Research indicates that expert decision makers don't follow step-by-step models. The **P-A-G-E** acronym consists of guidelines only, not specific steps or points that must be followed.

## PROBLEM

Student Handout 3, “P-A-G-E Explanations and Examples,” discusses the specific parts of **P-A-G-E**. The first section focuses on analyzing the problem, explaining what some experts call “framing.” Framing seems to have a variety of meanings for different people. The handout emphasizes finding the underlying problem in an attempt to keep things simple for students. It also asks, “What’s really going on here?” in order to help students uncover underlying problems.

According to Gary Klein, experts (people with a great deal of experience in a particular field, such as nursing, firefighting, or chess) “recognize” particular problems as being of one type or another. Once they make this recognition (i.e., once they frame it or represent it a particular way), experts can make very quick and successful decisions—that’s why they’re experts! In making these recognitions, experts draw upon analogies they’ve learned through experience. Thus, the section of the handout that discusses framing is related to the section on analogies. Experiments with expert chess players have shown that recognition is extremely important. When pieces were placed on a board in completely random fashion, experts could remember the placement no better than novices. But when the pieces were arranged in a way similar to placements in a game, experts could remember the placements with a single glance and project ahead several possible moves.

How students see or frame a problem depends partly on how the problem is worded. To help students become more aware of wording, some problems are phrased in two different ways: for example, half the class could get the problem worded using positive language, while the other half gets it worded with negative language. After students make their decisions, the class can discuss the effects of different wording on their decisions. Was it a big factor?

Political Scientist James Voss believes that the way people perceive problems in foreign policy acts as a key variable in the decisions they make. He believes that problem representation (which is similar to framing) constrains what we do thereafter. For example, if we see a problem as a case of communist aggression, we will make different choices than if we see it as a typical boundary dispute between neighboring countries. Questions included with some problems help students become more attuned to problem representation.

The section on assumptions is greatly simplified compared to the literature on assumptions, which delineates several different types of assumptions (presuppositions, working assumptions, etc.). The primary method used in these books to teach students to recognize their own assumptions is by asking them to identify which of a specific menu of assumptions they made. When they see a list of possible assumptions, they can better recognize which ones they've made. This strategy seems more effective than having students read a lengthy explanation on types of assumptions.

## **ASK FOR INFORMATION**

Asking questions is crucial in good decision making. The more people know about background sources and context, the better they will understand the real problem.

The “Guide to Thoughtful Decision Making” also emphasizes asking questions about analogies (“How is the historical case different from this decision-making problem?”), but you should also encourage students to think of historical analogies in the first place. Students will often think about a problem in terms of a personal analogy: for example, “I don’t like it when people criticize me, so it’s wrong for a country to make a harsh speech against another country.” Probing for personal or historical analogies, teachers should ask students where they got their ideas about what is really going on in a problem.

## **GOALS**

The section on goals includes setting clear, realistic goals and generating numerous options for accomplishing those goals. Questions about ethicality have also been included in this section, since ethics are related to setting goals.

## **EFFECTS**

The section on effects/consequences includes both long-term, unintended consequences and short-term possibilities of what could go wrong. Gary Kline argues that the ability to run mental simulations—that is, to envision what could go wrong and to imagine positive and negative consequences—is a vital skill in decision making. Every decision-making problem in this series emphasizes unintended consequences and things that could go wrong.

## EVALUATING STUDENTS

There are numerous ways to evaluate student progress in both content and decision-making skills. Here are a few examples:

- Quiz students on the vocabulary included in the relevant lesson(s)
- Have each student keep a decision-making log, as outlined in Student Handout 3. It's a good idea to copy the handout onto colored paper: you can then tell students after analyzing the outcome of a problem to turn to their green (for example) decision-making log sheet and record their thoughts. The right column requires students to reflect on their thinking.
- Have students keep a journal in which they comment on:
  - the decision actually made in history
  - what the actual decision makers did well or poorly
  - historical constraints on the decision makers
  - what the outcome of the decision reveals about that time period
  - the decision made by the student and what he/she did well or poorly
  - the "lessons" of this decision-making problem
- Have students write a "history" of an event after the class has participated in a decision-making problem on that event and has discussed the outcome. I've required students to include at least two elements of **P-A-G-E** in their historical analysis.
- As a test question, have students make a decision about a problem you haven't used in class. Give them the problem and instruct them to make a decision and explain their thinking according to **P-A-G-E**. You have criteria in the suggested answers for grading their work.

# EVALUATION TIPS FOR STUDENT HANDOUT 5

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Have students complete Student Handout 5, in which they must evaluate a sample historical decision. Below are eight elements of **P-A-G-E** to consider when grading student responses to this question. Students need only address four out of the eight, and they only need to suggest ideas for the ones they do address. For example, give full credit to students who suggest any possible underlying problem or ask any reasonable question. Students could follow up with more research, starting with “The Legacy of the Housing Act of 1949” (*Housing Policy Debate*. Vol. 11, Issue 2. Fannie Mae Foundation, 2000; available at

[http://www.knowledgeplex.org/kp/text\\_document\\_summary/scholarly\\_article/relfiles/hpd\\_1102\\_edintro.pdf](http://www.knowledgeplex.org/kp/text_document_summary/scholarly_article/relfiles/hpd_1102_edintro.pdf)).

- **Underlying problem:** Truman might not have considered the underlying reason for the housing shortage. For example, if he thought increased demand (because of returning veterans and an improving economy) had caused the problem, the best solution might have been to let the price of housing rise. Builders would then respond by constructing more houses in order to meet the higher demand.
- **Point of view:** Did Truman see the problem from the point of view of taxpayers and renters? Taxpayer money would pay for this program, which could draw funding away from other government programs. Also, taxes would most likely increase, meaning that taxpayers would have less money of their own to spend and invest in other areas of the economy. Truman probably did not consider the perspective of people who would be evicted when the slums were cleared for new construction. Also, he likely assumed that people would want to live in large high-rise buildings.
- **Ask about context:** Students should ask at least one context-related question. Possibilities: Has the government built housing in the past? If so, have such ventures worked out well? Tell students that at that time the federal government had not previously run such a program.
- **Ask about analogies:** Students may come to the conclusion that the postal service analogy is flawed, since running public housing differs greatly from running the postal service. Public housing agency officials would have to maintain the buildings as well as deal with the complex social problems that often arise in public housing projects. Also, the postal service at that time did not compete with private mail-delivery services, whereas public housing would have to compete against the private housing market. Moreover, the postal service had a reputation for inefficiency, so that analogy might not have inspired confidence in the American people for the Housing Act.
- **Goals:** If students determine that Truman’s main goal was to make enough housing available in the short term, then the program seems like a good idea. However, later studies showed that the government demolished more housing units in the act of clearing low-income areas than it built. Many of the units torn down were replaced by office buildings, parks, or parking lots. Thus, if Truman’s

goal was to increase the supply of high-quality housing, then the program was questionable.

- **Options:** No evidence exists that Truman considered other options. One alternative would have been to provide subsidies to renters or tax credits to home buyers. Under a rent subsidy, the government would pay part of the monthly rent; a tax credit would give back a fixed amount (say, \$500) to home buyers from their income taxes paid (interest deductions on mortgages were already in place). Several economists feel that rent subsidies work much better than public housing because they increase demand, and the market then adjusts to meet that demand. It appears that Truman focused on increasing supply, not demand.
- **Play out the option:** Playing out the option reveals a number of possible problems: Is the government good at running housing on a long-term basis? (No. It has no experience in this area, so it would have to hire and train people. Critics claim that salaried government employees wouldn't have as much incentive to solve problems as someone who ran the housing as a profit-driven business.) Is there any guarantee that the necessary funding would continue over the long term? (No. An economic downturn or a change in the political climate could mean that in a couple of years there might not be sufficient funding to run the housing properly.) Low-bid contractors have a strong incentive to use cheap materials so that they can reap more profit; thus, significant maintenance problems might arise. Moreover, corruption could occur: government officials and contractors might work out deals to pocket some of the money from these large contracts.
- **Unintended consequences:** Truman should have considered possible long-term consequences of government housing. Here are some problems that have afflicted public housing over the years:
  - Poor maintenance resulted in public housing projects becoming run-down
  - The government only built public housing projects in the poorest parts of cities, and the buildings attracted only low-income renters, since only the poor qualified for public housing. The projects soon became plagued by problems such as drugs and gangs that perpetually afflict low-income urban areas.
  - The quality of life at some public housing projects became so bad that cities eventually ended up tearing many of them down. For example, the nearly 3000-unit Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis was demolished over the course of 1972–1973.

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# GUIDE TO THOUGHTFUL DECISION MAKING

## Student Handout 1

### Welcome to “Foresight” History!

The problems in the *Decision Making in U. S. History* series will challenge you to make choices about events in United States history before you know what actually happened in those events. This is learning history in a foresighted way—first you decide, then you find out what really happened—rather than as hindsight history, where you just find out what happened. You will get at least two benefits from this method of learning history: First, you will improve your decision-making skills. Someday, when you avoid buying a “lemon” used car that would have wasted thousands of dollars, you can thank your history teacher for helping you build up your decision-making skills. Second, it’s fun to learn history as though it’s a cliffhanger mystery, where you’re eager to find out if your decision worked or ended in disaster. But don’t forget to concentrate on the actual historical decision that was made and how it turned out. You can learn a lot about your own decision making through these problems, but you’re mainly in class to learn history and to understand what really happened, not what could have happened.

### What is Decision Making?

You’ve learned about problem solving in other courses such as math and science, and you’ve encountered problem solving when you’ve tried to build something or fix something. Decision making resembles problem solving in some ways (for example, it involves defining a problem and thinking of alternatives), but it’s different from problem solving in that there is no one right answer. The lessons in this book involve “messy” problems: even long after the event, people often disagree about what the best decision was or should have been.

### Decision Making as Experience

Experience teaches you how to make good decisions. Every decision that you make—whether good or bad—better equips you to make good decisions in the future. For example, you would probably feel safer being treated by a doctor who had a lot of experience than by a brand new doctor. The historical problems your teacher gives you will provide you with experience in making decisions in general, and will help you become a better decision maker in your role as a citizen. You won’t just have learned about history, you will have experienced it! For some of these lessons, you will feel that you made good decisions; for others, you may feel that you’ve made errors in judgment. As you go along, try to reflect on your experiences as well as on your thinking about decision making.

## **P-A-G-E Guide to Decision Making**

While experience is the most important way to learn to make better decisions, it's also helpful to learn some basic decision-making skills so that you know what areas to target in order to improve your overall decision making. Handout 2 contains an acronym, **P-A-G-E**, that provides you with guidelines for making better decisions. These aren't rules you have to follow; they are just meant as helpful tips you can use to improve your thinking about decision making.

Handout 3 explains and gives examples for each part of the **P-A-G-E** guide to decision making. Keep it in your notebook for reference as you make decisions about situations in U.S. history. Every single **P-A-G-E** guideline will not necessarily apply to each decision-making problem you encounter. You (with the assistance of your teacher) will have to determine which guidelines will work best with which problems.

# P-A-G-E ANALYSIS FOR DECISION MAKING

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## Student Handout 2

<b>Decision-Making Analysis</b>
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**P=Problem:**

- Identify any **underlying problem**: What's really going on here?
- Consider **other points of view**: How do others see this situation?
- What are my **assumptions**? **Emotions**?

**A=Ask for information (about):**

- **Historical context**: What is the history and context of this issue?
- **Reliability of sources**: Does my information come from experts on this topic? Do the sources have a reason to lie? Is the information supported by evidence?
- **Historical analogies**: What has been done in the past about situations like this? In what ways do these other situations differ from this situation?

**G=Goals:**

- What are my main **goals**? Are they **realistic**?
- Generate **options** to help achieve these goals. Are they **ethical**?

**E=Effects:**

- Predict **unintended consequences**. What are some long-term effects?
- **Play out the options**. What could go wrong?

# P-A-G-E EXPLANATIONS AND EXAMPLES

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## Student Handout 3

<b>PROBLEM</b>
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### **Underlying problem:**

Sometimes a decision-making situation will seem very difficult until you recognize that an underlying problem exists. For example, suppose two people come in for marriage counseling because they have been arguing a lot about money. The counselor is going to look for an underlying problem (such as unfulfilled needs) that might have led to spending more money. A student doing poorly in school might turn things around by discovering she needs glasses—the underlying problem. Please remember that you should not just repeat or rephrase the problem: instead, you need to look for what's behind it, for what's causing it. Underlying problems are not openly given as part of the decision-making situation—you have to figure them out on your own.

Another way to think of this skill is “the ability to see what is really going on.” Some people call this “framing” the problem: in other words, by putting a “frame” around the heart of the problem and excluding unimportant parts, you discover what's really important. You need to call on your own personal experiences in order to see what's really significant. In history, you do this by making analogies. In a sense, you need to say, “The problem we are facing now is like a problem people faced before [this is an analogy], so I'd better do *this*.” The way you see (or frame, or represent) a problem influences the decision you eventually make.

### Example:

*Bob's grades have been much lower for the last three months in history class. He says he's bored in class, and that he'll improve his grades when he really needs to.*

List at least two possible underlying problems for Bob's lower grades. What's really causing his problems?

### **Other points of view:**

Other people are always involved in decisions in history. We need to consider their points of view as we make decisions about history, just as we need to consider other points of view in our own lives today.

Example:

*My brother Mark is angry with me for borrowing his car three times. But he's wrong to be angry. I needed to get to work each time I borrowed the car.*

Rewrite this problem from Mark's point of view.

*What are my assumptions? Emotions?*

Sometimes after we make a decision, we realize that we had made an assumption that we didn't even know we were making until it was too late.

Emotions are part of being human, so they represent a legitimate part of the decision-making process. We do, however, need to be aware of our emotions during the decision-making process. Emotions, especially frustration and anger, can sometimes lead us to make irrational choices. People frequently become frustrated and say, "I've had enough of this situation. Let's just do something!" But they often come to regret the rushed choices they made under such circumstances. They would have benefited from saying to themselves, "Okay. I'm getting frustrated, but I still need to take the time necessary to make a good decision."

Studies have shown that when people feel pessimistic or are in a bad mood, they exaggerate the possible negative consequences of decisions; similarly, when they feel optimistic or are in a good mood, they overestimate positive consequences.

Emotions and gut feelings are unavoidable and natural, but thinking the situation through is crucial to making good decisions. We wouldn't want the President to decide about nuclear missiles in Cuba based solely on his gut feeling—we'd want him to gather information, consider several options, predict the possible consequences for millions of people, and so forth. As decision makers, we need to account for the role of emotion and gut feelings in our decisions and be aware of them as we choose.

Example for assumptions:

*Player to teammate: "We'll have no trouble beating Central. After all, Central lost to Suburban, and we beat Suburban the first game of the year."*

What is this player assuming?

Example for emotions:

*Suppose you have two children and are trying to decide whether to buy life insurance. An insurance ad shows a boy who can't go to college because his father died and had no life insurance.*

To what emotion does the ad appeal?

## ASK

### **Ask about historical context (history of the issue; context in the world):**

Asking questions about both the historical background and the present context of a problem are both essential for getting the information necessary to make a good decision. If you don't know the background, you will have difficulty deciding on the best solution. Every problem has a backstory, and we need to find out what that story is. The key is to ask questions that will help you obtain the necessary information.

#### Example:

*You are 17 years old, and you have been thinking about buying a car. You work part time after school, about ten hours per week. Your parents have told you that you'll have to pay for the car yourself. You go to a used car dealership and the salesman shows you a used car that costs \$2000.*

What questions should you ask before you buy it?

### **Ask about reliability of sources:**

Information is crucial to making good decisions, but we need know what the sources of our information are and consider the reliability of those sources. Basing a decision on bad information from questionable sources is a recipe for disaster. You can evaluate sources by asking if the person giving the information has a reason to lie, if the person is a primary source, if other sources support this information, if the person is an expert on the topic, what the person's bias is on the topic, or if the person has been reliable in the past.

You should always be probing for disagreements among sources. Be wary if no disagreements seem to exist. It might mean your advisers are engaging in "groupthink," where they all get pulled to the same option without thoroughly thinking through other options or considering what could go wrong. Always try to find people who disagree with a proposed option. If you can't find one, ask tough questions yourself.

#### Example:

*The car salesman says this used car is in perfect condition.*

How reliable is the salesman? What reasons might you have to distrust him?

### **Ask about historical analogies:**

It's natural to compare the problems we encounter to other, similar situations that have occurred in the past. In fact, one reason we study history in the first place is to build a deeper understanding of our world today through learning about historical events/analogies. You should try to think of analogies to the problems you encounter. As mentioned above in the section on underlying problems, you derive your understanding of what is important in a problem (framing) from analogies. (Example: "This problem is

like that situation George Washington was in at Trenton during the American Revolution.”) The more you draw on your knowledge of history, the more likely you are to fully understand a decision-making problem.

However, analogies are tricky because important differences often exist between the problems we encounter now and the historical cases we use to guide our decisions. We should always evaluate analogies by asking, “How do the two cases differ? In what ways are they similar? Are they similar enough to justify the conclusion?” We should also consider whether other, more appropriate analogies exist that could provide us with better guidance.

Example:

*Suppose you drove in a race at a parking lot near a mall a month ago. You raced your five-year old Toyota Corolla, and your time was 36.8 seconds. Margaret told you that she drove in a race last Sunday and her time was 28.2 seconds. She says this proves she is a better race driver than you are.*

What are two questions you could ask to determine whether Margaret is really a better driver?

## GOALS

### **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**

We can’t make good decisions if we are unclear about our goals. Once we establish goals, we can more easily set priorities and use them as a basis for choosing between options.

However, establishing goals isn’t enough. The goals we set need to be realistic. Some decisions in history have been catastrophic because the decision makers didn’t notice that they had unrealistic goals. It didn’t matter how carefully they exercised their other decision-making skills—because their goals were unrealistic, they would never achieve them.

Example:

*You’re out of school and need a job, since you live on your own and have expenses (rent, car payments, food, heat, insurance, etc.). You’ve got two offers. The first one is close to where you live and pays a lot more money, but it’s doing work you wouldn’t like. The second job is farther away and pays less money (but enough to cover your expenses), but it’s doing something that you really like.*

What do you do? After you decide, list your goals and ask how realistic they are.

### **Generate options to help achieve my goals. Are they ethical?**

After you've made a decision, you don't want to be stuck thinking, "Oh, I wish I'd thought of that option before I decided!" At the same time, though, you don't want to become paralyzed trying to think of every possible option, no matter how remote. Nevertheless, important decisions should spur us to take the time to consider a number of options. We should also consider whether the options we come up with are ethical.

Example:

*You are 25 years old, single, work full-time ten miles from where you live, and drive your compact car to work. In recent months, gas prices have risen to very high levels. Your main goal at this point is to save money.*

What options do you have for coping with these price increases?

## EFFECTS

### **Predict unintended consequences:**

Most of the time, predicting unintended consequences will be more important than any other thinking you do about a problem. For some problems, it may be enough just to see the situation from other points of view or to ask questions about background or context. However, considering consequences will do more to help you avoid that awful feeling you get when you've made a bad decision.

Example:

*Suppose you are 35 years old and have a son and a daughter, ages five and two. The company you work for is asking you to move to a different state. You can refuse and take a pay cut.*

If you make the move, what unintended consequences might it have on you and your family in ten years? Guess at what the effects of the move might be.

### **Play out the option. What could go wrong?**

Here, you need to think about short-term effects, as opposed to predicting unintended consequences, which focuses more on long-term effects. For example, say you're playing the role of president and decide to get a law passed to help solve a problem. You have to take into account the fact that Congress has the constitutional power to pass laws, and thus to get your law enacted you need to convince Congress to approve it. By noticing that the approval of Congress is vital to the success or failure of your decision, you've identified something that could go wrong, and need to plan accordingly (overcoming opposition by talking to individual members of Congress, thinking of another option as backup, etc.).

Example:

*Suppose you are 30 years old and working at a job you like pretty well. You get an offer to work at a job for higher pay that is further away.*

If you take the job, what might happen? List two or more things that could go wrong.

# DECISION-MAKING LOG

# Student Handout 4

## What I learned about P.A.G.E. from this topic (2 examples)

## Why different/similar?

## My decision

## Actual decision

# Topic

# EVALUATING DECISION MAKING

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## Student Handout 5

It is 1949. In these first few years after World War II, America faces a housing shortage. Congress responded by passing the Housing Act, which President Truman signed into law. One part of the act states that the government will build and run over 800,000 units of public housing, to be paid for out of general tax revenues. The government plans to erect large apartment buildings in cities, though it will have to clear out slums in order to make room for the new buildings. Contracts for this construction will be awarded to the lowest bidders. Housing agencies staffed by government workers will run the buildings. Since the government already operates some public services (such as the postal service), it can likely administer and oversee public housing capably.

According to **P-A-G-E**, evaluate the factors President Truman would have taken into account in deciding whether to enact the Housing Act.

**P:**

**A:**

**G:**

**E:**

# THE COLD WAR & THE 1950s

## Introduction

### OVERVIEW

This volume on postwar America consists of eight lessons: five focus on foreign policy, and three on domestic matters. Since the start of the Cold War dominated this period, this book deals with it extensively. As with the other volumes in the *Decision Making in U.S. History* series, this book does not attempt to cover all the major topics from this time period. Rather, lessons were constructed around interesting decision-making problems.

### SKILLS GRID FOR THIS VOLUME

X = part of lesson

E = emphasized in the lesson

Skill	Lesson							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Underlying problem	X	X			E	X		X
Point of view	E			X	X	E		E
Assumptions/emotions		E						
Ask—context	E	X		E	X	X	X	X
Ask—sources					X	X		
Ask—analogies	X			X		X		
Goals? Realistic?		X	E	X	X	X	X	E
Options. Ethical?		X						E
Unintended consequences	X	E		X	E	X	E	
Play out option	X	X		X		X	X	X

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

The Yalta Conference marked a pivotal moment in both U.S. and world history. The focus shifted from the battlefields of World War II to the negotiations and hostilities that would come to characterize the Cold War. This lesson asks students to make decisions on four issues: the future of eastern Europe, the division of Germany, the establishment of the United Nations, and the end of the war with Japan.

These questions actually came up over the course of three separate conferences: the Tehran Conference, the Yalta Conference, and the Potsdam Conference. For the sake of simplicity, this lesson condenses the issues and concentrates on the best known of the three conferences—Yalta.

### VOCABULARY

- Yalta—Conference in 1945 between the U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union
- Joseph Stalin—Dictatorial leader of the Soviet Union
- Franklin Roosevelt—President of the U.S. during the Depression and World War II
- Winston Churchill—Prime Minister of Britain in the late 1930s and early 1940s
- Lublin Poles—Communist leaders in Poland put into power by the Soviet Union
- London Poles—Polish leaders in exile in London who wanted to return to Poland and promote a democratic, capitalist society
- Reparations—Payments by one country for damages caused to another in the act of war
- United Nations—International organization that aims to settle disputes and prevent wars
- Veto—The power of one political group or individual to cancel the decision of another. In the U.N. Security Council, proposals have to pass unanimously, so a single negative vote vetoes that proposal.
- Declaration of Liberated Europe—Pledge to allow free elections in countries liberated from the Nazis

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Identify underlying problem
- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context
- Ask about analogies
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one 40-minute class period)

### Procedure:

You do not need to use all the handouts in this lesson; simply select the ones that meet your content and skills objectives. Distribute Handout 1 and have students read the introduction silently. Next, have students meet in groups and decide what they will do for Problem 1 (regarding Poland). Bring the class back together. Have each group report on its decisions and explain its reasoning. After groups have reported and the class has discussed the various options, ask students to predict what happened. Discuss why students made the predictions they did. Read the outcomes about Poland from Handout 7, but don't distribute Handout 7 yet because it contains the outcomes of the other three problems. Follow the same procedure for Problems 2–4. When you have discussed all the questions, distribute Handout 7 so that students will have a record of what happened.

OPTIONAL: While students consider Problem 1, distribute Handout 4 in order to encourage them to ask questions about the debate over Poland. The directions on Handout 4 ask students to choose the two questions they think are most important (alternatively, you could have them ask one or three questions if you so desire). Have copies of Handout 5 cut into strips so that students can come to your desk and obtain answers only to the questions they chose. Alternatively, you could simply pass out Handout 5 as a background sheet.

OPTIONAL: After students have finished all four problems, use Handout 2 to give them the Soviet point of view. After you discuss this handout, ask students go back and see if they would change any of their decisions in light of this new information. Does seeing the problem from another point of view affect their decision-making process?

OPTIONAL: Use Handout 6 to explore situations that could be analogous to the Yalta Conference. The “Decision-Making Analysis” section for this lesson includes evaluations of the analogies.

OPTIONAL: Use Handout 8 to explore two of the actual Yalta agreements as primary sources. Students could compare their decisions to the actual decisions made by leaders at the time. Alternatively, for homework you could ask students to analyze the agreements based on what they learned from the lesson.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACH: Instead of asking students to read both Handout 1 and Handout 2, split the class into two groups—the U.S. side and the Soviet side. Ask the U.S. group to read Handout 1 and the Soviet group to read Handout 2. Next, use Handout 3 to have students role-play a negotiation between the two sides. What does each side want to achieve in the negotiation? What arguments will each side use to support its case? After the role play, distribute Handout 7 (which lists the outcomes) and ask

students which outcomes surprised them most. Who do students think got the better deal—the Soviet Union or the U.S. and Britain? Why? What did the Yalta Conference teach students about negotiating? How did students' decisions compare to what actually happened? Which decision-making skills did they use? Which ones do they wish they had used better?

#### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly important in making decisions about these issues? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the "Decision-Making Analysis" section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

#### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students: What caused the problems at Yalta—certain historical factors or the failings of individual leaders? Many historians criticize FDR and Churchill for being too lenient with Stalin and granting him too many concessions. Churchill himself stated that while his predecessor, Neville Chamberlain, had been mistaken to trust Hitler, he himself could trust Stalin to behave reasonably and carry out the terms of the agreements. FDR was ill during the Yalta Conference and died two months later; some have suggested that his illness undermined his negotiating skills. On the other hand, outside factors put FDR and Churchill at a disadvantage. Stalin's army controlled eastern Europe, and he firmly believed that whichever nation had military control over a given area should determine what happens in that area. Historian John Lewis Gaddis argues that regardless of the decisions made at Yalta, the Soviet Union still would have controlled eastern Europe at the end of the war and still would have imposed its will on the region. According to this view, FDR and Churchill did not have the power to force Stalin to allow democracy in Poland.

#### Connecting to Today:

In May 2005, on the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, President George W. Bush made a speech in Latvia in which he emphasized the need to protect smaller countries from aggression. In that speech, he criticized the Yalta agreement, saying, "The agreement at Yalta followed in the unjust tradition of Munich [which gave the Sudetenland to Germany] and the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact [the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939, which helped start World War II]. Once again, when powerful governments negotiated, the freedom of small nations was somehow expendable." Evaluate this statement. What might Bush have meant by this? What lessons can Yalta provide for today's world?

Troubleshooting:

Make sure that students don't confuse the Lublin Poles with the London Poles, since the two groups have similar-sounding names.

If students have trouble with the concept of a veto, give an example. For instance, students may vote unanimously to receive no homework, but you have the ability to veto them.

<b>B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–15 minutes)</b>
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Assign Handout 1 as homework. Have students focus only on Problem 1 (concerning Poland), and then only on Options 1–4. (You can set aside the remaining options, which concern the land dispute.) In class, have students pair up and discuss which of the four options they would choose. Ask for a show of hands for each option and briefly discuss students' reasoning. Distribute Handout 7 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes. You could extend the lesson further by including other issues as time permits (Germany, Japan, and then the UN.)

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handout 7)

Within days of the end of the war in Europe, the U.S. cut off Lend-Lease aid. The Soviet Union considered this a diplomatic snub. The U.S. also delayed giving loans to the Russians, contending that the Soviet Union had failed to honor its agreements regarding eastern Europe. Both of these actions increased tensions between the two countries.

Some historians believe that Stalin never really wanted to establish a “sphere of influence” in eastern Europe, since by definition that would imply a rival sphere of influence in western Europe for Britain and France. This would have limited Stalin’s ability to spread communism to western Europe.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- \* - **Identify any underlying problem**
- \* - **Consider other points of view**
  - What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
  - Reliability of sources
- \* - **Historical analogies**

### G = Goals

- What are my main goals? Are they realistic?
- Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?

### E = Effects

- \* - **Predict unintended consequences**
- \* - **Play out the options: what could go wrong?**

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

- **Identify underlying problems:** Students should consider the inherent ideological hostility between communism and capitalism. If the goal of the Soviets was to spread communism, then their true reason for occupying eastern Europe might not have been to establish a buffer as a defense against future attacks (as they claimed) but to further the spread of communism in Europe. The U.S., a staunch defender of capitalism, would obviously have opposed this goal. Students should understand how the U.S. and the Soviet Union, once united by a common goal (to

defeat Hitler), came to have divergent goals in the postwar period. The Soviet Union's military strength also posed another underlying problem for the U.S. Eastern Europe clearly lay inside the zone of Soviet control, and Stalin thus had little incentive to relinquish any of that control. Another underlying problem involved the lack of trust between the Soviet Union and the U.S. and Britain. This dated back to 1919, when the U.S. and Britain had sent troops to fight against the communists during the Russian Revolution. The fact that Stalin had signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939 (which included secret provisions for a division of eastern European countries between the two powers) did not inspire Western democracies' trust in Stalin. For his part, Stalin was a highly paranoid leader: distrust formed the foundation of many of his policies, and he probably wouldn't have trusted the other leaders regardless of their actions.

- **Point of view:** Handouts 2 and 3 help students see the Yalta Conference from the point of view of the Soviets as well as the Americans.
- **Ask about context:** Handouts 4 and 5 suggest questions students could ask and provide possible answers.
- **Analogies:** Handout 6 gives several possible analogies, some of which apply more than others. You can refer to the following guidelines when discussing the analogies with students.
  1. All three countries did indeed have “spheres of influence.” However, the Soviets seemed to want much greater control over eastern Europe than the U.S. had over Latin America or than Britain had over its empire. Some historians now believe that the U.S. and Britain exerted just as much control over their “spheres of influence” as the Soviets did, but managed to do it in more subtle ways.
  2. Many historians doubt that Stalin would have given the U.S. and Britain any say in eastern Europe even if they had consulted him about Italy. Also, many believe that the idea of making the amount of control that each side exerted equal was inherently flawed. Democracies like the U.S. and Britain allow opposition parties to exist. Countries under Soviet control, however, do not allow opposition.
  3. FDR did not want to repeat Wilson's mistakes—he knew that Congress would have the final say as to whether the U.S. would join the UN, so he made sure to take the opinions of Congress into account. However, he also had to make concessions to get the Soviets to join; many believe he made too many concessions.
  4. To evaluate this analogy, one must consider whether the Soviet republics (SSRs) were like U.S. states (which do not receive individual votes in the UN), like countries that composed the British Empire (such as Australia, which does have an individual vote), or something different entirely. The analogy to American states works better because states compose the U.S. just as SSRs composed the Soviet Union. However, students should realize that SSRs were not directly analogous to U.S. states: U.S. states have a voice in the federal government, whereas SSRs did not because the Soviet Union was not a democracy.

5. As the quote from George W. Bush in the “Connecting to Today” section indicates, this analogy still commonly comes up. However, there are differences: Hitler did not yet have control of the Sudetenland at the Munich Conference, so if the Allies had strongly refused his demand to control it, he would have been forced to invade. However, in this case the Soviets already controlled eastern Europe. The U.S. and Britain weren’t in a position to dispute Stalin’s claims over the region in the same way that Britain and France could have disputed Hitler’s claim to the Sudetenland.
  6. On the surface, this seems like a solution: the Soviet Union would permit the U.S. to control Japan and the U.S. would permit the Soviets to control eastern Europe. One problem, though, is that the Americans felt the Soviets had little claim to Japan and therefore no right to even consider having a say in its occupation: they entered the war against Japan literally days before the end and risked little. The U.S., on the other hand, would have had a legitimate claim on postwar Europe: American forces suffered casualties for years while fighting in Africa, Italy, France, and Germany.
- **Play out the option:** As students make their decisions (particularly for the role play from Handout 3), they should consider how the other side would react to their policies. How will they then respond if the other side reacts adversely? One of the problems with the Yalta agreements, as students should note, was that they did not include consequences for non-compliance. Disputes were to be discussed between the three countries, but no guidelines existed for what would happen if a country continued to refuse to uphold its obligations for instance, if the Soviets refused to hold free elections in Eastern Bloc countries).
  - **Consider consequences:** Handout 7 (which gives the outcomes) lists numerous consequences.

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# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

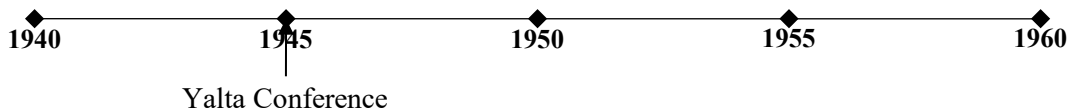
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## Vocabulary

- Yalta—Conference in 1945 between the U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union
- Joseph Stalin—Dictatorial leader of the Soviet Union
- Franklin Roosevelt—President of the U.S. during the Depression and World War II
- Winston Churchill—Prime Minister of Britain in the late 1930s and early 1940s
- Lublin Poles—Communist leaders in Poland put into power by the Soviet Union
- London Poles—Polish leaders in exile in London who wanted to return to Poland and promote a democratic, capitalist society
- Reparations—Payments by one country for damages caused to another in the act of war
- United Nations—International organization that aims to settle disputes and prevent wars
- Veto—The power of one political group or individual to cancel the decision of another. In the U.N. Security Council, proposals have to pass unanimously, so a single negative vote vetoes that proposal.
- Declaration of Liberated Europe—Pledge to allow free elections in countries liberated from the Nazis

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

## Student Handout 1: Problems



It is February 1945, and you are President Franklin D. Roosevelt. You have come to the Russian city of Yalta to meet with your allies, Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Britain and Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union. The war in Europe is rapidly coming to a close. The Soviets are marching towards Germany from the east through Poland and Hungary, while British and American forces close in on Germany from the west.

You have had successful meetings with Churchill and Stalin before; at those times, all three leaders shared a common goal—to defeat Germany.

Now with the defeat of Hitler's army all but certain, the three nations must plan for the postwar world. What will happen to lands seized by the Nazis? What will happen to Germany itself? Can the U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union do anything to ensure that a global conflict like this one never happens again? The U.S. and the Soviet Union have been allies during the war, but no one is confident that their cooperation will continue during peacetime. The Soviets are communist, and Stalin seems to want to promote the spread of communism. The U.S. and Britain are capitalist democracies, and they want to see similar governments established throughout Europe. It seems inevitable that these two goals will come into conflict.

You also know that you still need Stalin's powerful "Red Army" to defeat the Nazis. The U.S. also still has to wage a bloody and costly war in Asia against Japan, and you may need Stalin's help to defeat the Japanese as well. Some of your advisors estimate that if the U.S. ends up having to invade Japan, as many as one million U.S. troops could die. American scientists have secretly worked to develop an atomic bomb that might force the Japanese to surrender, but you don't know if it will be ready in time, or if it will actually work. Having the Soviets join the war in Asia might be the only way to defeat Japan without a catastrophic loss of American lives, so you cannot risk losing Stalin's support.



Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin at Yalta, February 1945

Below is a list of issues that you, Stalin, and Churchill will negotiate at the Yalta Conference. Read the description of each issue and decide which option or options you will choose. You can also make changes to these options or come up with ones of your own.

### PROBLEM 1—POLAND (AND EASTERN EUROPE)

During his aggressive campaign, Hitler seized control of most of Europe. As U.S. and British forces have pushed the Nazis back from the west, they have liberated much of western Europe. The Soviets, pushing in from the east, now occupy eastern Europe. The U.S. and Britain have no intention of occupying western European countries: for example, France can revert to its prewar government with little interference. However, the fate of eastern Europe remains less certain. The Germans attacked the Soviet Union by marching through eastern Europe, and Stalin has vowed never to let that happen again. He wants Soviet-friendly governments installed in the countries that lie between Germany and the Soviet Union. He also seems to want to spread communism, and since he has control over eastern Europe, he will likely promote communist governments there.

Poland is the largest and most populous of the eastern European nations whose fate is under debate. All three leaders have a great interest in Poland because what happens there will likely happen throughout the region. Winston Churchill has a particular interest in the country because when Poland's democratically elected leaders fled the Nazi invasion, they went to Britain. Known as the "London Poles," they have the complete support of the British government, which regards them as the legitimate leaders of the new Poland. Stalin, however, disagrees. He wants a Polish government that will favor the Soviets and help protect the Soviet Union from invasions. To this end, he has installed a communist puppet government (one controlled by another country), called the "Lublin Poles," to rule the country. The U.S. believes in self-determination—that is, the Polish people should have the right to choose their own leaders. The U.S. wants to see free elections in Poland and confidently believes that the Polish people will elect the London Poles and other democratic groups.



However, the U.S. doubts that Stalin will permit truly free elections: the Lublin Poles might rig the votes so that the communists win. You also feel pressure from within the U.S. to ensure Poland's democratic future: Polish American voters in key states want to make sure that the U.S. stands up for Poland and the Polish people.

Another issue involves whether any Polish land should actually become a part of the Soviet Union. The Soviets want to take territory from Poland up to the Curzon Line. Stalin claims that land rightfully belongs to the Soviet Union: he asserts that Poland took it from Russia after World War I. The London Poles disagree: They say the Soviets wrongfully appropriated the land under the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939, in which the Germans agreed to attack Poland from the west while the Soviets would attack from the east and keep any territory that they captured. The London Poles prefer to have Poland keep the territory, but they have agreed to let the Soviets have it in exchange for territory in Germany.

As FDR, you must decide what to do about Poland's future. You want to promote democracy and capitalism, but you still need Stalin's support in fighting the war. Put a check next to each of the policies you will support:

1. Let Stalin's Lublin Poles remain in control of the Polish government until an election for a new government can be held.
2. Insist that the democratically elected London Poles have as much power as the Lublin Poles in the government before the election is held.
3. Insist on elections in Poland, but let the Soviets handle them. Poland lies in their area of occupation, so the U.S. doesn't have much influence there.
4. Insist on elections in Poland, with international observers on hand to ensure the process is free and fair.
5. Let the Soviets have the territory in eastern Poland. Soviet troops currently occupy it, so the U.S. has little choice.
6. Let the Soviets have the territory in eastern Poland, but take just as much territory from eastern Germany and make it part of Poland. Poland would then be as large as it was before the war.
7. Insist that Poland keep its original territory. Don't allow the Soviets to take any land from Poland.
8. Insist that the Soviets agree to hold free elections in Poland and other countries throughout eastern Europe, and establish a commission to restore democracy to liberated countries.

## PROBLEM 2—GERMANY

American, British, and Soviet forces stand on the verge of defeating the Nazis. Once they succeed, Germany will be a leaderless, devastated nation, having suffered heavy casualties and economic destruction. The Allies will have to decide what will become of Germany. Different schools of thought exist regarding this question: Some people point out that Germany deserves harsh punishment because it started the war in the first place. They recall that Germany rose up again in spite of the defeat it suffered in World War I.

Thus, in order to make sure that Germany does not once again become an aggressive, war-hungry superpower, these people want to see the country practically destroyed.

Others worry that an utterly devastated Germany will prevent the European economy from recovering after the war: western Germany represents one of the greatest industrial centers in Europe, and draining its resources will cripple production. These people also cite the aftermath of World War I as a precedent, but they claim that the economic ruin the German people faced after that war made them more susceptible to the radical ideas of the Nazis.



The U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union all agree that Germany should be divided into occupation zones immediately after the war ends. The question here is how the Allies will reunite Germany—or whether it should be reunited at all.

The second question concerns reparations (payments one country makes to another country for war damages). The U.S. and Britain haven't asked the Germans to pay them large reparations, but the Soviets insist on reparations of \$10 billion—an enormous sum. According to some estimates, the Soviet Union lost as many as 7.5 million people in the war—far more than any other country. The Soviet Union certainly has suffered immensely, but such a huge amount of reparations would further drain the already-ravaged Germany economy and prevent it from recovering. One of your advisors tells you that Stalin wants a broken, crippled Germany because he wants to prevent the country from ever attacking the Soviet Union again. Some of your American advisors also had wanted to impose harsh terms of surrender for the Germans and initially supported Stalin's request for huge reparations. However, most now feel that Germany should not have to pay a large amount. Instead, they want to help the German economy recover because if it doesn't, all of Europe will suffer. The U.S. would then have to spend a great deal of money to save the European economies and prevent widespread poverty and starvation. In effect, the U.S. would have to pay money to the Germans so that the Germans could pay reparations to the Soviet Union.

As FDR, you must choose what you want for Germany's future. Keep in mind that while Germany started the war, you nevertheless want to help the European economy recover. You also know that you need Stalin's help in ending the war, both in Germany and in Japan. Put a check next to each of the policies you will support:

1. Tell Stalin that the U.S. wants all zones of occupation merged into a unified government within two years. Free elections throughout all of Germany will decide the new government.
2. Tell Stalin that the U.S. favors keeping the zones separate for the foreseeable future.
3. Insist that the Soviet Union take only a minimum of reparations (such as \$20 million) instead of the \$10 billion it has requested.
4. Allow the Soviets to take the \$10 billion. After all, since Germany invaded the Soviet Union and killed millions of its people, Germany should compensate the Soviets for these damages. The U.S. will help by collecting reparations from its zone and delivering them to the Soviet Union.
5. Tell the Soviets that they can take their reparations from their own zone. However, the U.S. will not deliver reparations from its zone.

### **PROBLEM 3—THE UNITED NATIONS**

Many countries around the world (including the U.S.) want to form an international organization once the war ends that will aim to preserve peace and prevent another global conflict. The new body will be known as the "United Nations," and it will try to avoid the problems that plagued the League of Nations. It will be better organized, and—unlike the League of Nations—the U.S. will take part as a charter member. The UN will consist of two parts: the General Assembly (which will include all the member countries) and the Security Council (which will consist of the major powers).

The Soviets are willing to join the UN but insist on having one vote in the General Assembly for each of the 15 republics that compose the Soviet Union. That would mean that the Soviet Union would have 15 votes in the UN. The Soviets also demand an unlimited veto in the Security Council—even on questions of how to run the UN.

Put a check next to each of the policies you would choose in regard to the UN:

1. Let the Soviets have 15 votes in the UN. As many as 50 democratic countries already plan to join the UN, so even with 15 votes the Soviets won't be able to take control.
2. Insist that the Soviet Union get only one vote. After all, the U.S. consists of 50 states but only has one vote.
3. Insist on a limited veto for the five major powers in the Security Council. A country would not be allowed to use its veto for matters of procedure or if the vote concerns a dispute involving that country.
4. Allow the unlimited veto, as the Soviets request.

## PROBLEM 4—THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

Most Americans feel that the U.S. needs Stalin's help in order to shorten the war in Asia and the Pacific. Some of your advisors warn that up to one million American soldiers could die if the U.S. is forced to invade Japan. American scientists are working on an atomic bomb, but they may not have a working version ready in time to force the Japanese to surrender. Stalin has a very powerful army, and once the war in Germany finally ends he can focus his efforts on Asia.

The Soviet Union is not currently at war with Japan: in fact, it signed a non-aggression pact with the Japanese in 1941. The Soviets remain open to the idea of joining the war against Japan despite the pact, but it will have to be in their interest to do so. Your advisors tell you that Stalin will insist on receiving land in Asia in exchange for joining the war against Japan. The Soviets will especially want to regain land lost to Japan in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5. They will also probably want to occupy part of Japan itself. You want to ensure Stalin's cooperation, but you also worry about what will happen to Asia after the war. The Soviets could use lands gained in China to help the communists under Mao Zedong win the civil war there. China is a very important country, and you do not want to see communists take power there. The U.S. believes that countries liberated from Japan should have the right of self-determination and be allowed to choose their own governments.

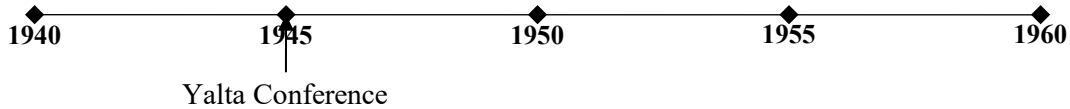
As FDR, you must decide whether to seek help from the Soviets, and consider how such assistance might ultimately allow Stalin to spread communism throughout Asia. Choose one of the following options, or come up with one of your own:

1. Ask Stalin for the Soviet Union's help against Japan after the war ends in Europe. Tell him that in exchange for his help, the U.S. will give the Soviet Union territory it lost in the Russo-Japanese War.
2. Ask Stalin for the Soviet Union's help against Japan after the war ends in Europe, but insist that he not take any territory in Asia. Hold firm to your belief that the people in those territories should have the right of self-determination.
3. Do not ask Stalin for help—the threat of communist expansion in Asia is just too great. The U.S. should defeat Japan on its own, despite the possibility of high casualties.



# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

## Student Handout 2: Soviet View



You are Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union. It is February 1945, and you are meeting at Yalta with your two greatest allies: Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Britain and President Franklin Roosevelt of the United States. The war in Europe is rapidly drawing to a close. Soviet troops are marching towards Germany from the east through Poland and Hungary, while the British and Americans close in on Germany from the west.



Lavidia Palace at the Yalta Conference

You have met with Churchill and Roosevelt before to discuss military strategy for the war, and those conferences went well. During the war, everyone had the same goal: to stop Hitler and the other fascist regimes. However, now that the war in Europe is coming to an end, you, Churchill, and Roosevelt must make decisions about the postwar world. You clearly have different goals than they do. The Soviet Union is communist, whereas the U.S. and Britain are capitalist democracies. The U.S. and Britain completely oppose communism and want to stop it from spreading. Both countries sent troops into Russia during 1919–1920 to support anti-communist factions in the civil war, and you still resent that intrusion. You also resent the fact that the U.S. and Britain let the Soviet Union do the bulk of the fighting against the Nazis on the European mainland by refusing to immediately open a second front. The Soviet Union had to fight against the Nazis alone in Europe for two-and-a-half years. It seems to you that the U.S. and Britain wanted Germany to weaken the Soviet Union, and thus delayed attacking Hitler in western Europe.

Despite the military cooperation and mostly cordial relations during the last few years, these underlying tensions will likely come to the surface during the postwar period, since the two sides have conflicting goals. However, you still need the Americans and British

to help finish off what remains of the German military, so you should keep that in mind while negotiating.

Below is a list of issues that you, Joseph Stalin, will negotiate with American and British leaders at the Yalta Conference. Read the description of each issue and decide which option or options you will choose. If you don't like any of the options, you can come up with one of your own.

### PROBLEM 1—POLAND (AND EASTERN EUROPE)

As your “Red Army” has marched towards Germany and pushed the German troops back, you have taken control of Poland. This is an important move for you strategically: Germany has twice attacked Russia through Poland, and you feel the need to establish Poland as a first line of defense against any future German threat. You also know that what happens in Poland will also likely happen throughout the rest of eastern Europe. You want to ensure that eastern Europe remains friendly to the Soviet Union and, if possible, install communist governments there.

The British and Americans have major concerns about Poland. The democratically elected leaders who once ruled Poland fled to Britain when the Nazis invaded; they now reside in London and are referred to as the “London Poles.” The British government and British people favor returning the London Poles to power, so Churchill faces political pressure to ensure that this happens. American leaders have an interest in Poland because large numbers of Polish American voters can swing elections in key states like Illinois and Wisconsin. FDR tells you that he can't ignore these voters' concerns.

However, Britain and the U.S. lie at a disadvantage. You pushed the Germans out of Poland and now occupy the country, so you can essentially do what you want there. You have installed a communist government called the “Lublin Poles” that now rules Poland. You felt justified in doing this without the consent of the other countries: after all, when the Americans and British marched into Italy, they did not consult you about forming a new government there or about plans for occupying the



country. The Americans insist that you allow free elections in Poland, and they seem confident that democratic groups like the London Poles will win as long as the election is free. They suspect, however, that the Lublin Poles will rig the elections to ensure a communist victory. Your first priority is to make sure that Poland has a Soviet-friendly government and will help prevent any future attack on the Soviet Union from Germany or anywhere else.

In 1939, you signed a non-aggression pact with Germany and received territory in Poland: the Germans attacked Poland from the west, while your forces attacked from the east and kept the territory they captured. The London Poles now demand that the Soviet Union give back that territory. You want the territory up to the Curzon Line. You believe that the Poles wrongfully took this land from Russia after World War I, and you have no intention of giving it back. You also claim that this land will help defend the Soviet Union against another attack.

As Joseph Stalin, what positions will you take when negotiating with the U.S. and Britain about Poland? Put a check next to each of the policies you will choose:

1. Insist that the government you installed (the Lublin Poles) retain control of the Polish government until an election for a new government can be held
2. Let the London Poles share power equally with the Lublin Poles until an election can be held.
3. Hold elections in Poland that are controlled either by the Lublin Poles or directly by the Soviets. The Soviet Union occupies Poland and should decide what happens there.
4. Let elections in Poland go ahead with international observers on hand to ensure that the process is free and fair.
5. Refuse to hold any elections in Poland.
6. Insist that the Soviet Union take the territory in eastern Poland. This land was wrongfully taken from Russia in 1920, and the Soviet Union needs it in order to defend itself from future attacks.
7. Allow Poland to keep its original territory.
8. Sign an agreement guaranteeing democracy and free elections in Poland and throughout eastern Europe.

## **PROBLEM 2—GERMANY**

American, British, and Soviet forces stand on the verge of defeating Germany. Once they succeed, Germany will be a leaderless, devastated nation, having suffered heavy casualties and economic destruction. The Allies will have to decide what will become of Germany. In your view, the Germans will always pose a dangerous threat: they have started two world wars and have attacked the Soviet Union in each of them, causing tremendous devastation. Some estimate that the Soviet Union has lost up to 7.5 million people in this war—far more casualties than any other country sustained. For the safety of the Soviet Union, you feel you must make sure that Germany cannot again become an aggressive, war-hungry superpower.

You agree with the U.S. and Britain that Germany should be divided into occupation zones immediately after the war ends. The question here is how the Allies will reunite Germany—or whether it should be reunited at all.

The second question concerns reparations (payments one country makes to another country for war damages). The Soviet Union has suffered tremendously because of the Nazis, so you have asked for \$10 billion in reparations—an enormous sum. The U.S. and Britain have not asked for large reparations: some people in those countries believe that reparations will devastate the already-struggling German economy and



prevent it from recovering. However, this doesn't worry you since a crippled Germany will not pose a military threat. You thus would support larger reparations for the U.S. and Britain should these countries decide to demand them.

As Joseph Stalin, what postwar policies will you take regarding Germany? Put a check next to each of the policies you will choose, or create your own:

1. Agree to merge all of the zones of occupation in Germany into a unified government within two years. Free elections throughout all of Germany will decide the new government.
2. Tell Roosevelt and Churchill that you favor keeping the occupation zones separate for the foreseeable future.
3. Agree that you will take only a minimal amount of reparations (such as \$20 million) instead of the \$10 billion you initially requested.
4. Insist on \$10 billion in reparations, to be collected from all the occupation zones in Germany.
5. Tell Roosevelt and Churchill that you will collect reparations from the Soviet-controlled zone, but won't insist on reparations from their zones of occupation.

### PROBLEM 3—THE UNITED NATIONS

The Soviets are willing to join the UN but insist on having one vote in the General Assembly for each of the 15 republics that compose the Soviet Union. That would mean

that the Soviet Union would have 15 votes in the UN. The Soviets also demand an unlimited veto in the Security Council—even on questions of how to run the UN.

The U.S. wants to form an international organization once the war ends that will aim to preserve peace and prevent another global conflict. The new body will be known as the “United Nations.” The UN will consist of two parts: the General Assembly (which will include all the member countries) and the Security Council (which will consist of the major powers). You don’t believe that the UN will help the Soviet Union: most countries in the world have capitalist systems and therefore distrust communism. These countries will likely band together to implement policies that would work to the disadvantage of communist countries. Perhaps if each of the 15 Soviet republics had a vote, communist countries could balance the threat posed by a voting bloc of capitalist nations. You could also ask for veto power in the UN Security Council for all matters, even on questions of how to run the UN and for votes on international situations involving the Soviet Union.

As Joseph Stalin, what position will you take on the question of the United Nations? Put a check next to the policies you will support, or come up with your own:

1. Insist that each of the 15 Soviet republics get its own vote in the UN.
2. Concede that the Soviets should collectively get one vote, just as the United States does.
3. Insist that each of the major countries (including the Soviet Union) get veto power.
4. Agree to a limited veto, meaning that countries cannot use their veto in matters of procedure or issues that directly involve them.
5. Don’t join the UN. As an organization, it probably won’t ever work in favor of the Soviet Union.

#### PROBLEM 4—THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

Even though the Germans lie on the verge of defeat, the Americans still have to fight a costly and bloody war in Asia against Japan. The U.S. faces the possibility of even higher casualties if the war continues for much longer—especially if American troops have to invade Japan in order to end the war. The Americans want your Red Army to step in to shorten the war in Asia. The Soviet Union is not currently at war with Japan, and in fact has a neutrality agreement with the Japanese. You will



need to break that agreement and declare war against Japan in order to attack. In addition, the Red Army is exhausted from fighting against the Germans and will probably need several months to regroup. You are willing to break the neutrality pact and mobilize the army, but you need assurances that you will receive something in exchange—preferably land in Asia. In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5, the Japanese took land from Russia, and you want that land back. You could also occupy parts of China and help the communists there (led by Mao Zedong) in their civil war. In addition, the Allies will need to occupy Japan in the same way that they occupy postwar Germany, and you hope to be part of that occupation force.

As Joseph Stalin, will you help the Americans against Japan when the war in Europe ends? What will you demand in exchange for that help? Put a check next to each of the policies you would choose or come up with ones of your own.

1. Agree to help the U.S. against Japan in exchange for territory lost in the Russo-Japanese War.
2. Agree to help the U.S. against Japan, but don't demand any territory in Asia.
3. Honor your neutrality pact with Japan and tell the Americans you will not help them. The Red Army has suffered heavy losses in Europe, and you don't need to fight another war.

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

## Student Handout 3: Role Play

Here is the agenda for the Yalta Conference. Decide what your position will be for each item on the agenda:

### POLAND (EASTERN EUROPE)

1. Should the Soviet-sponsored Lublin Poles control the government until a new government can be formed?
2. Should Poland have free elections with international observers on hand to ensure that the process is fair?
3. Should the Soviet Union get land from eastern Poland?
4. Should the Allies agree on a policy of allowing democracy in eastern Europe, including a guarantee of free elections?

### GERMANY

1. Should the occupation zones be temporary, followed by a unified German government?
2. Should Germany pay reparations of \$10 billion to the Soviet Union?

### UNITED NATIONS

1. Should the Soviet Union get 15 votes in the General Assembly?
2. Should major countries get an unlimited veto?

### THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

1. Should the Soviet Union join the war against Japan in exchange for control of land in Asia?

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

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## Student Handout 4: Questions

You can ask any two of the following questions regarding the situation in Poland. You can get answers from your teacher for the two questions you choose.

1. What is the background of Soviet-Polish relations?
2. What is the background of U.S.-Soviet relations?
3. How does the American public feel about Poland?
4. What do experts say about the situation in Poland?
5. What do other leaders (especially members of Congress) think about the situation in Poland?

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

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## Student Handout 5: Answers to Questions

### 1. What is the background of Soviet-Polish relations?

Hostility and mistrust has marked the history of Poland and the Soviet Union. After World War I, Poland took territory from the Russians, who were in the midst of fighting a civil war. The Soviets want that territory back. In addition, Russia has been attacked three times through Poland: first by Napoleon, then by the Germans in World War I, and most recently by Hitler. Stalin wants to ensure that no European power ever again attacks the Soviet Union by going through Poland.

In 1939, the Soviets and Germans signed a non-aggression pact; it not only prevented war between the two countries but also enabled them to seize territory in eastern Europe. Germany attacked Poland from the west, while the Soviet Union brutally attacked Poland from the east. During the war, evidence shows that Soviet troops took thousands of Polish officers into the Katyn Forest and executed them.

In August 1944, the Polish resistance staged an uprising against the German troops occupying Warsaw. By that point, the Soviets were fully at war with the Germans, and the Poles believed that the Soviets would take their side. The uprising aimed to weaken German forces so that the Soviets could defeat them quickly. The Soviets, after all, had troops just across the river—a few hundred yards from Warsaw. However, instead of rushing in to help the resistance, the Soviets actually stopped attacking, allowing the Germans to brutally crush the Polish resistance. Eighteen thousand Polish soldiers and about 250,000 Polish civilians died, and the Nazis burned about 85% of Warsaw. Even though the Soviets have been integral to the war against Germany, the Poles won't likely forget this incident. They remain suspicious and distrustful of the Soviets.

### 2. What is the background of U.S.-Soviet relations?

The U.S. and the Soviet Union have allied against Germany, but the U.S. has never approved of the Soviet Union's communist government. In 1919, the Reds (communists) fought a civil war against the Whites (supporters of the czar and of democracy) in Russia. The U.S. sent troops to support the Whites. Despite this help, the Reds eventually won and established a communist government. The U.S. refused to officially recognize this government until 1933.

The biggest source of conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the war stemmed from disagreement about when to open a second front in Europe. The U.S. and Britain initially focused their efforts on defending the British Isles, leaving the Soviets to fight alone against the Germans on the European mainland. Stalin called for a second front for two-and-a-half years before the U.S. and Britain actually started one with the D-Day invasion in 1944. Stalin feels that the U.S. and Britain delayed

attacking Germany by land in order to allow the Germans and Soviets to wipe each other out. Even Stalin has to admit, though, that the U.S. has provided “Lend-Lease” aid to the Soviet Union, a friendly gesture that has allowed the Soviets to fight more effectively.

The biggest underlying problem between the two countries might be the Americans’ suspicion that the Soviets want to spread communism worldwide. A group called Communist International has advocated overthrowing capitalist governments all over the world (including that of the U.S.). The Americans also worry that the Soviet Union simply wants to gain territory: the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939 helped the Soviets gain large portions of Poland, and the Soviets also took control of the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) and attacked Finland.

Still, most Americans respect the bravery of the Soviet people. The Soviets played a huge part in helping defeat the Nazis, and suffered more casualties (possibly as many as 7.5 million) than any other nation. Americans recognize the sacrifices and contributions the Soviets have made and sympathize with their losses.

### **3. How does the American public feel about Poland?**

One month before the Yalta Conference, you received a summary of recent public opinion polls. These show that the American public remains skeptical that the U.S. can guarantee freedom and democracy to the countries affected by the war. Public confidence in U.S. foreign policy has actually declined.

In addition, Americans worry that the Soviets support communist groups in the countries liberated from the Nazis. The public opposes the Stalin-installed “Lublin Poles” since they seem to have the support of only a minority of the Polish people. The State Department reports that letters and petitions in favor of a democratic Poland have increased dramatically in the past year.

### **4. What do experts say about the situation in Poland?**

Secretary of State Henry Stimson feels the Soviet request for territory in eastern Poland is reasonable. He tells you that the issue “certainly does not seem to be worth a quarrel with Russia.” John Hickerson, Deputy Director of the State Department’s Office of European Affairs, agrees that the U.S. can’t do anything to dispute the Soviets’ claims. After all, the Soviets have military control of Poland. He recommends that the U.S. concede this issue and focus on convincing the Soviets to join the United Nations.

**5. What do other leaders (especially members of Congress) think about the situation in Poland?**

In the 1944 elections, the Republicans criticized your policy regarding Poland. They argued that the U.S. had to do more to support democracy there. The Republicans made this argument in the hope that they could gain the support of Polish American voters. It proved ineffective, however, since most Polish Americans still voted to reelect you and supported Democratic candidates for Congress. Both the Senate and House of Representatives have solid Democratic majorities, indicating that you will face little trouble getting your policies through Congress. However, the Republicans have shown their willingness to make Poland a divisive issue if you and the Democrats seem advocate policies contrary to the will of the American people.

You also know that you need the support of Republican senators to ratify the United Nations treaty, which needs the approval of two-thirds of the Senate. You want to avoid what happened to Woodrow Wilson with the League of Nations: Wilson's other policies had alienated so many members of the Senate that he couldn't muster sufficient support for the league. You remember this precedent and know that you must take care not to anger the Republican leadership. One of the leading Republicans in Congress, Senator Arthur Vandenberg, has a large Polish population in his state of Michigan and has become a vocal critic of your policy regarding Poland. If you compromise too much with the Soviets, you run the risk of having Republicans like Vandenberg defeat your United Nations plan.

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

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## Student Handout 6: Analogies

Evaluate whether each of the following analogies has relevance regarding the issues at Yalta.

1. The Americans have a “sphere of influence” in Latin America, meaning that many Latin American countries look to the U.S. for leadership in economic and government matters. The Soviets should thus be allowed to have a “sphere of influence” in eastern Europe.
2. When the Italians surrendered to the Americans and the British, the Soviets were given no say in Italy’s fate. Therefore, the Soviets should be allowed to control eastern Europe without American or British interference.
3. Woodrow Wilson didn’t pay enough attention to Congress in the aftermath of World War I, and as a result Congress did not support the League of Nations. FDR therefore needs to take the opinions of congressmen into account when he makes decisions about the postwar world so that Congress will support the United Nations.
4. If the Soviets get 15 votes in the United Nations (one for each of their republics), then the Americans should get 50 votes—one for each of their states.
5. Before the war, Britain and France adopted a policy of “appeasement” towards the Nazis, and allowed Germany to occupy the Sudetenland. This policy allowed Hitler to begin his campaign of aggression. Giving in to Stalin’s demands on the issues at Yalta would be similarly disastrous and would encourage Stalin to encourage communist expansion elsewhere.
6. The U.S. plans to play a dominant role in Japan after the end of the war there: it may consult the Soviets on some issues, but it intends to occupy Japan alone. Similarly, the Soviets should be allowed to play a dominant role in eastern Europe.

# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

## Student Handout 7: Outcomes

### PROBLEM 1—POLAND

In 1943, FDR told Stalin that the six or seven million Polish Americans in the U.S. represented a powerful force in American politics. It is not clear what point FDR wanted to get across to Stalin here, but Stalin believed that FDR was asking him to make decisions on Poland that would at least *look* positive to Polish American voters. Stalin agreed to hold free elections at a later date if the Lublin Poles could run the new Polish government for the time being. U.S. negotiators then



proposed that all three major powers (the U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union) would supervise the elections. Stalin refused. Without supervision, there was absolutely no way to assure free and fair elections. An advisor to FDR said the agreement was “so elastic that the Russians can stretch it all the way from Yalta to Washington without ever technically breaking it.” FDR replied, “I know it. But it’s the best I can do for Poland at this time.” Stalin never held free elections in Poland, which upset the Americans and worsened relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union also agreed to the Declaration of Liberated Europe, which promised free elections. The declaration lacked provisions for enforcement, however—just as the promised elections in Poland did. If questions arose about whether elections had been fair, the countries would “consult together.” FDR didn’t insist on creating an agency to enforce the declaration, so no means existed to make sure that countries followed the agreements.

Stalin’s broken promise to hold free elections in Poland and eastern Europe became an important cause of the Cold War. The American public reacted with distrust and suspicion when the Soviet Union refused to hold elections, and U.S. leaders began to

promote stronger policies against the Soviet Union. Stalin's motives remain unclear: he might have primarily wanted to have regimes in eastern Europe that would act as a buffer and protect the Soviet Union from attack (as he publicly stated), or he might have wanted to spread communism in Europe. He most likely wanted both.

The Soviets obtained territory in eastern Poland (along the Curzon Line), while Poland gained territory in the west from Germany.

## PROBLEM 2—GERMANY

The three governments agreed to divide Germany into four temporary occupation zones. They also agreed to \$10 billion in reparations for the Soviet Union, but only as “a basis for discussion.” At the Potsdam Conference five months later, the U.S. said the Soviets could collect their reparations only from their own zone. The U.S. did not want to give aid to Germany just to have that aid be paid as reparations to the Soviets. Also, the Americans wanted to help the economy of western Europe recover, and they knew that the industrial area of West Germany was essential to that effort. If Soviet reparations crippled that region, widespread poverty and devastation could result.

Each power, therefore, would rule its own zone and take reparations only from that zone. The separate economic and political control of each zone resulted in the further division of Germany. Under the supervision of the U.S. and Britain, the three western zones united and became West Germany, which had a separate government and currency from that of East Germany. Germany stayed divided until 1990.

## PROBLEM 3—UNITED NATIONS

The Soviet Union compromised and agreed to receive three votes in the General Assembly. Regarding the veto, the powers agreed that the permanent members of the Security Council could veto proposals, but not questions of procedure. These procedural questions usually concerned whether to debate a proposal in the first place. Also, a country involved in a particular conflict on which the UN was voting could not exercise the veto. Later in 1945, the Soviets insisted that they had the right to veto decisions about what questions were considered procedural. This meant that they could then decide that no questions were procedural, and



essentially have unlimited veto power—which would more or less end the UN’s ability to operate as an effective body. At the last minute, Stalin gave in on this issue, possibly because the U.S. had given him what he wanted regarding Poland.

#### PROBLEM 4—THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

The U.S. and the Soviet Union agreed that the Soviets would enter the war against Japan three months after the end of the war in Europe. In exchange, the Soviets would get parts of Manchuria, part of Sakhalin Island, and the Kurile Islands. The threat posed by Stalin’s army may have influenced the Japanese decision to surrender, although historians debate whether the atomic bombs alone would have forced Japan to surrender. Also, the Soviet occupation of parts of Asia may have helped them assist the communist factions in the Chinese civil war. One of the unintended consequences, therefore, may have been the establishment of a communist regime in China.



# LESSON 1: YALTA, 1945

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## Student Handout 8: Primary Source

### Yalta Agreements (excerpts)

#### VII. POLAND

The following declaration on Poland was agreed to at the conference:

“A new situation has been created in Poland as a result of her complete liberation by the Red Army. This calls for the establishment of a Polish Provisional Government which can be more broadly based than was possible before the recent liberation of the western part of Poland. The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should therefore be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. This new Government should then be called the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity.

...This Polish Provisional Government of National Unity shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot. In these elections all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates....

“The three heads of Government consider that the eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon Line with digressions from it in some regions of five to eight kilometers in favor of Poland. They recognize that Poland must receive substantial accessions in territory in the north and west....”

#### II. DECLARATION OF LIBERATED EUROPE

The following declaration was approved:

“...The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice. This is a principle of the Atlantic Charter—the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live—the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who have been forcibly deprived to them by the aggressor nations.

To foster the conditions in which the liberated people may exercise these rights, the three governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis state in Europe where, in their judgment conditions require,

- a. to establish conditions of internal peace;
- b. to carry out emergency relief measures for the relief of distressed peoples;

- c. to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of Governments responsive to the will of the people;
- d. and to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.

...When, in the opinion of the three Governments, conditions in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite in Europe make such action necessary, they will immediately consult together on the measure necessary to discharge the joint responsibilities set forth in this declaration....”

### QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What does the phrase, “The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland [the Lublin Poles] should therefore be reorganized...” imply about the Stalin-sponsored Lublin Poles?
2. Does the document clearly pledge to hold free elections in Poland?
3. What will happen if a country does not follow through on the promises made in the Declaration of Liberated Europe (for example, if the Soviet Union doesn’t hold free elections)?

# LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

This lesson on the early Cold War (1946–1951) asks students to establish a general policy the U.S. should adopt towards the Soviet Union and to consider specific policies and events. As always, the lesson is not intended as a comprehensive review of the Cold War, though it does cover a range of key events.

### VOCABULARY

- Yalta—Conference in 1945 at which the U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union agreed on holding elections in eastern Europe and required a specific amount of reparations from Germany
- “Iron Curtain”—Term used by Churchill to refer to oppressive communist governments in eastern Europe; people living in these countries were said to be “trapped behind the Iron Curtain”
- Containment—U.S. policy aimed at stopping the spread of communism
- Truman Doctrine—Speech in which President Truman declared that the U.S. would help other countries fight communism
- Marshall Plan—Economic aid given to western European countries by the U.S. in order to help them recover from the war
- NATO—North Atlantic Treaty Organization; a military alliance of the U.S. and western European countries against the communist powers
- Berlin blockade—Unsuccessful strategy in which the Soviets blocked all land traffic into Berlin in an effort to get the U.S. to give up its claim to the city
- HUAC—House Un-American Activities Committee; a congressional committee established to investigate people and organizations suspected of having ties to communists
- Senator Joseph McCarthy—Senator from Wisconsin who claimed communists had infiltrated American government

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Identify underlying problem
- Recognize assumptions
- Ask questions about context
- Ask about reliability of sources
- Set realistic goals
- Generate options
- Play out options
- Predict unintended consequences

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one to two 40-minute class periods)

### Procedure:

Distribute Handout 1, which asks students to choose an overall policy towards the Soviet Union. Have students read it silently and decide what they will do. Next, divide students into groups and have them discuss their choices. Handout 5 has questions that might help students deliberate: tell the class that each group can ask two of the questions on the handout. Have copies of Handout 6 cut into strips so students can come to your desk and take answers only to the two questions they've chosen. Bring the class back together. Have each group report on its decisions and explain the reasons behind those decisions. Distribute Handout 3, which lists the outcomes for the overall policy. How many students chose containment as their policy? Would they choose differently now that they know the outcomes?

OPTIONAL: Distribute Handout 8 and have students read the primary source that made the argument for the containment policy.

Next, distribute Handout 2, which has specific policy questions. Students could do all the problems for homework and discuss them in class the next day, or they could go through the problems one at a time. Alternatively, you could divide the class into six groups, with each group taking one problem. Circulate around the room to answer questions while the groups deliberate. Bring the class back together and have each group report on its decisions. Students from the other groups can then ask questions and make comments. The class could then vote on whether it would take the action the group proposed. When the class has discussed and decided on all the problems, distribute Handout 4, which lists the outcomes.

OPTIONAL: Use Handout 7 to help make students aware of any assumptions they might have made. At the end of the discussion about the outcomes, distribute the handout and have students fill in the assumptions they think they made. (The "Decision-Making Analysis" section for this lesson further discusses these assumptions.)

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly important in making decisions about these issues? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the "Decision-Making Analysis" section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students to compare their decisions with those of the leaders at the time. Why do students think the leaders decided the same as or differently than they did? Which was more important in establishing U.S. policy towards communism: historical factors or the actions of a few key people, such as Harry Truman?

### Connecting to Today:

Ask students if any of lessons learned from the U.S. policies during the Cold War could be relevant to today's threat from terrorism. Many differences exist between the communist threat during the Cold War and the current threat posed by terrorists, but can the analogy still be useful in terms of considering how the U.S. should react?

### Troubleshooting:

Some students may forget that the U.S. and the Soviet Union fought on the same side during World War II. Lesson 1 in this volume addresses this shift from ally to enemy, but you may want to remind students about the alliance, and how and why the situation changed. Some students may struggle with the term "Cold War," so you might want to assign them to write a definition of the term as homework and then discuss it the next day.

You may also want to review the basic tenets of communism before starting the lesson and discuss why communism and capitalism are opposites.

## **B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–25 minutes)**

Assign Handout 1 and Problem 2 from Handout 2 as homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices on Handout 1 for three minutes or so. Ask for a show of hands for each policy choice on Handout 1. Distribute Handout 3 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes. Repeat the process for Problem 2 of Handout 2. Distribute Handout 4 (which has the outcomes for Problem 2) and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

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(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 3 and 4)

## What Actually Happened:

### **PROBLEM 1—SPREAD OF COMMUNISM**

This situation was much more complicated than the version presented here. The specific circumstances under which the Truman Doctrine was issued involved a civil war in Greece and Soviet pressure on Turkey. The British said they could no longer fund the anti-communists in Greece, which made the Americans fear that the communists would prevail there. Truman asked for a small amount of aid for Greece (\$250 million) and Turkey (\$150 million), but in the speech he made a larger case about the evils of communism and the need for the U.S. to help resist it.

### **PROBLEM 2—ECONOMIC AID**

Traditionally, historians have believed that the Marshall Plan was exactly what it claimed to be: a strategy to help Europe recover from the war. Some historians, however, have suggested that the U.S. had an ulterior motive in promoting the plan. They claim that the Marshall Plan actually represented an attempt by the U.S. to dominate western Europe economically; they point out that the plan did open up avenues of trade and investment for the U.S. Students could research further to see if they think the U.S. did indeed want to dominate Europe and whether the U.S. actually achieved some level of domination.

### **PROBLEM 6—COMMUNIST INFILTRATION**

This lesson only deals with the president's policy on disloyalty. A great follow-up to this lesson would be to study the McCarthy-era Red Scare in more depth.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- \* - **Identify any underlying problem**
  - Consider other points of view
- \* - **What are my assumptions? Emotions?**

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
  - Reliability of sources
  - Historical analogies

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
- \* - **Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

- \* - **Predict unintended consequences**
- \* - **Play out the options. What could go wrong?**

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

- **Underlying problem:** Handout 1 asks students to focus on the underlying problem and establish their goals. Students should consider the extent to which the problems between the U.S. and the Soviet Union resulted because of differences in ideology (the view expressed by Ambassador Harriman in Handout 1) or because Soviet leaders needed to control their own internal population (the view expressed by the second advisor in Handout 1). To what extent could U.S. leaders have negotiated with Soviet leaders if the underlying problem was communism in general? To what extent did the underlying problem concern internal control?
- **Assumptions:** Handout 7 asks students to identify assumptions they might make as they go through these problems. Which of the assumptions did students make? Historians debate the accuracy of some of these assumptions: for example, no one really knows whether the primary goal of the Soviet Union was to spread communism or to control its own population. However, regardless of whether their assumptions are right or wrong, students should be aware of their tendency to make them.
- **Ask questions about context:** Handouts 5 and 6 provide questions and answers that students may want to consider when looking at Handout 1. Students should also ask questions about the particular policies on Handout 2. For Problem 1, students might ask about the specific situation that would lead a U.S. president to make a speech with such forceful language (the historical background is explained in the “What Actually Happened” section). They might also ask about how receptive Congress was to a new “get tough” policy with the Soviets. For

Problem 2, they might ask how high the U.S. debt stood at this time (the debt was very high). They could also ask if the U.S. would lower its tariff when the Europeans lowered theirs (not necessarily—nothing required the U.S. to do so). For Problem 3, students might ask if the U.S. normally makes military alliances. (Definitely not: Since George Washington’s presidency, the U.S. hadn’t made any permanent peacetime alliances. Doing so at this point in history thus represented a big break with the past.) They might also ask if the communists posed a real military threat to western Europe (opinions vary). In Problem 4, students should ask about the feasibility of defending Berlin (not very feasible). Students should definitely ask questions about the situation in China (Problem 5) before sending in troops. Did the nationalists have the potential to win? (General George Marshall, the lead U.S. advisor in China, characterized the communists as ruthless and determined, and the nationalists as corrupt and waiting for the U.S. to help them out.) In Problem 6, students could ask if the U.S. had any evidence of communist spying. (Several lesser spy cases had occurred in other parts of the world by this point, including a busted spy ring in Canada, and the State Department believed that communist infiltration would increase. On the other hand, evidence of actual spying in the U.S. was minimal.)

- **Ask about reliability of sources:** Students should question the reliability of Averill Harriman, simply based on his statements in Handout 1. If students ask about Harriman, you can tell them that he was a wealthy businessman who became a diplomat to Russia during World War II. He had positive feelings about Russia in 1943 and 1944, but his optimism about Soviet postwar intentions was shaken in 1945 by the fate of Poland and the prisoners-of-war issue.
- **Goals:** Handout 1 focuses on goals and how realistic they might be. For example, most historians feel an attack against the Soviet Union at this time would have been disastrous.
- **Generate options:** Problem 4 asks students to generate options. Some students will see only two options—fight or withdraw. Some students may generate the third option that Truman saw: airlifting food and supplies to Berlin.
- **Play out the option:** Students should consider that if they seek aid to western Europe (Problem 2) or if they want to form an alliance (Problem 3) they will need congressional approval. They need to consider how to approach the problem in a way that will ensure congressional support. For example, when Truman asked Congress for aid to western Europe, he cited two appealing goals: to stop the spread of communism and to benefit the U.S. economy in the long term.
- **Consequences:** All of the problems involve long-term consequences as outlined in Handouts 3 and 4.

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# LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

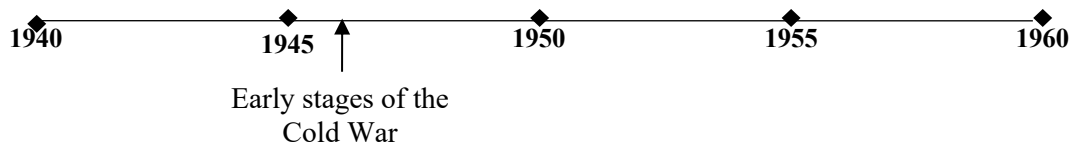
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## Vocabulary

- Yalta—Conference in 1945 at which the U.S., Britain, and the Soviet Union agreed on holding elections in eastern Europe and required a specific amount of reparations from Germany
- “Iron Curtain”—Term used by Churchill to refer to oppressive communist governments in eastern Europe; people living in these countries were said to be “trapped behind the Iron Curtain”
- Containment—U.S. policy aimed at stopping the spread of communism
- Truman Doctrine—Speech in which President Truman declared that the U.S. would help other countries fight communism
- Marshall Plan—Economic aid given to western European countries by the U.S. in order to help them recover from the war
- NATO—North Atlantic Treaty Organization; a military alliance of the U.S. and western European countries against the communist powers
- Berlin blockade—Unsuccessful strategy in which the Soviets blocked all land traffic into Berlin in an effort to get the U.S. to give up its claim to the city
- HUAC—House Un-American Activities Committee; a congressional committee established to investigate people and organizations suspected of having ties to communists
- Senator Joseph McCarthy—Senator from Wisconsin who claimed communists had infiltrated American government

# LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

## Student Handout 1: General Cold War Policy



You are President Harry Truman in 1946. As the leader of a capitalist nation, you have watched apprehensively as communism has spread from the Soviet Union since the end of World War II. Two of your advisors have presented their analyses of the situation. Read the analyses below and decide which of the four options best fits the way you think the U.S. should react to the communist threat.

### **Averill Harriman, American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1946:**

When Russia became a communist country in 1917, the world faced a new threat. The Soviet Union (the new name for Russia) became a totalitarian dictatorship under Joseph Stalin. Stalin has outlawed religion, eradicated individual rights, and killed millions of people, including more than 10 million people in the 1930s alone when the government took control of private farms in a process called “collectivization.”

The Soviet Union does more than just oppress the Russian people: it also represents a menace to the world. The Soviet Union has taken over Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and many other formerly independent countries near Russia. The Soviet Union obviously intends to overthrow all capitalist governments—including that of the United States. The Soviets have even created an organization called Communist International that aims to spread communism around the globe.

The end of World War II provided further proof of the Soviet intention to expand. As they pushed back the Nazi armies, Soviet forces naturally occupied eastern European countries. However, when the war ended they did not allow these countries to become free. Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and East Germany now all have communist governments and all lie under Soviet control. Moreover, such control violates Stalin’s pledge at the Yalta Conference in 1945 to establish representative governments in eastern Europe based on free elections. No democracy and no free elections exist in eastern Europe today.

Obviously, the western European democracies of West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and Austria feel threatened by the communists. Communist parties have already become quite active in Italy, France, and Belgium.

1946 has been a difficult year. Stalin gave a speech in which he threatened western democracies, declaring that the communists would defeat capitalist nations like the U.S. Winston Churchill then gave a speech in which he declared that an “iron curtain” had

descended on Europe, keeping half the continent (eastern Europe) under totalitarian communist control.

The entire world now faces the threat of communist invasion, either by military means (from the Soviet Union itself or from communist countries it controls) or by ideological means (from internal communist parties). Soviet control over any country means more than just economic change: Soviet-style governments deny freedom of speech and other rights to its citizens, and use secret police to oppress the population and keep it under control.

**A second advisor (an expert on the Soviet Union):**

The Soviets pose a threat not necessarily because they're communists, but because they need to convince their own population that capitalist countries—especially the United States—pose a grave threat to them. Soviet leaders need to take a hostile stance toward the U.S. so that they can create an atmosphere of fear that will help them maintain complete control over their citizens.

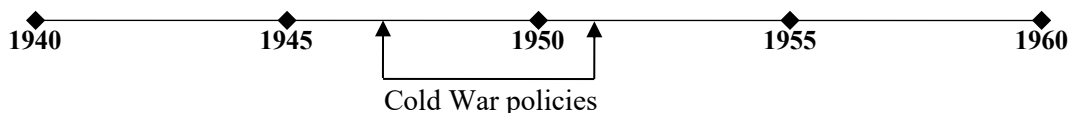
<b>QUESTION FOR ANALYSIS:</b>
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What should the U.S. do about the Soviet threat? Check the option that comes closest to what you, as President Truman, think the U.S. should do:

1. Attack the Soviet Union. A military conflict is inevitable, and the U.S. should attack now while it has the power of the atomic bomb and the Soviets do not.
2. Focus U.S. efforts on rolling back Soviet expansion. Use threats and possibly military action to liberate countries in eastern Europe from communism. This will make the Soviets less dominant.
3. Halt the expansion of the Soviet Union. Don't attack the Soviet Union or force it to give up territories currently under its control, but use alliances, economic aid to western Europe, and military defense to prevent the Soviets from taking over new countries.
4. Negotiate with the Soviets. Military action is dangerous and unwarranted at this time.

## LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

### Student Handout 2: Specific Cold War Policies



You are President Harry Truman. You face a number of policy questions concerning the Cold War. Explain what you will do for each problem and why.

#### PROBLEM 1—THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM

You could make speeches arguing that the United States is fighting for freedom while the Soviet Union imposes totalitarian control. You could declare that communism is a system akin to slavery in its oppressive tactics, while capitalist, democratic nations enjoy freedom. People will understand America's determination to support free peoples everywhere against communist aggression, both in the form of outside invasion and internal rebellion.

**Will you give speeches about the threat of communism?**

#### PROBLEM 2—ECONOMIC AID

World War II devastated Europe, as shown in the photograph to the right. The war ended two years ago, and countries throughout Europe remain in ruins. Economies are shattered, unemployment runs very high, and most countries can't sell the goods they do manage to produce. The war damaged or destroyed factories, mines, railroads, cities, farmland, and farm equipment. Currencies have become unstable, making business investment even more risky. On top of all that, the winter of 1946–47 (the worst in a century) caused thousands of deaths. Some of these countries now have active, popular communist parties. If the economic problems continue, poor people might begin to see communism as a solution to their poverty. Many



Destruction in Germany, 1945

worry that a communist party might take control of one or more countries in western Europe, though debate exists as to whether that could actually happen.

Meanwhile, the U.S. also has to recover from the war. However, the war was expensive, and economic recovery will not come easily. In addition, the extra demand for products has caused shortages (especially in housing) and led to inflation. With limited funding available, Congress has refused to expand social programs such as public housing or Social Security, or to raise the minimum wage.

Some of your advisors recommend that the U.S. give billions of dollars in aid over a span of four years to European countries to help them recover. This aid will not only help ease suffering in Europe but could also prevent the spread of communism there. They reason that a quick economic recovery in Europe will make Europeans less susceptible to communist ideas and also lead them to look favorably on the United States. Recovery will also help increase demand for American products by giving Europeans money with which they can buy goods from the U.S. The U.S. has already provided aid, but only through piecemeal programs. Your advisors recommend that the U.S. increase the amount of aid and centralize it into one package under one set of rules that would apply to all countries. That way, the U.S. can help create favorable conditions in the new European economies: for example, the U.S. could require countries to reduce their tariffs so that more American goods can be sold in Europe. The U.S. could also make rules strict enough to prevent the Soviet Union and other communist countries from receiving the aid.

Many oppose this plan, however. They argue that the proposed level of aid (\$17–18 billion over four years, with \$6.8 billion of that coming in the first year) is much too expensive. In the first year, it would take out almost \$1.00 out of every \$5.00 (about 17%) that the government collects in taxes for the whole national budget. What if the American economy suffers as a result of this drain on its resources? These opponents believe that the government should focus primarily on taking care of Americans, since many segments of the U.S. economy have yet to recover. The U.S. has done more than enough for Europe already, having spent billions to defeat the Nazis. Opponents also argue that this much aid will cause Europeans to become dependent upon the U.S. and to expect handouts in the future.

**Will you give aid to western European countries?**

### **PROBLEM 3—MILITARY ALLIANCE**

The war decimated the armies of western European countries, so these nations can no longer defend themselves. Many fear that Stalin might invade western Europe. You could form a military alliance with western European countries (including West Germany) to protect the area from Soviet invasion. Such an alliance would require stationing

American troops in western Europe to aid in the defense of those countries. Many people believe that this is the only way to stop the spread of communism into western Europe, but others don't want the U.S. to form military alliances that could eventually drag it into another war.

**Will you form a military alliance with western European countries?**

#### PROBLEM 4—THE BERLIN BLOCKADE



The city of Berlin lies over 100 miles inside East Germany (which the Soviets control), but because of its importance, the Allies divided the city into two zones after the war: a communist zone controlled by the Soviets (East Berlin) and a free zone controlled by the U.S., Britain, and France (West Berlin). Just three roads and one railroad connect West Berlin with the rest of West Germany. In 1948, you received word that the Soviets had blockaded the roads and railroad leading to Berlin. No goods can enter the city, and no one can leave it.

**How will you respond to the Berlin blockade?**

### **PROBLEM 5—CHINA**

In China, a civil war rages between nationalist and communist forces—and the communists appear to be winning. China's large size and enormous population make it of strategic international importance to the U.S. Some believe that the U.S. must do everything in its power to support the nationalists and stop the formation of a communist government in China, while others don't want the U.S. to get involved in a potentially long and dangerous conflict.

**How will you respond to the possibility that communists may win the civil war in China?**

### **PROBLEM 6—THE THREAT OF COMMUNIST INFILTRATION**

Many of your advisors believe that not only have communist spies infiltrated the U.S., but that communist sympathizers also hold positions in the government, the entertainment industry, the military, educational institutions, and even churches. These advisors question how the U.S. can defeat communism abroad if it can't defeat it at home. They recommend that you start a program to identify communist supporters and other disloyal people and remove them from positions of power. Some people disagree, however: they say that alarmists have exaggerated the threat, and they worry about the effect of such a program on civil liberties.

**Will you support an anti-communist program in the U.S.?**

## LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

### Student Handout 3: Outcomes for Handout 1

President Truman chose option 3, a policy referred to as “containment,” which had been proposed by an American diplomat named George Kennan. Containment meant that the U.S. would focus its energies on stopping further communist expansion, rather than on attacking communist countries in an attempt to roll back expansion. Disagreement exists about the degree to which this policy was wise or successful. Many historians believe that the policy worked very well over the long term and allowed the U.S. to wait for the Soviet system to self-destruct, as it did in 1989 and the early 1990s. The U.S. never found itself forced into a potentially devastating war in order to defeat the Soviets, the Soviet Union eventually disintegrated, and communist regimes in many other countries (such as China) have incorporated elements of capitalism (while still retaining authoritarian rule).



George Kennan

Some critics, however, felt containment was too passive and defensive. In the 1950s, the Eisenhower administration chose a more forceful strategy under which the U.S. threatened to liberate parts of eastern Europe from communism by force. The policy didn't work at that time, but some analysts argue that a more aggressive approach would have limited Soviet demands and ended the Cold War much sooner.

Some historians have criticized containment for the opposite reason: they believe it was too confrontational. They argue that had the U.S. taken more moderate positions, it could have negotiated settlements with the Soviets and prevented the Cold War altogether. They argue that the threat Americans felt from communism was vastly exaggerated, and that this perceived threat pushed the U.S. into an unnecessarily confrontational stance against the Soviet Union.

# LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

## Student Handout 4: Outcomes for Handout 2

### PROBLEM 1—THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM

President Truman did use forceful language several times when speaking about the Soviet Union. His most notable speech established what has been called the “Truman Doctrine,” in which he portrayed the world as divided into good countries (democracies) and evil ones (communist countries). This speech helped bolster public support in the U.S. for stopping the spread of communism through the policy of containment. However, Truman did not specify exactly where he wanted to stop communism: he probably intended for the Truman doctrine to apply only to Europe, not to the rest of the world. The American public failed to realize this and interpreted the Truman Doctrine as a general policy. As a result, Americans expected the U.S. to become involved in stopping the expansion of communism anywhere. That perception made it more difficult for later presidents to stay out of conflicts in which communist forces threatened to take over a country. Many of these situations involved more than just a struggle between communist and capitalist forces. The U.S. wound up supporting brutal dictators in places like Latin America simply because those dictators opposed communism; America also involved itself in bloody and intractable conflicts, such as the war in Vietnam.



President Harry Truman

### PROBLEM 2—ECONOMIC AID



Truman and Secretary of State George C. Marshall

The U.S. adopted the European Recovery Plan, which became popularly known as the Marshall Plan (after Secretary of State and former general George C. Marshall). It gave \$13 billion (equal to about \$130 billion in 2006) to European countries over the course of about two years (until the start of the Korean War in 1950). Congress passed the act on the grounds that it offered a constructive way to help Europeans and stop the spread of communism. The Marshall Plan proved very popular and successful. According to most historians, it produced overwhelmingly positive results. Among the Marshall Plan's consequences:

1. Western European countries recovered very quickly. By the time the Marshall Plan ended in 1951, industrial production in western Europe had

increased by 40% over pre–World War II levels. The money itself helped, but the political and economic stability created by U.S. involvement in Europe might have helped even more.

2. Americans traded with Europeans and also invested heavily in European industries. In the decades after the Marshall Plan’s implementation, American investments increased more than tenfold in some European businesses, with American companies gaining majority control over a number of industries in Britain and France (over 80% control of baby food, typewriters, and sewing machines, for example).
3. Europe’s demand for goods increased, and Europeans now had the money to buy those goods. Simultaneously, production increased tremendously in the U.S. It’s difficult to pinpoint exactly how much of that increase in production resulted from increased European demand and the Marshall Plan, but those factors certainly had a significant effect.
4. Some Europeans resented what they saw as American domination of their industries and economies. They worried that the U.S. was exploiting them for its own economic gain.
5. Communist party membership in western Europe declined significantly, although many historians believe they never posed much of a threat even before the Marshall Plan.
6. European productivity increased significantly. New machinery and larger markets increased output.
7. In order to receive Marshall Plan aid, European nations reduced tariffs, controlled their spending through fiscal and monetary policy, and integrated their economies. This marked the beginning of the European Common Market and set the groundwork for the eventual adoption of the Euro.
8. West Germany, with its important industrial regions, became powerful again. The perception that the U.S. supported Germany became a source of anxiety for the Soviets: they feared that a strong Germany would rise up and attack them again.
9. The U.S. greatly enhanced its international reputation.
10. Many now viewed the U.S. as the leading power in the world. With America’s new power came a responsibility to get involved in world affairs, creating a further drift from the policy of isolationism that the U.S. had adopted in the years prior to World War II.

### **PROBLEM 3—MILITARY ALLIANCE**

In 1949, Truman established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to defend western Europe. The alliance probably lacked sufficient power to repel a Soviet attack, but the fact that much of the free world had united against them provided a psychological barrier for the Soviets. In joining an alliance like NATO, the U.S. abandoned its long-held goal of isolationism. The U.S. had joined alliances before, of course, but always during wartime and always when faced with great pressure to do so. NATO marked the first time the U.S. joined a peacetime alliance, and it symbolized the U.S. commitment to involvement in world affairs. More alliances followed, such as SEATO and CENTO.

Many still debate whether the U.S. involvement in international organizations such as NATO worked to its benefit or detriment.

### **PROBLEM 4—THE BERLIN BLOCKADE**

Accepting the blockade and allowing the Soviets to take over West Berlin would have marked a profound, symbolic defeat for the U.S., and might have emboldened the Soviets to impose more blockades or cause other confrontations. On the other hand, Truman knew that sending troops to forcibly break the blockade could have led to a full-fledged war with hundreds of thousands—or even millions—of casualties. Instead, Truman chose a third option. He decided to fly food and supplies into Berlin to keep the city going, as shown in the photograph below. After 11 months, the Soviets lifted the blockade. It represented a great victory for West Germany, western Europe, and the U.S.

### **PROBLEM 5—CHINA**

Truman tried to support nationalist forces in China by sending aid. By 1949, however, it had become apparent nationalists leaders had wasted the aid, selling much of it on the black market to enrich themselves. The nationalists did not inspire much sympathy as a group: they were largely wealthy landowners, and they opposed any kind of land reform that might help peasants. The communists did offer land reform, so enormous numbers of peasants naturally gravitated to the communist side.

American leaders determined that the nationalists would probably lose regardless of any help the U.S. could provide, and sending troops would therefore be fruitless. Despite the communist takeover of China, most historians believe that sending U.S. troops to fight in the Chinese civil war would have ended disastrously.

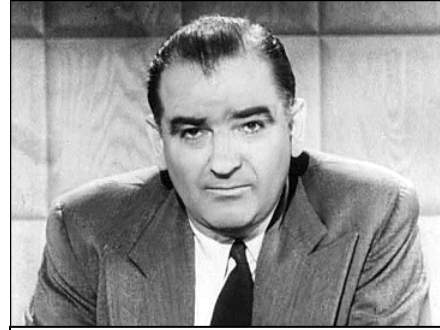


Plane landing during the Berlin airlift

### **PROBLEM 6—THE THREAT OF COMMUNIST INFILTRATION**

Truman was under pressure to take action against possible communists and communist sympathizers, since the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) had concluded that numerous security risks existed within the government itself. This powerful congressional committee had the ability to cause trouble for Truman if he failed to take action. As a result, Truman decided to continue and expand the loyalty program, which investigated government employees and fired those considered disloyal. It remains unclear whether the program actually prevented any communists from spying inside the U.S. (since it's difficult to find evidence of something not happening). Truman's support

of the loyalty program did have a negative effect: the fact that the president seemed concerned about the internal threat increased Americans' fear of communism. This fear contributed to a "Red Scare" in which government officials (most notably, Senator Joseph McCarthy) used unscrupulous methods to search for communists in government, the entertainment industry, universities, and churches. Americans were threatened and cajoled into informing on one another. Many Americans suspected of communist affiliation lost their jobs on the basis of little or no evidence.



Senator Joseph McCarthy

## **LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES**

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### **Student Handout 5: Background Questions for Handout 1**

1. How does the American public feel about U.S. involvement in foreign affairs? Will the people support military action?
2. How does the public feel about the Soviet Union and the communist threat?
3. What do U.S. experts say about the threat posed by the Soviets?
4. How does Congress view the Soviet Union?

# LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

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## Student Handout 6: Answers to Questions

- 1. How does the American public feel about U.S. involvement in foreign affairs? Will the people support military action?**

The American public fears the spread of communism, but it is tired of war. Both soldiers and civilians suffered during the war, and everyone now wants a return to normalcy and prosperity. A majority of Americans favor cutting back both on military spending and on economic aid to other countries. Americans also want to end wartime taxes and government controls on the economy.

- 2. How does the public feel about the Soviet Union and the communist threat?**

The public feels the U.S. hasn't taken a firm enough stance against the Soviet Union. "Containment" doesn't feel strong enough: it sounds too much like Britain and France's disastrous "appeasement" policy towards Hitler prior to World War II. In a recent poll, 60% of Americans think the U.S. is "too soft" in its relations with the Soviets, while only 3% think Americans are "too tough." Seventy-one percent disapprove of U.S. policy regarding the Soviets, while only 7% approve.

- 3. What do U.S. experts say about the threat posed by the Soviets?**

Experts express varying opinions:

- A. A State Department report says that the Soviet Union poses a serious threat to the United States. Communists plan to secretly infiltrate government agencies and labor unions in the U.S. in order to obtain information for the Soviet Union. Communists will criticize U.S. policies and try to incite labor disputes throughout the country. In Europe, communists will likely attempt to take over in Germany and other countries.
- B. George Kennan, an American diplomat in the Soviet Union, sent a long telegram arguing that the Soviets see the world as divided into two hostile camps: communist and capitalist. In their view, the two systems are incompatible and will remain hostile to one another until the capitalist countries are overthrown. According to Kennan, Soviet leaders use this alleged capitalist hostility towards their nation to justify their dictatorial control over their own people. If the Russian people fear that capitalist nations will attack them, they will more likely support the leaders of the Soviet Union. Soviet foreign policy is therefore driven by internal politics and won't be changed by U.S. compromises. Kennan believes that the U.S. and the Soviet Union cannot cooperate, so U.S. policy should focus on preventing the expansion of communism while waiting for the Soviet Union to change on its own.
- C. Former senator John Foster Dulles believes the Soviet Union is intent on unlimited expansion. The U.S. can counter this expansion by exhibiting strong

- military power and promoting American ideals abroad (such as giving aid to other countries and supporting democracy).
- D. White House Counsel Clark Clifford gave you a full report on American relations with the Soviet Union. He says that the Soviets' communist ideology drives them to destroy capitalist countries. Compromise with the Soviets will serve only to embolden them to make more demands. The U.S. should take a tough stance against the Soviets while remaining aware that Stalin might provoke the U.S. into a war at any time.
  - E. Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace delivered a speech in which he said the U.S. should avoid a "get tough" policy with the Soviet Union. The tougher the U.S. gets, he contends, the tougher the Soviets will get. He argues that the U.S. has no more right to determine what should happen in eastern Europe than the Soviets have to determine what should happen in Latin America.

#### **4. How does Congress view the Soviet Union?**

Democrats (your party) control both houses of Congress, which makes implementing your policies easier. Since the beginning of World War II, both political parties have agreed on foreign policy. This bipartisan cooperation has kept the country unified behind particular policies. Now, however, Republicans have begun to openly criticize your policies. They characterize your compromises with the Soviets as "appeasement" and complain that as the Soviets demand more and more, the U.S. merely responds by proposing compromises and giving in to their demands. The U.S. is far from powerless, they point out, since it has the atomic bomb. Why should it give in on anything? Congressional elections are coming up this year (1946), and Republicans hope that criticizing your policies will help them gain control of one or both houses of Congress.

## LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

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### Student Handout 7: Assumptions

**With which of the following assumptions do you agree?**

- ☐ 1. The Soviet goal is unlimited expansion. Communist ideology compels the Soviets to spread communism everywhere they can.
- ☐ 2. The Soviet goal is primarily security. The Germans invaded Russia twice: once during World War I and again during World War II. The Soviets want to ensure that such an invasion never happens again, and they therefore want to secure friendly countries along their border. Expansion beyond that security area is only a secondary Soviet goal.
- ☐ 3. The Soviets are primarily driven by their need to maintain control over their own people. They use foreign policy threats to keep their own population under dictatorial control. If the Russian people fear that capitalist nations will attack them, they will more likely support the leaders of the Soviet Union.
- ☐ 4. The Soviets operate the same way leaders of other countries operate. They want to advance their national interest and would be willing to compromise with other countries if it can further their national interest.
- ☐ 5. The priority of the U.S. is to defend freedom and preserve other countries' right to self-determination. The U.S. wants to promote freedom, not gain territory or colonies for itself.
- ☐ 6. American leaders have the same goals as the leaders of other countries. They want to advance the national interest of the U.S. and would be willing to compromise with other countries if it can further their national interest.
- ☐ 7. The primary goal of American leaders is to promote policies that protect and benefit the interests of American business.

# LESSON 2: COLD WAR POLICIES

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## Student Handout 8: Primary Source

### The Containment Policy

*George Kennan was an American diplomat who began his career as an observer of the aftermath of the Russian civil war. He witnessed the brutal process of collectivization, in which the Soviets seized control of private property and killed millions. From 1944 to 1946, he served in Moscow as chief of mission and Ambassador Averell Harriman's consultant. Kennan is 44 years old, fluent in the Russian language and culture, and decidedly anti-communist. He sent a very long telegram in response to a request for analysis of Soviet policy. The following is an excerpt of the telegram.*

...Now it lies in the nature of the mental world of the Soviet leaders, as well as in the character of their ideology, that no opposition to them can be officially recognized as having any merit or justification whatsoever. Such opposition can flow, in theory, only from the hostile and incorrigible forces of dying capitalism....

Now the maintenance of this pattern of Soviet power, namely, the pursuit of unlimited authority domestically [within the USSR], accompanied by the cultivation of the semi-myth of implacable foreign hostility, has gone far to shape the actual machinery of Soviet power as we know it today. Internal organs of administration which did not serve this purpose withered on the vine. Organs which did serve this purpose became vastly swollen. The security of Soviet power came to rest on the iron discipline of the Party, on the severity and ubiquity of the secret police, and on the uncompromising economic monopolism of the state. The "organs of suppression," in which the Soviet leaders had sought security from rival forces, became in large measures the masters of those whom they were designed to serve. Today the major part of the structure of Soviet power is committed to the perfection of the dictatorship and to the maintenance of the concept of Russia as in a state of siege, with the enemy lowering beyond the walls. And the millions of human beings who form that part of the structure of power must defend at all costs this concept of Russia's position, for without it they are themselves superfluous....

But least of all can the rulers dispense with the fiction by which the maintenance of dictatorial power has been defended. For this fiction has been canonized in Soviet philosophy by the excesses already committed in its name; and it is now anchored in the Soviet structure of thought by bonds far greater than those of mere ideology.

So much for the historical background. What does it spell in terms of the political personality of Soviet power as we know it today?

Of the original ideology, nothing has been officially junked. Belief is maintained in the basic badness of capitalism, in the inevitability of its destruction, in the obligation of the proletariat to assist in that destruction and to take power into its own hands. But stress has come to be laid primarily on those concepts which relate most specifically to the Soviet

regime itself: to its position as the sole truly Socialist regime in a dark and misguided world, and to the relationships of power within it....

In the light of the above, it will be clearly seen that the Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence. The Russians look forward to a duel of infinite duration, and they see that already they have scored great successes. It must be borne in mind that there was a time when the Communist Party represented far more of a minority in the sphere of Russian national life than Soviet power today represents in the world community.

It is clear that the United States cannot expect in the foreseeable future to enjoy political intimacy with the Soviet regime. It must continue to regard the Soviet Union as a rival, not a partner, in the political arena. It must continue to expect that Soviet policies will reflect no abstract love of peace and stability, no real faith in the possibility of a permanent happy coexistence of the Socialist and capitalist worlds, but rather a cautious, persistent pressure toward the disruption and, weakening of all rival influence and rival power.

Balanced against this are the facts that Russia, as opposed to the western world in general, is still by far the weaker party, that Soviet policy is highly flexible, and that Soviet society may well contain deficiencies which will eventually weaken its own total potential. This would of itself warrant the United States entering with reasonable confidence upon a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world.

It would be an exaggeration to say that American behavior unassisted and alone could exercise a power of life and death over the communist movement and bring about the early fall of Soviet power in Russia. But the United States has it in its power to increase enormously the strains under which Soviet policy must operate, to force upon the Kremlin a far greater degree of moderation and circumspection than it has had to observe in recent years, and in this way to promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the breakup or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power. For no mystical, Messianic movement—and particularly not that of the Kremlin—can face frustration indefinitely without eventually adjusting itself in one way or another to the logic of that state of affairs.

### QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What does Kennan argue that the U.S. should do?
2. What information does Kennan provide that might help in making decisions about the Soviet Union? List two parts of **P-A-G-E** in which his arguments prove helpful.

# LESSON 3: ELECTION OF 1948

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## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

The 1948 election is mostly known for Truman's surprise win. The Republicans nominated a moderate, Governor Thomas Dewey of New York, so the two candidates held similar positions on many issues. The biggest factor in the election proved to be the gutsy campaign style of President Truman. When students read about his vigorous campaign, will it also affect their decision?

### VOCABULARY

- Harry Truman—Democratic winner of the 1948 election
- Thomas Dewey—Republican loser of the 1948 election
- Dixiecrat Party—Southern Democrats who formed their own faction when the Democratic Party decided to oppose segregation

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Reflect on goals

# LESSON PLAN

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## **A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (30 minutes)**

### Procedure:

Give students the handout on the candidates, then ask them to vote and to predict who won the actual election. After the discussion, tell them who the candidates were and that Harry Truman (Candidate A) won, as noted in Handout 2. Ask students if they think Truman will be a good president based on this description. Was there anything in the description of Truman that would help them predict how he would handle the Korean War? Students could note that Truman believed in containment.

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they learned from this outcome. Then ask what decision-making skills were particularly important in deciding for whom to vote. Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) You might want to ask students directly if they voted primarily on character, decision-making skills, or positions on important issues. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students what the election shows about the U.S. in 1948. (Possibilities include the concern about communism and labor at the time.) Why did students vote the same or differently from voters at the time?

### Connecting to Today:

How should people vote in presidential elections: based on character, skills, or issues? What does the 1948 election show about how voters pick candidates?

### Troubleshooting:

Some students may need to review the Marshall Plan and other Cold War policies up to 1948. Don't review the Truman Doctrine or discuss it by name, since that would give away the identity of one of the candidates.

## **B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10 minutes)**

For homework, have students decide on their candidate. Ask them to vote on their candidates and predict the results. Give them Handout 2, which gives the results. Keep the discussion short by concentrating on whether students focused more on personal characteristics or issues when choosing their candidate.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handout 2)

## What Actually Happened:

Truman managed an upset victory over Dewey despite trailing in the polls.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- Identify any underlying problem
- Consider other points of view
- What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)
- Reliability of sources
- Historical analogies

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
- Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?

### E = Effects

- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out the options. What could go wrong?

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

- **Reflect on your goals:** Is the primary goal to elect someone with strong character, good decision-making skills, or the right positions on important issues? The candidates in 1948 didn't differ greatly on the issues, so in this lesson students may place more emphasis on personality.

## Further Research:

The platforms of the Republican and Democratic Parties can be found at The American Presidency Project, available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/platforms.php>.

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## LESSON 3: ELECTION OF 1948

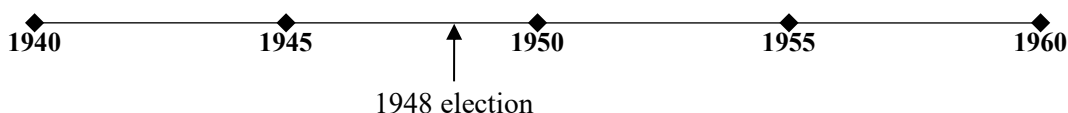
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### Vocabulary

- Harry Truman—Democratic winner of the 1948 election
- Thomas Dewey—Republican loser of the 1948 election
- Dixiecrat Party—Southern Democrats who formed their own faction when the Democratic Party decided to oppose segregation

# LESSON 3: ELECTION OF 1948

## Student Handout 1



You are a voter in the 1948 presidential election. The U.S. has recovered from World War II, and Americans look forward to years of peace and prosperity. However, the Soviet Union seems determined to spread communism around the world. The U.S. has entered a period of anxiety and unfriendly diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union known as the “Cold War.”

**Choose who you want as your next president. Who do you predict will win the election?**

### CANDIDATE A

#### Positions on Issues:

1. Taxes—Wants to cut taxes for poorer people; believes wealthy Americans have received too many tax cuts
2. Foreign policy—Supports the United Nations and a strong military. He also supports the right of the state of Israel to exist and be a member of the United Nations. He instituted the Marshall Plan and supports a tough stand against the Soviet Union. He has taken a strong stand against the Soviet blockade of Berlin flying in food to the Berliners.
3. Communists/spies—Supports a program to investigate and ensure that all government employees are loyal to the United States
4. Economy—Wants a higher minimum wage and more government-supported public housing
5. Veterans—Boasts that his party passed the popular and successful GI Bill for veterans
6. Farmers—Supports government aid (subsidies) for farmers to keep prices high
7. Labor—Opposes the Taft-Hartley Act, which limits the power of unions
8. Minorities—Supports civil rights for African Americans, even though part of his own party disagreed on this issue so strongly that they walked out and formed a third party. He wants to end all discrimination based on race, creed, or color. He issued an executive order that ended discrimination in the military.

#### Personal Characteristics:

He grew up on a farm in Missouri. He is a Baptist, is married, and has one daughter. He fought in the U.S. army during World War I, then ran a clothing store that went out of business during the Depression. He worked hard to pay back the debts from this business failure. He has a no-nonsense, straightforward personality, and isn't afraid to take an

unpopular stand on an issue. For example, he called for the Democrats to support civil rights for African Americans, even though many in his party bitterly opposed it.

As a congressman during World War II, he served on a committee that aimed to eliminate government waste and corruption; the committee ended up saving the government as much as \$15 billion. He likes playing poker. He had been vice president and is now the current president, running for reelection.

Even though he is the president now, he is the underdog in the election. His popularity dropped two years ago when he took a strong stand against labor strikes. Lately, he has regained some support from labor because he opposed the Taft-Hartley Act, which limited the power of unions. Experts have confidently predicted that Candidate B will win. Nevertheless, Candidate A has not given up. He has campaigned vigorously, traveling all over the country by train in a “whistle-stop campaign.” He has given over 200 speeches from the backs of railroad cars, charging that Congress, which is controlled by the party of Candidate B, has done nothing to help ordinary people.

## **CANDIDATE B**

### Positions on Issues:

1. Taxes—Wants to cut taxes and control government spending
2. Foreign policy—Supports the United Nations and a strong military. He also supports the right of the state of Israel to exist and be a member of the United Nations. He backs the Marshall Plan, and advocates a tough stance against the Soviet Union.
3. Communists/spies—Supports efforts by the House Un-American Activities Committee to root out communist subversion in the U.S.
4. Economy—Wants to reduce government regulation of business; also favors a higher minimum wage and more government-supported public housing
5. Veterans—Supports cost-of-living raises for veterans
6. Farmers—Supports government aid (subsidies) for farmers to keep prices high
7. Labor—Supports the Taft-Hartley Act, which limits the power of unions
8. Minorities—His party’s platform states, “The right of equal opportunity to work and to advance in life should never be limited in any individual because of race, religion, color, or country of origin.” The party favors anti-lynching laws, ending the poll tax for voting (a tax widely used to prevent African Americans and poor whites from voting), and ending discrimination against African Americans in the armed forces.

### Personal Characteristics:

He grew up in Michigan and went to law school at Columbia University. He tried but failed at professional singing in New York. He then became a government prosecutor and conducted campaigns against organized crime. One mobster plotted to have him assassinated but was killed himself before he could carry out the plan.

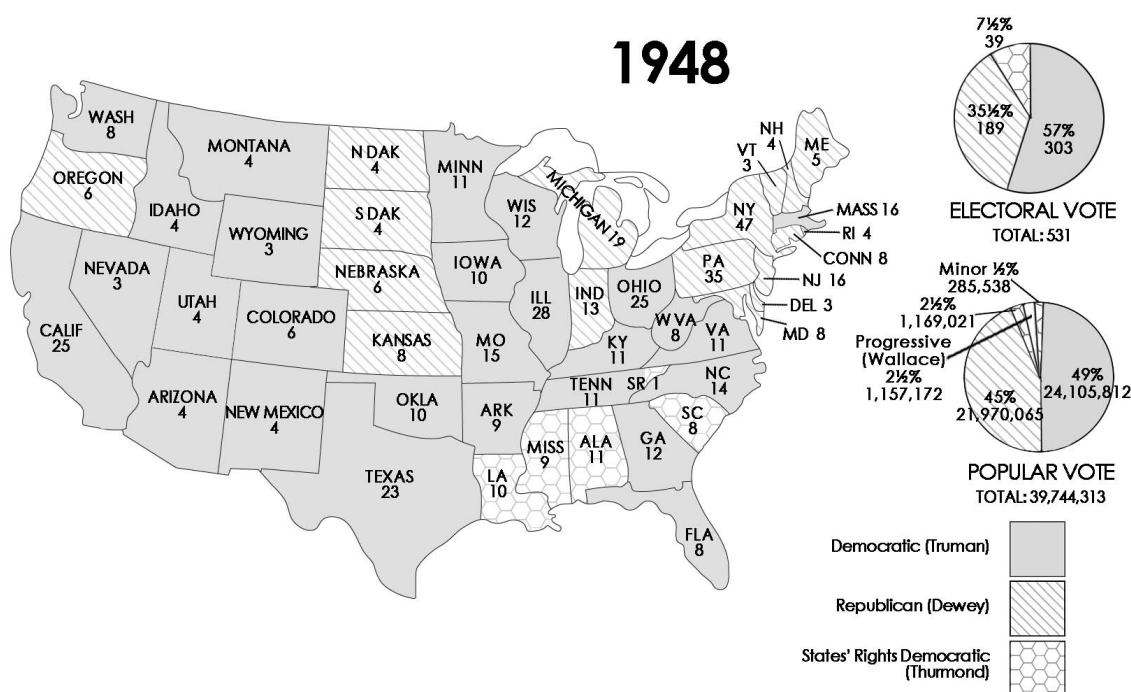
As governor of New York, he has earned a reputation for honesty and efficiency. He cut taxes, doubled state aid to education, increased salaries for state employees, and reduced the state's debt by over \$100 million. He also pushed New York to pass the first state law in the U.S. prohibiting racial discrimination in employment. He also signed legislation that created the State University of New York and built the New York State Thruway.

Unlike Candidate A, he has not traveled the country giving passionate and combative speeches. Instead, he has conducted a dignified campaign, talking mostly about his positions on various issues. He is a perfectionist who prefers to write all his own speeches. He has dark hair and a thin mustache. One critic says that he looks like the "little man on the wedding cake." He is married and has two children.

# LESSON 3: ELECTION OF 1948

## Student Handout 2

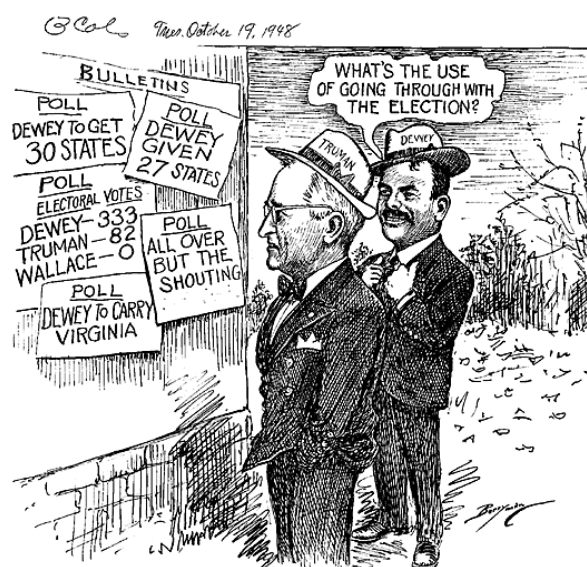
### OUTCOME



### What Actually Happened:

Candidate A, Democrat Harry S. Truman, defeated Candidate B, Republican Thomas E. Dewey, by a margin of 49.6% to 45.1% (303 electoral votes to 189) in the 1948 election.

Before the election, polls predicted that Dewey would win easily, so Truman's reelection came as a tremendous surprise. Many thought that Truman's campaign was hindered by a split in the Democratic Party: when Truman took a position in favor of civil rights for African Americans at the Democratic National Convention, southern Democrats walked out and formed the Dixiecrat Party. No one expected that Truman could win the



election without the votes of southern Democrats. Polling organizations later concluded that their methods were flawed: they conducted their interviews by telephone at a time when many working-class people did not have telephones. Thus, the sample did not represent working-class Americans. The *Chicago Tribune* was so confident that Dewey would win that they printed a headline reading “Dewey Defeats Truman” before all the results had come in. The photograph below shows Truman after his victory happily holding up the headline.

The Korean War dominated Truman’s second term, and he quickly lost the support of the American people. By the end of his presidency, Truman’s popularity stood at only 28%.



# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

Many people refer to the Korean War as the “Forgotten War,” a term that understates its historical importance. The Cold War was largely a political and ideological conflict, fought in conference rooms rather than on the battlefield. However, the Korean War marked one of the few instances in which U.S. forces engaged in armed conflict against communists. In subsequent years, U.S. leaders used the Korean War as an analogy when making other decisions, reckoning that policies that had proven effective in keeping communism out of South Korea could work elsewhere as well.

### VOCABULARY

- Communism—System in which all property is owned communally and controlled by the government, rather than privately owned and operated
- North Korea—Communist-controlled region
- South Korea—Non-communist region
- Inchon landing—Surprise attack by U.S. forces behind North Korean lines
- Containment—U.S. policy of preventing communist expansion
- Pusan Perimeter—UN/U.S. defensive line in South Korea against North Korean attacks
- Panmunjom—Location in North Korea where peace negotiations were held
- Joseph Stalin—Communist leader of the Soviet Union
- Mao Zedong—Communist leader of China

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context
- Ask about analogies
- Set realistic goals
- Play out options
- Predict unintended consequences

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one 40-minute class period)

### Procedure:

Give students Problem 1 and have them work in small groups to make a decision. Groups should choose two of the questions provided on the handout. Circulate around the class and give students the answers (provided on Handout 5); alternatively, make copies of Handout 5 and cut them into strips so that students can come to your desk and get only the answers to the questions they chose. You could also distribute Handout 5 in its entirety and give students access to the answers to all of the questions. Bring the class back together and have each group explain its decision. After all groups have reported, distribute Handout 1 and discuss the actual decision.

Repeat the same procedure for Problems 2 and 3. Throughout the lesson, encourage students to come up with their own questions in addition to the ones provided.

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly important in making decisions about these issues? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students if they thought the Korean War resulted more from historical factors or from the decisions of one person or small group of people. Truman and his advisors made significant decisions that directly led to U.S. involvement in the war, but many historical factors also came into play in 1950 and 1951, including the fear of communism, American public opinion, and the history of Korea.

### Connecting to Today:

Ask students how they think the events of the 1950s shaped the situation in Korea during the first decade of the 21st century. How should U.S. leaders deal with the communist government of North Korea and the threat of nuclear weapons?

Troubleshooting:

Students may have difficulty following the phases of the war. It may help to go over the maps included in the lesson, particularly when discussing Problems 1 and 2.

<b>B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–20 minutes)</b>
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Assign Handout 1 as homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their decisions for three minutes or so. Have the class vote on which questions they would like to have answered and briefly discuss students' reasoning. Read the answers to the top three vote getters, then have students go back and see if they would change their decisions. Repeat this process for Problems 2 and 3. Distribute Handouts 2, 3, and 4 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 2–4)

The book by William Stueck (see “Sources”) provides a good analysis of the war, focusing on both the Chinese and Soviet perspectives.

Irving Janis has written an important book on “groupthink” (see “Sources”), a phenomenon that occurs when a group of people (often with similar opinions) seeks to maintain group solidarity and come to unanimous decisions, rather than raise difficult or divisive questions. The decision making of Truman’s advisors may represent an example of this phenomenon: the members of the group knew and respected each other and had a tendency to make unanimous decisions. The lack of any dissenting voices in cases like these, says Janis, leads to poor decision making.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- Identify any underlying problem
- \* - **Consider other points of view**
- What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
- Reliability of sources
- \* - **Historical analogies**

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
- Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?

### E = Effects

- \* - **Predict unintended consequences**
- Play out the options. What could go wrong?

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

## PROBLEM 1—JUNE 1950

- **Consider other points of view:** Students should consider the situation from the points of view of all parties involved, not just that of the U.S. They should wonder about the nature of Soviet involvement: did Stalin hope to expand in North Korea, or did the attack start without his permission? What did the Chinese think about a

war taking place so close to their border? How much did the Chinese depend on the Soviets?

- **Ask questions:** The questions provided should help students focus on identifying what additional information they will need when considering the problems.
- **Evaluate analogies:** The answers to questions 1 and 6 raise the possibility that North Korea's invasion of South Korea was analogous to the fascist aggression of Germany, Italy, and Japan in the years before World War II. Many people believed that the Soviet Union, wanting to further the spread of communism, pushed North Korea to attack. If so, the situation does seem analogous to the one that existed before World War II: both involved aggression by powerful, totalitarian countries. However, some people (including George Kennan, the author of the containment policy) believed that the Soviets simply sought regional expansion and protection from future attack, not world domination. Experts still argue about the Soviet Union's motivation. Adam Ulam, an American expert on Soviet policies, believes Stalin wanted Korea to strengthen Soviet power in Asia, not to test the U.S. (as Truman assumed). Historian Ernest May argues that the U.S. shouldn't have jumped to the conclusion that the Soviet Union was starting a campaign to spread communism worldwide. Historically, Russia had always sought control of Korea. Therefore, the communist expansion there may have been a goal in itself, not the beginning of a larger campaign.
- **Play out the option:** Students should recognize that if they choose to send troops, they will need support from Congress and other allied nations. Truman learned this lesson the hard way: members of Congress criticized him for not involving them in the decision to send American soldiers into combat. Historians have said that Truman suffered as a result of offending Congress, and without congressional backing for the war effort, the public was much more likely to turn against it. While Truman enjoyed initial public support for the war, this support evaporated as the war dragged on over the course of three long years. By the end of his term in 1953, Truman's approval rating had dropped below 30%. On the other hand, Truman did a much better job of securing support from other countries. By working through the United Nations, he created the impression that he had consulted with other countries and was acting in accordance with international law. This legitimized American actions in the eyes of people all over the world. Other nations did not send many troops to Korea, but quite a few did support Truman's goal of stopping the spread of communism.

## PROBLEM 2—SEPTEMBER 1950

- **Ask questions:** Questions 7, 8, and 12 are especially important because they deal with the Chinese and their willingness and ability to get involved in the conflict and fight on the side of North Korea. Many believe that Truman should have asked similar questions: had he understood the implications of Chinese involvement, he might have realized the difficulty of invading North Korea.
- **Identify goals:** One could criticize Truman and his advisors for not identifying and sticking to their goals in the conflict. The goal of containment was to stop the expansion of communism. However, if Truman merely wanted to prevent a

communist takeover of South Korea, why did he then invade North Korea? Also, Truman didn't establish a coherent goal for dealing with China, possibly because he didn't realize the implications of Chinese involvement. By invading North Korea, the U.S. risked an all-out war with China. General MacArthur proposed that the U.S. bomb China—with both conventional and nuclear weapons—in order to ensure victory. When his views became public, Truman fired him. Such a war would have been devastating and costly, and the American public would not have supported it. But the question remains: if Truman remained unwilling to do everything in his power to fight China for North Korea, why did he invade North Korea in the first place? Many believe that had Truman stuck with his main goal of preventing the spread of communism into South Korea, he could have avoided a costly, bloody battle and maintained public support.

- **Consider effects/consequences:** Students should consider possible consequences of their choices. What will happen if the Chinese defeat the U.S. on the battlefield? Does the war in Korea have the potential to draw in other countries and spark another world war? Will the war further increase distrust and animosity between the U.S. and the Soviet Union?

### PROBLEM 3—JUNE 1951

- **Evaluate analogies:** In considering how to negotiate with North Korea and the Chinese, you could encourage students to think of other historical negotiations they have studied. At the Munich Conference in 1938, Britain and France appeased Germany by giving in to Hitler's demands for Czechoslovakia. This decision allowed Hitler to begin his campaign of aggression; most historians now regard appeasement as disastrous, so students may feel as though they shouldn't appease the communist powers. Students may also remember the debate over whether the U.S. should have required Japan to surrender conditionally or unconditionally. Under what conditions is it reasonable to be uncompromising? When is it wise to compromise? When is it necessary to give in on most issues? Students should think about whether the U.S. was negotiating from a position of strength or weakness.

# SOURCES

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Janis, Irving. *Victims of Groupthink*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972, Chapter 3, “In and Out of Korea.”

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# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

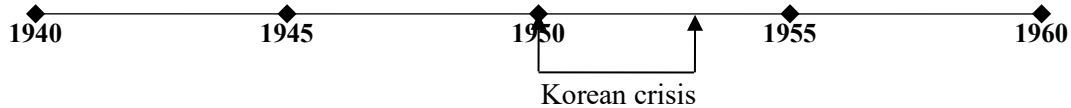
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- Panmunjom—Location in North Korea where peace negotiations were held
- Joseph Stalin—Communist leader of the Soviet Union
- Mao Zedong—Communist leader of China

# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

## Student Handout 1: Problems



### PROBLEM 1—JUNE 1950

You are President Harry Truman. After World War II, the U.S. and the Soviet Union each occupied half of Korea: the Americans stationed troops in South Korea, while the Soviets stationed troops in North Korea. The U.S. withdrew its troops last year. Now you learn that communist North Korea has invaded South Korea. The South Koreans are rapidly losing the fight, and your advisors think that they can only last two to three weeks without U.S. support.

You are surrounded by a group of trusted advisors, including Secretary of State Dean Acheson, for whom you have great respect, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (heads of the army, navy, and air force), in whom you place great confidence and trust. This group of advisors gets along well, shares similar ideas about the goals and tactics of U.S. foreign policy, and prides itself in harmony and unity in the spirit of public duty. All the advisors agree that the U.S. needs to take strong military action to respond to the North Korean attack.



**How will you react to the invasion of South Korea by the communist North Koreans?**

You can ask any two of the questions below to help with your deliberations:

1. What policy has the U.S. taken regarding Korea? Does Korea have strategic importance to the U.S.? How does Korea fit into the larger context of the Cold War?
2. What information do U.S. intelligence agencies have? Did they anticipate this attack? Does North Korea have a strong military? What about South Korea? What is the political relationship between the two countries?
3. If the U.S. decides to send in troops, can it defeat the North Koreans? What problems will it face?
4. What is the political situation in the U.S., including public opinion, recent political events, Congress, the press, and upcoming elections?
5. How do allies of the U.S. view the conflict? What about neutral countries? Can the U.S. appeal to the UN for help?
6. What do the major communist powers in the area (particularly China and the Soviet Union) think about the conflict? What are their goals?

## PROBLEM 2—SEPTEMBER 1950

You have received word that General MacArthur has made a daring attack behind North Korean lines. U.S. ships landed men at Inchon, hundreds of miles behind the North Korean forces. The entire North Korean army had to retreat or be surrounded. At this point, you stand very close to your goal of reclaiming South Korea. General MacArthur now wants permission to pursue the North Korean army into North Korea itself. He reminds you that the North Koreans started this war with an aggressive and unprovoked attack on South Korea. He says their army is now disorganized and that his superior U.S. forces can eliminate it.



U.S. troops at the Inchon landing

Currently, the U.S. has a policy of containment—stopping the expansion of communism into new countries. Retaking South Korea from the communists was consistent with containment. However, expanding into North Korea would go far beyond this.

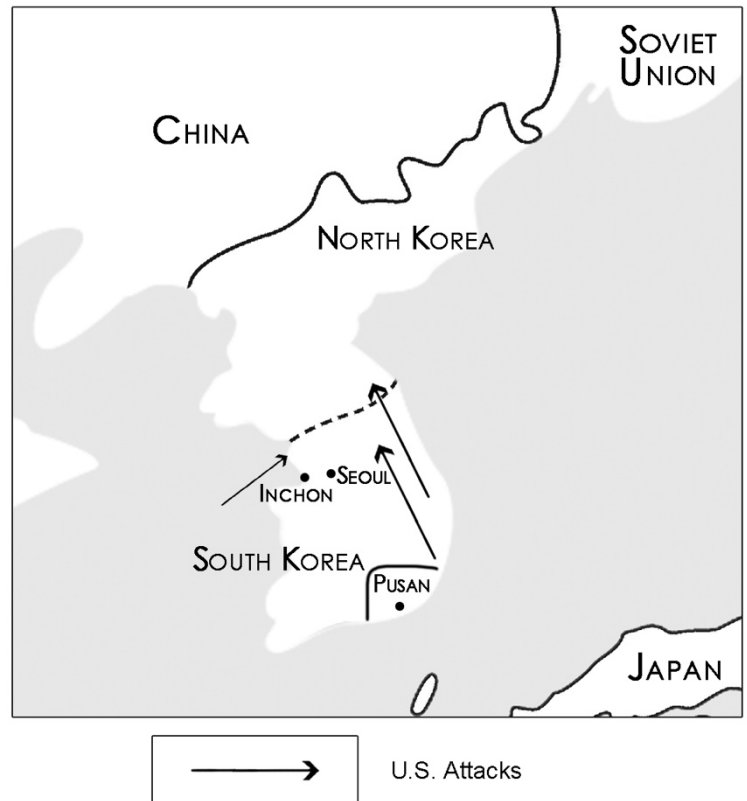
You've consulted your advisors, who unanimously recommend that you grant MacArthur's request and allow the U.S. to push into North Korea and defeat the North Korean army. That will allow the U.S. to reunite the two halves of Korea into one democratic, non-communist nation. The North Koreans' weakness, they say, has given the U.S. an opportunity to expand democracy.

You've also consulted the United Nations, since you hope to conduct any invasion under U.N. auspices, even though most of the troops taking part will be Americans. The U.N. will agree to the invasion of North Korea if the U.S. supplies the troops.

### Will you grant MacArthur's request to invade North Korea?

You can ask any two of the questions below to help with your deliberations:

1. Does either China or the Soviet Union have troops in North Korea?
2. Is either China or the Soviet Union likely to get involved if the U.S. invades North Korea?
3. Can you trust General MacArthur to reliably report on events and judge the military situation?
4. Your advisors may unanimously agree about the benefits of invading North Korea, but have other people offered dissenting opinions?
5. How prepared is the U.S. militarily? What about other countries that may get involved?
6. What do the Chinese think about the conflict? What about the Soviets?
7. What does the American public think about the Korean War?



### PROBLEM 3—JUNE 1951



Chinese soldier killed in the fighting in Korea

A year has now passed since the war began, and casualties have run high on both sides. The U.S. invaded North Korea, but then the Chinese entered the conflict on North Korea's side and pushed the American forces back to the middle of the Korean peninsula. Over the past several months, the war has become a costly, bloody stalemate. The North Koreans and the Chinese seem willing to negotiate. Since the fighting has not resulted in a clear victory for either side, it seems likely that negotiations will lead to compromise and some sort of settlement. Your

advisors are split on this question: some want to continue fighting, while others feel the U.S. should negotiate.

**Will you negotiate with North Korea, or will you keep fighting?**

The answer to the question below may help with your deliberations:

1. What does the American public think about the Korean War in 1951? Has anyone polled the American people about their views? If so, what patterns do these polls show?

# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

## Student Handout 2: Outcomes for Problem 1

### PROBLEM 1—JUNE 1950

President Truman decided to send American troops to stop the North Korean army from taking over all of South Korea.

Truman listened to the recommendations of his advisors, and he also considered several historical events in making his decision. In the years before World War II, Truman had been a senator. He voted in favor of neutrality laws designed to keep the U.S. out of the war, and he supported the Nye Committee's view that the U.S. had made a mistake by entering World War I and should take care to stay out of future conflicts. However, the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor changed Truman's mindset. He felt ashamed and guilty for supporting neutrality and possibly delaying U.S. entry into the war. He became convinced that the U.S. should take a strong stance against any future acts of aggression. As president, he promoted the idea that the U.S. should take decisive military action against communism. When North Korea attacked, he told his advisors that he believed the communists were probing for weaknesses, testing the U.S. to see if it would respond. He compared this to Germany's campaign of aggression that had started with Hitler's demand for the Sudetenland at the Munich Conference. In his memoirs, Truman compared the North Korean attack to the actions taken by fascist nations in the years before World War II. He wrote, "In my generation, this was not the first occasion when the strong attacked the weak. I recalled some earlier instances: Manchuria, Ethiopia, Austria. I remembered how each time that the democracies failed to act it had encouraged the aggressors to keep going ahead. Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier.... If this was allowed to go unchallenged it would mean a third world war, just as similar incidents had brought on a second world war."



U.S. soldiers fighting in Korea, July 1950

Initially, the North Koreans held off the outnumbered and ill-prepared U.S. forces. American troops eventually managed to hold defensive lines at the Pusan Perimeter.

The situation began to improve for the U.S. when American bombing campaigns struck the North Korean army and impaired its supply chain. General MacArthur then devised a daring plan. U.S. troops landed at Inchon, far to the north of enemy forces, and trapped

the North Korean army. The North Koreans had to retreat or be cut off and surrounded. With the invasion at Inchon, MacArthur managed to turn a possible defeat into a decisive victory.

Truman's decision to stop the communist advance into South Korea had widespread public support. Afterwards, most people continued to feel that Truman had made the right decision in defending South Korea.



Bombed North Korean railcars

# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

## Student Handout 3: Outcomes for Problem 2

### PROBLEM 2—SEPTEMBER 1950

Truman and his advisors chose to grant MacArthur's request and allow him to invade North Korea. As U.S. forces moved north, they had to occupy more and more territory, thus spreading their troops thin. By this time, the Chinese had decided to enter the war on the North Koreans' side. A large Chinese force, determined to defend North Korea against the invasion, engaged the Americans in battle. Then, the Chinese force suddenly disappeared. MacArthur assumed the Chinese had retreated back into China, but he was wrong. On November 24, 1950, about 300,000 Chinese soldiers (along with 40,000 guerilla fighters behind American lines) launched an attack on U.S. forces. The attack killed or wounded thousands of Americans, forcing the U.S. to retreat. The defeat was crushing. Many saw Truman's decision to invade North Korea as a huge blunder.



U.S. and South Korean trucks crossing the effective dividing line between North and South Korea



The Americans had successfully defended South Korea, but invading North Korea was a different story; the presence of the Chinese proved to be the crucial factor. Truman had abundant evidence that China intended to defend North Korea against a U.S. invasion, and MacArthur continued to push forward even after the Americans had engaged the Chinese in battle. Clearly, the Chinese had troops on the peninsula and were prepared to fight. Some of Truman's advisors who were familiar with China's leader, Mao Zedong, should have considered that the Chinese were repositioning themselves

for attack—not retreating—because Mao had a reputation for setting traps for enemy soldiers. Despite the fact that many in the U.S. government knew this, no one seemed eager to counter MacArthur’s optimistic assessment that the Chinese had retreated.

Why didn’t Truman and his advisors foresee the risks involved in invading North Korea, and why didn’t they pull U.S. troops out after the first encounter with the Chinese? Some historians believe that Truman and his advisors made the wrong decision because they got along so well and all shared such similar opinions. Their group cohesion made them reluctant to question one another’s judgments or plans, and they didn’t listen to dissenting views from outsiders. Truman knew that foreign policy experts like George Kennan and Paul Nitze opposed the invasion, but such alternative points of view were not discussed at meetings. Similarly, when some suggested after the invasion began that the U.S. stop advancing and negotiate with the North Koreans, Secretary of Defense George Marshall struck down that proposal, saying that the U.S. should wait until MacArthur’s offensive had achieved victory. One political scientist has called this phenomenon “groupthink”: it occurs when group members are so loyal to one another that they can’t think critically about proposals the group comes up with.

Even after the invasion had proved disastrous, Truman did not fire the men who had pushed for it. Instead, he blamed the American press and critics of his policies in Korea, reasoning that the Chinese had taken these dissenting opinions as proof that the U.S. was divided and could be defeated. This, he said, encouraged them to attack the U.S. troops in North Korea.

MacArthur then proposed that the U.S. begin bombing China, using nuclear weapons if necessary. Truman adamantly opposed to this strategy. When MacArthur’s views became public, Truman fired him.



General Douglas MacArthur

# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

## Student Handout 4: Outcomes for Problem 3

### PROBLEM 3—JUNE 1951

In 1951, the U.S. began negotiations with North Korea and China at the city of Panmunjom, which lay near the middle of the Korean peninsula. Truman had replaced General MacArthur with General Ridgway, and the new general understood the need to create a balance of power in Korea. Militarily, the U.S. and China kept trying to capture territory from each other because each wanted to approach the negotiations from a position of strength. Unfortunately, this maneuvering prolonged the negotiations for two years, during which fighting continued. Almost half the casualties in the Korean War occurred during this two-year period. In addition, Stalin wanted the war to continue: he didn't want China to threaten Soviet supremacy in the communist world, so he was happy to let the U.S. and China weaken each other. He therefore pushed Mao Zedong to take a hard line in negotiations with the U.S. Finally, in 1953 the two sides agreed to a truce line roughly at the same place where the border had existed before the war.



Wounded U.S. soldier in Korea

Estimates of casualties in the Korean War vary widely. (The figures given here should serve only as a rough guide.) Between 36,000 and 54,000 American soldiers were killed or wounded in the war. South Korea had 200,000 soldiers killed or wounded and over 500,000 civilian casualties. Approximately 350,000 North Korean soldiers and one million North Korean civilians were killed or wounded, and China suffered about 500,000 casualties.



Mao Zedong and Joseph Stalin

Some historians believe that while the decision to invade North Korea was misguided, it ultimately didn't cause lasting harm to the U.S. It certainly damaged Truman's reputation and hurt the Democratic Party in the 1952 elections. Americans voted in Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower as president, with the understanding that he would negotiate a peace settlement.

One historian believes that the Soviet Union and China suffered much more from the war than the U.S. did: even though the communists successfully repelled the U.S. invasion, they still had to negotiate a settlement when the battle reached a stalemate. The Chinese lost hundreds of thousands of soldiers and saw their economic power and prestige decrease. The Soviet Union suffered as well: because Truman conducted the U.S. involvement in Korea under the auspices of the United Nations, he managed to unite western democracies against communist countries. However, unlike Truman, Mao Zedong and Stalin held dictatorial power and thus stayed on as leaders of their nations after the war.

# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

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## Student Handout 5: Suggested Answers to Questions for Problem 1

- 1. What policy has the U.S. taken regarding Korea? Does Korea have strategic importance to the U.S.? How does Korea fit into the larger context of the Cold War?**

The Japanese occupied the Korean peninsula until its defeat in World War II. The U.S. and the Soviet Union then divided Korea into zones of occupation, as they had with Germany. The Americans occupied South Korea, while the Soviets occupied North Korea. U.S. forces withdrew from South Korea a year before North Korea's invasion. Thus, while the U.S. does not have a formal alliance with South Korea, it does have close ties with the country and helped the South Koreans reestablish themselves after the war. Korea also has a strategic geographic importance: it lies close to Japan, which the U.S. has an interest in defending.

Korea also holds strategic significance in the ongoing Cold War struggle against communism. The policy of containment dictates that the U.S. should use force to resist any instances of communist expansion, and the Soviet-backed North Korean invasion of South Korea certainly qualifies. Your own policy, known as the Truman Doctrine, stipulates that the U.S. should help countries threatened by communism. The U.S. has taken several actions to stop the spread of communism: with the Marshall Plan, it gave aid to European countries to make them less susceptible to communist influence, and it also formed the NATO military alliance to defend western Europe.

In the past year, the U.S. has experienced setbacks in its struggle against communism. The Americans learned that the Soviet Union now has the atomic bomb, so the U.S. no longer has a monopoly on nuclear weapons. Then China, the most populous country in the world, fell to communism. In Congress, Senator Joseph McCarthy has charged that communists have infiltrated the U.S. government. These events have made Americans even more fearful of the threat posed by communism. Many leaders believe that the U.S. must take opportunities to stop the spread of communism whenever it can.

Some of your advisors have compared the North Korean attack on South Korea to the aggressive land grabs by fascist nations during the 1930s. In the years leading up to World War II, Germany, Italy, and Japan took land in Europe, Africa, and Asia, respectively, while western Europe and the League of Nations stood by and did nothing. When Hitler demanded part of Czechoslovakia, Britain and France thought it best to give in to his demands rather than go to war—a policy known as “appeasement.” However, instead of mollifying Hitler, appeasement instead

emboldened him to begin an aggressive campaign to conquer all of Europe. Many people now fear that allowing the communists to take over South Korea would only encourage them to aggressively seek land elsewhere. Any sign of weakness or lack of resolve on the part of the U.S. would thus only encourage the communists to expand further.

On the other hand, some American leaders think that Korea lies outside the U.S. zone of defense and thus might not be that important in fighting the Cold War. In a speech in January, Secretary of State Dean Acheson mentioned Japan and the Philippines as being part of the U.S. defense perimeter, but explicitly left out Korea. A State Department official declared that "Southern Korea is without strategic value to us." American military leaders have also said repeatedly that Korea has no strategic importance and would be very difficult to defend due to its distance from the U.S. and its rugged geography. General Douglas MacArthur, the U.S. commander in the Pacific, said, "[I]n the event of any serious threat to the security of Korea, strategic and military considerations will force abandonment of any pretense of military support."

**2. What information do U.S. intelligence agencies have? Did they anticipate this attack? Does North Korea have a strong military? What about South Korea? What is the political relationship between those two countries?**

The invasion of South Korea came as no surprise to U.S. intelligence, since tensions had existed between North and South Korea for years. Since U.S. troops withdrew a year ago, North and South Korean armies have clashed numerous times. In a speech three months ago, Syngman Rhee, the president of South Korea, actually mentioned the possibility that the South might invade the North. However, American leaders never thought that possibility likely, since South Korea lacks the military resources for such an attack.

North Korea, backed by the Soviet Union, clearly has the dominant military force on the Korean peninsula. It has access to Soviet planes and tanks. The South Koreans have no way to stop the tanks, so they can't resist the North Korean advance. General MacArthur recently toured the battlefield and believes the South Korean army has been routed. The South Koreans have as few as 25,000 soldiers left, and many have given up. Only the intervention of U.S. ground troops can save the South Koreans.

North Korea is a communist dictatorship, dependent on the Soviet Union for military and economic aid. Opinion in South Korea is divided: Many Koreans see President Rhee as too weak to fight the communist guerilla forces inside the country, but others see him as a dictator because (among other things) he has rigged elections and had police arrest and torture suspected communists. In the last election, the South Korean people voted Rhee's party out of power, which led to the current state of political instability.

**3. If the U.S. decides to send in troops, can it defeat the North Koreans? What problems will it face?**

Fighting a war in Korea will not be easy. The U.S. doesn't have many troops in the region, and it will be difficult not only to transport troops and equipment there, but also to resupply them during the war. Also, the military will have to move troops in from nearby countries, such as Japan. In addition, the rugged Korean terrain and poor roads will make movement and supply difficult.

Nevertheless, U.S. military leaders have confidence that U.S. air and naval power can hold the North Koreans back until enough American troops arrive. The U.S. can inflict a great deal of damage through aerial bombings. Your advisors tell you that the American military's superior firepower and fighting spirit should be able to handle the North Koreans.

**4. What is the political situation in the U.S., including public opinion, recent political events, Congress, the press, and upcoming elections?**

The American people have heard Senator Joseph McCarthy's allegations that communists have infiltrated the U.S. government. Last year, China, the world's most populous nation, fell to communism, and Americans now fear that either spies within the U.S. or an invasion from abroad could bring down America as well. Polls show that 63% of Americans want an increase in defense spending to protect the United States.

You are a Democrat, and fortunately for you, both the House and the Senate have Democratic majorities. Therefore, you can count on Congress to support most of your initiatives, including your decisions on Korea. Still, 1950 is an election year for most of Congress, and although Democrats remain on track to keep their majorities, you don't want to take any actions that might hurt the party's fortunes. The Republicans advocate strong action against the North Koreans, and they will criticize you if you show any sign of weakness or indecisiveness. Republican Senator Taft has recently accused you of being "soft" on communism. You definitely don't want to give to that impression to American voters.

Several major newspapers (such as the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald*, and the *Baltimore Sun*) have run editorials encouraging you to take a strong stand against communism in Korea. A *Washington Post* editorial, for example, argued that the U.S. "is committed to repel the aggression by every reason of prestige in Asia and of moral obligation to the Koreans."

Currently your approval rating stands at only 37%, but it has fluctuated during your time in office. Here is a sample of your approval ratings since 1945:

- July 1945: 87%
- October 1946: 32%
- March 1947: 60%

- April 1948: 36%
- January 1949: 69%
- January 1950: 45%
- June 1950 (before the Korean crisis): 37%

Your advisors believe that taking a strong stand against communist expansion in North Korea will increase your approval ratings. Americans fear the communist threat and will respond to strong leadership.

**5. How do the allies of the U.S. view the conflict? What about neutral countries? Can the U.S. appeal to the UN for help?**

Most other democratic, capitalist countries see the North Korean invasion of South Korea as an act of communist aggression. Your advisors believe that other countries are waiting to see if the U.S. will stand up to the communists. If the U.S. chooses to fight in Korea, these countries will support the effort. If the U.S. decides not to fight and allows South Korea to fall to the communists, the other countries will doubt the U.S. commitment to oppose communism. You want to inspire confidence and unity among your allies.

Your advisors believe that with your encouragement, the United Nations will condemn the invasion of South Korea and send military forces to stop the communists.

**6. What do the major communist powers in the area (particularly China and the Soviet Union) think about the conflict? What are their goals?**

It appears that the Soviets must have approved the North Korean attack. The North Koreans wouldn't be able to fight without Soviet equipment (especially their tanks). However, you don't know whether Soviet troops took part in the actual attack. One South Korean newspaper reported large numbers of Soviet soldiers riding in the invading tanks, but little solid evidence exists to support this.

Most of your advisors believe that China will keep its troops out of Korea. They reason that since the country has just emerged from a civil war, the Chinese will be too busy putting down resistance movements at home to get involved in Korea. Evidence shows that at this time, China has few troops located near North Korea.

Your advisors tell you that the Soviets are testing the will of the American people. In the 1930s, Germany, Italy, and Japan did much the same thing: they began campaigns of aggression, and when no one stopped them, they intensified their attacks and eventually started World War II. To appease the Soviets in the same way that countries appeased the fascists in the 1930s could lead to World War III. General Bradley said that "one appeasement leads to another until you eventually make war inevitable." Many believe that the Soviet Union had already begun testing the U.S. before the Korean invasion by blockading Berlin and exploring

the limits of America's determination to stop communist expansion in such places as Greece and Iran.

One contrary school of thought comes from an official government policy study called NSC-68. It suggests that instead of testing the U.S. and trying to achieve world domination, the Soviets might have a greater interest in strengthening power at home and gaining just enough territory to protect the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, even that study called for increased U.S. defense spending in order to counter growing Soviet power.

# LESSON 4: KOREAN CRISIS

## Student Handout 6: Suggested Answers to Questions for Problems 2–3

### PROBLEM 2—SEPTEMBER 1950

**1. Does either China or the Soviet Union have troops in North Korea?**

U.S. intelligence now has information that China has ground troops in North Korea. These troops may number in the thousands, but it remains unclear exactly how many are there. At this time, U.S. intelligence has no indication that Soviet ground troops are in Korea, though Soviet military leaders may be advising the North Koreans.

**2. Is either China or the Soviet Union likely to get involved if the U.S. invades North Korea?**

The Chinese have stated repeatedly that they will fight to defend North Korea if the U.S. threatens its national security. However, all of your advisors think that the Chinese are bluffing. They tell you that the Chinese lack the military strength to back North Korea and depend largely on the Soviet Union. The Chinese could not attack the U.S. in Korea without Soviet approval. Your advisors believe that the Soviets would never approve such an attack because they don't want to be drawn into a war with the U.S.

**3. Can you trust General MacArthur to reliably report on events and judge the military situation?**

General MacArthur has a reputation among both civilians and military leaders as a notorious braggart and an egomaniac. He likes media attention and is always quick to portray his army as standing on the verge of a great victory. Despite this reputation, however, his military accomplishments during World War II earned him a great deal of prestige and respect. People admire his abilities as a military strategist. He also angers easily, and his advisors often hesitate to confront him with bad news.

**4. Your advisors may unanimously agree about the benefits of invading North Korea, but have other people offered dissenting opinions?**

Yes. George Kennan, an expert on communism and author of the containment policy, opposes the U.S. invasion. He argues that if the U.S. invades North Korea, the Chinese will certainly respond by attacking U.S. troops. The Chinese outnumber the Americans, and at the very least the U.S. will suffer substantial losses. The worst-case scenario—that the war will escalate and involve other

countries, leading to a third world war—is also possible. Kennan wonders why the U.S. would take such a risk when it has already established its goal of pushing the North Koreans out of South Korea and containing the communist threat. He claims that the American public will not support the U.S. effort in Korea if it results in heavy casualties and an escalation of the war. Paul Nitze, head of the State Department’s policy planning staff, also opposes the U.S. invasion of North Korea.

**5. How prepared is the U.S. militarily? What about other countries that might get involved?**

The U.S. has successfully repelled the North Korean invasion and has about 100,000 troops in South Korea. However, to invade North Korea will probably require even more soldiers. Some troops will need to stay in the South and others will remain in parts of North Korea as the army advances. This means that the troops will be spread very thin. The Chinese do not have the world’s strongest army, but they have an enormous number of troops. If the Chinese attack, they could send in a nearly unlimited number of soldiers and completely overwhelm U.S. forces.

**6. What do the Chinese think about the conflict? What about the Soviets?**

The Chinese do not want to see the U.S. take over North Korea. They remain upset with the U.S. for supporting Taiwan during the Chinese civil war: the Chinese wanted to invade and capture the island, but American support prevented that. Korea is located right next to China, and the communist Chinese leaders do not want to see the U.S. unite Korea and turn it into a capitalist government right on their border. A capitalist Korea would provide a possible route for future attacks on China from hostile powers and could also encourage anti-communist factions within China. Mao Zedong believes that the Chinese can defeat the U.S. in Korea, which would increase China’s prestige in the region and also create unity and a sense of victory within China. The Chinese people would credit Mao for the victory, which would increase his power over any potential rivals.

While the Soviets do not want a U.S. victory in Korea, they do like the idea of a war between China and the U.S. China is the Soviet Union’s leading communist rival, while the U.S. is the Soviet Union’s capitalist archenemy. A war between the two would drain resources from both. The Soviets will probably provide China with enough supplies to keep fighting but not support them enough to actually ensure their victory. The Soviets would prefer to have the war drag on for years.

**7. What does the American public think about the Korean War?**

Most Americans support the policy of containment, which stipulates that the U.S. should stop communism whenever it tries to expand. However, it remains unclear

whether Americans would support aggressive actions against countries that already have communist governments. The public doesn't know much about the debate over whether the U.S. should invade North Korea, since the discussions have been kept secret. Therefore, there is no way to know people's opinions about the subject. However, it seems unlikely that Americans will support the war if it continues to drag out and large numbers of American soldiers die.

A majority of Americans support stopping the communists from expanding into South Korea: three public opinion polls show support for the war at 75% (21% opposed) in June, 66% (19% opposed) in August, and 81% (13% opposed) in September.

Here are some of the actual poll questions and responses:

**Poll 1—July 1950**

Some people say the United States should pull our troops out of Korea and stop fighting there. Other people say that we should go on fighting in Korea. With which point of view do you agree?

- 12%—Pull out
- 77%—Go on fighting
- 11%—No opinion

**Poll 2—November 1950**

Some people say the United States should take her troops out of Korea to avoid a third world war. Other people say that we should keep our troops there even if it does mean a world war. What do you, yourself, think—should we take our troops out of Korea, or not?

- 25%—Stop fighting, take our troops out
- 65%—Keep troops, risk world war
- 10%—No opinion

### **PROBLEM 3—JUNE 1951**

#### **1. What does the American public think about the Korean War in 1951?**

Here are results of public opinion polls taken in 1951, after the Chinese attacked U.S. troops in North Korea:

Question: Do you think the United States made a mistake in going into the war in Korea?

<b>Poll #</b>	<b>Not a Mistake</b>	<b>Mistake</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Poll 1—February 1951	41%	49%	10%
Poll 2—March 1951	43%	44%	13%
Poll 3—April 1951	45%	37%	18%
Poll 4—June 1951	42%	41%	17%

Question: Do you think the United States was right or wrong in sending American troops to stop the communist invasion of South Korea?

<b>Poll #</b>	<b>Right</b>	<b>Wrong</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Poll 5—February 1951	57%	32%	11%
Poll 6—March 1951	60%	30%	10%
Poll 7—April 1951	63%	27%	10%
Poll 8—May 1951	59%	30%	11%

# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

The CIA-engineered overthrow of the democratically elected Iranian government provides one of the clearest examples of U.S. leaders making poor decisions because they failed to anticipate the long-term consequences of their actions. Evidence indicates that although President Truman anticipated some of the consequences of interfering in Iran and decided not to take action, Eisenhower, operating under the advisement of the Dulles brothers, apparently failed to recognize the possibility of negative consequences. This lesson is designed to give students the opportunity to see if they can anticipate the possible pitfalls of the American actions in Iran.

### VOCABULARY

- Nationalization—Occurs when a government takes over a private company
- Mohammad Mossadegh—Prime Minister of Iran who nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company
- Anglo-Iranian Oil Company—British company that extracted and refined oil in Iran
- Allen Dulles—Head of the CIA; supported Operation Ajax
- John Foster Dulles—U.S. Secretary of State; supported Operation Ajax
- Coup—Overthrow of a government by force or illegal action
- Operation Ajax—CIA-engineered overthrow of the Iranian government in 1953
- Ayatollah Khomeini—Islamic leader of the 1979 Iranian Revolution

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Identify underlying problems
- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context
- Ask about reliability of sources
- Set realistic goals
- Predict unintended consequences

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one 40-minute class period)

### Procedure:

Distribute Handout 1 and have students meet in groups of three to decide what they will do. Have each group explain its decision and then discuss the decisions as a class. Distribute Handout 3 (which lists the outcomes) or tell the class what actually happened and discuss.

Next, give students Handout 2. Have them meet in groups again and decide what they will do. Students can receive answers to two of the four questions at the end of Handout 2. Have copies of Handout 5 cut into strips so students can come to your desk and pick up answers only to the questions they have chosen. Next, have each group report on its decision and explain their reasoning.

OPTIONAL: Distribute Handout 6, which asks students to identify underlying problems. Have students decide which of the seven items best describes the underlying problems, then discuss their answers.

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly important in making decisions about these issues? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students: Did certain historical factors cause the U.S. to instigate the overthrow of the Iranian government, or did it occur because of the decisions of a small group of leaders, such as Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers? Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers pushed hard for the takeover without seeming to consider the possible consequences. Had another administration been in power, the takeover might not have occurred. However, historical forces such as fear of communism (especially after the Korean War) and a tradition of western dominance over Middle Eastern countries were also important causes of the controversial action.

### Connecting to Today:

Discuss the troubled state of U.S.-Iranian relations today. Can we trace current problems back to Operation Ajax in 1953? Given the history of the two countries, how should the U.S. deal with Iran? You could also cite Operation Ajax as an example of the U.S. government taking action to force regime change in a foreign country. Ask students what the Iranian example demonstrates about regime change.

Edmund Burke, an 18th-century British statesman, once said of Britain, “I dread our own power and our own ambition. I dread our being too much dreaded.” Is it fair to apply this quote to American actions like Operation Ajax? Does it apply to the U.S. today?

To what extent did American sources (including news reports and government statements) oversimplify and stereotype information about the Iranian conflict? This is discussed in the “Decision-Making Analysis” section for this lesson in the part about reliability of sources. Do students think the same thing happens today?

### Troubleshooting:

Make sure students understand the concept of nationalizing a company.

## **B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–20 minutes)**

Distribute Handout 1 near the end of class and have students decide quickly whether they will support the British invasion. Discuss their answers and read the outcome from Handout 3. Assign Handout 2 as homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices for three minutes or so. Ask for a show of hands on whether students will approve the overthrow. Distribute Handout 4 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes.

Alternatively, skip Handout 1 and just give students Handout 2.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 3–4)

There is some agreement among historians that a connection exists between Operation Ajax, the Iranian Revolution, and the taking of American hostages.

Historians question what would have happened in Iran had the U.S. not engineered Mossadegh's overthrow. Some wonder if the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party, one of Mossadegh's political allies (even though he himself was not a communist), would have increased in power and eventually taken over Iran. On the other hand, Nikki Keddie (see "Sources") argues that the Tudeh Party was very weak and did not represent a significant threat.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- \* - **Identify any underlying problem**
- \* - **Consider other points of view**
  - What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
- \* - **Reliability of sources**
  - Historical analogies

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
  - Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?

### E = Effects

- \* - **Predict unintended consequences**
  - Play out the options. What could go wrong?

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

- **Other points of view:** Students should consider the situation from the point of view of the Soviets, as well as of various groups in Iran (most business owners and oil workers would have been upset by the conflict with Britain; many ordinary Iranians would have liked the way Mossadegh stood up for Iran).
- **Ask questions about context:** Handouts 2 and 5 provide possible questions and answers, respectively.

- **Ask about reliability of sources:** A great deal of the information available to Americans came from suspect sources, and students receive this same information in the lesson.
  - A. Students should consider the reliability of the Dulles brothers. They seemed to drive the policies of the U.S. government. How did they come to believe that an overthrow was necessary? What evidence did they have that the operation would succeed? Were there any dissenters who opposed Operation Ajax?
  - B. The British certainly had reason to lie in order to protect their oil revenue, so students should not take what they say at face value. Some historians believe that Americans were not sufficiently skeptical of the British.
  - C. One historian, Richard Cottam (see “Sources”), studied American sources of information at the time and concluded that the information available to Americans became less reliable as the U.S. became more involved in Iran. Before the U.S. became active in Iran, newspaper articles and diplomatic reports were reasonably objective. After the U.S. got involved, reports became biased and simplistic, characterizing the conflict as good vs. evil and calling for the removal of the bad elements in Iran (including Mossadegh).
- **Goals:** Students should be very clear about their goals and consider how well various plans conform to these goals. They should also consider how realistic their goals are. For example, is it realistic to stop nationalism?
- **Predict consequences:** The most significant decision-making element in this lesson is the ability to anticipate long-term consequences. It seems unlikely that the U.S. government would have overthrown Mossadegh had it foreseen the long-term consequences.

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Kinzer, Stephen. *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2003.

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# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

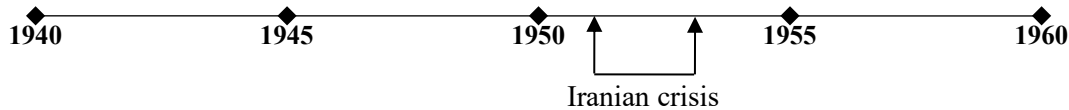
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## Vocabulary

- Nationalization—Occurs when a government takes over a private company
- Mohammad Mossadegh—Prime Minister of Iran who nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company
- Anglo-Iranian Oil Company—British company that extracted and refined oil in Iran
- Allen Dulles—Head of the CIA; supported Operation Ajax
- John Foster Dulles—U.S. Secretary of State; supported Operation Ajax
- Coup—Overthrow of a government by force or illegal action
- Operation Ajax—CIA-engineered overthrow of the Iranian government in 1953
- Ayatollah Khomeini—Islamic leader of the 1979 Iranian Revolution

# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

## Student Handout 1: Problem



It is 1951, and you are President Harry Truman. You have learned of trouble brewing in the oil-rich nation of Iran. A British oil company known as the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company has long controlled the production and refinement of Iran's oil. Now the Iranian government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh, has taken control of the company and nationalized it, declaring that it will be used for the benefit of the Iranian people and not British business interests. Before the nationalization, Iran received less than 20% of the profits from its own oil, so Mossadegh felt justified in taking this action. The Iranians compensated the British for taking the company, but the British remain outraged that the Iranians would appropriate their property.

You sent a personal representative, Averell Harriman, to Iran's capital city of Tehran to negotiate with Mossadegh and the British. Harriman reports that Mossadegh is inflexible and determined to keep the British oil company. He told Harriman, "You do not know how evil [the British] are." Similarly, the British also seem unwilling to compromise. Harriman worked hard to get Mossadegh to agree to negotiations in the first place, but when he did, the British offered a list of terms that the Iranians had previously rejected. The Iranians tried to suggest changes to this list, but the British refused to make any concessions. British leaders have claimed that the Iranians are incapable of running modern oil facilities on their own. The British have now stopped negotiating and have imposed economic sanctions on Iran: they have frozen Iranian money in British banks, blocked imports to Iran, and withdrawn British oil workers from the country.

You've met Prime Minister Mossadegh, and you came away from the meeting with a generally favorable impression. He was democratically elected and is popular with the Iranian people. You're concerned that he is too idealistic and doesn't appreciate the realities of international business, but he seems dedicated to bettering the lives of the Iranian people.



Iranian soldier guarding the refinery at Abadan, 1951.  
(Photo by David Douglas Duncan. Used with Mr. Duncan's permission.)

Now the British have a plan (called “Operation Boot”) to invade Iran in order to secure the oil fields. An invasion could cause Iran to seek help from other countries. The American ambassador in London says that the British will not go ahead with the invasion without American support. **Will you back the British plan to invade Iran and secure the oil fields?**

- A. No—you will oppose any British military action. Britain should not start an international conflict over this issue.
- B. Yes—Britain has been America’s most valued ally for years. You also don’t want the nationalization of the oil company to set a precedent that would encourage poor countries to nationalize private businesses. This would damage American business interests abroad and possibly further the spread of communism.

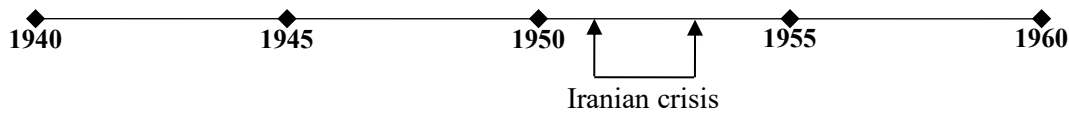


Prime Minister Mossadegh and President Truman

- C. Don’t take a position on the British invasion. This is a matter between Britain and Iran which the U.S. should stay out of completely.

# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

## Student Handout 2: Problem



It is 1953, and you are President Dwight Eisenhower. You just won election in November 1952, largely because you promised to get tough on communism.

Two years ago, the Iranian government under Prime Minister Mossadegh nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, a British company that controlled the production and refinement of Iranian oil. The takeover infuriated the British, who wanted to invade Iran and take back the oil fields. Your predecessor, Harry Truman, adamantly opposed this plan, and the British were unwilling to implement it without American support. The situation between the British and the Iranians has since gotten worse. The British navy blockaded Iran, preventing the country from exporting oil, which in turn plunged Iran into an economic crisis. Negotiations to solve the dispute have failed, and in October 1952, Mossadegh cut all diplomatic ties with the British and declared Britain “an enemy.”



John Foster Dulles

The British have a detailed scheme to remove Mossadegh from power. The Shah (Iran’s king and hereditary ruler) has been in a power struggle with Mossadegh for years. The Shah has the constitutional power to dismiss Mossadegh, but has been reluctant to do so because of Mossadegh’s popularity. Mossadegh has the support of the people, but the Shah has the support of the military. The Shah is also strongly anti-communist; Mossadegh, though not a communist himself, has formed a political alliance with the communist Tudeh party. The British claim that Iran is vulnerable to a communist takeover, and that if the Soviet Union backed a coup by the Tudeh party, Mossadegh wouldn’t be able to prevent it, and Iran would become a communist nation.



Allen Dulles

All of your main advisors—including Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and the head of the CIA, his brother Allen Dulles—support the plan to overthrow Mossadegh. They tell you it is necessary: rioting recently broke out in the streets of Tehran (the capital of Iran), and the situation seems very chaotic there. The CIA has worked with the British to plan a coup (overthrow) against Mossadegh, called Operation Ajax, which the Dulles brothers support. The plan would involve the following:

- Covert agents will turn public opinion in Iran against Mossadegh. Through lies and rumors, they will portray Mossadegh as corrupt, pro-communist, hostile to Islam, and detrimental to the army.
- Agents will hire thugs to attack religious leaders and make it look as if Mossadegh ordered the attacks
- Agents will bribe military leaders and members of the parliament, and then pay people to stage an anti-government rally. The Shah will then dismiss Mossadegh, and the parliament will support the move. If Mossadegh resists, the army will overthrow him. Public and religious leaders will support the overthrow.

John Foster Dulles reports that in a meeting about the coup plan, all of the leading American advisors voted in favor of Operation Ajax. He claims it offers the only way to stop communist expansion into oil-rich Iran.

**Will you support Operation Ajax, and overthrow Mossadegh?**

You may ask any two of the questions below to help you with your decision:

1. What is the history of Iran and how does it relate to the current conflict?
2. What is the status of the Cold War in 1953?
3. What is the situation between the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the Iranians?
4. What do the British think about the situation in Iran?

## **LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN**

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### **Student Handout 3: Outcomes for Handout 1**

President Truman adamantly opposed the British plan to invade Iran. He believed that the British were responsible for the problems in Iran and the stalemate over the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Based on information from his advisors, Truman believed that the British regarded the Iranians as inferior and incapable of controlling their own resources. Moreover, Truman feared that if Britain invaded Iran, the Iranians might ask the Soviet Union for help, since they knew that the Soviets favored the nationalization of businesses. The Soviets might jump at the chance to oppose western democracies and gain a foothold in the oil-rich nation. Truman knew that if the Soviets got involved, the crisis could escalate into a full-scale war. Without U.S. support, British leaders abandoned their plan to invade.

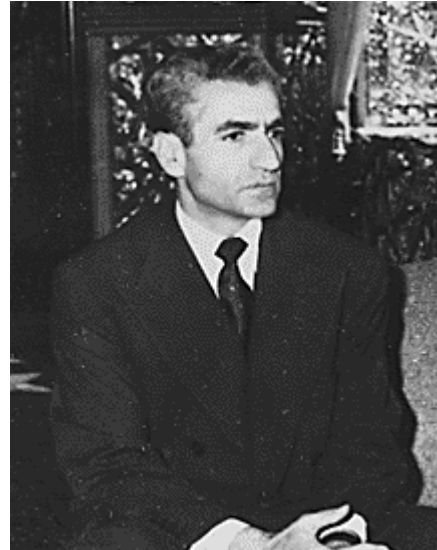
# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

## Student Handout 4: Outcomes for Handout 2

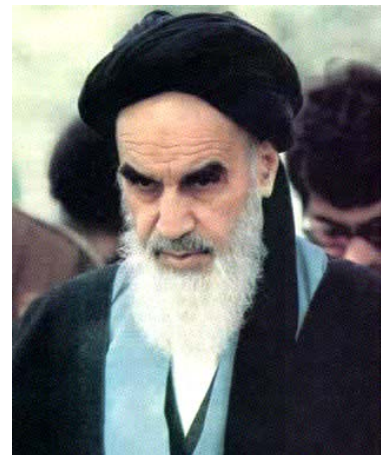
President Eisenhower approved Operation Ajax. Though the British came up with the idea of overthrowing Mossadegh, the U.S. took the lead in actually doing it. The Shah dismissed Mossadegh, then temporarily left the country (as a safety precaution) when Mossadegh refused to leave. Pro-Shah military forces ultimately arrested Mossadegh: he would spend two years in prison and the rest of his life under house arrest. The Shah returned to Iran and installed a former general, Fazlollah Zahedi, as the new prime minister. Foreign oil companies returned to Iran to once again ensure a steady flow of oil to western countries.

However, the new oil arrangement was different. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company now held 40% of the oil shares (instead of 100%), while five American companies collectively held 40% and other foreign companies held the remaining 20%. Iran now received half of all oil revenues, instead of the less than 20% it used to get. The decision to put the Shah back in power and give control of Iran's oil back to the oil companies led to numerous **unintended consequences**:

- The Shah was unpopular, both because of the circumstances in which he came to power and the methods he used to retain that power. He used much of the oil revenue to buy weapons instead of to develop Iran and help the Iranian people. The CIA helped him to establish a secret police force, called SAVAK, to identify dissenters. SAVAK employed brutal methods and might have been responsible for thousands of deaths.
- Mossadegh had been a democratically elected leader who represented the will of a large percentage of the Iranian people. The Shah, by contrast, held power because of foreign intervention, not because Iranians supported him. This led Iranians to harbor a great deal of resentment towards the U.S. and Britain, making Iran more susceptible to the radical, anti-Western views of radical Muslim clerics such as the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.
- Khomeini and other clerics rallied the Iranian people to their cause with such anti-Western slogans as "Death to the American Shah!" They referred to the U.S. as the "Great Satan," and many Iranians agreed: the U.S., after all, had overthrown their democratically elected government.



The Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi



Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini

- In 1979, Khomeini and his radical Islamist followers started a revolution and took control of Iran, establishing an anti-Western Islamic republic.
- Later in 1979, after the revolution, a group of Iranian students feared that the U.S. would again overthrow their government and reinstall the Shah. As a result, they took several dozen Americans hostage at the U.S. embassy and held them for 444 days.
- After the revolution, Iran began supporting terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Taliban.
- During the Iran–Iraq war, the U.S. ended up supporting Iraq and its brutal dictator, Saddam Hussein.
- The success of Operation Ajax gave the CIA a more prominent role in foreign policy decisions and set a precedent for CIA-sponsored overthrows of governments. Even before Mossadegh’s ouster had been completed, John Foster Dulles had approved plans to overthrow the Guatemalan government. In subsequent years, the CIA attempted to overthrow governments in Cuba, Chile, the Congo, and Vietnam. These attempted coups reinforced the growing view around the world of the U.S. as an imperialist power determined to interfere in foreign nations in order to further its own purposes.

Radical Islamist factions within Iran might have eventually taken control of the country even without the upheaval and resentment caused by Operation Ajax. However, little doubt exists that American actions contributed significantly to the revolution, and Iranian anger towards the U.S. ensured that Khomeini’s government would take an anti-American stance. A British agent involved in Operation Ajax later said, “It is easy to see Operation Boot [the British plan in 1951 that was the forerunner of Operation Ajax in 1953] as the first step towards the Iranian catastrophe of 1979.” In 2000, U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright said, “In 1953 the United States played a significant role in orchestrating the overthrow of Iran’s popular prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh. The Eisenhower Administration believed its actions were justified for strategic reasons. But the coup was clearly a setback for Iran’s political development. And it is easy to see now why many Iranians continue to resent this intervention by America in their internal affairs.”

In retrospect, Truman’s refusal to approve Britain’s plan to invade Iran and capture its oil fields looks enlightened. Like Eisenhower, Truman thought that the Soviet Union wanted to promote the spread of communism to Iran. However, Truman did not think that the U.S. should fear nationalist movements in the developing world. Whereas Eisenhower thought nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company represented a harbinger of communism, Truman believed that the U.S. should support some nationalist movements and prove itself a true friend to countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. If those countries viewed the U.S. as a friend and ally, they would be less likely to turn to communism. It’s impossible to predict what would have happened had the Americans followed Truman’s strategy instead of trying to overthrow nationalist governments in Iran and elsewhere. It seems clear, though, that Eisenhower’s approval of Operation Ajax proved detrimental to U.S. interests in the long run.

# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

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## Student Handout 5: Suggested Answers to Questions

### 1. What is the history of Iran and how does it relate to the current conflict?

Iran, known in ancient times as Persia, has a long and proud history. The Persians once followed the Zoroastrian religion, which taught that citizens should follow enlightened leaders but rebel against wicked ones. In the seventh century, Arabs conquered the Persians and brought their faith, Islam, to the country. From Islam, the Persians learned the virtue of self-sacrifice for their family, their country, and their god. In 1501, Ismail (a Shi'ite Muslim and a military leader), proclaimed himself shah, or king, and instituted Islam as the state religion. This marked the beginning of the Iranian nation.

In the 19th century, a series of corrupt shahs weakened Iran. The shahs sold grants known as "concessions" to foreigners that permitted them to run businesses in Iran. The British received a concession to find and sell Iranian oil. In the early 1900s, the people rose up against the shah. A constitution was established in 1906 that set up a parliament, called the *Majlis*. Despite these movements towards democracy, however, the shahs remained powerful. In 1919, the British bribed Iranian negotiators to pass the Anglo-Persian Agreement, which allowed the British to control the army, transportation system, treasury, and communications network. They also backed Reza Shah, who ruled Iran with an iron fist until 1941. During World War II, the British needed large amounts of oil for the war effort, so they occupied the southern half of Iran (the Soviet Union occupied the northern half).

After the war ended, Iranian workers organized a strike at the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, but the British refused to make significant reforms. Reza Shah's son, Mohammed Reza Shah, succeeded his father. Under his rule, the parliament gained power, despite his efforts to control it by vote-rigging elections. Mohammed Mossadegh, who had been elected to the parliament, led the opposition. The Shah traveled to the U.S. in 1949 seeking military aid, but was turned down. When he returned to Iran, he faced a strong nationalist movement. Members of the parliament realized that the Iranian people wanted to take over the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company because they felt it exploited their country for huge profits. In March 1951, both houses of Parliament, led by Mossadegh, voted unanimously to nationalize the company, and then elected Mossadegh prime minister.

Unlike Britain and the Soviet Union, Iranians very much admire the United States. Several Americans run schools in the country and the American government has often sided with Iran in its struggles.

## 2. What is the status of the Cold War in 1953?

America's Cold War struggle against the Soviet Union and communism is intense. After World War II, the Soviet Union installed communist governments in the nations of eastern Europe. Communism spread to China in 1949, and in June 1950, communist North Korea invaded South Korea. Americans have watched these events unfold with apprehension, and they wonder if communists could attack the U.S. Domestically, fear of communism also runs high. Several famous spy cases and Senator Joseph McCarthy's campaign to identify communist sympathizers have reinforced the idea that communists are trying to take over the U.S. from within.

Iran represents a likely candidate for further communist expansion. During World War II, the Soviets had troops in Iran, and although they did withdraw them in late 1946, they stayed past the agreed-upon date. Oil-rich Iran would be a great asset to the Soviets, a fact they likely realized during their occupation of the northern half of the country during the war. A communist movement already exists in northern Iran.

In response to the Soviet threat to Europe, the United States formed NATO, a military alliance aimed at containing Soviet expansion. Britain is one of the most important members of NATO. British help is vital to American strategy in the Cold War.

## 3. What's the situation between the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the Iranians?

The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company has made huge profits for many years in Iran. For example, in 1947, the company made an after-tax profit of \$112 million, of which Iran received \$19.6 million—less than 18% of the profits from its own oil. The company sold its oil for between ten and thirty times the cost of producing it, according to the State Department's petroleum expert. He reports that Iranians hate the company. In 1933, the company agreed to raise wages and build schools, hospitals, and roads, but it hasn't honored its commitments. The director of Iran's petroleum institute described the conditions that existed in 1949 at Abadan, the company's main refinery:

"Wages were 50 cents a day. There was no vacation pay, no sick leave, no disability compensation. The workers lived in a shantytown called Kaghazabad, or Paper City, without running water or electricity, let alone such luxuries as iceboxes or fans. In winter, the earth flooded and became a flat, perspiring lake. The mud in town was knee deep, and canoes ran alongside the roadways for transport..."

"Summer was worse. It descended suddenly without a hint of spring. The heat was torrid, the worst I've ever known—sticky and unrelenting—while the wind and sandstorms whipped off the desert hot as a blower. The dwellings of

Kaghazabad, cobbled from rusted oil drums hammered flat, turned into sweltering ovens...”

“To the management of AIOC [the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company] in their pressed ecru shirts and air conditioned offices, the workers were faceless drones... In the British section of Abadan there were lawns, rose beds, tennis courts, swimming pools and clubs; in Kaghazabad there was nothing—not a tea shop, not a bath, not a single tree... The unpaved alleyways were emporiums for rats.”

#### **4. What do the British think about the situation in Iran?**

The British believe that their involvement in foreign countries has improved those countries: they say that they help countries that can't help themselves. They insist that their work in Iran has done the world a great service. A British leader wrote, “It was British enterprise, skill and effort which discovered oil under the soil of Persia, which has got the oil out, which has built the refinery, which has developed markets for Persian oil in thirty or forty countries... None of these things would or could have been done by the Persian government or the Persian people.” The British view the Iranians as inferior. A British diplomat described Iranians this way: “The ordinary Persian is vain, unprincipled, eager to promise what he knows he is incapable or has no intention of performing, wedded to procrastination, lacking in perseverance and energy, but amenable to discipline.” Their beliefs make it unlikely that the British will negotiate with the Iranians as equals. The British have continually refused to compromise with the Iranians despite the U.S. government's insistence that compromise is necessary.

# LESSON 5: CRISIS IN IRAN

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## Student Handout 6: Underlying Problem

When we look for the underlying problem, we try to “frame” it by showing what’s really important. For this problem, which one or two of these frames works best?

1. This problem in Iran is really about resources. Iran has a huge supply of oil, and the U.S. should do whatever is necessary to ensure the continued supply of that oil.
2. This problem in Iran is really about the Cold War. Communists want to take advantage of Mossadegh’s weakness and control Iran. The U.S. can thwart their plans by overthrowing Mossadegh and putting in a strong, stable leader like the Shah.
3. This problem in Iran is really about the dangers of nationalism. Nationalism represents a first step on the path to communism—the Iranians, for example, took control of the oil company, a privately held business. The U.S. should promote policies to resist nationalism.
4. This problem in Iran is really about furthering nationalism. Countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America want to rule themselves and control their own resources without foreign interference. Nationalism is a growing force throughout the world, and the U.S. should welcome it instead of resisting it. By supporting nationalist movements in the developing world, the U.S. will prove itself a true friend and ally to those countries. People will be less susceptible to communism if they know the U.S. supports their independence.
5. This problem in Iran is really about the U.S. obligation to honor commitments to its allies. Britain has served as America’s most valuable ally, and it now needs U.S. support.
6. This problem in Iran is really about politics in the U.S. American voters fear communism, and politicians need to address the public’s apprehensions by taking a strong stance against communism whenever possible.
7. This problem in Iran is really about the failure of containment. The U.S. needs to stop waiting for communists to strike a particular area before defending it. Instead, it should take action against communism by overthrowing weak governments and installing strong anti-communist leaders.

# LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

This lesson asks students to examine U.S. actions in Guatemala from the points of view of both the Americans and the Guatemalans, and it includes handouts describing the situation from both sides. You could distribute both handouts to all the students, or you could split the students up into two groups and have one group decide the issue from the point of view of the U.S. and have the other group make its choice based on the Guatemalan perspective. If the two groups come to different conclusions, discuss how and why this happened.

### VOCABULARY

- United Fruit Company—American company that owned a great deal of land in Guatemala and other Central American countries
- Confiscate—To take land or other property by force
- Allen Dulles—Head of the CIA
- John Foster Dulles—Secretary of State under President Eisenhower
- CIA—Central Intelligence Agency; gathers information about other countries, sometimes by spying
- Jacobo Arbenz—Democratically elected leader of Guatemala in the early 1950s; overthrown by a U.S.-backed rebel force
- Castillo Armas—Leader of Guatemala after the overthrow of Arbenz
- Operation Success—CIA code name for its plan to overthrow Arbenz

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Identify underlying problem
- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context
- Ask about reliability of sources
- Ask about analogies
- Set realistic goals
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one 40-minute class period)

### Procedure:

Distribute Handout 1 and divide students into groups to discuss the problem. Have each group report on its decisions and explain its reasoning. Don't discuss the outcomes yet, since they may influence students' decisions about the problems on Handout 2.

Next, give students Handout 2, divide them into groups, and have them decide what they will do. Students can ask any three of the questions provided at the end of the handout. Have copies of Handout 3 cut into strips so that students can come to your desk and take only the answers to the problems they have chosen. Have each group report on its decisions and explain its reasoning. After all groups have reported, distribute Handouts 4 and 5 (which list the outcomes) or tell students what happened.

Alternatively, you could first give students Handout 2, which presents the American perspective. They could consider the problem and discuss their answers. You would then distribute Handout 1 and have students go back to rethink their response to Handout 2 now that they understand the Guatemalan perspective.

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly useful in choosing whether to support "Operation Success"? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the "Decision-Making Analysis" section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students if they think historical factors caused the U.S. to sponsor the overthrow of the Guatemalan government, or if the actions of a few individuals (namely, Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers) caused the U.S. to behave the way it did. Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers favored an aggressive approach towards stopping communism, and they implemented similar policies in other places, such as Iran. They were also very pro-business and likely to oppose any actions by foreign governments that would hurt American business interests. The personal biases of the Dulles brothers were even more apparent: John Foster Dulles had been a lawyer for the United Fruit Company and Allen Dulles had once served on its board. Had leaders who favored a more moderate approach towards the communist threat been in power, the U.S. might not have undertaken Operation Success. However, the very fact that Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers were

in power reflects historical forces. The American people feared the Soviet Union, and believed it important to elect leaders like Eisenhower who would take a strong stand against the communist threat. In addition, not only Eisenhower supported American business interests—the U.S. government in general tried to intervene in cases that threatened U.S. businesses.

Connecting to Today:

Ask students if they think the U.S. should consider overthrowing governments today that threaten U.S. interests.

<b>B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–20 minutes)</b>
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Assign Handout 2 as homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices for three minutes or so. Have the class vote on which questions they would like to have answered. Read the answers to the top three vote getters, and have students make a decision as to whether they will go ahead with Operation Success. Discuss their answers as a class. Distribute Handout 5 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 4–5)

The CIA codename for the overthrow of Arbenz was actually “Operation PBSUCCESS.” This lesson employs the simpler, more common “Operation Success.”

The materials by the United Fruit Historical Society and Nick Cullather (see the “Further Research” section for this lesson) provide excellent opportunities for follow-up.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- \* - **Identify any underlying problem**
- \* - **Consider other points of view**
  - What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
- \* - **Reliability of sources**
- \* - **Historical analogies**

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
  - Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?

### E = Effects

- \* - **Predict unintended consequences**
- \* - **Play out the options. What could go wrong?**

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

### For Handout 1:

- **Consider if there is an underlying problem:** The greatest underlying problem that led to this conflict is that the United Fruit Company held most of the power in Guatemala. The Guatemalan government had little say over its own country.
- **Point of view:** Students should think about how landholders might feel about being forced to sell unused land to the government. Students should also consider the point of view of the United States, as explained in the next section on context.
- **Context:** Students should consider that the U.S. had a history of intervening in Latin America and that the U.S. at the time was in the midst of the Cold War. Had Arbenz compromised with the U.S. or fired his communist advisors, he might have appeased the Americans and avoided intervention. However, Arbenz also

had to respect the wishes of the Guatemalan people, who didn't want him to bow to the will of the United States. He thus had to walk a fine line between maintaining good relations with the U.S. and asserting Guatemala's right to decide what would go on within its borders.

- **Reliability of sources:** The advisors who pushed Arbenz to begin land reforms were members of the Communist Party. Students should consider that bias when making decisions as Arbenz.
- **Historical analogies:** Students may wonder if other countries had successfully confiscated land and gave it to peasants. The Soviet Union and China both implemented such policies—meeting with devastating results. In both cases, wealthy landowners resisted, and widespread violence and death resulted. In the Soviet Union, Stalin's government starved millions of middle class farmers, or *kulaks*. Another possible analogy lies in the fact that the U.S. had intervened in the past to protect business investments from foreign governments in such places as Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. Students thinking about the problem from Arbenz's perspective should appreciate the high likelihood that the U.S. would intervene in Guatemala as well.
- **Unintended consequences:** In choosing to confiscate land from American businesses, Arbenz's government provoked its own overthrow by U.S.-backed forces. However, that was just a short-term consequence. A long-term consequence involved human rights: the new government in Guatemala took extreme, repressive measures to eliminate dissent—including torture and murder.
- **Play out the options:** Students should consider several short-term problems:
  1. How will the landholders react, and how will the Guatemalan government deal with their reaction?
  2. How much should Guatemala pay for the land?
  3. How will Guatemala pay, in cash or by borrowing?
  4. What happens if American landholders complain to the American government? Is there a way to prevent a bad outcome?

#### For Handout 2:

- **Consider if there is an underlying problem:** The poverty and powerlessness of peasants in Guatemala represents one of the most significant underlying problems for this question. If the U.S. fails to address this problem, Guatemalan leaders will continue to push for radical proposals such as the land confiscation scheme. Peasants may also turn against the capitalist system, since it does not seem to benefit them, and become more susceptible to communist ideas. A second underlying problem might have been the U.S.'s single-minded focus on the Cold War and the fight against communism. This problem in Guatemala involved more than a simple struggle between communism and capitalism. Instead of labeling the Guatemalan government as communist and overthrowing it, the U.S. could have tried to come up with other solutions.
- **Point of view:** This lesson is designed to help students see a situation from different points of view. Students who receive Handout 1 first may be more sensitive to the Guatemalan point of view than students who receive Handout 2

first. This lesson should help students see the value of considering all perspectives before making decisions.

- **Reliability of sources:** The Dulles brothers were ardent anti-communists who pushed the U.S. to react strongly to possible communist threats in Iran and elsewhere. John Foster Dulles once worked as a lawyer for the United Fruit Company, and his brother Allen once served on its board. When deciding what Eisenhower should do, students should wonder if the Dulles brothers might have exaggerated the communist threat or pushed for actions that would have benefited United Fruit. For example, the Dulles brothers depicted Arbenz as a communist, but his views were probably more consistent with socialism than with communism.
- **Goal:** If students think their goal is to prevent the expansion of communism at all costs, then they consider the communist threat in Guatemala strong enough to warrant intervention. However, if students want primarily to help the Guatemalan people, then they might determine that Arbenz represents the will of the Guatemalans and anticipate that a U.S.-installed government would represent a subversion of democracy. Students could also decide that their goal is to preserve stability in Latin America. These goals are not mutually exclusive: for example, spreading democracy might offer an effective way to stop communism.
- **Play out the options:** In the short term, the U.S. plan resulted in the successful overthrow of Arbenz. However, things could have gone wrong. Did students consider possible problems? What if Arbenz's forces had defeated the rebels in battle? What if the rebels started fighting among themselves?
- **Consequences:** Students should consider that the new government installed by the U.S. committed human rights abuses and repressed the Guatemalan people. They should also think about the effects of the overthrow on the reputation of the United States: such an action did little to dispel the notion held by many throughout the world that the U.S. behaved as an imperial power.

#### Further Research:

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# LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

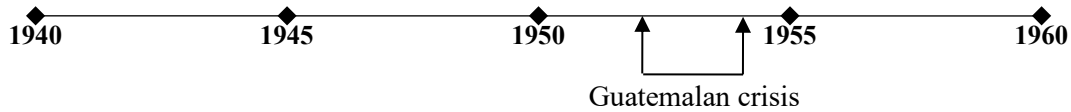
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## Vocabulary

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- Confiscate—To take land or other property by force
- Allen Dulles—Head of the CIA
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- Castillo Armas—Leader of Guatemala after the overthrow of Arbenz
- Operation Success—CIA code name for its plan to overthrow Arbenz

# LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

## Student Handout 1: Guatemalan Perspective



It is 1952, and you are Jacobo Arbenz, leader of Guatemala. Last year, the Guatemalan people elected you with the expectation that you would continue the reform policies of your predecessor, Jose Arevalo. Guatemalans believe the current system of land ownership is unfair and want to see reform.

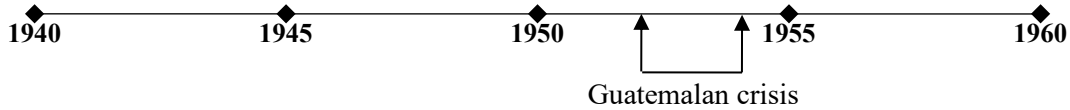
Huge discrepancies of wealth exist in Guatemala. The wealthiest 2% of the people own 70% of the land, and most of the peasants (poor farmers) own no land at all. Per-capita income in rural areas is only about \$90 per year. Malnutrition is widespread and getting worse as wealthy landowners plant bananas and coffee to sell to other countries instead of the beans and corn necessary to feed Guatemalans. Some landowners have extra land that currently lies unused: they bought the land to prevent other companies from growing crops on it that would compete with their crops.

One possible action is to confiscate (forcibly take) unused land from large landowners and give it to the peasants. Two of your advisors, who are communists, are pushing for this land reform. You know, however, that American companies (especially the United Fruit Company, which is Guatemala's largest landowner) wield an enormous amount of power in Guatemala. Confiscation would therefore probably anger the United States. The Americans have intervened before in foreign countries to stop the spread of communism, and they might perceive the land reform policy as communist. Indeed, some American leaders have already argued publicly that communists have infiltrated the Guatemalan government.

**Will you confiscate unused land and give it to peasants?**

# LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

## Student Handout 2: U.S. Perspective



You are President Eisenhower in 1954. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles has come to you with a concern about communist expansion in Guatemala. According to Dulles and his brother (Allen Dulles, the head of the CIA), communists have infiltrated the Guatemalan government led by Jacobo Arbenz. What follows is the Dulles brothers' analysis of the situation in Guatemala and their proposal for correcting the problem:

First, Arbenz approved a law that would confiscate unused land from landowners and distribute it to landless peasants. The Guatemalan government assured landowners that it would pay for the land. However, the United Fruit Company—a Boston-based, American-run company that's the largest landowner in Guatemala—says that the price the Guatemalans offered represents only a small fraction of the land's real value.



Eisenhower with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles

Next, Arbenz decided to arm his government so that he could take the land by force if necessary. He started buying guns from communists in eastern Europe. In addition, several of Arbenz's close advisors are confirmed communists, and Arbenz himself legalized the Guatemalan Communist Party. Arbenz is likely a communist himself, and no doubt exists that Guatemala is moving towards communism. Guatemala could provide communists with their first solid foothold in the western hemisphere and deal a tremendous blow to the U.S. in the Cold War. According to Secretary of State Dulles, "The master plan of international communism is to gain a solid political base in this hemisphere, a base that can be used to extend communist penetration to the other peoples of the American governments." The Dulles brothers believe that it is essential for the U.S. to stop the communist menace in Guatemala.

The CIA has devised a plan called “Operation Success” which aims to organize a group of rebels to overthrow the Arbenz government. The planners believe the rebels will rally around the leadership of Colonel Castillo Armas, who received military training in the United States. After training, the rebel group will gather in Honduras and cross the border into Guatemala. The CIA will support the rebels with several airplanes that will give the impression of a much stronger force and intimidate the Guatemalan army. The CIA will also spread propaganda around Guatemala about the huge rebel force and its many “victories.” CIA agents will jam communications in the country in order to prevent the Guatemalan government from broadcasting its side of the story to the people. Some in the army oppose Arbenz’s land reform program because they see it as communism. They will likely move to overthrow Arbenz if instability occurs. A new U.S.-approved government will take power in Guatemala, and it will eliminate communist influence and end the land reform program.

**Will you, as President Eisenhower, authorize Operation Success?**

You may ask any three of the following questions to help you make your decision.

1. How did the Guatemalan government determine what price to pay for the land?
2. Is there anything in the background of John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles that suggests you shouldn’t trust them to give wise and impartial advice?
3. Do the Guatemalans have legitimate complaints against the United Fruit Company?
4. What policy has the United States adopted towards the Arbenz government?
5. Are there Soviet agents involved in Guatemala? Is Arbenz a communist?
6. How did Arbenz come to power in Guatemala?
7. How well has the land reform law worked?
8. What is the history of Guatemala? How is it relevant to the current situation?

# LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

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## Student Handout 3: Suggested Answers

### 1. How did the Guatemalan government determine what price to pay for the land?

The Guatemalans set the price by looking at tax records. Twenty years ago, United Fruit bought the land for \$1.48 per acre. In recent years, United Fruit had valued its land at \$2.99 per acre in public statements. The land is probably worth more, but the company underestimated the value in order to lower its taxes. When Arbenz's government decided to seize the land, it offered to pay the stated price of \$2.99 per acre, but United Fruit complained that the land was actually worth \$75.00 per acre. The State Department supported United Fruit, protesting to the Guatemalan government that the offer "bears not the slightest resemblance to just evaluation." Arbenz feels justified in paying United Fruit such a low price: if United Fruit cheated Guatemala by undervaluing the land so it could pay less in taxes, it now deserves to be compensated only for that amount.

### 2. Is there anything in the background of John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles that suggests you shouldn't trust them to give wise and impartial advice?

Before becoming Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles worked for a law firm that represented the United Fruit Company. Allen Dulles served as a board member for United Fruit before becoming head of the CIA.

### 3. Do the Guatemalans have legitimate complaints against the United Fruit Company?

Many Guatemalans feel the United Fruit Company exerts far too much power in their country. The company is the largest landowner and controls nearly every mile of railroad track in Guatemala. Most of United Fruit's land lies unused. The company bought the land in order to prevent other companies from using it to grow crops that would compete with United Fruit's crops. Moreover, United Fruit basically runs Guatemala's only Atlantic port and owns telephone and telegraph facilities. United Fruit employs (directly or indirectly) about 40,000 people in Guatemala.

United Fruit portrays itself as a fair and benevolent presence in Guatemala. The company pays its workers three times the average individual income. It also provides top-notch housing and educational facilities and promotes scientific agriculture. United Fruit claims that the Guatemalan government has unfairly targeted it. Indeed, many of the Guatemalan politicians who criticize the company hope to win election by blaming foreigners for Guatemala's problems.

**4. What policy has the United States adopted towards the Arbenz government?**

Arbenz asked the U.S. for weapons to help defend Guatemala, but the U.S. refused because his land reform policy made U.S. officials suspect he might be a communist.

**5. Are there Soviet agents involved in Guatemala? Is Arbenz a communist?**

According to the Washington Post, the Soviets have active agents in Guatemala, and have encouraged Guatemalans to revolt against the United Fruit Company and other landowners. The government includes known communists, but only four of the 56 members of the Guatemalan congress are communists. Arbenz is a socialist, but not a communist. He advocates dividing up land and distributing it to the poor, but he does not believe in suppressing political rights, having a one-party state, or in the Soviet goal of spreading communism worldwide.

**6. How did Arbenz come to power in Guatemala?**

Like his predecessor, Jose Arevalo, Arbenz was democratically elected, winning 65% of the vote. However, one of his opponents was murdered during the election, and some people suspect Arbenz of having a hand in the murder.

**7. How well has the land reform law worked?**

By 1954, about 100,000 families had received 42 acres each, along with loans and expert help in planting and marketing crops. Productivity levels have stayed the same or risen, and crop exports have also risen. Many poor people can now grow their own food and sell their own goods.

**8. What is the history of Guatemala? How is it relevant to the current situation?**

Until 1944, a dictator named General Jorge Ubico ruled Guatemala. He modeled himself after Hitler, and once claimed "I execute first and give trial afterward." Ubico was overthrown, and in the election that followed the people voted in former schoolteacher Jose Arevalo by a large margin. Arevalo introduced many reforms, legalizing unions, increasing the minimum wage, and improving social security. In 1951, voters elected Arbenz, believing that he would continue and expand upon Arevalo's reforms.

## LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

### Student Handout 4: Outcomes for Handout 1

#### GUATEMALAN PERSPECTIVE

Arbenz confiscated the unused land, but soon found himself embroiled in a dispute with the United Fruit Company over the correct amount of compensation. The Guatemalan government decided to pay United Fruit the amount the company had listed for tax purposes, knowing that many landowners had set their land value low deliberately in order to reduce the land taxes they had to pay. Arbenz failed to anticipate the problems that arose when trying to pay United Fruit for its unused land, and did not consider that United Fruit would complain to the U.S. government about the low price. The Guatemalan government also lacked sufficient cash reserves to compensate landowners; consequently, it had to offer to pay them in bonds.



Jacobo Arbenz

Land confiscation did achieve its goal of helping the poor. By 1954, about 100,000 families had received 42 acres each, along with loans and expert help in planting and marketing crops. Productivity levels stayed the same or rose, and exports also rose. For the first time, crop exports exceeded imports. Many poor people could now grow their own food and sell their own goods.

However, the initial excitement over these positive effects soon vanished. The United Fruit Company complained to the U.S. government, which came up with a plan to overthrow Arbenz and install a government favorable to U.S. business interests. The CIA-backed rebel force succeeded in overthrowing Arbenz, and the new government often employed repressive tactics against the Guatemalan people.

# LESSON 6: GUATEMALA

## Student Handout 5: Outcomes for Handout 2

### U.S. PERSPECTIVE

President Eisenhower approved the “Operation Success” plan to overthrow the Arbenz government. The plan worked just as designed: although CIA-backed rebel force consisted of only 150 men and only managed to advance slightly into Guatemala, the CIA tricked the government and people of Guatemala into believing that the force was much larger. The presence of airplanes seemed to confirm the power of the rebels to the Guatemalans. These tactics convinced the Guatemalan army to demand that Arbenz resign and negotiate with the rebels.

The CIA did not manage to keep its involvement a secret, however. One of the airplanes suffered damage and had to make an emergency landing in Mexico, where its pilot was identified as an American. The world thus found out that the U.S. had orchestrated the rebellion. Many countries, especially in Latin America, condemned the U.S. for overthrowing a democratically elected government. The perception of “Yankee imperialism” became much stronger after this action. The U.S. had always claimed it fought on the side of democracy in the Cold War, while the Soviets established dictatorships. U.S. actions in Guatemala thus seemed hypocritical at best and a blatant example of economic imperialism at worst, since the overthrow seemed to have taken place largely to enhance the interests of the American-owned United Fruit Company.

The new U.S.-backed Guatemalan government reversed Arbenz’s policies. It gave the confiscated land back to the companies, halted literacy programs, abolished the secret ballot, disenfranchised illiterates in a country with a low literacy rate, and crushed political freedoms—particularly those of suspected communists.

Subsequent Guatemalan governments treated their own citizens brutally and repressively. Castillo Armas, the first new leader of Guatemala, was corrupt and ineffective. He was assassinated in 1957, and a succession of turbulent rebellions and poor leaders followed. The United States encouraged the new governments to arrest and imprison suspected communists in order to prevent any future land confiscation programs. Guatemalan officials engaged in widespread torture and murder. A cabled note from Thomas Hughes, Director of Intelligence for the State Department in 1967, stated that Guatemalan security forces used “kidnappings, torture, and summary executions” to eliminate dissent. In the decades following Arbenz’s overthrow, the Guatemalan government killed over 200,000 of its own citizens. Guatemala had one of the poorest human rights records in the world during this period.

On the other hand, Arbenz’s overthrow benefited U.S. business interests. The new government reversed the land reform policy and abolished the tax on interest and foreign dividends to foreign investors. Thus, conditions remained perfect for United Fruit and

other foreign companies to operate, which was good news for the American economy. United Fruit's 40,000 Guatemalan workers, who received better wages than workers at other companies, also benefited.

Some historians believe that Operation Success achieved its goal of stopping the spread of communism in Central America. The overthrow demonstrated to other nations there that the U.S. would willingly intervene if a country seemed to be moving towards communism. The example of Guatemala may have served as a major deterrent to communism throughout Central America. Despite pressure from the Soviet Union and Cuba, most other nations in Central America retained their capitalist governments and steered clear of bold socialist reforms such as those pioneered by Arbenz.

President Eisenhower summed up the U.S. position on Guatemala: "The first open, specific attempt of international communism to establish a beachhead on this continent has been repulsed by the majority of the people of Guatemala, proving again that people who have tasted freedom will not willingly submit to the regimentation of the Red dictatorship."

# LESSON 7: NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

## PROPOSAL

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### Teacher Pages

#### OVERVIEW

This lesson asks students to consider the consequences of the interstate highway system. The system did more than just build roads—it also promoted changes in the American way of life. The new ease of travel helped unify the nation, and the focus on automobile travel contributed to the suburban, car-oriented culture of the 1950s and the 1960s.

#### VOCABULARY

- Federal Highway Act—Passed in 1956 to build the interstate highway system
- Productivity—Output per worker per hour
- Subsidies—Government-provided financial help for businesses
- Suburbanization—Process in which people move out of cities and into outlying areas

#### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Ask about context
- Set realistic goals
- Play out options
- Predict unintended consequences

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one 40-minute class period)

### Procedure:

Distribute Handout 1. Have students read it silently and decide what they will do. Next, divide students into groups and have them discuss their choices. Give time for students to ask questions. Bring the class back together. Have each group report on its decisions and explain. List the consequences on the board as the class generates them. After groups have reported, distribute Handout 2, which lists the outcomes. Compare the list of consequences on Handout 2 to the list generated by the class. Did students fail to predict any of the consequences? Did they predict consequences that weren't on the list?

The question at the end of Handout 2 asks students whether they think the bill passed. Based on the importance of cars to American culture and the presence of an interstate highway system, students should assume that the bill did in fact pass. Students might also anticipate that such a bill would lead to tremendous profits for many businesses, and that these businesses would have lobbied heavily to ensure the bill's passage.

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly important in making decisions about these issues? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the "Decision-Making Analysis" section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Focus especially on unintended consequences, as described in the paragraph above. Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students: What was more important in securing the passage of the Federal Highway Act—the decisions of particular leaders (such as President Eisenhower) or historical forces? Eisenhower certainly favored an interstate highway system. His experiences as a general showed him that efficient transportation was essential for military defense and deployment. In 1919, he participated in the army's first transcontinental military convoy, and saw the need for an interstate highway system. In World War II, he recognized the military advantage Germany's autobahn system gave to the Nazis. While Eisenhower's support helped ease passage of the bill, the act was most likely inevitable. World War II and the New Deal had helped the public grow accustomed to the idea of the federal government (rather than state and local governments) taking on huge spending projects. World War II also increased the national sense of unity and identity, having sent many soldiers to parts of the country far from their places of birth; as the American people grew accustomed to traveling throughout the country, they naturally saw the need for a better

highway system. Also, by the 1950s a thriving car culture had already developed in the U.S. People wanted to drive instead of relying on trains and other forms of public transportation.

Ask students if they think other countries put the same amount of resources into highways and cars. Students familiar with European countries and Japan should answer no—those countries have much more developed train and bus systems than the U.S. does. Some countries have even more creative systems: for example, Denmark has devoted great resources to bicycles. Bike lanes exist alongside most roadways, and the government levies a 180% tax on automobiles. This has lowered the Danes' energy consumption and promoted healthy lifestyles. Some critics argue that the U.S. should have done something similar and poured more resources into public transportation systems, particularly in densely populated areas. This might have reduced pollution and fuel dependency. However, others contend that a car culture would have inevitably developed in the U.S. simply because the U.S. is so much larger than the other countries in question.

#### Connecting to Today:

Ask students: Should the federal government still fund improvements in transportation? How should the government decide which type of transportation to favor (e.g., roads or public transportation systems such as trains or monorails)? Have students heard of money wasted on ill-conceived transportation projects, such as Boston's "Big Dig" or Alaska's "Bridge to Nowhere"?

#### Troubleshooting:

Students need to keep in mind that taxpayer money funds all government programs. Certain programs might sound positive, but American citizens will have to foot the bill for those programs. Also, students should weigh whether the money spent on those programs could perhaps be better used elsewhere.

### **B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–15 minutes)**

Assign Handout 1 as homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices for three minutes or so. Ask for a show of hands of who will support the Highway Act. Distribute Handout 2 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handout 2)

President Eisenhower appointed a committee to study the need for highways. The committee came back with a recommendation for a highway bill. The report only cited the advantages of the system—it failed to mention any potential disadvantages.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- Identify any underlying problem
- Consider other points of view
- What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
- Reliability of sources
- Historical analogies

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
- Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?

### E = Effects

- \* - **Predict unintended consequences**
- \* - **Play out the options. What could go wrong?**

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

- **Ask about context:** Students should consider the important role that cars already played in American culture by 1956. They should also consider the fact that the Cold War placed great emphasis on military preparedness. Many people believed that a sound national highway system was essential for that preparedness.
- **Goals:** When deciding whether to implement a national highway system, students should first identify their goals. For example, if their primary goal is to increase Americans' ability to travel freely between states, then the system is a good idea. However, if their main goal is to promote the growth of public transportation, then the highway act does not make sense.
- **Play out the option:** Students should anticipate the fact that they might find it difficult to get the bill through Congress, which had a Democratic majority. As described in Handout 2, Eisenhower anticipated this potential problem and successfully managed to make the bill appealing to Democrats.
- **Predict unintended consequences:** This is the main skill involved in this lesson. How many of the consequences listed in Handout 2 did students anticipate?

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# LESSON 7: NATIONAL HIGHWAYS PROPOSAL

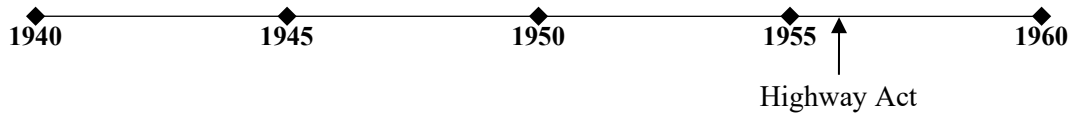
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## Vocabulary

- Federal Highway Act—Passed in 1956 to build the interstate highway system
- Productivity—Output per worker per hour
- Subsidies—Government-provided financial help for businesses
- Suburbanization—Process in which people move out of cities and into outlying areas

# LESSON 7: NATIONAL HIGHWAYS PROPOSAL

## Student Handout 1: Problem



It is 1956, and you are Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower. While serving as commander of allied forces in Europe during World War II, you admired the effectiveness of the German highway system. The comprehensive nationwide system of roadways allowed the Germans to easily move their troops and supplies around the country. Now, many of your advisors favor a federal government program to build highways in the U.S. Such a system would enable the military to respond quickly anywhere in the nation in case of attack and would make it easier to evacuate large cities. However, the proposal does have opponents. Some believe that because the U.S. is so big, a program to build a network of interstate roads would be prohibitively expensive.



President Eisenhower

Decide whether you, as Eisenhower, will approve the highway proposal (that is, submit it to the Democratic-controlled Congress to approve) based mainly on:

- Playing out the option (what immediate problems will you need to overcome?)
- The unintended consequences of building such an extensive system of roads

You can use other decision-making guidelines from **P-A-G-E**, but you should concentrate on these two.

# LESSON 7: NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

## PROPOSAL

### Student Handout 2: Outcomes

President Eisenhower supported the Federal Highway Act enthusiastically. He anticipated that his greatest problem in the short term would be getting the bill passed in Congress, which had a Democratic majority at the time. In order to ensure the bill's passage, he did the following:

1. He had all states submit proposals and then selected ideas from the top two plans, which made lawmakers throughout the nation feel as though they had contributed to the project.
2. He gave speeches explaining why the U.S. needed the highways.
3. He listened to objections from Congress and then adjusted the act in order to gain their votes.

The bill passed in the Senate by a vote of 89 to 1. Eisenhower does not deserve full responsibility for this easy victory—lobbyists from the automobile, bus, and truck companies worked very hard to encourage lawmakers to pass the bill. These lobbyists probably influenced its passage even more than the president did.

The Federal Highway Act resulted in the construction of an interstate highway system. The act also had numerous **unintended consequences**, both positive and negative:

#### POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES

- Traffic deaths dropped to one-eighth of what they had been, due largely to the added safety of divided highways.
- The highways strengthened the military's ability to respond in case of an attack against the U.S.: the new roads meant that troops could reach affected areas quickly and that people could evacuate cities more efficiently.
- The highways contributed to an increase in trade within the U.S. Distant regions could efficiently trade with each other for the first time, which increased specialization: each region could now focus on producing what it did best. For example, Nebraska could more easily import produce from California and ship its wheat to other states. Increased specialization led to an increase in productivity, which contributed to economic growth.



A rural highway

- The building of the highways created construction jobs. Later, increased interstate travel created jobs in the tourist and travel industries.
- Economic growth increased tax revenues. While the system was expensive, the increase in revenue from the stronger economy easily offset the money the government had spent.
- The ability to travel easily between states contributed to a sense of national unity. People could now easily visit other regions and relocate to other areas for work.
- The growth of the car culture enabled people to make individual choices: for instance, they could easily travel to a nearby city in order to find better stores. The additional options available to consumers created competition between businesses, which benefited consumers and contributed to economic growth.
- Many businesses grew larger and spread their operations into other regions.
- The new highway systems around cities enabled people to move outside the city and commute in for work. This contributed to the process of suburbanization, and the large numbers of new houses in the suburbs increased home ownership. This photograph of a housing development illustrates what suburbanization ended up looking like.



Levittown, Long Island, New York

## NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

- The government increased taxes to pay for the new highway system. The new taxes on gasoline were particularly high, and many new roads had tolls, which people also had to pay.
- The increase in government spending resulted in some cases of corruption and waste. Construction companies sometimes charged higher prices for the work they did than it actually cost.
- The government's focus on funding highways hurt other forms of transportation, such as railroads. The highways were built and maintained at government expense, whereas the railroads were maintained by charging customers higher prices. The railroads couldn't expand in the same way that highways did and couldn't reach as many places. Therefore, Americans were more likely to buy cars so they could get to the places they wanted to go, and once they became accustomed to cars, it became difficult to persuade them to return to using trains and other forms of public transportation.

- Suburbanization increased home ownership, but it also increased commutes and pollution. The new housing developments (part of what is sometimes referred to as “urban sprawl”) replaced vast tracts of wilderness and thus adversely affected the environment. Also, as middle-class people left the cities for the suburbs, cities suffered. Wealthy taxpayers no longer contributed to help pay for schools, parks, and other programs.
- The U.S. increased its energy use and its dependence on foreign oil.
- Suburbanization and the increase in auto travel caused air pollution.
- The ease of auto travel contributed to the rise of the “car culture,” and businesses sprang up to contribute to that culture, including fast-food restaurants, motels, and malls. Americans suffered from health problems (especially obesity) as they drove places instead of walking to them and ate more fast food. Americans also started spending more time alone in their cars.
- The new highways often ran directly through cities. In order to build the highways, the government forced residents of some areas—usually in poorer neighborhoods—to move.
- Some critics say that the Highway Act increased federal power over the economy. In addition, the ease of doing business in other regions allowed large companies to increase their power, often at the expense of smaller businesses. This problem still exists today: in many semi-rural areas, customers would rather drive 50 miles to the nearest major retailer (such as Wal-Mart) than buy from smaller businesses in their own towns, which charge higher prices.
- Many critics also feel that the highway system contributed to a homogenization of American culture and decreased regional variety. All Americans now had access to a few large national brands at lower prices, which put regional companies at a disadvantage. People tended to favor businesses that offered consistent food and service (such as major fast-food chains) over local options.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS, 1954–1960

## Teacher Pages

### OVERVIEW

It may be tempting to reduce the civil rights struggle of the 1950s to simple questions of right and wrong. However, doing so limits students' understanding of why different groups of people reacted in the ways they did. This lesson asks students to consider civil rights issues from different perspectives—even ones with which they may strongly disagree.

### VOCABULARY

- Ghetto—Rundown, poor area of a city. In the U.S., the term often refers to impoverished areas with large African American populations.
- Segregation—Separate facilities for different races
- Montgomery bus boycott—Organized protest in which blacks ended the policy of segregated seating by refusing to ride the buses in Montgomery, Alabama
- Rosa Parks—African American woman who refused to give up her seat on a city bus, providing the catalyst for the Montgomery bus boycott
- Martin Luther King—Preacher who led the Montgomery bus boycott and later became a national leader of the civil rights movement
- *Brown v. Board of Education*—Supreme Court case that outlawed segregation
- Little Rock crisis—Attempt to integrate all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas
- Orval Faubus—Governor of Arkansas; sent state troops to prevent African American students from attending Central High School

### DECISION-MAKING SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Identify the underlying problem
- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context
- Set realistic goals
- Generate options
- Play out options

# LESSON PLAN

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## A. IN-DEPTH LESSON (one 40-minute class period)

### Procedure:

Distribute Handout 1, which focuses on the Montgomery bus boycott (although the word “boycott” doesn’t appear in the title) This handout asks students to generate options, encouraging them to think of the possibility of a boycott on their own. Give students a few minutes to read the handout and come up with options individually, then have students discuss the handout in small groups. Bring the class back together and have students report on the options they considered. List the options on the board. If students struggle with generating options or if you want to move through the lesson more quickly, share the following with students:

- Nonviolent demonstrations
- More forceful demonstrations, such as vandalizing the buses
- Boycott the bus company
- Sue the bus company in court

Next, have students play out the options, looking for possible problems that they will need to overcome. You may want to assign each group one or two of the options for analysis. Tell students to imagine how this option will play out. How will other segments of society react? What will civil rights leaders need to do to overcome obstacles to this option?

Distribute Handout 6 (which lists the outcomes of the Montgomery bus boycott) and discuss with students.

Next, distribute Handouts 3, 4, and 5 (which cover the Little Rock crisis from the perspective of the school board, Governor Faubus, and President Eisenhower) and divide the students into groups. You could have different groups consider different perspectives, or you could have each group consider all three points of view. Bring the class back together and discuss. Did any of the students change their minds after hearing other points of view? Finally, distribute and discuss Handout 8, which lists the outcomes of the Little Rock crisis.

OPTIONAL: Use Handout 2 to help students consider the perspectives of other people in Montgomery. After students make decisions from the perspectives of white men and white women in Montgomery, distribute Handout 7, which lists the outcomes. Have students go back to the choices they made from the perspectives of black leaders to see if they would now make different choices. Did the white perspectives help them see any additional problems with the strategies they chose?

### Reflecting on Decision Making:

Ask students what they would have done differently, if anything, now that they know the outcomes. Which decision-making skills were particularly important when making decisions about these issues? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Did they do well in anticipating other points of view? Did they anticipate what could go wrong? Discuss their answers, or have students write their answers in their journals or in their decision-making logs.

### Putting the Actual Decisions into Historical Context:

Ask students: Did certain historical factors cause the civil rights movement, the Montgomery bus boycott, and the Little Rock crisis, or did they occur mainly because of the actions of individuals? Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., and others have been hailed for the important roles they played. However, historical forces (such as African Americans fighting in World War II, the Cold War, and migration patterns) may have made the movement for equal rights inevitable. Students need to discuss and make up their own minds.

### Connecting to Today:

Ask students about the civil rights movement today. Have African Americans achieved full equality, or is there still work left to be done? What other groups are fighting for civil rights, and who opposes giving rights to these groups? You can mention the gay rights movement, and have the class discuss what both advocates and opponents of gay rights can learn from the black civil rights movement in the 1950s.

### Troubleshooting:

Students may find it difficult to generate options for Handout 1. The “Procedure” section for this lesson provides some possibilities.

## **B. QUICK MOTIVATOR (10–15 minutes)**

Assign Handout 1 as homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their options and choices for three minutes or so. Have students tell the class the options they generated, and list them on the board. Ask for a show of hands for each option. Distribute Handout 6 and for homework have students comment on what they learned from these outcomes. Skip Handout 2 (on the white perspective) in order to keep things quick.

# TEACHER NOTES FOR EXPANDING DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 4–6)

Some historians believe that white proponents of segregation could have limited the impact of the bus boycott by compromising. Had they agreed to the black leaders' initial request that the buses adopt a first-come, first-served seating policy, they may have ended the boycott. By taking an uncompromising stance, segregationists lost more. African American leaders saw that they had a difficult fight ahead of them and organized the people into a cohesive movement. As the strength of the movement increased, so did their demands.

## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS:

### P = Problem

- \* - **Identify any underlying problem**
- \* - **Consider other points of view**
  - What are my assumptions? Emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

- \* - **Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**
  - Reliability of sources
  - Historical analogies

### G = Goals

- \* - **What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**
- \* - **Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

- Predict unintended consequences
- \* - **Play out the options. What could go wrong?**

\* Denotes topics emphasized in this lesson

- **Identify underlying problems:** Students should consider many aspects of African American history, including slavery, reconstruction, sharecropping, and Jim Crow laws. Racism and poverty also represented issues of significant concern to the black community. Historians Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro have raised the possibility of another underlying problem: home ownership. In many cases, blacks and whites had similar incomes but blacks couldn't obtain loans for homes and businesses. This contributed to the disparity in wealth and lifestyle between blacks and whites.
- **Point of view:** Handouts 2–5 ask students to consider other points of view.

- **Ask about context:** Students should consider the context of the situation: What is the history of African Americans in the United States? Why had so many African Americans migrated north in recent years? How were younger African Americans doing compared to older African Americans?
- **Goals:** Handout 1 in particular focuses on goals, but students should keep goals in mind when considering the other handouts as well. For example, students should consider their goals before choosing strategies in Handout 1.
- **Generate options:** Handout 1 asks students to generate their own options. If they can't come up with many options, the "Procedure" section of the lesson plan provides some possibilities.
- **Play out the option:** The "Procedure" section of the lesson plan outlines how students can use Handout 1 to play out the options for the Montgomery bus crisis.

#### Further Research:

The *Montgomery Advertiser* has an excellent Web site on the boycott that includes interviews, newspaper articles, and an interactive timeline: "They Changed the World: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," available at <http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/frontpage.htm>.

The dispute between President Eisenhower and Governor Faubus is documented at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library under "Little Rock School Integration Crisis." Available at <http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/LittleRock/littlerockdocuments.html>.

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## LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS, 1954–1960

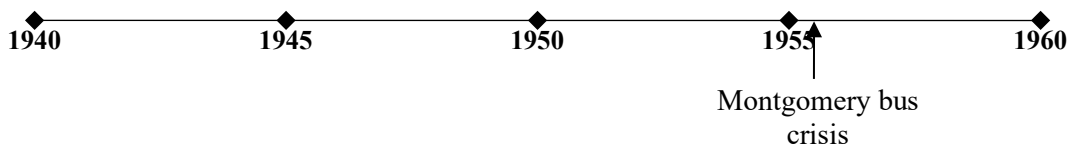
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### Vocabulary

- Ghetto—Rundown, poor area of a city. In the U.S., the term often refers to impoverished areas with large African American populations.
- Segregation—Separate facilities for different races
- Montgomery bus boycott—Organized protest in which blacks ended the policy of segregated seating by refusing to ride the buses in Montgomery, Alabama
- Rosa Parks—African American woman who refused to give up her seat on a city bus, providing the catalyst for the Montgomery bus boycott
- Martin Luther King—Preacher who led the Montgomery bus boycott and later became a national leader of the civil rights movement
- *Brown v. Board of Education*—Supreme Court case that outlawed segregation
- Little Rock crisis—Attempt to integrate all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas
- Orval Faubus—Governor of Arkansas; sent state troops to prevent African American students from attending Central High School

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

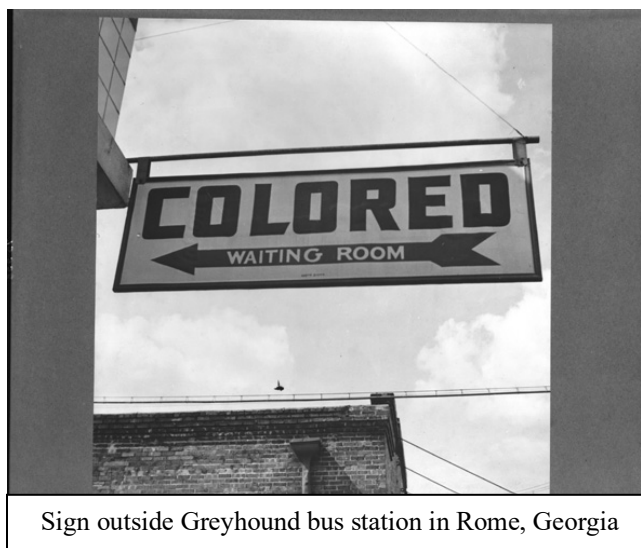
## Student Handout 1: Problem Montgomery Bus Crisis, 1955–1956



You are an African American activist in Montgomery, Alabama, in December 1955. Here, as elsewhere in the South, the system of segregation is widespread. Even on city buses and in bus terminals, blacks must remain apart from whites, as illustrated in the photo below:

About 75% of the bus riders in Montgomery are black, but blacks can only sit at the back of buses, while the front is reserved for whites. Blacks cannot sit in the white area even if there are seats there and the black section is full. However, if the white area of the bus is full, blacks are expected to give up their seats to whites.

Yesterday, a black woman named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white rider as a protest against the unfairness of the system. She was arrested, an action which outraged the black community.



Sign outside Greyhound bus station in Rome, Georgia

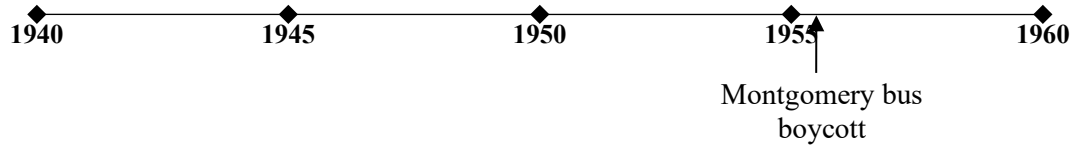
A recent protest in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, forced a change in the bus system there. Blacks can now sit in the buses from back to front, while whites sit from front to back. Seating is determined on a first-come, first-served basis, and there is no reserved white area. Blacks no longer have to give up their seats to white riders.

**Many people look to you and other black leaders to find a way to protest Parks's arrest and somehow effect change. What will you do?**

- A. Establish your goals. What do you want to achieve?
- B. Brainstorm possible strategies you could use to achieve those goals, then write down your top two or three.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

## Student Handout 2: Problem White Perspectives, Montgomery, 1955–1956



### WHITE COMMUNITY LEADER

You are a leader in Montgomery's white community, and you want to maintain the system of segregation. You believe that blacks and whites have learned how to live peacefully together under segregation, and that each group prefers the company of its own people. You feel that no trouble had existed under segregation until the NAACP (the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, of which Rosa Parks is a member) started agitating for change. Black leaders in Montgomery are staging a boycott against the bus company. Initially, they just wanted a modification of the rules regarding segregated seating. However, the movement has grown stronger and they leaders now demand an end to segregation on buses.

**How will you attempt to defeat the boycott and preserve segregation? What strategies will you employ?**

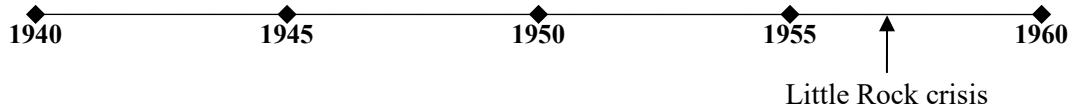
### WIFE OF A WHITE COMMUNITY LEADER

You are the wife of a white business leader in Montgomery. Your husband is active in the effort to defeat the boycott. You don't believe blacks and whites are equal, nor do you believe in integration. However, the boycott has affected someone else you know: your black housekeeper has refused to ride the buses and as a result has had to walk miles to your house every day. She hasn't been able to get to your house as early as she usually does, and in the past two weeks she has had to take two days off so that she can rest her feet from the additional walking. You're annoyed that she won't ride the bus to work, but you like her personally and felt bad when you saw the blisters on her feet from walking so much.

**Will you give her a ride to your house so she can come on time and not miss any days of work, even though doing so would undermine efforts to defeat the boycott?**

## LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

### Student Handout 3: Problem Little Rock, 1957



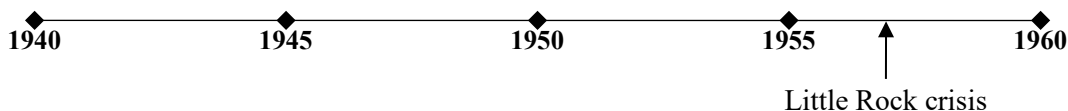
#### SCHOOL BOARD PERSPECTIVE

You are a member of the Little Rock, Arkansas, school board in 1957. In 1954, the Supreme Court decided in *Brown v. Board of Education* that having separate schools for whites and blacks violated constitutional guarantees of equality. Little Rock has several segregated schools, including Central High, a white school, and Horace Mann High, a black school. How should the school board respond to the court's decision? Choose one of the options below:

1. Refuse to obey the decision. Whites don't like the idea of integration: having blacks attend white schools will only decrease the quality of white schools. Instead of being forced to integrate the schools, close them down and make everyone attend private schools.
2. Integrate the two high schools in Little Rock. The Supreme Court declared separate schools illegal, and the school board must obey the law. Reassign half the whites from Central High School to Horace Mann, and relocate half the black students from Mann to Central.
3. Submit to the law but move slowly, so that people can get used to the idea of integration. Allow about ten of the best black students to attend Central High School for the first year. In the second year, expand that to 40 black students. By year three, the schools should be fully integrated.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

## Student Handout 4: Problem Little Rock, 1957



### GOVERNOR'S PERSPECTIVE

You are Orval Faubus, governor of Arkansas, in 1957. You are a political moderate (especially compared to some other Southern politicians), and in your last race you won a majority of African Americans' votes. However, you are running for reelection this year, and your advisors tell you that you need the segregationist vote in order to win.

You learn that the Little Rock school board has decided to integrate the city's high schools by enrolling nine black students into the all-white Central High School. Voters wait to see how you will respond to the situation.



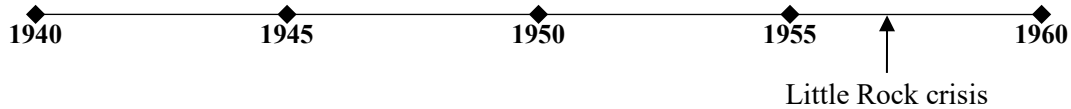
Governor Orval Faubus

Which of the following options will you choose?

1. Support integration. Send the Arkansas National Guard to protect the nine black students.
2. Stay out of this situation. It's a local matter, not a state one.
3. Use the Arkansas National Guard to prevent the black students from attending Central High School. The Supreme Court has no business telling states or cities what to do with their schools. If you take a stand against this forced integration and in favor of states' rights, you'll earn the support of segregationists and likely win reelection.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

## Student Handout 5: Problem Little Rock, 1957



### PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

You are President Dwight Eisenhower in 1957. In 1954, the Supreme Court declared segregation in public schools illegal. The school board in Little Rock, Arkansas, decided to integrate the schools there slowly by sending nine black students to all-white Central High School. However, Arkansas governor Orval Faubus sent the Arkansas National Guard to prevent the black students from attending. You spoke with Faubus, and he indicated that he planned to back down and let the black students attend Central High. Instead, he simply withdrew the troops. Chaos resulted as white segregationists descended on the school, threatening violence if blacks attended. Many Americans look to you for leadership. Integration has become a major issue, particularly in the South, and people fear that the type of unrest Little Rock is experiencing might spread to their communities.



A young African American boy watches from afar as angry whites march on Central High School to protest integration

Which of these options will you choose?

1. Tell Faubus that he should send in the Arkansas National Guard again, but this time for the purpose of protecting the black students.
2. Stay out of the situation. It's a local and/or state matter, not a federal one.
3. Send federal troops to make sure the students can attend school and to preserve order in Little Rock.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

## Student Handout 6: Outcomes Montgomery Bus Crisis, 1955–1956

### GOALS

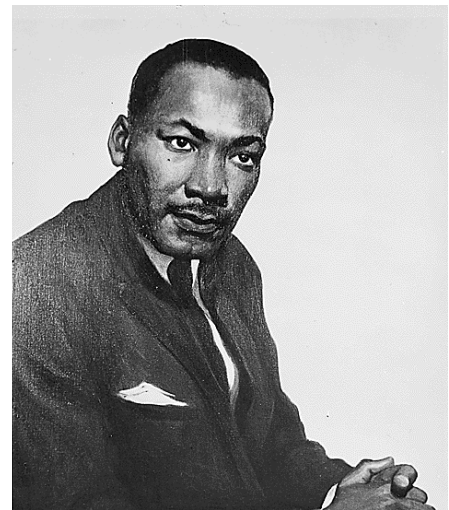
Black leaders began the boycott with the goal of making the segregated seating system fairer. They wanted a solution similar to the one reached in Louisiana: blacks would sit on buses from the back to the front, while whites sat from the front to the back. There would be no reserved seating area, and blacks would not be forced to give up their seats. However, white leaders resisted even this moderate change. As the boycott gained strength and it became clear that the decline in ridership was hurting the bus system, black leaders changed their goal. They now wanted to end segregation on buses altogether.

### STRATEGIES

The black community focused its efforts on the boycott of the Montgomery bus company. Because blacks made up 75% of the city's bus riders, a boycott would almost certainly have a major impact. Black leaders believed that the bus company couldn't withstand such a huge drop in ridership and would eventually have to change the system.

The leaders of the boycott had to overcome numerous obstacles. First, they needed to spread the word about the boycott in order to ensure that a large number of blacks would participate. Activists accomplished this task by printing 40,000 handbills and distributing them around Montgomery.

The activists quickly realized that they needed better organization. They formed the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) in order to coordinate the boycott. However, Montgomery's blacks were a large and diverse group with many different income and education levels, and the MIA alone couldn't effectively reach the entire African American community. The one thing almost all Montgomery's blacks did have in common was affiliation with one of the community's black churches. Thus, church leaders such as Martin Luther King took leadership roles in the boycott. King was an inspirational preacher who successfully urged blacks to endure the many months of the boycott. His charismatic leadership helped spread the civil rights effort beyond Montgomery, and he eventually became a national leader of the civil rights movement. The civil rights movement retained



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

many reminders of its church roots as it spread across the country: supporters sang spiritual anthems to provide inspiration and a sense of unity, and many of the most famous speeches in favor of civil rights used religious imagery.

The boycott's organizers also had to overcome the fact that blacks depended on income from work to support their families, and in many cases the bus system provided the only source of transportation to those jobs. Few people had enough money saved to hold out if the boycott lasted for months, and many risked their jobs if they missed too many days of work. Segregationists made it difficult for boycotters to arrange alternate transportation. The police threatened to arrest any taxi driver who charged less than the standard 45-cent fare, which made taxis too expensive for many workers. Some blacks organized carpools to get to work. Some whites who sympathized with the boycott also aided in the carpool effort. Although about 150 car owners volunteered initially, at least 20,000 rides were needed per day for blacks who couldn't walk, which meant that each carpool driver would have to give 130 rides per day. Eventually, the MIA raised enough money to buy more than a dozen large station wagons, which reduced some of the burden.

White segregationists waged a media war against the organizers, creating further challenges. Newspapers printed personal attacks on King, charging that he was an outsider who had never ridden a bus in Montgomery. However, blacks trusted King and didn't believe the articles. Segregationists met with black ministers who were not part of the MIA, and made an agreement with them to end the boycott. Newspapers printed the agreement to fool blacks into thinking that the boycott had ended. Though some fell for the ruse, MIA leaders managed to spread the word about the false agreement, and the boycott continued.

Violence also posed a problem. The MIA leaders became targets of white violence, but they knew that it was important for the black community not to retaliate. Rioting or attacks against whites would have turned moderate members of the white community against the boycott. The MIA prevented blacks from getting violent by repeatedly reinforcing the idea of the boycott as a civil, peaceful action. The boycotters won the sympathy of many people both in Montgomery and nationwide. Many applauded the black community's commitment and determination to create change through nonviolent, legal means; they also deplored the violent tactics used by some white segregationists.

## OUTCOMES

The Montgomery bus boycott succeeded in desegregating the buses. As such, it represented a milestone in the civil rights movement and encouraged other communities to push for desegregation and equal rights, both on buses and in other areas of society. Rosa Parks became a hero to many people in the civil rights movement and to others who supported equal rights for all people. She became a role model for African Americans, for women, and for people in general. Martin Luther King went on to become the nation's most prominent civil rights leader, and has remained an inspirational figure even after his tragic assassination in 1968. The Montgomery bus boycott showed that direct, nonviolent action could successfully effect change.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

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## Student Handout 7: Outcomes

### White Perspectives, Montgomery, 1955–1956

Many whites believed that blacks were content with segregation in the South. They concluded that any protests about the system had to have resulted from the actions of outside agitators, particularly from the North. A white police officer stated, “We never have any trouble with our Southern niggers until the NAACP talks to them.”

In many places in the South (including Montgomery) whites formed citizen councils designed to resist the efforts of civil rights groups. Some of these groups used their economic power to fire blacks from jobs in white businesses or threaten economic retaliation. Some whites committed acts of violence against blacks, either independently or as members of groups like the Ku Klux Klan. Some violence occurred during the Montgomery bus boycott, but it largely ended when prominent whites spoke out against it.

One ploy that almost ended the boycott in Montgomery was an exaggerated news story. In January 1956, the white-run city commission met with three non-MIA (Montgomery Improvement Association) black ministers and got them to agree to a “compromise.” This compromise turned out to be essentially the status quo before the boycott. The city commission planned to have the story of the compromise printed in the Sunday morning newspapers. They hoped that blacks would read the story, believe that the boycott had ended, and return to riding the buses. The MIA, including King, learned of the city commission’s efforts on Saturday night. They immediately sent members out to bars and other meeting places around the city to spread the news that the soon-to-be-printed story was a lie. They got the word out in time, and the boycott continued. Segregationists also tried to fine black taxi drivers. Many drivers had charged only 10 cents (the regular bus fare) to drive blacks to work, and the police began to fine them if they didn’t charge the city minimum of 45 cents.

Not all whites opposed the boycott. Many white women defied their husbands and gave rides to their black maids. In many cases, these actions occurred because of self-interest: these white women depended on their black maids to clean their houses. However, some women liked their maids personally and eventually became sympathetic to their struggle for equal rights. Some white businessmen pushed the city to negotiate with the MIA to end the bus boycott: since black customers couldn’t get to their shops, these businessmen were losing money in sales.

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

## Student Handout 8: Outcomes Little Rock, 1957

### SCHOOL BOARD PERSPECTIVE

The school board chose to try to integrate the schools slowly (option 3). To many, this seemed like the most reasonable option available at the time. They believed that the school board had to obey the Supreme Court's mandate but also worried that moving too quickly would have created further problems. Other states (such as Virginia) opposed integration so vehemently that school boards chose option 1 when faced with the same choice and closed the public schools.

### GOVERNOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Orval Faubus chose option 3 and sent the Arkansas National Guard to prevent the nine black students from attending Central High School. This move encouraged segregationists to fight harder against integration. Supporters of segregation from all over the country came to Little Rock, raising the possibility of deadly violence between the segregationists and the civil rights activists. When President Eisenhower asked Faubus to allow the black students to attend the school, he responded by withdrawing the troops. Without the troops to keep order, people feared widespread rioting and violence.



Governor Orval Faubus (far right) speaking to a crowd of anti-integration protesters outside the state capitol

### PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Eisenhower sent in paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division to maintain order in Little Rock and to ensure that the black students could attend Central High School. He felt obligated to enforce the law, despite the risk that white segregationists would desert the Republican Party. Eisenhower portrayed the action less as about ensuring integration and civil rights (a difficult political position, since most voters were white, and many supported segregation) than of preventing civil disorder (which almost everyone wanted to avoid). The President stated in a television speech, "When large gatherings of obstructionists made it impossible for the decrees of the court to be carried out, both the law and the national interest demanded that the President take action."

# LESSON 8: CIVIL RIGHTS

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## Student Handout 9: Primary Source

**Text of flyer circulated by Montgomery Improvement Association following the settlement of the boycott: December 19, 1956**

### Integrated Bus Suggestions

This is a historic week because segregation on buses has now been declared unconstitutional. Within a few days the Supreme Court Mandate will reach Montgomery and you will be re-boarding integrated buses. This places upon us all a tremendous responsibility of maintaining, in face of what could be some unpleasantness, a calm and loving dignity befitting good citizens and members of our Race. If there is violence in word or deed it must not be our people who commit it.

For your help and convenience the following suggestions are made. Will you read, study and memorize them so that our non-violent determination may not be endangered. First, some general suggestions:

1. Not all white people are opposed to integrated buses. Accept goodwill on the part of many.
2. The whole bus is now for the use of all people. Take a vacant seat.
3. Pray for guidance and commit yourself to complete non-violence in word and action as you enter the bus.
4. Demonstrate the calm dignity of our Montgomery people in your actions.
5. In all things observe ordinary rules of courtesy and good behavior.
6. Remember that this is not a victory for Negroes alone, but for all Montgomery and the South. Do not boast! Do not brag!
7. Be quiet but friendly; proud, but not arrogant; joyous, but not boisterous.
8. Be loving enough to absorb evil and understanding enough to turn an enemy into a friend.

Now for some specific suggestions:

1. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and has been instructed to obey the law. Assume that he will cooperate in helping you occupy any vacant seat.
2. Do not deliberately sit by a white person, unless there is no other seat.
3. In sitting down by a person, white or colored, say "May I" or "Pardon me" as you sit. This is a common courtesy.
4. If cursed, do not curse back. If pushed, do not push back. If struck, do not strike back, but evidence love and goodwill at all times.
5. In case of an incident, talk as little as possible, and always in a quiet tone. Do not get up from your seat! Report all serious incidents to the bus driver.

6. For the first few days try to get on the bus with a friend in whose non-violence you have confidence. You can uphold one another by glance or prayer.
7. If another person is being molested, do not arise to go to his defense, but pray for the oppressor and use moral and spiritual forces to carry on the struggle for justice.
8. According to your own ability and personality, do not be afraid to experiment with new and creative techniques for achieving reconciliation and social change.
9. If you feel you cannot take it, walk for another week or two. We have confidence in our people.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

THE MONTGOMERY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Rev. M. L. King, Jr., President

The Rev. W. J. Powell, Secretary

*Source: Inez Jessie Baskin Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.*

### QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What do these guidelines show about civil rights strategies in 1956?
2. Do you think blacks at the time would have found it difficult to follow these suggestions?