

*U.S. History Readers*

## **American Presidents: Kennedy to Obama**

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# American Presidents: From Kennedy to Obama

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1	John Fitzgerald Kennedy .....	1
Chapter 2	JFK at Home: Effective Reformer? .....	17
Chapter 3	Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society.....	31
Chapter 4	President Johnson and the War in Vietnam.....	47
Chapter 5	President Nixon: The Man and His Foreign Policy.....	61
Chapter 6	President Nixon's Domestic Policies and Watergate .....	75
Chapter 7	Gerald Ford: the Unelected President .....	93
Chapter 8	James Earl Carter: A Born-Again Peanut Farmer as President.....	107
Chapter 9	Ronald Reagan: An Actor as President.....	121
Chapter 10	President Reagan and the "Evil Empire".....	135
Chapter 11	President George H.W. Bush .....	151
Chapter 12	President Clinton's Domestic Policies .....	165
Chapter 13	President Clinton's Foreign Policy .....	181
Chapter 14	The Second President Bush's Domestic Policy.....	195
Chapter 15	President George W. Bush and the War in Iraq .....	213
Chapter 16	Barack Obama: A Work in Progress .....	231





## **American Presidents: From John Kennedy to Barack Obama**

This book provides teachers with the opportunity to acquaint students with the life stories of the men who have held the highest office in America and to encourage students to make tentative observations about how well these presidents' domestic and foreign policies served the people who elected them. Several themes run through the unit. On the personal side, it asks how each president's early experiences influenced his actions while in office. In domestic policy, it asks if the president followed conservative (supply side) economic policies, and what he did to increase or limit the government's role in the economy. With regard to foreign policy, readers learn that these ten presidents' records vary between vigorously defending American interests and adopting a conciliatory posture that sought first to arrive at peaceful solutions. Students examine American presidents' efforts to engage the Soviet Union in Cuba and Berlin, fight and end the war in Vietnam, confront the challenges of the Middle East, and face the threat of terrorism.

The first chapter informs readers that President John F. Kennedy pursued a vigorous foreign policy that included initiatives such as the Peace Corps and the Alliance for Progress, the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, the blockade of Cuba, and the test-ban treaty with the Soviet Union. Subsequent chapters indicate that Lyndon Johnson generally carried out Kennedy's domestic initiatives, including the War on Poverty. Readers learn that Johnson also made the decisions that engulfed the U.S. in a quagmire from which President Nixon extricated the country only to watch Saigon fall during Gerald Ford's presidency. Students learn how Nixon's domestic policies contained surprisingly liberal initiatives at the same time he adhered to a "Southern strategy." The narrative describes Ford vainly trying to fight inflation with WIN (Whip Inflation Now) buttons and continuing Nixon's foreign policy initiatives with respect to China and the Soviet Union.

The story continues with the largely ineffective presidency of Jimmy Carter, whose only significant accomplishment—helping negotiate the successful peace agreement between Egypt and Israel—was largely ignored by a country experiencing 15 percent inflation, a hostage crisis with Iran, and "malaise." While the latter disappeared with Ronald Reagan's election, the resulting optimism did not succeed in helping balance the budget: a tax cut along with increased military spending led the U.S. to run deficits. However, the increased military spending may have helped to break the Soviet economy and led to surprising concessions from the "evil empire."

The story proceeds with George H. W. Bush allowing a tax increase that helped his successor balance the budget. Readers learn that despite a largely successful U.S. effort in the First Gulf War, Bush lost his bid for reelection. Bill Clinton's foreign policy is portrayed as succeeding in former Yugoslavia, being remiss in Rwanda, and falling short with the Israelis and the Palestinians. Readers learn that George W. Bush bloated the budget by cutting taxes and increasing defense spending. They learn that the war in Iraq took longer to fight than all of World War II, and that the weapons of

mass destruction whose existence supposedly justified this war weren't found. Finally, they see that George W. Bush's failed economic and foreign policies provided Barack Obama with a full plate. They are left to speculate whether a generous bailout for parts of the financial and auto industries, accompanied by a massive economic stimulus package, may not achieve the desired recovery, or if overtures to Muslims may not bring about a hoped-for peace.

Each chapter is designed to accommodate a wide range of student abilities. The first part of every chapter is written at a lower reading and conceptual level than the second part. The two parts are separated by a series of student exercises, including a graphic organizer and several questions intended to help students master basic information and stimulate higher-order thinking skills. The second part of each chapter, the "For Further Consideration" section, is written at a higher reading and conceptual level. It is followed by a question that requires students to write a strong paragraph and/or be prepared to present their opinions in class. In some cases, this section continues the story; in others, it challenges students to think deeply about issues related to the overarching question raised in the unit. In addition, I (Inquiry)-Charts are provided to help students optimize what they already know or think about a topic and integrate it with identifiable additional information they find in the text and other sources. Finally, each lesson includes vocabulary words and key terms in flash-card format; these can be used either for review or reference.

This unit is also designed to stimulate informed discussions and higher-order thinking skills rather than recitation and rote learning. Students are provided with the information they need to acquire and share factually supported opinions and/or consider important philosophical issues. Students' debating, discussion, and thinking skills get sharpened as they grapple with questions such as whether JFK or Lyndon Johnson deserved credit for the Great Society programs, whether disaster in Vietnam could have been avoided, if Richard Nixon's transgressions were more disreputable than the misdeeds of other presidents, whether Ronald Reagan's arms buildup caused the collapse of the Soviet Union, and whether supply-side economics works.

## Chapter 1. John Fitzgerald Kennedy Teacher Page

### Overview:

This chapter follows John F. Kennedy's career, starting with his illustrious family and ending with the debate with Richard Nixon. It highlights quotes from JFK's inaugural speech that foreshadow his determination to "pay any price...to assure the survival of liberty," and his pledge to "help the many [countries] that are poor." Much of the remaining parts of this chapter show how Kennedy's foreign policy embraced the promises implicit in this powerful speech. Among other topics, the chapter covers the Peace Corps, the Alliance for Progress, the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the war in Vietnam, and the atmospheric nuclear test ban treaty. The Graphic Organizer question asks students to use phrases from Kennedy's inaugural address to categorize each of these episodes. The "For Further Consideration" section uses Kennedy's words to explain his commitment to landing a man on the moon, and asks students whether Kennedy should be remembered for "piloting the U.S. through international crises not of his making," or for "being reckless in the application of American power."

### Objectives:

Students will:

- become familiar with John F. Kennedy's life story, mystique, and the foreign policy issues he confronted
- learn about major foreign policy decisions Kennedy made
- learn that a case can be made that Kennedy's foreign policy decisions were either "reckless" or appropriate

### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section. Inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all student activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** Begin class by asking students what they knew about JFK before they did their reading and what they have learned from the text. Ask them what they found admirable about Kennedy, what obstacles he had to overcome, and what advantages he had over other candidates for president. Talk to them about the speech he gave during his debates with Richard Nixon and the meaningful phrases in his inaugural address. Ask whether these phrases showed him to be an idealist who wanted to help people or a "tough guy" who was ready to go to war before he would negotiate. Starting with the Peace Corps, review each of the major foreign policy initiatives mentioned in the chapter and ask students which of two characterizations best fit JFK's actions. Toward the end of the period, ask students who read the "For Further

Consideration” section to tell their classmates why JFK was intent on the U.S. winning the race to the moon. End the class by discussing whether Kennedy came across more as a peaceful idealist or a hardheaded cold warrior.

## Chapter 1. John Fitzgerald Kennedy I-Chart

	<b>What made JFK an attractive presidential candidate?</b>	<b>What were the major foreign policy decisions President Kennedy made?</b>	<b>Did President Kennedy make the best possible decisions in each case?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 1, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 1, Part II</b>			
<b>What I still would like to learn about the subject</b>			



## Chapter 1. John Fitzgerald Kennedy

**inadequately paid**

**confiscating**

**guerrilla warfare**

**perception**

**conciliatory**

**strafed**

**convention  
delegates**

**magnanimous**

**socialist policies**

## Chapter 1. John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Fighting with terrorist-like hit-and-run attacks	Usually refers to an official taking property without paying for it	Not paid enough based on value of work or need
Attacked with gunfire, often from planes or jets	Trying to make peace	The way something is seen or understood by other people
Policies that tend to have businesses run by the state rather than by individual owners	Generous	People elected to attend a convention in order to decide on their party's goals and leaders. This is how Democrats and Republicans finalize the selection of candidates for president.



# Chapter 1

## John Fitzgerald Kennedy

### Introduction

This chapter introduces you to the early life of America's youngest elected president and explores the contents of his foreign policy. Some historians have rated him as the sixth greatest president to hold that office. You will have the opportunity to explain just what qualities prepared him to become chief executive and then to evaluate his foreign policy. The next chapter covers JFK's domestic policies and his tragic death at the age of 46.

### JFK: His Early Years



Kennedy with his wife and children

“Jack,” as his friends called him, was born in Brookline Massachusetts on May 29, 1917. His father, a bank president by the age of 25, was rumored to have been a bootlegger and known to have made a great deal of money in the stock market. Joseph Kennedy was so well schooled in the market's shady practices that President Roosevelt had him supervise it during the 1930s. Like their father, Jack and his three brothers attended Harvard University. The father gave each of his sons enough money when they reached maturity so they could afford to concentrate their efforts on public service. The three older siblings served in the military. Joe Jr., the oldest, was killed when his plane was shot down over the English Channel. Jack served as a Patrol Torpedo boat commander and became a war hero after his ship was split in half by a Japanese destroyer. Though injured in the collision, Jack swam a badly wounded comrade to a distant island. Bobby enlisted in the navy but was never called into active duty.

Jack's political career began after he returned from the war, when he ran an effective political campaign to represent Boston in the House of Representatives. Many believe he won because he used his political connections with his grandfather (a one-time mayor of Boston), the political talent of his brother Robert, the money supplied by his father, and his good looks and personal charm. In 1952, John Kennedy won a seat in the U.S. Senate as a Democrat. Again his father's money and influence, his brother's political acumen, and his own charm and brilliance were deciding factors in his victory.

JFK's first term in the Senate was interrupted by a recurring back injury, which gave him the time to write his second book, ***Profiles in Courage***. It received a Pulitzer Prize, became a nationwide bestseller, and earned Kennedy a reputation as an intellectual as well as a politician. The book was also instrumental in providing Kennedy with the opportunity to become a vice-presidential candidate in 1956. After Kennedy spoke in favor of the Democratic nominee, Adlai Stevenson, Stevenson invited the

convention to choose his running mate. JFK's name was put into nomination, and the Massachusetts senator came within 33 votes of being selected.

After coming so close to receiving his party's support for the office of vice-president, Kennedy spent the next three and a half years as an undeclared candidate for the top spot on the ticket. His campaign consisted of giving speeches around the country in support of other Democrats, appearing on television, writing articles, and making friends with potential convention delegates. He stood far ahead of his competitors when the time came for him to officially announce his candidacy. Nevertheless, he had to overcome the perception that religious prejudice against Catholics would prevent him from being elected president of the United States. Kennedy overcame this perception by winning the presidential primary in West Virginia, an overwhelmingly Protestant state.

### **A New Frontier and the Debates with Vice-President Nixon**

In his acceptance speech after winning the Democratic nomination for president in 1960, Kennedy said, "We stand today on the edge of a new frontier—the frontier of the 1960s, a frontier of unknown opportunities and paths," and added, "The new frontier of which I speak is not a set of promises—it is a set of challenges. It sums up not what I intend to offer the American people, but what I intend to ask of them."

Together with his running mate, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, Kennedy faced the Republican nominee, Richard Nixon. Nixon's experience as vice-president under President Eisenhower made him a favorite over his younger and less-experienced rival. JFK overcame this disadvantage in the first of four televised presidential debates. Kennedy held his own against Nixon as he pointed out the U.S. could do better under Democratic leadership than it had under eight years of Republican rule:



Kennedy won the first debate partially because he was more photogenic than Vice-President Nixon

...This is a great country, but I think it could be a greater country; and this is a powerful country, but I think it could be a more powerful country. I'm not satisfied to have fifty percent of our steel-mill capacity unused. I'm not satisfied when the United States had last year the lowest rate of economic growth of any major industrialized society in the world. Because economic growth means strength and vitality; it means we're able to sustain our defenses; it means we're able to meet our commitments abroad. ...I'm not satisfied when the Soviet Union is turning out twice as many scientists and engineers as we are. I'm not satisfied when many of our teachers are inadequately paid, or when our children go to school part-time shifts. I think we should have an educational system second to none.

## The Election of 1960

The election results in 1960 were very close. With more than 34 million people going to the polls, John Kennedy received only 120,000 more votes than Richard Nixon. However, the vote was so dispersed that Kennedy won a 303 to 219 electoral-vote majority.

### President Kennedy's Inaugural Address



Kennedy giving his inaugural address. Many consider it one of the best ever delivered.

A careful reading of President Kennedy's inaugural address reveals that it was devoted almost entirely to foreign policy. The president pledged that the U.S. would "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, and oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty." He called for America to stand armed and strong, "for only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed." He was magnanimous, "to those people in the huts and

villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves," for "if a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." He was conciliatory "to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace," and he was flexible: "Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate." Even Kennedy's most famous line, "ask not what your country can do for you, but for what you can do for your country," was followed by a request to "my fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you—ask what together we can do for the freedom of man."

You may wonder if President Kennedy's foreign policy initiatives carried out the ideas in these famous lines just quoted. Read the following and decide for yourself.

### President Kennedy's Foreign Policy: Commitments to the Poor

One of JFK's first foreign policy initiatives was to propose a program known as the Peace Corps. It was designed to provide young Americans who had the necessary skills with the opportunity to serve people living in poverty throughout the world. The president issued an executive order that started this program in March 1961. Less than two years later, 7300 volunteers were serving in 44 different countries. Despite initial criticism, the Peace Corps has received universal praise—people from 139 different countries have applied as volunteers. More than 195,000 Americans performed a variety of jobs in the Peace Corps, ranging from teaching English to digging irrigation ditches for the world's poorest people.

In March of 1961, President Kennedy revealed his plan for forming the Organization of American States to:

build a hemisphere where all men can hope for a suitable standard of living and all can live out their lives in dignity and in freedom.

The U.S. government pledged \$20 billion to the cause over a ten-year period; U.S. businesses were expected to contribute by investing \$80 billion dollars to increase the standard of living of the people of Latin America. However, lack of support from future presidents and Congresses, as well as internal problems within South America, prevented this initiative from achieving its goals.



President Kennedy and the president of Venezuela at a meeting for Alliance of Progress

## The Bay of Pigs

Shortly after his inauguration, President Kennedy made his first really difficult foreign policy decision. For some time, the Central Intelligence Agency had been training about 1400 Cuban exiles who had fled their homeland because of the oppressive and socialistic policies of Cuban dictator Fidel Castro. The exiles had come to the United States with horrifying stories of Castro confiscating businesses and plantations belonging to Americans as well as Cubans, and jailing patriotic Cubans who expressed their opposition. They claimed that the Cubans who stayed in their homeland were equally disgusted with Castro for establishing what seemed to be turning into a communist dictatorship.

By the time Kennedy became president, the CIA-trained invasion force was almost ready to go. In early February, Kennedy gave his consent to the operation, and two months later nearly 1400 Cuban exiles landed on the shores of Cuba in a place called the Bay of Pigs. They were met by Cuban planes that strafed the beachheads and sank two supply ships. Within 24 hours, 20,000 men loyal to Fidel Castro arrived in the area. Castro's forces captured 1200 invaders and killed one hundred. Within days, Castro triumphantly marched his captives through the streets of Havana. Rather than overthrowing Castro, this failed invasion made him more popular. Still attempting to remove this communist thorn in America's side, John Kennedy and his brother Robert launched a series of secret but unsuccessful attempts to kill the Cuban dictator.

## Kennedy's Foreign Policy: Southeast Asia

President Kennedy came to office at a difficult time in Vietnam's history. The South Vietnamese under President Ngo Dinh Diem had failed to abide by a treaty that



committed them to holding free elections. The elections would have united North and South Vietnam and no less of an authority than former President Eisenhower believed the elections would result in a communist victory. Eisenhower therefore provided aid to South Vietnam in the hopes that the South Vietnamese could withstand a guerrilla warfare attack on their government. President Kennedy decided to continue assisting the South Vietnamese. He introduced an elite military fighting force called the Green Berets to engage in counterinsurgency (anti-guerrilla) warfare. He increased the number of American “military advisors” when he took office from 900 to 16,000. He supported another counterinsurgency plan called the Strategic Hamlet Program. The president felt that the U.S. could not afford to lose Vietnam to the communists under Ho Chi Minh.

### President Kennedy and Prime Minister Khrushchev

Early during his presidency, President Kennedy went eyeball to eyeball with Soviet Union Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev. In June 1961, he met the Soviet leader for the first time in order for the two men to get to know one another, but the meeting did not go well. First, Khrushchev confronted Kennedy, lecturing him on foreign policy; Kennedy replied in kind, but left the impression that he was young and inexperienced. Khrushchev’s challenge to his young opponent came soon after in the form of building a wall around the Soviet sector of Berlin. The wall’s purpose was to stop East Germans from escaping to West Berlin and through West Berlin to West Germany.



Kennedy meets Khrushchev in Vienna

Kennedy called up the reserves while continuing to expand conventional forces. He also built up the U.S. offensive missiles that surrounded the Soviet Union. During his campaign for president, Kennedy had claimed that the Soviet Union was ahead of the U.S. in offensive missiles. Although his claim proved false, JFK continued building more missiles and deploying them in silos surrounding the Soviet Union.



Map showing the range of missiles in Cuba

Partially to counter what the USSR thought was a “missile gap” favoring the United States, Nikita Khrushchev allowed Fidel Castro to talk him into installing missiles with nuclear warheads in Cuba. Satellite pictures informed U.S. intelligence agents that the U.S. was about to be confronted by nuclear-armed missiles 90 miles from Florida. On October 16, 1962, aids informed the president of this danger and he immediately convened 26 advisors to help him decide how to respond to this threat. After 13 days of deliberation, speeches in the UN, and the U.S.’s announcement of a naval blockade around Cuba, the Soviets backed down. The U.S. and the USSR reached an

agreement: in exchange for the Soviets removing their missiles from Cuba, the U.S. agreed not to invade Cuba and (secretly) agreed to eventually dismantle obsolete American missiles stationed in Italy and Turkey.

Relations between the U.S. and the USSR improved after the Cuban Missile Crisis. President Kennedy acted more conciliatory toward the Soviet Union, as seen in a speech stressing a mutual interest between the two countries:

For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet, we all breathe the same air, we all cherish our children's futures, and we are all mortal.

Khrushchev responded to Kennedy by praising his speech and agreeing to arms reduction talks. Both sides agreed to a ban on atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons. However, the U.S. and the Soviet Union could not agree on halting underground weapons testing, and the arms race continued.

## Student Activities

### A. Student Exercises

Give examples of the qualities and accomplishments that you think helped make John F. Kennedy a successful candidate for president.

### B. Graphic Organizer

Explain what happened as a result of the following foreign policy decisions by President Kennedy and use at least three different phrases from his inaugural address to help explain the motives for these actions.

<b>Foreign policy initiative</b>	<b>What happened as a result?</b>	<b>Phrase from inaugural address that explains reason for the initiative</b>
<b>Peace Corps</b>		
<b>Alliance for Progress</b>		
<b>Bay of Pigs</b>		
<b>Response to Berlin Blockade</b>		

<b>Response to missile threat in Cuba</b>		
<b>Continued deployment of nuclear missiles</b>		
<b>Attempts on Castro's life</b>		
<b>Test Ban Treaty</b>		
<b>Support for President Diem of South Vietnam</b>		



## For Further Consideration: President Kennedy Shoots for the Moon

In response to the Soviet Union's launch of the manned spacecraft *Sputnik* into orbit around the earth, President Kennedy pledged that the U.S. would surpass the Soviets in space. He proposed to land an American on the moon before the end of the 1960s, stating:



Kennedy giving his moon speech in 1961

...if we are to win the battle that is now going on around the world between freedom and tyranny, the dramatic achievements in space which occurred in recent weeks should have made clear to us all, as did the *Sputnik* in 1957, the impact of this adventure on the minds of men everywhere, who are attempting to make a determination of which road they should take...Now it is time to take longer strides—time for a great new American enterprise—time for this nation to take a clearly leading role in space achievement, which in many ways may hold the key to our future on earth.

...I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish.

The U.S. redoubled its efforts in space and landed astronaut Neil Armstrong on the moon on July 21, 1969. His words, “one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,” commemorated this event.

Kennedy's supporters have, in the words of one historian, praised him for “piloting the United States safely through international crises not of his own making” and improving relations with the Soviet Union. His critics, in the words of another historian, have characterized him as reckless “in the application of American power and...provocative and adventuristic.”

Which of the two evaluations seem more convincing to you?

**Based on what you know about President Kennedy's foreign policy, decide which of these evaluations you support. Write two strong paragraphs supporting**

**your opinion and prepare to present your ideas in class, listen to the opinions of others and defend yours or change your mind.**

## Chapter 2. JFK at Home: Effective Reformer?

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter covers several important reforms Kennedy advocated and asks students whether his initiatives were too cautious, too liberal, or too late. The chapter begins by reporting on Kennedy's proposal for a fiscal stimulus and the argument between demand- and supply-siders. Students learn that the supply-siders won. However, the chapter credits JFK with securing an increase in the minimum wage and the passage of the Trade Expansion Act, but notes that he failed to secure health insurance, an increase in Social Security payments, and aid to public schools. Students are told that JFK was a "Johnny-come-lately" in backing civil rights legislation. As a senator, he voted against passage of the 1957 Civil Rights Act, and as president he waited until the South was wracked by protests before proposing and eloquently arguing for what eventually became the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The "For Further Consideration" section describes Kennedy's assassination and summarizes the arguments over the single assassin and "magic bullet" theories.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- understand the argument between demand- and supply-siders
- become familiar with JFK's positions on minimum wage increases, civil rights legislation, and other domestic programs
- discuss whether JFK's domestic initiatives were too cautious, too liberal, or too late
- 

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** Start by asking students to explain what they know about arguments for demand- and for supply-side economics and ask which arguments make most sense to them. Next, review President Kennedy's decision and ask students whether he made the right decision in proposing an across-the-board tax cut that would save far more money for people in the higher tax brackets than those in the middle and lower ones. Follow this up with a review of the proposals Kennedy made that would benefit people with lower incomes, including an increase in Social Security, an increase in the minimum wage, aid to education, and his undeclared plan for a war on poverty.

Start a discussion on Kennedy's record on civil rights, noting his opposition to the 1957 Civil Rights Act, his delay in integrating public housing, and how he waited for more than two years before proposing his own civil rights bill. Have a student read Kennedy's speech calling for civil rights legislation and ask other students to share their responses to some of its more eloquent passages and to discuss the meaning of the law's provisions. Question whether Americans should praise Kennedy for proposing this landmark legislation or criticize him for waiting so long. When reviewing Kennedy's accomplishments, ask how important it is to be aware of the short time he had to achieve them.

Time permitting, allow students who read the "For Further Consideration" section to explain what they have learned about the tragic event of November 22, 1963, and who was responsible for the untimely death of this important man.

## Chapter 2. JFK at Home: Effective Reformer?

### I-Chart

	What legislation did JFK propose?	What was actually passed while JFK was President?	What important reforms remained to be passed?
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 2, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 2, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to know</b>			



## Chapter 2—JFK at Home: Effective Reformer?

**diminished**

**prudently**

**languished**

**Trade  
Expansion  
Act**

**caste system**

**charismatic**

**recession**

**scriptures**

**public  
accommodations**

## Chapter 2—JFK at Home: Effective Reformer?

Reduced	Law allowing the president to negotiate with foreign countries for a mutual reduction in tariff barriers	A decline in economic activity that lasts half a year or longer
Carefully	A system in India designating distinct and permanent social classes	Passages from the Bible
Having been neglected and or deprived of attention	Having a magnetic charm or appeal	Places such as restaurants that are privately owned but open to the public



## Chapter 2

# JFK at Home: Effective Reformer?

### Introduction

Today, many historians rate John F. Kennedy highly on the list of great American presidents. However, many others dispute this high ranking. We have already seen that his foreign policy decisions might have been too “reckless, provocative, and adventuristic.” We will now investigate whether his domestic decisions were too cautious, too liberal, or too late. More directly, this chapter asks you to decide whether President Kennedy was really a devoted reformer who wanted to “grow” the economy to help low-income Americans, and whether he was strongly committed to supporting the rights of African Americans.

Perhaps one reason that President Kennedy’s short time in office has been rated highly is because his time as president was tragically cut short by an assassin’s bullet. Because of this untimely death, Americans may have given Kennedy credit for reforms that came after he died. In any case, Kennedy’s assassination has also become a hotly debated issue—was it the result of a conspiracy, or only the act of a single, deranged killer? This question will be discussed in the “For Further Consideration” section.

### Tax Cut or an Increase in Spending

During the 1960 campaign, Kennedy frequently criticized President Eisenhower and the Republican Party for three economic downturns, which we call recessions. In each of the three, unemployment increased, production decreased, and many Americans suffered. As a candidate for president, JFK promised he would prevent this dismal cycle from reoccurring.

But which way to turn? Kennedy’s economic advisors split on this issue. Some (they would be called “supply-siders” today) called for a tax cut. They wanted to reduce taxes on the average American family by about 13 percent. This reduction would save a millionaire about \$100,000 a year, and a person earning a dollar an hour about \$120. Supply-siders argued that by cutting taxes more people could invest, save, or spend their own money. Businesses would have more to invest and use this money to hire more workers and expand production. Thus, the decrease in taxes would “trickle down” and help workers, small and big businesses, and consumers.

The people on the other side of the economic debate among Kennedy’s advisors could be called “demand-siders.” They claimed that a cut in taxes would mostly save money for the people who were already wealthy, while depriving the government of billions in tax revenue dollars. This money, they argued, could be used for a number of very helpful programs, including paving roads, providing low-cost transportation, and building housing for low-income people. Helping those at the low end of the income

scale, demand-siders said, would “bubble up” to those at the top of the scale by putting money in the hands of people willing to spend it.

Who won this argument? Supply-siders persuaded the president to cut marginal (the highest tax rates) from 91% to 70% and the lowest rate from 20% to 14%. The tax cut helped grow the economy, but the increase in public spending by the next president created increasingly larger government deficits and decreased the value of the American dollar.

## **Other Economic Issues**

President Kennedy had little success in persuading Congress to pass the laws he wanted. Even his proposed tax cut did not pass while he was alive. His proposals to provide medical insurance for America’s senior citizens, increase Social Security payments, and grant federal assistance to the nation’s schools all went down to defeat.

However, Kennedy did succeed in getting Congress to increase the minimum wage from \$1.00 an hour to \$1.25. He also succeeded in getting Congress to give him power to negotiate decreases in taxes on imports from foreign countries in exchange for decreases in taxes on American exports. This law, the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, helped American consumers buy less-expensive goods and spurred businesses to become more efficient, but it hurt workers and businesses that could not compete with cheaper foreign imports.

## **Kennedy and Civil Rights**

Before and after Kennedy became president, he had a mixed record on civil rights. As a senator in 1957, he had to decide whether to vote for a civil rights bill proposed and supported by President Eisenhower. He knew that a vote for the bill could cost him support from some Southern Democrats whose votes he would need to become president. Senator Kennedy decided not to vote for the bill, but it became a law without his support. During the presidential campaign in 1960, candidate Kennedy called Martin Luther King’s father to express his condolences that King’s son was in jail for participating in a sit-in demonstration. The call helped Kennedy win the African American vote, and with it, the presidency.

During the same campaign, Kennedy criticized President Eisenhower for not integrating public housing, which he claimed could be done with the stroke of his pen. Once in office, however, President Kennedy waited a full 18 months before issuing his executive order to integrate public housing.

Civil rights was not a major issue during the 1960 presidential campaign. Neither political party wanted to antagonize the white Southerners whose votes could determine the election’s outcome. Freedom Riders were just beginning to challenge the South’s segregation laws by boarding interstate buses with tickets to Southern

destinations. Angry segregationists burned several buses. Shortly after the election, scores of sit-in demonstrators stepped up their efforts to challenge Jim Crow laws by



Governor George Wallace attempting to block integration at the University of Alabama

demanding to be served at segregated restaurants. In Birmingham, Alabama, the chief of police unleashed vicious police dogs and powerful streams of water from fire hoses on people protesting segregated facilities. Pictures of this and similar tactics flashed across the front pages of Northern newspapers. Alabama Governor George Wallace joined angry crowds protesting the admission of African Americans to the previously all-white University of Alabama. President Kennedy realized that the federal government needed to take action.

The occasion called for eloquence, and on June 11, 1963, President Kennedy met the challenge:

This Nation was founded by men of many nations and backgrounds. It was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, and that the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened...

We are confronted primarily with a moral issue. It is as old as the scriptures and is as clear as the American Constitution.

We preach freedom around the world, and we mean it, and we cherish our freedom here at home, but are we to say to the world, and much more importantly, to each other that this is a land of the free except for the Negroes; that we have no second-class citizens except Negroes; that we have no class or caste system, no ghettos, no master race except with respect to Negroes? Now the time has come for this Nation to fulfill its promise. The events in Birmingham and elsewhere have so increased the cries for equality that no city or State or legislative body can prudently choose to ignore them.

...We face, therefore, a moral crisis as a country and as a people. It cannot be met by repressive police action. It cannot be left to increased demonstrations in the streets. It cannot be quieted by token moves or talk. It is a time to act in the Congress, in your State and local legislative body and, above all, in all of our daily lives.

The landmark legislation Kennedy proposed would ban discrimination in public accommodations, employment, federally funded programs, and housing. However, it was one thing to give an eloquent speech; it was quite another to convince Congress to provide the needed legislation. The Civil Rights Act proposed by Kennedy made little

progress through Congress. To prevent a possible backlash against his bill, President Kennedy tried to discourage Martin Luther King Jr. from proceeding with plans to stage his famous March on Washington. When Dr. King proceeded without the president's blessing, Kennedy took steps to insure that the march would be nonviolent. On August 28, 1963, 250,000 demonstrators heard Martin Luther King Jr. deliver his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in which this charismatic leader predicted "this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed...that all men are created equal."



Scene from the March on Washington

The Civil Rights Bill, however, still languished in committee. The full House of Representatives had yet to consider it by the fateful day that John Kennedy left for Washington to travel to Texas for a meeting in Dallas scheduled for November 22, 1963. He returned to Washington in a casket, the fourth president in America's history to be slain by an assassin. When JFK's former vice-president returned to Washington following the assassination, he found plans on his predecessor's desk for a "war on poverty" that had never been formally publicized. This war on poverty became the signature program that Lyndon Johnson enacted as president.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

Check the appropriate box to show which initiatives were proposed by Kennedy but not passed by Congress, which were passed after Kennedy's assassination (put a question mark if you don't know), and which were not proposed by Kennedy.

<b>Domestic actions proposed in the 1960s</b>	<b>Proposed by JFK and passed while he was president</b>	<b>Proposed by JFK but not passed while he was president</b>	<b>Not proposed by JFK</b>
Voting Rights Bill			
Job training for inner city youth			
Fair housing law			
Aid to Public schools			
Medical insurance for seniors			
Medical Insurance for low income people			
Increased Social Security benefits			
Clean Air and Water Acts			
Cut in income taxes by 13% for all income groups			
Civil Rights Act of 1964			
Food Stamp Program			
Declaration of a war on poverty			

**B. Student Exercise**

Based on what you read, do you think President Kennedy was an effective reformer? Provide evidence to support your arguments and (if applicable) account for his failure to secure more laws favoring African Americans and Americans needing help from the government.



## For Further Consideration: Lone Gunman or Conspiracy?



Kennedy in motorcade, sitting directly in back of Texas governor, seconds before they were shot. The governor's and the president's wives are sitting next to their spouses

The crosshairs of the rifle's telescopic site focused on President Kennedy's neck. A finger pulled the trigger and sent the bullet speeding toward its target. President Kennedy grasped his throat. Another bullet blew out the front of the president's head and may have caused a neurological reflex, which threw it in a backward direction; the head snap might also have been caused by another bullet. The First Lady, sitting next to her husband, screamed, "My God, what are they doing? My God, they killed Jack, they killed my husband!" The

limousine sped off, carrying the dying president and Texas Governor John Connolly, who had also been wounded, to the Parkland Memorial Hospital. However, doctors could do nothing to save Kennedy's life. President John F. Kennedy was pronounced dead at 1 p.m. on November 22, 1963.

Controversy surrounds the tragedy of President Kennedy's assassination. We know that when he was killed a gunshot came from the Texas School Book Depository building in Dallas, and we have film of the calamity taken by amateur photographer Abraham Zapruder. We know that at least three bullets were fired, but there might have been a fourth. We know that one bullet missed, and one might have caused the head snap, but we aren't certain that the bullet which pierced President Kennedy's neck might be the same bullet that entered Governor Connolly's back, exited through his chest, and shattered his wrist before lodging in his thigh.

We know of only one suspected gunman, Lee Harvey Oswald. We know that his palm print was found on a rifle left on the room of the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository building, and Oswald himself was seen calmly drinking a Coke just 90 seconds after the shots were fired. We know that Oswald scampered home, where he picked up a pistol that he used to shoot a police officer who tried to stop him. He entered a movie theater and drew his revolver when he discovered that police had followed him, but was arrested before he could shoot. We also know he was killed within 48 hours of his arrest by Jack Ruby, a shady nightclub owner with ties to the mob.

President Johnson appointed a committee to investigate whether Oswald was the lone assassin. The Committee included many notable Americans, including Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren. After months of investigation, the Warren Commission concluded that Oswald was solely responsible for the president's death.

The commission concluded that a so-called “magic bullet” had caused the seven wounds to Kennedy and Connolly, that Kennedy’s head snap was a neurological reaction, that the people who were on a grassy knoll far away from the Book Depository building were mistaken in believing they had heard bullets whizzing over their heads. Conspiracy theorists have not accepted these conclusions and claim that either organized crime (angry with Attorney General Robert Kennedy for investigating their activities), Fidel Castro (seeking revenge for the Kennedy brothers’ attempts to kill him), or the Soviets were responsible for pulling off a successful plot to kill President Kennedy.

**Do you think that the conclusions of the Warren Commission were probably correct, or do you think their explanations did not satisfactorily answer questions raised about the head snap, the “magic bullet,” and the grassy knoll? Explain your answer as best as you can and come to class prepared to share and discuss your answer. (You may wish to see the Zapruder film taken of the assassination, which you can find on the Internet, and/or do further research on this topic.)**



## Chapter 3. Lyndon Johnson and the “Great Society”

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter begins by describing Lyndon Baines Johnson’s Texas childhood, follows his pre-presidential career, and covers his domestic policies as president. Readers are told that once Johnson succeeded President Kennedy, he made every effort to surpass his predecessor’s accomplishments and popularity. Johnson’s ambitions resulted in the Great Society programs on the domestic front and the escalation of the War in Vietnam abroad. This chapter describes the “Johnson Treatment” used to persuade reluctant congressmen to pass an astonishing array of programs that get lumped together in this chapter under several headings, including civil rights, the War on Poverty, and the Great Society: health and education. The chapter provides readers with brief explanations of each program and encourages students to learn more about the transformation of the federal government’s role in passing LBJ’s domestic legislation. Students read short statements praising and criticizing this legislation. The “For Further Consideration” section provides excerpts of statements about the collection of programs known as the “Great Society,” one laudatory and one critical.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- understand that LBJ’s Great Society programs created a fundamental shift in the federal government’s social and economic role in the United States
- become familiar with the numerous new government programs created under the Great Society
- discuss whether the Great Society went too far or not far enough in using government to help people

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** Begin class by asking students a series of questions about the role of the federal government in the lives of citizens. For example, you can ask whether students believe that the government should make and enforce a seatbelt law, whether the government should protect children from parental abuse, if the government has the responsibility to provide programs that help prepare disadvantaged children for kindergarten, or if the government should require automobile makers to produce cars that average more than 40 miles per gallon. Follow this exercise with a review

of students' answers to the Graphic Organizer questions. Lead a discussion about the purpose of each program and how it might have affected people needing help. Return to the theme of whether the government has the responsibility to provide such assistance when individuals can't provide it for themselves or their children. End class by reviewing the statements in the "For Further Consideration" section and ask students with which they agree or disagree and why.

### Chapter 3. Lyndon Johnson and the “Great Society” I-Chart

	Why did the programs enacted under President Johnson deserve to be called the “Great Society?”	Which of the Great Society programs do you regard as the most important, and which do you think should not have been passed?	Do you believe the Great Society went too far or not far enough in helping people?
What I already know			
What I learned from Chapter 3, Part I			
What I learned from Chapter 3, Part II			
What I would still like to learn			



## Chapter 3—Lyndon Johnson and the “Great Society”

**articulate****endangered  
species****urban mass  
transportation****ardent****miscellaneous****beautification****speculation****logjam****Appalachia**

## Chapter 3—Lyndon Johnson and the “Great Society”

Includes subways, trolleys, and buses in cities	A kind of life form in danger of becoming extinct	Being able to express ideas clearly
An attempt to make something more attractive	Describes a number of different things having nothing or little in common	Describes a strong or passionate feeling for something
A region including 13 different states centered around West Virginia and Kentucky; known for its lack of development	Originally, a blockage caused by floating logs, but used to describe anything that impedes progress	A form of gambling done by buying something with the intention of selling it for more money

## Chapter 3

# Lyndon Johnson and the “Great Society”

### Introduction

The first of five children, Lyndon Baines Johnson was born in Stonewall, Texas on August 27, 1908. His father, a six-term state representative, lost a good deal of money speculating in cotton futures. Later in life, Johnson would claim that he learned the meaning of poverty from personal experience and from teaching children of dirt-poor Mexican immigrants. At the signing of an education bill that he guided through Congress while president of the United States, Johnson asserted:

I shall never forget the faces of the boys and the girls in that little Welhausen Mexican School, and I remember even yet the pain of realizing and knowing then that college was closed to practically every one of those children because they were too poor. And I think it was then that I made up my mind that this Nation could never rest while the door to knowledge remained closed to any American.

After graduating from high school at age 15, Johnson spent a few aimless years doing odd jobs before enrolling in a Texas state teachers' college. A lack of funds forced him to interrupt his education, during which he earned money through stints teaching at public schools. After graduating, he jumped at the opportunity when offered a job as private secretary to a Texas congressman. He became a student of the ways of the national legislature, rapidly moved up to become National Youth Administration director of Texas, and then won a seat in the U.S. Congress. An ardent supporter of Franklin



A young LBJ shaking hands with President Roosevelt

Roosevelt's New Deal, Johnson was able to steer a good share of its blessings to his constituents. After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, Johnson became the first U.S. congressman to enlist in the Armed Services. He won a Silver Star for his service and returned to Washington, D.C. shortly after President Roosevelt ordered elected officials in military service to resume their legislative duties. He ran for the U.S. Senate in 1948 and earned the ironic nickname “Landslide Lyndon” after he won by a total of 87 votes. His rise in the Senate was spectacular. He was elected minority leader in 1954 and led the majority after his party won control of the Senate in 1956.

Johnson's reputation grew by leaps and bounds as he became “master of the Senate.” When necessary, he cooperated with Republican President Dwight Eisenhower to secure passage of important legislation. He even broke with his Southern roots to steer a civil rights bill through the Senate in 1957 that then-Senator

Kennedy opposed. Meanwhile, majority leader Johnson achieved sufficient national recognition to risk running for president. After he lost to John Kennedy on the first ballot, he accepted JFK's offer to be his running mate. While vice-president, however, Johnson felt that Kennedy seldom sought his advice, failed to take advantage of his legislative skills, and sent him on meaningless missions abroad just to keep him occupied.



Lyndon Johnson taking the oath of office on Air Force 1, flanked on the left by his wife, Lady Bird, and on the right by President Kennedy's widow, Jacqueline

Lyndon Johnson became President of the United States on November 22, 1963, the same day President Kennedy was assassinated. In his five years as president, Johnson compiled an enviable record in domestic affairs. His problems as chief executive stemmed from the war in Indochina that he inherited: he found that he could neither achieve victory nor withdraw. This chapter will give you the opportunity to evaluate Lyndon Johnson's domestic achievements and the next will help you understand the difficulties Johnson encountered in Vietnam.

## The Great Society

In his first address to Congress after becoming president, Johnson pledged himself to continue the policies initiated by President Kennedy. However, LBJ was determined to surpass Kennedy in legislative accomplishments and in popularity. In a speech delivered in May 1964, Johnson committed his administration to far more lofty goals in domestic policies than those articulated by his predecessor. Johnson pledged himself to transform the America of the 1960s into a "Great Society:"

The "Great Society" rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time. But that is just the beginning.

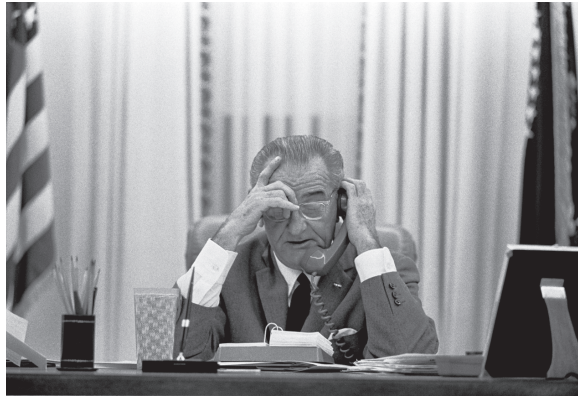
The "Great Society" is a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents. It is a place where leisure is a welcome chance to build and reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness. It is a place where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.

The purpose of protecting the life of our Nation and preserving the liberty of our citizens is to pursue the happiness of our people. Our success in that pursuit is the test of our success as a Nation.



## The Great Society and Civil Rights

Johnson's first step toward creating the Great Society was to secure passage of the civil rights bill submitted by John F. Kennedy. The bill languished in committees



Administering the "Johnson treatment"

in the House of Representatives and faced a possible filibuster in the Senate. President Johnson did everything in his power to get Congress to pass this bill, efforts that became known as the "Johnson treatment." He invited reluctant legislators in his office, called them on the telephone, literally twisted their arms, appealed to their patriotism as well as to the memory of JFK, used his nose-to-nose and finger-in-the-chest diplomacy, and plotted strategic moves with Martin Luther King. In the end, Johnson

got the Civil Rights Act of 1964 through Congress and signed into law. It prohibited segregation in facilities open to the public, in education, in voting, and in hiring, firing, promoting, and demoting. The next year, the president used all of his legislative skills to secure passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It provided for federal agents to administer fair literacy tests in states that had used extremely difficult test questions to prevent African Americans from registering to vote. Another civil rights bill passed in 1968 prohibited discrimination on the basis of race in buying or renting houses and apartments. Though it was years before all these laws were adequately enforced, their passage represented landmark achievements in the field of civil rights. For the first time since Reconstruction, the laws sided with African Americans and not with the persons who discriminated against them.

## The Great Society and the War on Poverty

Before describing other Great Society laws, we should discuss the politics that gave Democrats and cooperating Republicans the legislative majorities that passed these laws. In 1964, conservatives in the Republican Party nominated Barry Goldwater, a man committed to several right-wing principles. He suggested privatizing Social Security, opposed the progressive income tax, voted against the Civil Rights Act of 1964, advocated selling the TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority, a New Deal program providing electricity) to private businesses, and called for using nuclear weapons in Vietnam. Opposition to Goldwater led voters to cast their ballots for Democratic candidates for the House and the Senate at the same time they elected a Democratic president. Johnson won a record 61 percent of the popular vote and Democrats obtained a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. President Johnson interpreted this overwhelming victory as an endorsement of his Great Society programs.

## **The War on Poverty**

With the exception of civil rights laws, the first and most important element of Great Society programs became known as the “War on Poverty.” President Kennedy had left outlines of a proposal to reduce poverty in the U.S. (at the time, 22 percent of the population lived in poverty) when he left Washington for his ill-fated trip to Dallas. President Johnson, who had experienced poverty as a child and a young adult, viewed Kennedy’s ideas as “my kind of a program” and adopted them. The War on Poverty was administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity and included many diverse elements. Under the guidance of Kennedy’s brother-in-law, Sargent Shriver, the OEO sponsored a huge number of initiatives, including community action projects that gave support directly to agencies run by poor people it was supposed to help. Among the programs to which OEO was committed were:

- Volunteers for Service in America (VISTA,) a domestic peace corps that paid volunteers to work in U.S. cities to improve life in poor neighborhoods
- Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) which provided summer and after-school jobs for inner-city youngsters to encourage them to stay in school
- Project Head Start, which provided money to finance pre-kindergarten programs for poor youth to provide them with the pre-reading and writing skills needed to succeed in school
- Legal services for the poor, which made lawyers available to help poor people settle disputes with landlords and other authorities
- Appalachian Regional Development Act, which was intended to build roads and highways in order to end the physical isolation of impoverished people in a 13-state region while developing that region’s natural and human resources
- Food Stamps, coupons that could be used by the poor to buy groceries

## **The Great Society: Health and Education**

The Great Society programs included major initiatives in the field of public health:

- Medicare, a program that provided men and women eligible for Social Security and over 65 years of age with medical insurance. After the recipient paid a yearly deductible, Medicare paid for most of doctor services and hospital care. (Medicare Part D was added in 2006 and pays for prescription drugs.)
- Medicaid, which helped Americans with low incomes pay for medical care. It is administered by states, which impose different eligibility requirements, but is supervised by the national government. Even its name differs from state to state: In Massachusetts, it’s called MassHealth; in California, it’s known as Medi-Cal.

In addition to reforms in health care, the Great Society programs led to historic gains in aid to education:

- The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 broke a constitutional logjam that prevented aid to education given to parochial (religious) schools by providing funds for schools (parochial or public) that serve a large percentage of low-income children.
- The Higher Education Act of 1966 increased money the federal government gave to colleges and universities, and created scholarships and low-interest loans to low-income students.

## **The Great Society: Miscellaneous Programs**

### **Consumer Protection**

- Required warning labels on cigarette packages
- Set standards for meat and poultry
- Fair packaging and labeling laws
- Truth-in-lending law

### **Environment**

- Clean Air and Water Quality acts
- Endangered Species Act
- Solid Waste Disposal Act
- Motor Vehicle Air Pollution Control Act
- Highway beautification programs

### **Miscellaneous**

- Provided money for urban mass transportation programs
- Provided funds later used for supporting public radio and television
- Provided funding for the Kennedy Center of Performing Arts

## **Legacy of the Great Society**

All the Great Society initiatives were intended to improve the quality of life in the United States. There has been relatively little criticism of the president's efforts to protect consumers, protect the environment, enrich the arts, and improve public transportation. In addition to ending racial discrimination, the primary objectives of the Great Society were to lift Americans out of poverty. These programs have attracted a great deal of praise and much criticism.

Between 1959 and 1970, the number of Americans living in poverty decreased from 22.2 percent to 12.6 percent, and has hovered around the latter number since that time (increasing only with the recession that began in 2008.) The percent of African Americans and whites that escaped from poverty has been about the same—about 42 percent. However, one cannot say with any degree of certainty how much of this reduction in poverty resulted from Great Society programs and how much resulted from economic growth.

Critics of Great Society programs complained that too much of the decrease in poverty came at the taxpayers' expense. They point out that government outlays for social welfare programs increased from 28 percent of the federal budget in 1960 to 40 percent by 1970. These critics complain that the Great Society programs used taxes taken from hard-working people to support people unwilling to help themselves.

Advocates of the Great Society programs claim that they failed to go far enough to lift everyone out of poverty and pointed to the lack of funds to support low-income housing, education, and job-training programs, resulting in continued poverty.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

In the chart provided here, identify what each of the listed programs does and how, if at all, you may benefit from it:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Purpose of program</b>	<b>How the program might help you</b>
<b>Civil Rights Act of 1964</b>		
<b>Civil Rights Act of 1965</b>		
<b>OEO</b>		
<b>VISTA</b>		
<b>NYC</b>		
<b>Head Start</b>		
<b>Appalachian Development Act</b>		
<b>Food stamps</b>		
<b>Medicare</b>		
<b>Medicaid</b>		
<b>Elementary &amp; Secondary School Act</b>		
<b>Higher Education Act</b>		
<b>Laws that protect consumers</b>		
<b>Laws that protect the environment</b>		

**B. Student Essay**

Write an essay of no fewer than 150 word stating what personal reasons you believe motivated President Johnson to propose such a comprehensive plan to improve the quality of life in America.

## For Further Consideration: Two Views on the Great Society

Remarkable and Enduring Achievements	LBJ's War on Poverty was a Failure
<p>If there is a prize for the political scam of the 20th century, it should go to the conservatives for propagating as conventional wisdom that the Great Society programs of the 1960s were a misguided and failed social experiment that wasted taxpayers' money.</p> <p>The Great Society saw government as providing a hand up, not a handout. The cornerstone was a thriving economy (which the 1964 tax cut sparked); in such circumstances, most Americans would be able to enjoy the material blessings of society. Others would need the kind of help most of us got from our parents' health care, education and training, and housing, as well as a nondiscriminatory shot at employment to share in our nation's wealth.</p> <p>It is time to recognize, as historians are beginning to do, the reality of the remarkable and enduring achievements of the Great Society programs. Without such programs as Head Start, higher-education loans and scholarships, Medicare, Medicaid, clear air and water, and civil rights, life would be nastier, more brutish, and shorter for millions of Americans.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>...[Since] President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an "unconditional war on poverty in America..." the federal government has created vast new bureaucracies and raised taxes to a staggering level not seen since World War Two...[with] Medicare, Head Start, the Job Corps, and Medicaid.</p> <p>When LBJ's War on Poverty initiatives are balanced against costs—the lost economic growth, the massively expanded taxation, the substantial increase in the size and scope of government, and the creation of a class of citizens completely dependent upon the government—the War on Poverty looks more Waterloo than America's recent march to Baghdad.</p> <p>No doubt, viewed broadly, LBJ's War on Poverty was a failure...because of LBJ's flawed battle plan. Poverty can be defeated by fighting it with freedom...An America based on limited government and unlimited opportunity—an America that rewards the hard work and initiative of its citizens—will not suffer from widespread poverty. Government handouts will never solve poverty. They only encourage and subsidize irresponsibility and trap the poor in a vicious cycle of dependency.<sup>2</sup></p>

**Do you agree with the critics of the Great Society who say that the government spent too much money on social welfare programs to help the poor, or the supporters who believe that the War on Poverty did not go far enough? Explain reasons for your answer, and cite specific examples that support your argument.**

1 Joseph A. Califano, Jr., "What Was Really Great About the Great Society," *The Washington Monthly*, October, 1999, [www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/1999/9910.califano.html](http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/1999/9910.califano.html)

2 Jerome R. Corsi and Kenneth Blackwell, "Democrats' War on Poverty Has Failed," *HumanEvents.com*, 09/06/2006





## Chapter 4. President Johnson and the War in Vietnam

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

While acknowledging that Lyndon Johnson inherited the Vietnam War, this chapter discusses the way in which it was conducted during his administration. It presents a series of events that affected his decisions and explains how he dealt with them. Readers are informed that despite his own reservations, President Johnson decided early on that he “was not going to let southeast Asia go the way China went.” A timeline traces Johnson’s descent into the quagmire that swallowed his presidency, as he escalated America’s commitment in Vietnam from 16,000 “advisers” to an excess of a half million men and women. The timeline ends with a description of the Tet Offensive and a review of its effects on public opinion at home. The last presidential decision this chapter reviews is President Johnson’s decision not to stand for reelection in 1968. The following chapter on Nixon’s foreign policy describes the winding down and eventual end of the Vietnam War.

All students reading this chapter are asked to state the circumstances pertinent to three of President Johnson’s decisions and comment on the wisdom of each decision. Students reading the “For Further Consideration” section are asked how they evaluate Johnson’s decisions on a continuum ranging from reasonable and in America’s interest to reckless and detrimental.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- learn that President Johnson overcame his misgivings and decided to support the war in Vietnam because he feared that Democrats would be accused of losing southeast Asia
- realize there were few opportunities for Johnson to end the war honorably, even though it involved the U.S. supporting an unpopular dictator 13,000 miles away
- understand that the Tet Offensive convinced many Americans that the war was no longer worth fighting

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** The history of U.S. involvement in Vietnam is too long, complicated, and controversial to suitably summarize in a single day. The most you can expect to accomplish, therefore, is to help students understand that serious indications existed

that the U.S. should not have supported a corrupt and undemocratic government in South Vietnam that refused to honor its pledge to hold free elections. You can point out that President Eisenhower made the initial commitment to South Vietnam that President Kennedy and then President Johnson continued. You may point out that Johnson's initial step into the quagmire that became Vietnam was motivated by his desire to avoid the accusation that he lost southeast Asia, and to portray his escalation as seamless and almost inevitable. The best way to help students see this is to ask them whether strong indications existed that the Johnson administration should not have continued to support the South Vietnamese government, why Johnson made the decision despite these indications, and whether viable alternatives existed to the other decisions that Johnson made.

## Chapter 4. President Johnson and the War in Vietnam

### I-Chart

	<b>Reasons the U.S. never should have come to South Vietnam's defense</b>	<b>Reasons it was difficult not to escalate once the U.S. committed itself to defending South Vietnam</b>	<b>What was the Tet Offensive and what, if anything, did it prove?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 4, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 4, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to know</b>			



## Chapter 4—President Johnson and the War in Vietnam

**reactivate****unanimously****catastrophic****malevolent****international  
waters****perimeter****predecessor****retaliate****Saigon**

## Chapter 4—President Johnson and the War in Vietnam

Having a massively harmful effect	All in agreement	To call back into service or make active again
Outside boundaries	Defined as an area usually 12 miles offshore; open to ships of all nations	Describes something or someone harmful or having an evil influence
Capital of South Vietnam; now known as Ho Chi Minh City	To get back at someone	Person who came before

## Chapter 4

# President Johnson and the War in Vietnam

### Introduction



President John F. Kennedy was pronounced dead in Parkland Hospital, Dallas, Texas, at 1 p.m. on November 22, 1963. Standing over the former president's coffin in Air Force One less than two hours later, Lyndon Baines Johnson took the oath of office and became the 36th president of the United States. Among the many problems the new president inherited from his predecessor was the Vietnam War and the advisors who had urged Kennedy to increase America's commitment to defend South Vietnam from the civil unrest supported by communist North Vietnam. After his own visit to South Vietnam while serving as vice-president, Johnson didn't "think it...worth fighting for." President Kennedy himself had been dissatisfied with the progress the South Vietnamese had made in establishing a popular, democratic, and effective government. He considered withdrawing American support after the 1964

election. The decision to continue the war should have been based on many factors, including the willingness of the South Vietnamese to fight for their own freedom and whether the loss of South Vietnam would encourage communists everywhere to overthrow other pro-Western governments.

In this chapter, you will learn how President Johnson handled the situation in Vietnam and you will be asked to evaluate whether the decisions he made were reasonable and in America's interest, reckless and misguided, or somewhere in between.

### Vietnam in 1963

Exactly what situation in Vietnam did Lyndon Johnson inherit? South Vietnam had been part of a colony known as French Indochina for well over 100 years. During World War II, Japan conquered most of Indochina, and at the end of the war Chinese troops accepted the surrender of Japanese soldiers in the northern part of Vietnam. The Chinese turned North Vietnam over to a Vietnamese nationalist who was also a communist. His name was Ho Chi Minh, and the guerrilla army he controlled was called the Vietminh. South Vietnam was returned to the French, and they established a

playboy emperor in the country and maintained their rule in his name. In 1946, the French attempted to gain control over North Vietnam, and this began a war that lasted until 1954. Defeated in a major battle at Dienbienphu, the French agreed to leave



Ho Chi Minh

Vietnam, and Ho Chi Minh agreed to reunite the country by means of free elections. South Vietnam, now under President Ngo Dinh Diem and his malevolent brother Ngo Dinh Nu, agreed to hold these elections by 1956. Had these elections been held, Ho Chi Minh would most likely have won and the Vietnam War might never have occurred. However, Diem refused to hold elections that he believed he'd lose, and Ho decided to reactivate the Vietminh who had remained in South Vietnam and were known as the Viet Cong. Beginning in 1958, the Viet Cong attempted to overthrow the Diem government and Diem retaliated by throwing 50,000 suspected

communists or people he thought loyal to them into jail, torturing or killing thousands of them. Meanwhile, President Eisenhower, who had aided the French during their war with the Vietminh, pledged military and economic aid to Diem's government. President Kennedy, adhering to his inaugural promise to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty," continued that aid, bringing the number of American soldiers in Vietnam to more than 16,000.

Diem, however, proved to be a difficult friend to support. Assisted by his brother Nhu, he ran a dictatorial, inefficient, vastly unpopular, and corrupt government. Military promotions and government appointments were made on the basis of loyalty to the Ngo brothers. Money for schools, roads, hospitals, weapons, and salaries went into private pockets. Diem failed to keep promises to make reforms, and the Buddhist majority received few favors, while members of the Catholic minority (Diem was a Catholic) received important posts. President Kennedy had lost confidence in the Diem government and passed the word on to opponents that the U.S. was prepared to support other leaders. On November 1, 1963, a group of South Vietnamese generals took control of their country's government. Demonstrators captured the fleeing brothers and threw them in the back of a truck, where they were killed when a crowd halted the vehicle. Three weeks later, President Kennedy went to Dallas, where he was assassinated.

### **President Johnson Makes His Decision**

Difficult as the decision regarding South Vietnam would be, President Johnson did not spend much time making it. Two days into his presidency, he met with Henry Cabot Lodge, the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam. Johnson told Lodge "I am not going to be the president who saw southeast Asia go the way China went." (Johnson was referring to the communist takeover of China after the Truman administration (1946–53)—disgusted with the corruption, inefficiency, and military incompetence of the Nationalist government—decided to no longer provide it with American assistance.) Republicans subsequently charged that Democrats under the influence of communist



sympathizers in the U.S. had “lost” China and could not be trusted to handle America’s foreign policy. Believing that the rest of southeast Asia could follow South Vietnam into the communist orbit, Johnson decided to do whatever was needed to support South Vietnam.

### **Vietnam Timeline: Following Johnson’s decision not to lose the war in Vietnam**

**January 1964:** The government that replaced Diem’s in South Vietnam was overthrown by a group of Vietnamese generals who, several months later, got overthrown by another group of generals.

**March 1964:** President Johnson ordered U.S. forces to attack a route used by the Vietminh to send men and supplies to South Vietnam.

**Summer 1964:** By this time, an estimated 56,000 Vietcong guerrilla fighters, supported by North Vietnamese Army soldiers, were in South Vietnam.

**July 31, 1964:** South Vietnamese speedboats attacked North Vietnamese military bases on an island just off the North Vietnamese coast.

**August 2, 1964:** Apparently in retaliation, North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked the U.S.S. *Maddox*, an American destroyer that was in the vicinity of the July 31st attack. The *Maddox* avoided three torpedoes fired at it.



President Johnson sent a message to North Vietnam threatening “grave consequences” if any more unprovoked attacks took place. The *Maddox*, joined by the U.S.S. *C. Turner Joy*, patrolled the Gulf of Tonkin and came within eight miles of North Vietnam’s coast.

**August 4–7, 1964:** Both U.S. destroyers reported they had been attacked by Vietnamese patrol boats, though they never made a visual sighting of enemy ships and later reported that the attack may never have taken place.<sup>1</sup> Without further investigation of this incident, President Johnson:

1. Ordered U.S. planes to attack North Vietnamese naval facilities.
2. Told Congress and the nation that an American ship on a peaceful mission had been attacked in international waters and asked Congress to approve a resolution giving him permission to “take all necessary steps, including the use

<sup>1</sup> Most students of the war today believe that the second attack never occurred and the first one was a response to a military mission involving the *Maddox*.

of armed force,” to repel aggression in the area. This statement, known as the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, passed unanimously in the House of Representatives and had only two dissenting votes in the Senate. It came as close to being a declaration of war on North Vietnam than anything ever passed by Congress.

**August 21, 1964:** Violent mobs protested against South Vietnam’s military government in Saigon.

**December 1964:** Along with weapons supplied by China, 10,000 North Vietnamese soldiers entered South Vietnam by what was known as the Ho Chi Minh trail.

**December 24, 1964:** President Johnson rejected advice to retaliate for Viet Cong terrorists setting off a bomb in Saigon that killed two and wounded 58 Americans.

**February 22, 1965:** President Johnson heeded the U.S. commander’s request for two battalions to protect the perimeter of an airbase from an expected attack by 6000 Vietcong. He rejected a warning that “this move is likely to repeat the same mistakes made by the French in sending ever-increasing numbers of soldiers into the Asian forests and jungles...where friend and foe are indistinguishable.”

**March 2, 1965:** Operation Rolling Thunder began with more than 100 American planes attacking targets in North Vietnam. It continued for three years.



American soldiers search a Vietnamese village

The U.S. dropped approximately eight million tons of bombs on Vietnam (in both the North and the South), four times more than it dropped during World War II. The bombing had no major effect on the North Vietnamese except to cause them to decentralize their facilities, repair the damages, and stop forming in large units.

**April 1, 1965:** President Johnson ordered another 20,000 American troops and two Marine battalions to Vietnam. He did not immediately let the American people know that these forces would actively root out Viet Cong in the countryside rather than merely support the South Vietnamese and protect American bases.

**April 7, 1965:** President Johnson offered to enter into “unconditional discussions” with the North Vietnamese in order to stop the war, and then supply them with massive economic aid. The North Vietnamese rejected the offer, in part because they would not negotiate while being bombed, and in part because they did not believe they would ever receive the promised aid.

**April 1965–January 1968:** The war continued. By 1968, more than 500,000 American soldiers were in Vietnam. They engaged in every kind of military action imaginable, including dropping tons of bombs, defoliating thousands of square miles of jungle with



Vietnam War protesters in Washington, D.C.

a chemical called Agent Orange, conducting search-and-destroy operations, burning entire villages, killing livestock, and displacing civilians. One thousand American soldiers died every month, and the war cost \$24 billion a year. Millions of Americans opposed the war and expressed their opposition with loud and sometimes violent demonstrations. Many young men avoided the draft and joined others to campaign for anti-war candidates. To counter this growing opposition, the Johnson administration did its best to convince Americans that the U.S. was winning the war and that defeat would have catastrophic effects.

## The Tet Offensive

**January 31, 1968:** On the Vietnamese three-day holiday celebrating the New Year, 67,000 Viet Cong, supported by soldiers from the North Vietnamese Army, simultaneously attacked 104 South Vietnamese villages, towns, and cities. In Saigon, they captured the American embassy and held it for six hours. Elsewhere, it took up to a month to drive off Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops at the cost of 165,000 Vietnamese civilians killed and 2,000,000 losing their homes. Commenting on Tet and its aftermath, one American official complained, “In six weeks here, we have seen that the [South Vietnamese] Government cannot protect the people, or control them, or administer them, or help them recover.”

## Home Reaction to the Tet Offensive



President Johnson announcing on television that he would not run for reelection

After the attackers had been driven out, General Westmoreland claimed that the Tet Offensive was a U.S. victory. However, he followed this boast with a call for 205,000 more troops. At this point, President Johnson lost the support of the American people. Two candidates—Eugene McCarthy and John Kennedy’s brother, Robert—challenged Johnson for the Democratic presidential nomination. Both sought an immediate

halt to the bombing of North Vietnam, unconditional negotiations, and withdrawal of American troops in order to end the war. Realizing he had lost public support, Johnson announced he would not run for reelection in 1968. At the same time, he said he would stop bombing North Vietnam. However, he did not offer to withdraw American troops unless the Vietminh withdrew and the Viet Cong ceased fighting.

## Student Activities

### A. Student Exercises

1. Explain why President Eisenhower supported Ngo Dinh Diem's corrupt government after it failed to honor its promise to hold elections that would reunite North and South Vietnam. Do you think Eisenhower made a serious mistake? Explain.
2. What signs existed that President Johnson should have noticed that supporting South Vietnam might not have been a good decision?
3. Choose two decisions that President Johnson made after his initial decision regarding the Vietnam War. In each case, explain the circumstances, the decision he made, and the alternatives to his decision. Next, state your reasons for believing he made the right or the wrong decision.

### **For Further Consideration**

After doing further research, write a strong paragraph or two explaining why you think that the decisions President Johnson made about Vietnam were

- a. reasonable and in America's interest
- b. reckless and detrimental
- c. completely understandable

(Note: The next chapter, which discusses President Nixon's foreign policy, will help you understand how the Vietnam War ended.)



## Chapter 5. President Nixon: The Man and His Foreign Policy

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter presents a political biography of Richard Nixon as he moved from relative obscurity to prominence, suffered a close defeat by John Kennedy, and recovered politically by defeating Hubert Humphrey in the 1968 election, in part because of his alleged “secret plan” to end the war in Vietnam. At the same time, the chapter contrasts the “counterculture” with the “silent majority” and portrays Nixon’s campaign strategy as appealing to the latter. The remainder of the chapter summarizes what Nixon’s secret plan was and what happened as he implemented it. Students learn that it resulted in the death of 21,000 more Americans and left an inept South Vietnamese military unable to withstand the onslaught of a rejuvenated North Vietnamese army. Students are asked to evaluate President Nixon’s plan based on his intentions and its results.

The “For Further Consideration” section describes Nixon’s other foreign policy initiatives: his carefully crafted visit to China, his arms limitation talks with the Soviet Union, and America’s role in securing “regime change” in Chile. Students who read this section are asked to make a comprehensive statement regarding Nixon’s foreign policy based on the evidence presented.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- try to understand how and why Nixon became the person he was
- understand the reasons Nixon devised his “secret plan” to end the war in Vietnam and evaluate the plan based on its effects
- be aware that Nixon was able to restore relations with China, negotiate the SALT agreement with the Soviet Union, and obtain “regime change” in Chile

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** If you have the time—and if your students seem familiar enough with who Nixon was and what he did—ask the class to speculate about his character and personality: does it seem that he was the product of childhood and early adult experiences? Spend most of your class time reviewing Nixon’s career, including his rapid rise to prominence, his use of slander to destroy his opposition, his recovery from his loss to Kennedy in 1960, and his success in gauging America’s mood in the 1968

election campaign. Ask students to analyze the reasons for each part of his plan to end the war in Vietnam and ask them whether he should be praised for ending the war or condemned either for prolonging it or for leaving South Vietnam unable to defend itself.

If you have time, allow students who read the “For Further Consideration” section to report on and lead a discussion about Nixon’s China policy, his SALT II agreement with the Soviet Union, and regime change in Chile. If possible, spend a full day on those topics.



## Chapter 5. President Nixon: The Man and His Foreign Policy

### I-Chart

	<b>What was Nixon like as a person and what events helped shape his personality?</b>	<b>How did Nixon succeed in becoming president?</b>	<b>What was Nixon's plan to end the war and how successful was it?</b>	<b>What were Nixon's other foreign policy initiatives? Did they succeed?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>				
<b>What I learned from Chapter 5, Part I</b>				
<b>What I learned from Chapter 5, Part II</b>				
<b>What I would still like to learn</b>				



## Chapter 5—President Nixon: The Man and His Foreign Policy

**humiliating****prestigious****placate****obscurity****appeaser****raucous****enlarge****pinko****photogenic**

## Chapter 5—President Nixon: The Man and His Foreign Policy

To make less angry	Embarrassing	Increase in size
Loud and disorderly	State of not being well-known	Slang term used to describe someone who sided with communist causes
Describes someone who looks good in photographs	Highly regarded	Person who gives in to demands in order to prevent conflict

## Chapter 5

# President Nixon: The Man and His Foreign Policy

### Introduction



There are many mysterious things about former president Richard Nixon. He used Americans' fear of communism to enhance his political career, but as president he stopped a war against communist North Vietnam, reduced tensions with communist Russia, and became the first American president to visit communist China. His family had had little money, and though he opposed Great Society programs, he proposed an important plan for national health insurance. His political career consisted of a series of quick rises to power followed by humiliating defeats. It took him only six years to emerge from relative obscurity as a representative from

California to become vice-president. Following an unsuccessful run at the presidency, he failed in his bid to become governor of California. However, six years later he emerged from the ashes of defeat to win a close election for president. He followed this achievement with an overwhelming victory in 1972, but resigned in disgrace just two years later. Although politics was his chosen profession, Nixon did not like being with people, ate most of his meals alone, and spent most hours every day in solitude making plans and writing and memorizing his speeches.

In this chapter and the next, you will learn about Nixon's life and political career, and be asked to evaluate his performance in ending the war in Vietnam. The "For Further Consideration" section will help you understand Nixon's other foreign policy decisions.

### Biography

Richard Nixon was born in Yorba Linda, California. He was the son of a lemon farmer who moved his family to Whittier, a Los Angeles suburb, where he ran a grocery store. Tuberculosis caused the death of two of Nixon's brothers and took a heavy emotional and financial toll on his family. Nixon could not use the tuition scholarship he was awarded to attend Yale University because his family was too poor to send him. Instead, he attended Whittier College, lived at home, and worked in the family store. He earned his law degree at Duke University and, during the midst of the Depression, graduated third in his class. Nixon could not find a job with a large law firm in New York



Nixon as a Lt.  
Commander in the Navy

and returned to practice law in Whittier. During World War II, he joined the U.S. Navy, where he earned a distinguished service medal and a reputation as an excellent poker player. Returning to Whittier after the war, Nixon was offered the opportunity to run for the House of Representatives. He defeated his Democratic opponent, Jerry Voorhis, by claiming Voorhis's voting record showed that he favored communist causes. Once in Congress, Nixon joined the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). He made a name for himself in a celebrated case by uncovering evidence that seemed to prove State Department official Alger Hiss had provided a communist spy with secret government documents. In 1950, Nixon ran for the U.S. Senate against a woman who, he claimed, was a communist sympathizer and that even her underwear was pink ("pinko" was a slang term for those who sympathized with communists or their causes). Based in part on Nixon's reputation as a staunch foe of communism, Dwight Eisenhower invited the young senator to join him on the Republican ticket as his choice for vice-president. Nixon almost had to resign from this position because of accusations that he had accepted money from rich donors for personal use. In an emotional television appearance, Nixon managed to save his political career by claiming that his wife wore a "respectable Republican cloth coat" and that he would never return Checkers, his daughters' puppy, to its unnamed donor. Nixon returned to the campaign trail and spoke out harshly against the Democrats, at one time referring to presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson as "Adlai the appeaser" who held a PhD from the "cowardly college of Communist Containment." In the election, the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket defeated the Democratic one by about seven million votes.

As vice-president, Nixon continued attacking Democrats he thought were communist sympathizers, took control of Cabinet meetings when Eisenhower was ill, and at a fair held in Moscow, debated Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev about the advantages of capitalism. He easily won his party's nomination for president in 1960, but his train to success was derailed by a close electoral loss to his more photogenic but less experienced Democratic opponent, John F. Kennedy. Nixon's losing streak continued in 1962, when he suffered defeat in a race against the sitting governor of California. After this loss, Nixon seemed to end his political career by sullenly telling reporters "you won't have Nixon to kick around any more, because, gentlemen, this is my last press conference." Nixon moved to New York City, joined a prestigious New York law firm, and spent the better part of the next six years earning favors from Republican candidates by campaigning for them. By 1968, he had positioned himself to receive the Republican nomination for president by beating the popular conservative governor of California, Ronald Reagan, and the well-known liberal governor of New York, Nelson Rockefeller.



Nixon as vice president

## 1968

The U.S. in 1968 was quite different from what it had been eight years before—the last time Nixon ran for president. A distinct raucousness had replaced the relative

calm of the Eisenhower years. Dissatisfied with the conditions in which they had to live in America's cities and discouraged by the slow pace of change following successes in civil rights legislation, some African Americans had taken to rioting. An increasingly angry American youth began expressing their opposition to the war in Vietnam with loud demonstrations. In addition, the "counterculture" had begun, as young people experimented with drugs, listened to new types of music, grew out their hair, and dressed in ways that contrasted sharply with the "button down" style that had characterized the 1950s and much of the '60s. Furthermore, Americans divided between those who supported Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty and those who felt it gave too much away to the poor; between those who supported the war in Vietnam and those who opposed it; between those who supported the civil rights movement and those



Nixon campaigning in 1968

who thought African Americans were not ready to exercise their newly acquired rights; and between those who believed that success was the result of hard work and those who felt that success was achieved with money and influence. It was President Nixon's challenge to win an election by finding a way to dampen the opposition to the war in Vietnam and obtain "peace with honor" there, quiet the riotous youths, and placate the African American minority without alienating the white majority.

### Nixon's "Secret Plan"

If the United States shows weakness...the real trouble is that it may buy us trouble someplace else because whether the leaders of the Soviet Union or China...there are other leaders in the world, other people in the world, other people in the world who want to expand their systems...

—Richard Nixon

During the presidential campaign of 1968, candidate Nixon declared that he had a "secret plan" to end the war in Vietnam. However, he claimed that he could not reveal this plan without alerting the enemy. As his time in office wore on, the outlines of the plan came into view. It included:

- **Vietnamization**—turning the fighting over to the Vietnamese and gradually withdrawing American troops
- **Negotiating**—meeting secretly with North Vietnamese diplomats to seek a mutually acceptable way of ending the war
- **Bombing**—destroying enemy supply routes, troop concentrations, and military targets in countries such as Laos and Cambodia, as well as North and South Vietnam
- **Consulting with North Vietnam's allies**—bargaining with, threatening, and

- cajoling the USSR and China to stop sending military supplies to North Vietnam
- **Ending the draft**—stop forcing America's youth into military service and sending them to fight in Vietnam

### Did Nixon's Plan Work?



Nixon reveals where he had secretly ordered bombing of enemy supplies in neutral Cambodia. His attacks on Cambodia destabilized the government of that country.

It took President Nixon four years in office to end the Vietnam War. During that time, 21,000 Americans and between 500,000 and 1,500,000 Vietnamese lost their lives.

Nixon managed to obtain a peace treaty in January 1973 that provided for an in-place cease fire, the complete evacuation of all American but not North Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam, free elections in South Vietnam to be held under the supervision of a government other than the one in power, and a return of all prisoners of war. Before Nixon could get the South Vietnamese government to agree to this treaty, he had to supply it with a powerful air force and sufficient weapons for the South Vietnamese to defend themselves. The treaty was violated before the ink of the signatures had dried, and a little more than two years later, the North Vietnamese attacked the South with tanks and a full array of military weapons. South Vietnamese soldiers fled in panic. On April 30, 1975, the North Vietnamese captured Saigon and America's ally went down to an ignoble defeat.



## Student Exercises

**A. What do you think was the significant information in this chapter about Richard Nixon up until the time he became president?**

**B. Graphic Organizer: How parts of Nixon's "secret plan" might have helped end the war in Vietnam**

Choose a phrase from the list below and match it with the part of Nixon's plan to end the war it was most likely intended to accomplish. (Note: There is only one place for each phrase.)

<b>Elements of Nixon's "secret" plan</b>	<b>How the element was intended to achieve "peace with honor"</b>
<b>Vietnamize the war</b>	
<b>Negotiate</b>	
<b>Bomb</b>	
<b>Threaten Vietnam's allies</b>	
<b>End draft</b>	

Stop college students from opposing war	Weaken North Vietnam	Reduce aid to North Vietnam
Stop Americans from getting killed		Get favorable terms in a treaty

**C. Essay**

Write an essay of no more than 200 words explaining why you would agree or disagree with one of the following statements about Nixon's plan:

- a. Nixon's plan worked successfully in ending the Vietnam War.
- b. Nixon's plan needlessly prolonged the Vietnam War.

## For Further Consideration: Nixon, China, and the Soviet Union

Read the following and answer the question at the end of the section.

While many still question whether Nixon's Vietnam policy was successful, few question his success in dealing with the Soviet Union and China. Aware that the USSR and China, both communist countries, distrusted one another, Nixon adopted a strategy of "divide and conquer." This idea lay behind a slowly developing plan to open American relations with communist China, who had been an outright enemy of the U.S. since its attack on U.S. troops during the Korean War. Nixon used an intermediary to pass his message on to China's leaders, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, that he was willing to engage in an open dialogue with them. China showed its willingness to overlook years of bitter hostilities by inviting a U.S. ping-pong team to play the Chinese national team in China. Nixon followed this goodwill gesture by secretly sending his



Nixon's famous handshake with Zhou Enlai. Former Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had refused to shake Zhou's hand in a 1954 meeting. Wife Pat stands to the president's right.

National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, to China to arrange for a presidential visit. When the time for the visit came, all three major television networks in the U.S. spent three to four hours broadcasting Nixon's historic meeting with China's leaders. Not much of substance was accomplished at the meeting. Nixon didn't get China to commit to stop aiding North Vietnam, and China didn't get the U.S. to end the war in Vietnam. However, the meeting established a basis for future relations, and the U.S. dropped its firm opposition to admitting China to the United Nations.

The opening of relations with China had its desired effect on the Soviet Union and began an era of relatively friendly relations known as *détente*. The main thrust of Nixon's negotiations with the Soviet Union was a mutual limitation of increases in atomic warheads of land- and sea- (submarine) based missile launchers, and a limitation on the number of launchers. President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger negotiated these agreements without involving the Central Intelligence Agency, the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Defense. The U.S. military was not necessarily pleased with the results of these negotiations, but the agreement left the United States with 3500 nuclear warheads to 2350 for the Soviets. By the end of the five years covered by the agreement, however, the U.S. surpassed the Soviets in warheads by a ratio of 9 to 4. A number of tension-reducing agreements were also negotiated with the Soviets as well as a huge grain deal that not only helped the Soviet Union to feed its people but enriched American farmers.

Other aspects of U.S. foreign policy covering the situation in the Middle East (most notably Israel and its neighbors) and Latin America will be covered in

subsequent chapters. At this point, it should be noted that Nixon played a major role in overthrowing the first fairly elected communist government in Latin America. The country was Chile, and the deposed communist leader was Salvador Allende. A brutal right-wing dictator, General Augusto Pinochet, succeeded Allende. Pinochet's government later caused the deaths and disappearances of thousands of suspected opponents to his rule. He stayed in power for almost 20 years, and afterwards managed to prevent the government elected to replace him from prosecuting those responsible for the reign of terror he had imposed. Pinochet's free-market reforms, however, were largely responsible for a booming Chilean economy during his brutal dictatorship. Nixon justified his government's behavior by citing use of similar tactics by communists in other parts of the globe.

**Evaluate President Nixon's foreign policy by adding to your written statement on the success of his plan to end the war in Vietnam. Come to class prepared to present your opinions, listen to the ideas of others, and either defend your ideas or change your mind.**

## Chapter 6. President Nixon's Domestic Policies and Watergate

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter discusses Richard Nixon's domestic policies and shows that, contrary to public opinion, some of them were surprisingly liberal. Students learn that Nixon won the 1968 election against Hubert Humphrey and George Wallace by a close margin and knew he would need votes from conservative Southerners in order to win reelection in 1972. The largest part of this chapter describes the following major domestic issues that confronted the newly elected president: appointing competent judges to the Supreme Court without losing the support of voters who would reelect him, deciding how to provide aid to state governments for federal programs without imposing unacceptable restrictions on how it might be spent, resolving the problem of supporting poor families without rewarding irresponsible family planning, establishing a comprehensive health care system without bankrupting the federal government, providing clean water for states and cities that couldn't or wouldn't pay for it, and stimulating economic growth without causing inflation. The chapter describes each issue, and students are required to decide between three possible solutions. After learning what President Nixon decided to do in each of six case studies, students are asked to evaluate the president's domestic policies.

The "For Further Consideration" section presents Nixon's darker side by describing the series of "improprieties" that forced him to resign so that he wouldn't get impeached. Students read part of the transcript from one of Nixon's tapes and study a timeline of events leading to his resignation before they are asked whether they believe that Nixon was involved in an attempted cover-up.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- learn that Richard Nixon won a very close election in 1968
- understand several of the major domestic issues Nixon faced while he was president and how he dealt with them
- evaluate Nixon's presidency based on his domestic policies
- decide whether President Nixon took part in a cover-up of illegal actions committed by his subordinates

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section and inform students they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** This chapter may take more than one day to teach.

**Day 1.** Start by asking students whether they have questions regarding Nixon's Southern strategy, his appeal to American voters, and why he won the election of 1968. Having exhausted this line of questioning (in less than ten minutes), explore students' understanding of the six domestic issues covered in this chapter. Divide the class into groups of no more than five, and ask each group to discuss four of the domestic issues. Have them decide which proposals they would choose for resolving these issues. Follow up by having each group report to the class as a whole and allowing students to discuss their answers. Assign students to read the Extra Credit Epilogue, come to class knowing what President Nixon decided about each of the six problems he faced, and grade him on his performance in his domestic policy and as a president.

**Day 2.** Lead a discussion during which students share their evaluation of Nixon's decisions on domestic issues. If time permits, allow students who read the "For Further Consideration" section to offer their conclusions as to whether Nixon should have been impeached and convicted for participating in a cover-up of illegal actions by his subordinates. You may ask them to compare Nixon's actions to the misdeeds of other presidents with which you or they are familiar.

## Chapter 6. President Nixon's Domestic Policies and Watergate I-Chart

	<b>What circumstances led to Nixon becoming president?</b>	<b>What were the six major domestic policy decisions Nixon made while president?</b>	<b>Did President Nixon make the right decisions?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 6, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 6, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to know</b>			





## Chapter 6—President Nixon's Domestic Policies and Watergate

**“silent majority”**

**out of wedlock**

**political capital**

**white  
supremacist**

**unwanted  
regulations**

**industrial  
waste**

**tarnished**

**judicial  
philosophy**

**catastrophic**

## Chapter 6—President Nixon's Domestic Policies and Watergate

Refers to support a politician has that he or she can use to get legislation passed	Describes a child born to an unmarried couple	Voters who believe in traditional values and do not engage in demonstrations or speak out
An unwanted and potentially harmful byproduct of manufacturing	Rules governments make that are not desired by the people who have to obey them	Person who believes that all other races are inferior to white people
Disastrous or awful	A belief in a certain philosophy of the law which influences that person's interpretation of the constitution	Stained; of reduced quality

## Chapter 6

# President Nixon: Domestic Policies and Watergate

### Introduction

In the previous chapter, you learned how President Nixon ended (without winning) the war in Vietnam, instituted diplomatic relations with China, and negotiated arms limitation talks with the USSR. This chapter covers Nixon's domestic policies and the reasons he resigned. At the end of this chapter, you will be asked to judge Richard Nixon both as a president and as a person.

### How Nixon Became President

You already know some things about the political turmoil in 1968. The Democratic Party was undergoing a political meltdown. Facing opposition within his own party and from Republicans, President Johnson announced that he would not seek a second full term. Following this announcement, his party split into two factions. One supported Eugene McCarthy, an anti-war Democrat; the other faction supported John F. Kennedy's brother, Robert. During a divisive primary campaign, both candidates tried to win the support of Democrats opposed to the war. With his victory in the California primary, Robert Kennedy seemed to have won his party's support. However, Kennedy was assassinated shortly after delivering his victory speech. This tragedy shocked a nation that had not fully recovered from the news that Martin Luther King had been mortally wounded in Memphis, Tennessee scarcely two months earlier. Following Robert Kennedy's death, a deeply divided Democratic Party nominated Vice-President Hubert Humphrey to run for president. However, this victory was tarnished by mobs of angry students whose raucous demonstrations in and outside of the Democratic Convention horrified law-abiding citizens.



George Wallace: known for a speech in which he called for "segregation forever"

Meanwhile angry Southerners and white supremacists in the North supported the candidacy of Alabama Governor George Wallace. Wallace captured national attention by his outspoken stand against integration, as indicated by his boast—"I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny, and I say segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." Wallace expressed his opposition to anti-war demonstrators by threatening that if any of them should lie down in front of his car, "it'll be the last car he lies down in front of."

In the midst of this chaos and confusion, the Republican Convention in Miami, Florida chose a ticket of

Richard Nixon for president and the relatively unknown Maryland governor, Spiro Agnew, for vice-president. Its platform promised: “leadership at a time of crisis—leadership [to win] us peace in place of war, unity in place of discord, compassion in place of bitterness.” In his appeal to the “forgotten American” and the “non-shouters and the non-demonstrators,” candidate Nixon expressed the Republican Party’s pledge to support what he later called the “silent majority.”

The election produced one of the closest popular vote victories in American history. George Wallace’s American Independent Party captured 13.2 percent of the popular vote, leaving Nixon with 43.4 percent and Hubert Humphrey 42.7 percent. The Democrats, however, maintained control of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Though elated by his victory, President-elect Nixon remained conscious of the fact that he needed support from the Southern Democrats who had voted for Wallace in order to win reelection in 1972.

### **Domestic Issues facing President Nixon**

In this chapter, you will learn about six domestic problems President Nixon faced. A brief summary of each problem is followed by a short summary of three possible policy alternatives. You will be asked to decide what you think should have been done to resolve each of these problems, and then will learn how President Nixon tried to solve them.

#### **Problem 1. Judicial Appointments**

At the time Richard Nixon became president, many Americans were dissatisfied with recent decisions made by the Supreme Court. White Southerners hated the Court for ordering local communities to desegregate their schools, people advocating vigorous prosecution of suspected criminals disagreed with the Supreme Court’s insistence that suspects be informed of their rights to remain silent and to have a lawyer, and religious Americans objected to the Court’s prohibition of praying in school. Because four justices retired while he was in office, President Nixon had the opportunity to change the Supreme Court by appointing four new justices with different judicial philosophies from those who had made these controversial decisions.

#### **Possible Solutions:**

- Choose the most qualified candidates without considering their judicial philosophies.
- Appoint the most qualified candidates for the job whose judicial philosophies were most similar to his and the people who voted for him.
- Appoint the most qualified candidates whose political philosophies were most similar to the members of the current Supreme Court.

## **Problem 2. Federal Authority**

Dating back to the earliest period in American history, patriots resented either the British or the federal government for telling them what to do. During the pre-Civil War period in the South, during Reconstruction, and in the 1960s, Southerners regarded all federal attempts to regulate race relations as outright tyranny. During the New Deal and the Great Society, the federal government started many programs to help people but attached numerous unwanted regulations to make sure that the states spent money as Congress had intended.

### **Possible Solutions**

- Continue insisting that all money given to the states be spent in the way Congress intended.
- Provide federal dollars to states in the form of block grants that states could use as they thought fit.
- Stop funding such programs as welfare, Medicare, Medicaid (medical insurance for poor people), and housing assistance for the poor and allow each state to pay for such programs according to the wishes and finances of the people living there.

## **Problem 3. Welfare for Single Women with Children**

During the 1960s, the percentage of single women providing sole support for their children increased from 921,000 to 2,200,000, and the cost of programs to support them increased from two to eight billion dollars. The Great Society programs of the 1960s, as well as the increasing number of women entering the workforce, had something to do with this increase. Many people felt that government assistance to women having children out of wedlock encouraged what they saw as socially unacceptable behavior.

### **Possible Solutions**

- Stop the federal government from helping unwed mothers support their children.
- Provide every family of four up to \$1600 (or more or less, depending on family size and inflation) to help support itself as long as at least one person (other than the mother with preschool children) worked.<sup>1</sup>
- Provide each family living in poverty with enough income for every child to receive sufficient food, clothing, and adequate housing.

## **Problem 4. Healthcare**

In 1970, 25 million Americans had no health insurance, and many of the insured were not protected against the costs of a catastrophic illness, which could ruin otherwise financially secure families. Meanwhile, doctors' bills and hospital fees were

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<sup>1</sup> Family assistance would not be provided after the family earned a combined income (assistance plus earnings) in excess of \$4000.

rising at rates in excess of seven percent per year.

### **Possible Solutions**

- Require employers to provide and pay for most of each employee's health insurance costs with at least \$50,000 for catastrophic illnesses, and pay for part of medical expenses for low-income people while providing for cost controls.
- Start a single-payer system in which the federal government pays for medical insurance for all and sets rates for hospital and doctor's fees.
- Leave the system as it is; provide coverage only for low-income and elderly people.

### **Problem 5. The Environment**

States were unwilling or unable to prevent pollution of lakes and rivers, or to pay cities to modernize sewage disposal plants. This resulted in the deaths of 41 million fish in a single year and a lack of water clean enough for drinking, swimming, or fishing. Deadly chemicals were so prevalent in America's waters that a fire started in Cleveland's Cuyahoga River.

### **Proposed Solutions**

- Require each state to set clean water standards and hold itself accountable for meeting these standards.
- Spend billions of dollars to assure that all water in the U.S. would be free of pollution by 1985 by providing cities with funds to treat sewage, and requiring industries to stop polluting all bodies of water and to pay for damages caused by industrial waste.
- Do the same as above as well as prohibit rainwater run off from fertilized fields and lawns (along with construction sites) from polluting neighboring watersheds.

### **Inflation and Unemployment**

Because of a combination of price hikes by oil-producing nations, increased federal spending to fund Great Society programs as well as the war in Vietnam, and foreign competition with American industries, the U.S. economy suffered from something economists call "stagflation." Stagflation is a combination of slow economic growth (which during Nixon's presidency led to an unemployment rate of 5.9%) and an abnormally high rate of inflation (which surged from 9% in 1973 to 15% in 1974.)

### **Proposed Solutions**

- Cut taxes on all income groups in order to put more money in people's pockets.
- Increase government spending in order to stimulate economic growth.
- Enforce wage and price controls and increase government spending.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

Explain how each of the following helped Richard Nixon become president in 1972.

Opposition to the war in Vietnam	
Death of Robert Kennedy	
Violent street protests	
Opposition to school integration	
Opposition to Great Society programs	

**B. Student Exercise**

Select any of the four problems mentioned in the reading that you wish to cover and write a statement of no more than three sentences explaining why you chose one solution for each problem rather than the others.

**C. Extra Credit**

Read the epilogue and find out which of the proposed solutions President Nixon actually adopted. Next, write an essay of no more than 300 words explaining how well you think Richard Nixon performed as president. Include his foreign policy initiatives.



## Epilogue: Richard Nixon's Choices

### Judicial Appointments



Chief Justice Warren Burger

Nixon's first appointment to the Supreme Court was a fourth-generation Southern lawyer by the name of Clement Haynsworth. Though competent, his judicial record disclosed a preference for segregation, and his business record indicated a partnership with a disgraced public official. Seventeen Republicans joined 38 Democrats in opposing Haynsworth; President Nixon then nominated another Southerner, Clement Carswell. Possessing an undistinguished judicial record, many senators who interviewed him regarded Carswell as a "boob and a dummy," and he failed to win confirmation. The next four nominees passed the competence test: two became Chief Justice. Chief Justice Warren Burger didn't manage to swing the Supreme Court in the direction Nixon desired, but his successor, William Rehnquist, provided a powerful and effective voice favoring the conservative "silent majority," whose influence was somewhat reduced by two other Nixon appointees who proved more liberal, Lewis Powell and Harry Blackmun.

### Revenue Sharing

Always leery of the federal government as an inefficient and dictatorial bureaucracy, President Nixon managed to get Congress to pass the State and Local Assistance Act of 1972. In its first year of operation, this act funneled four billion dollars directly to cities and states with relatively few restrictions on how the money could be used. Before President Reagan killed this program in 1986, it redistributed \$83 billion dollars among the 50 states.

### Welfare

Proposed by Nixon but never passed by Congress, the Family Assistance Plan aimed to replace various programs such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Aid to Families With Dependent Children (commonly known as welfare) with a single program. Each family of four (with adjustments for family size) would be granted up to \$1600 if at least one family member worked (exceptions were made for mothers with preschool children.) Liberals opposed this proposal because they thought that \$1600 was not enough money (though families were allowed to earn up to an additional \$2400 before benefits would be reduced), and by conservatives who opposed any guaranteed income program. Unwilling to invest his political capital in this proposal, President Nixon stood by while opponents killed his plan for family assistance.

## **Healthcare**

Prior to President Nixon's time in office, two previous presidents had proposed a national healthcare initiative. Nixon's plan, the Health Improvement Standards Act, required employers to pay for up to 85 percent of the costs of a comprehensive health insurance plan for their employees. States would be required to provide group-rate coverage for those not qualified for other plans, and a special program would help poor people acquire affordable insurance. President Nixon proposed this plan in a special message to Congress in March 1972, but failed to secure a majority in both houses to pass it.

## **The Environment**

The Clean Water Act was passed in 1972. This far-reaching legislation set standards for allowable pollution by municipalities and businesses of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and oceans. In addition, the Clean Water Act provided grants to help cities and towns pay for sewage treatment plants. The goal of making all water in the nation safe for swimming and fishing by 1985 has yet to be reached. The main reason this failed has been that the Clean Water Act did not regulate runoff from farms, lawns, construction sites, and logging roads. Nixon vetoed the Clean Water Act because he did not see it as cost-effective, but Congress passed it over his veto.

## **Stimulus Packets and Wage-Price Freezes**

Haunted by fears that higher unemployment or inflation would prevent his bid for reelection in 1972, Nixon took two separate and seemingly contradictory actions. First, he increased government spending in order to stimulate economic growth. Reduced unemployment, however, was accompanied by higher rates of inflation. This prompted Nixon to do something he vowed he would never do: impose a 90-day freeze on wages and prices in order to prevent further inflation.

Neither increased federal spending nor imposed controls over wages and prices had a profound effect on either growth or inflation. However, the Democratic candidate for president in 1972, George McGovern, failed to win the support of Nixon's "silent majority"—or more than 37 percent of the popular vote. President Nixon won reelection with the support of all the states except for Massachusetts.

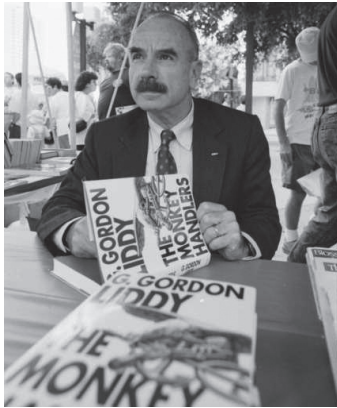
## **Student Exercises**

Based on what you know about Richard Nixon and the 1970s, write an essay of no more than 300 words explaining what you think of Richard Nixon as a president. Include his actions in foreign policy.

## For Further Consideration: President Nixon's Dark Side, and Watergate

You may remember that Richard Nixon found early success in politics by his accusing his opponents of sympathizing with communist causes. Many historians have written that Nixon viewed his political opponents as enemies that had to be destroyed. One indication of his view is that Nixon asked three different aides to compose a list of political enemies whose tax records and private lives he would investigate in order to determine the existence of any incriminating evidence that could be used against them.

Always on the lookout for people who were betraying him, Nixon instructed Attorney General John Mitchell to form an organization called the “plumbers” that would find insiders who had leaked information to the press, uncover incriminating information that could be used against political opponents, and play “dirty tricks”



G. Gordon Liddy in 1990

during political campaigns, such as calling off opponents' scheduled events. The heads of the plumbers, G. Gordon Liddy and H. Howard Hunt, arranged a break-in of the Democratic Party's national headquarters in the Watergate complex of offices and apartments in Washington, D.C. During their June 17, 1972 illegal entry into this building, all five were caught with incriminating evidence on them that connected them to Hunt, Liddy, and Attorney General John Mitchell. The five were indicted, tried, and found guilty, but not yet sentenced when a hitherto secret system of tape recordings made in the White House revealed information that seemed to incriminate the president. Since the tapes were

released 18 months later, the conversations they recorded did not become public until over two years after the break-in. Since Nixon had been able to avoid the appearance of direct involvement in the break-in, the airing of these tapes proved instrumental in getting him to resign from office. Read excerpts from the tape below and decide whether it convinces you that Nixon was personally and directly involved in an effort to prevent numerous investigating committees from finding out who had been involved in the break-in. This question is important because Nixon felt forced to resign as president because of suspicions that he was involved in an attempt to obstruct the investigation into this break-in. Nixon never admitted any guilt, but said only that he no longer had “a strong enough political base in the Congress” to fight the charges lodged against him.

## Does It Seem Like Someone Was Planning a Cover-Up?

The following excerpt comes from a secret tape from March 21, 1973. Aside from the president, his assistants John Dean and Bob Haldeman participated in the conversation. They discussed how to handle the fact that all seven of the conspirators who participated in the break-in at the Democratic National Committee had just been found guilty. Would they tell who ordered and paid them to commit the crime?

PRESIDENT: We have to look at that course of action. First, it is going to require approximately a million dollars to take care of the jackasses that are in jail. That could be, that could be arranged... That could be arranged. But you realize that after we're gone. I mean, assuming these [unintelligible] are, they're going to crack, you know what I mean? And that'll be an unseemly story.

HALDEMAN or DEAN: Yeah.

PRESIDENT:  
...But the second thing is we're not going to be able to deliver on, on any kind of a, of a clemency thing.  
...If you open up the Grand Jury, first, it won't do any good; it won't be believed.  
And then you'll have two things

## Watergate Chronology

June 19, 1972—Five men are arrested in the Democratic Headquarters in the Watergate hotel and office complex while attempting to install recording devices. Several have connections to G. Gordon Liddy and Howard Hunt, who are employed by the Committee to Elect the President (CREEP) under the leadership of Nixon's former Attorney General, John Mitchell.

September 29, 1972—The *Washington Post* reports that John Mitchell controlled the fund to finance spying on Democrats.

November 11, 1972—Nixon wins reelection with 60.7 percent of votes cast.

January 30, 1973—Five burglars, along with Hunt and Liddy, are convicted but not sentenced.

March 21, 1973—Discussion reported on next page takes place, but contents are not publicly released until middle of the following year.

April 30, 1973—Top Nixon aides H.R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and John Dean resign or are fired because of their involvement with the Watergate break-in/cover up.

July 18, 1973—The existence of a secret recording device in Oval Office is revealed.

October 20, 1973—Nixon fires an appointed prosecutor who ordered the release of Watergate recordings.

November 1, 1973—The new prosecutor subpoenas the same tapes. Citing executive privilege and national security as reasons, Nixon denies the request.

April 7, 1974—Nixon's release of 1200 pages of edited transcripts of tapes does not satisfy prosecutors.

May 9, 1974—The House Judiciary Committee begins hearings to determine if there is a case to impeach Nixon.

July 27–30, 1974—The Judiciary Committee votes to impeach.

August 8, 1974—Nixon submits his resignation; citing loss of Congressional support as the reason.

going: The Grand Jury and you have the other thing. At least the Grand Jury appeals to me from the standpoint, it's the president makes the move. "Since all these charges have been bandied about, and so forth, the best thing to do is to...I have ordered, or I have asked the Grand Jury to look into any further charges. All charges have been raised." That's the place to do it and not before a committee of the Congress. Right?

DEAN: Um hum.

PRESIDENT: Then, however, we may say, [Attorney General] Mitchell, et al., God we can't risk that, I mean, uh, all sorts of s--t'll break loose there. Then that leaves you to your third thing. The third thing is just to continue to...

DEAN: Hunker down and fight it.

PRESIDENT: All right. If you hunker down and fight it...and what happens?

DEAN: Your...

PRESIDENT: Your view is that, that is, is not really a viable option.

DEAN: It's a very high risk. A very high risk.

PRESIDENT: A high risk, because your view is that what will happen out of that is that it's going to come out. Somebody's...Hunt...something's going to break loose...

DEAN: Something is going to break and...

PRESIDENT: When it breaks it'll look like the president

DEAN: ...is covering up...



Nixon leaving the  
White House for the  
last time

**Based on the information you just read, do you think that President Nixon was involved in an attempted cover-up of his involvement in Watergate? Write a strong paragraph supporting your conclusion and come to class prepared to present your thinking, listen to the opinions of others, and to defend your own or change your mind.**

## Chapter 7. Gerald Ford: The Unelected President

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter introduces Gerald Ford as a former athlete who acquired a reputation as a political bungler. His career in the White House was undoubtedly curtailed more by his verbal missteps than by the physical mishaps he committed (including falling down the steps of Air Force One). His communication mistakes appear in his pardon of Richard Nixon for any crimes “he may have committed” and in his failure to realize during his presidential debate with Jimmy Carter that Poland was under Soviet domination. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to Ford’s unsuccessful attempt to combat stagflation with his campaign to distribute WIN (Whip Inflation Now) buttons and his failure to endorse an economic stimulus plan. Students learn about ways to combat both inflation and stagnation, but that stopping one tends to exacerbate the other. The section on foreign policy recounts how Ford, following Nixon’s foreign policy, failed to prevent the fall of Saigon and to reach any further understandings with China. The “For Further Consideration” section describes the *Mayaguez* incident and asks students to discuss whether it should be regarded as a triumph for Ford.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- learn about the life, times, and mistakes of the 38th president
- understand the term “stagflation” and learn why it is difficult to simultaneously end both inflation and high unemployment
- evaluate President Ford’s campaign to fight inflation, as symbolized by his plan to enlist Americans to wear WIN (Whip Inflation Now) buttons
- understand why Ford had difficulty securing the Republican nomination for president and why he lost the election of 1976.

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** I recommend that you review students’ answers to the Graphic Organizer and Student Exercise questions and then allow students to discuss whether Ford should have pardoned Nixon for any crimes that the former president might have committed. Follow this by examining Ford’s attempt to simultaneously fight inflation and high unemployment with WIN buttons but no stimulus packages. Next, ask students whether they think Ford’s Nixonian foreign policy achieved any successes.



Have students who read the “For Further Consideration” section decide whether the *Mayaguez* incident was a foreign policy triumph.

If you have time, ask students whether they think Ford deserved to be elected in 1976.



## Chapter 7. Gerald Ford: The Unelected President I Chart

	The life and times of President Ford	The definition, causes, and potential cures for stagflation	The failures and successes (if any) of the Ford administration
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 7, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 7, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to learn</b>			



## Chapter 7—Gerald Ford: The Unelected President

**preoccupation**

**klutz**

**Verbal gaffe**

**escalating**

**stimulus  
package**

**stagflation**

**anti-détente**

**multiple  
warheads**

**petroleum**

## Chapter 7—Gerald Ford: The Unelected President

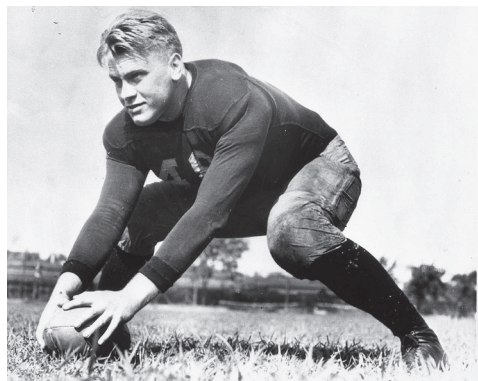
Refers to people who oppose a relaxation of tensions with foes (usually communist countries)	Increasing tension between two parties	Refers to spending too much time being concerned about something
Refers to a missile that carries more than one—and often separately targeted—payloads	An infusion of cash from the government designed to get the economy to grow more rapidly	Slang for a clumsy person
Another word for oil	Characterizes an economy undergoing a high rate of inflation while also experiencing high unemployment	A spoken statement that results in negative consequences for the speaker

## Chapter 7

# Gerald R. Ford: The Unelected President

### Introduction

Gerald R. Ford, probably the best athlete to serve as president, was born Leslie Lynch King in 1913. His parents divorced soon after his birth and Ford later took his stepfather's name. Despite his athleticism, his occasional physical stumbles in public earned him an undeserved reputation as a bungler who “could not walk and chew gum” at the same time and made him the butt of many jokes on *Saturday Night Live*.



Gerald Ford, an all-star center and linebacker for the University of Michigan

However, it was one action and one verbal gaffe that cost him most dearly. His pardon of Richard Nixon for “any crimes he might have committed” without first securing an admission of guilt caused many to wonder whether Ford had made a secret deal with Nixon when he was selected to be vice-president. The gaffe occurred during a presidential debate when Ford mistakenly asserted that Poland, a nation under Soviet control at the time, was a free and independent country. This inexcusable error may well have cost him the chance to be elected president.

The real question that this chapter explores, however, is not whether Gerald Ford was a klutz, but whether he was an effective leader of the American people.

### Biography

Shortly after her son's birth in Nebraska, Ford's mother divorced his father and moved to Michigan. Two years later, she remarried and gave her son his stepfather's name, even though it was not officially changed until the mid-1930s. A gifted athlete, Ford became an all-star lineman at the University of Michigan and turned down two offers to play professional football in order to attend Yale Law School. After serving in the Navy, where he was almost killed by a typhoon that took the lives of 800 members of his ship's crew, Ford returned to Michigan in order to practice law. He ran for the House of Representatives on the Republican ticket and received 61 percent of the vote—the first of 11 more election victories by a similar majority. He quickly rose to a leadership position in the House where, as a middle-of-the-road Republican, he supported President Eisenhower's and President Nixon's policies but opposed President Johnson's Great Society programs. In 1973, Nixon chose Ford to replace Vice-President Spiro Agnew, who had resigned from this office rather than face a trial for tax evasion. Gerald Ford became the 38th president of the United States on August 9, 1974, the day that Nixon's resignation became effective.

## Ford as President: The Pardon

Ford's first act as president won him public support. In a short speech following his oath of office, Ford made reference to the long and drawn-out Watergate trial by proclaiming:



President Ford reading his speech pardoning Nixon

Fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over.

Our Constitution works; our great Republic is a government of laws and not of men. Here the people rule...

As we bind up the internal wounds of Watergate, more painful and more poisonous than those of foreign wars, let us restore the golden rule to our political process, and let brotherly love purge our hearts of suspicion and of hate.

However, Ford rekindled those flames of suspicion one month later by granting Nixon:

...a full, free, and absolute pardon...for all offenses against the United States which he, Richard Nixon, has committed or may have committed or taken part in during the period from July [actually January] 20, 1969 through August 9, 1974.

Though claiming he only intended to end the nation's preoccupation with Watergate and Nixon's role in the cover-up, Ford never escaped the unproven suspicion that he had made a deal to pardon Nixon before being appointed vice-president. Whatever his reasons for pardoning Nixon, the decision caused Ford's favorability rating to drop from 70 percent to 50 percent.

## Domestic Policies: Stagflation

Ford had to deal with one vexing domestic problem that Nixon had also faced during his presidency—stagflation. The term refers to a combination of a high rate of inflation (anything above 4 percent is considered unacceptable) accompanied by a rate of unemployment exceeding 5 percent. The reason this combination is considered such a challenge to policymakers is that economists know how to cure either one of these problems, but have no clue on how to cure both of them at the same time. Inflation, a rapid rise in prices, is caused by a rapid increase in the money supply

without an equally rapid increase in the number of goods to buy with this money. Economists teach us that the cure for inflation is to reduce the amount of money in circulation. This can be accomplished by reducing government spending or by increasing taxes.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, decreasing government spending and increasing taxes has the unintended effect of reducing the amount of goods and services that can be produced because there is less money available to make purchases. Equally unfortunate is lowering taxes and increasing government spending because it puts more money in circulation and also raises prices. Ford, who majored in economics and political science at the University of Michigan, understood this problem, but training and personal preference led him more in the direction of making efforts to decrease inflation.

Ford decided to seek a third strategy other than manipulating taxes and spending to fight inflation. In a far-ranging speech on October 8, 1974, he asked Americans to:

- produce more food, and I call upon every farmer to produce to full capacity
- find and to expose all restrictive practices, public or private, which raise food prices
- [achieve] a 40 percent increase in gasoline mileage within a 4-year development deadline
- push with renewed vigor and talent research in the use of nonfossil fuels. [because] the power of the atom, the heat of the sun and the steam stored deep in the Earth, the force of the winds and water must be main sources of energy for our grandchildren, and we can do it
- grow more and waste less; to help save scarce fuel in the energy crisis, drive less, heat less...by carpooling, taking the bus, riding bikes, or just plain walking.
- join in this massive mobilization and stick with it until we do win as a nation and as a people



To show that they had enlisted in his cause for voluntary action, Ford urged Americans to obtain and wear a button bearing the logo “WIN” to show they had enlisted in the president’s program to “Whip Inflation Now!”

Without the support of enough people and with very little help from the government, Americans failed to whip inflation and, with no stimulus package, unemployment soon exceeded 9 percent. Ford not only failed to propose a stimulus plan, he vetoed several bills that would have provided unemployment relief, encouraged housing construction, created an estimated one million jobs, and provided money for school lunches. Referring to his opposition to Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society programs, Ford expressed his philosophy

<sup>1</sup> If the Federal Reserve Bank increases interest rates, this can also reduce the money supply. Since it’s difficult to explain how the Federal Reserve Bank can manipulate interest rates and the supply of money, and that the Federal Reserve Bank is supposed to be independent of the president, we will not burden readers by attempting an explanation.

as follows:

We thought we could transform the country through massive national programs, but often the programs did not work. Too often they only made things worse.

Whatever their merits, most of Ford's own suggestions for domestic legislation fell on deaf ears. With the Republicans' disastrous election losses resulting from Watergate, Democrats gained control of Congress.

### Foreign Affairs under Gerald Ford

Although Ford had supported President Truman's policies for containing communism, he opposed Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War. Once in the Oval Office, however, Ford not only adopted President Nixon's foreign policy but also kept his foreign policy advisors. First and foremost, because he was inexperienced in matters of foreign relations, Ford relied heavily on the advice of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the same man who had guided most of President Nixon's decisions.



Gerald Ford and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev meeting in Vladivostok, where they failed to conclude their disarmament agreement

The peace treaty Kissinger had negotiated with North Vietnam fell apart in 1975 when the well-equipped North Vietnamese Army invaded South Vietnam. Ford responded by asking Congress for one billion dollars of combined military, economic, and humanitarian aid. However, Congress was unwilling to spend even more money on a losing cause and was roundly blamed by many Republicans for the fall of South Vietnam. The final collapse came on April 30, 1975 with the undignified sight of Vietnamese civilians clutching on to the skis of departing American helicopters as North Vietnamese forces entered Saigon. The long

war that had involved America under Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon, and Ford had finally ended

On another front, Henry Kissinger negotiated an understanding with the Soviet Union to limit the number of missile launchers each side could maintain. Both the U.S. and the USSR could deploy 2400 launchers, of which 1320 could be equipped with multiple warheads. However, because it lacked an agreement on the new Soviet Backfire bomber and American cruise missiles, the disarmament agreement remained unsigned. Ford and Kissinger did get the Soviet Union to promise to protect the rights of people living in the parts of Europe the country had acquired by force during World

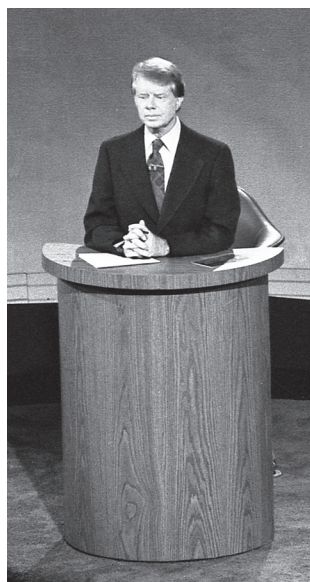


War II. In exchange, the West recognized these boundaries as permanent. Back in the U.S., fellow Republicans regarded the human rights agreement as a sham, and the acceptance of eastern European borders as a mistake.

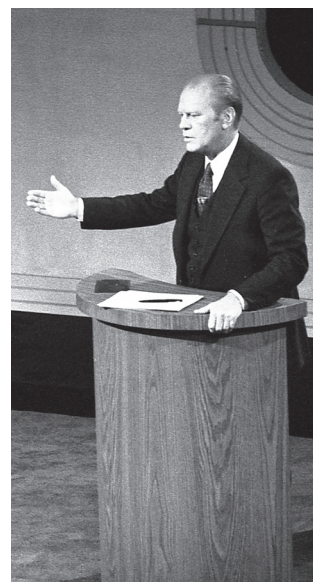
The Ford/Kissinger team completed a five-day goodwill mission to China, which accomplished little more than to acquaint Ford with the leaders of China and further antagonize the anti-détente wing of the Republican Party.

### **The Election of 1976**

Ford was determined to win his party's nomination so he could become president in his own right. His main opposition came from Nelson Rockefeller, who



was regarded by diehard Republicans as too liberal, and from Ronald Reagan, whose rhetoric captured the hearts and minds of the party's conservative wing. Challenged by Reagan, Ford barely won his party's nomination and faced Democrat Jimmy Carter as a distinct underdog. The election, however, was much closer than the public expected. Although hampered by his statement in the presidential debates that "there was no Soviet domination of eastern Europe," Ford lost the election, but only by a margin of 1.7 million votes of the 81 million ballots cast for president in 1976.



Carter and Ford during the debate

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

Mark each statement about Gerald Ford as true, false, or not enough information to answer the question.

Statement	True	False	Not enough information
His birth name was Gerald Ford			
He was an excellent athlete			
He became vice president because he made a deal with Richard Nixon			
He was elected by large majorities 11 times to represent his home state, Nebraska			
He tried to fight inflation by using WIN buttons			
He was more concerned with ending high unemployment than with fighting inflation			
He supported Johnson's Great Society programs			
He relied on Henry Kissinger's foreign policy advice			
He made important agreements with China and the Soviet Union			
He said that Poland was not under Soviet domination			

**B. Student Exercises**

Answer two of the following:

1. Explain why it is almost impossible to end inflation and high unemployment at the same time.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. With which interpretation of Ford's "WIN" speech do you agree? Explain why.
  - a. He understood at least part of the problem, but did not propose a workable solution.
  - b. It was an honest attempt to deal with a very difficult problem.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Did Ford successfully continue Nixon's foreign policy? Explain the reasons for your conclusion.

## For Further Consideration: The *Mayaguez* Incident

Less than two weeks after the fall of Saigon, President Ford faced an embarrassing problem. The Khmer Rouge, a radical communist group that had taken control of Cambodia, seized the U.S. merchant ship *Mayaguez*. The ship, with an American crew of 39, was sailing in international waters. The Cambodian government falsely claimed the ship had ventured within its territorial waters and that it carried military supplies for Vietnam. Unable to communicate directly with the Cambodian government, Ford ordered a group of American ships, planes, and Marines into action. One helicopter went to attack the *Mayaguez* but got shot down. Ironically, the attack came two minutes after Cambodia announced that it would release the *Mayaguez*,



President Ford at a National Security Council meeting about the *Mayaguez* incident

but said nothing about its crew. Meanwhile, 600 Marines were ordered to attack a nearby island where the captive crew was probably being held. Three helicopters got shot down transporting the Marines to the island, where the remainder encountered heavy resistance. At the same time, planes and the aircraft carrier shelled the island and the Cambodian mainland in order to let the Cambodians know the U.S. would not back down. Convinced by this show of force, the soldiers holding the crew put them on a wooden fishing vessel with a flag of truce and set sail toward the *U.S.S. Wilson*.

Altogether, 41 Americans died in the rescue operation and 50 were wounded. The 39 hostages that were released unharmed would probably have been freed without the loss of those killed and wounded in the attempt to rescue them. However, both Ford and Kissinger defended their action because it proved that the U.S. had shown that it was not a helpless giant that other countries could push around. Of the Americans who sent a torrent of telegrams and letters to the White House, some 14,000 agreed with this analysis compared to only about 1000 who disagreed.

**Do you think President Ford acted too hastily in ordering an all-out attack to rescue the 39 Americans and the *Mayaguez*? Write a strong paragraph or two answering this question and come to class prepared to present your opinion, listen to the views of others, and defend yours or change your mind.**

## Chapter 8. James Earl Carter: A Born-Again Peanut Farmer as President Teacher Page

### Overview:

After a brief introduction to James Earl Carter as a deeply religious peanut farmer eager to heal the country of its political, military, and economic wounds, this chapter focuses on his foreign and domestic policy initiatives. Students are told they will be asked to judge Carter as president and in his post-presidential years according to both his standards and their own. The chapter proceeds by covering Carter's unsuccessful attempts to negotiate a meaningful disarmament treaty (SALT II) with the Soviet Union, his responses to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, his success in guiding Egypt and Israel to a meaningful agreement at Camp David, and his failed attempt at maintaining America's self-respect while recovering the 52 American hostages held in Tehran, Iran.

Domestic policy topics include Carter's difficulties adjusting his economic measures to combat stagflation, first with a stimulus and then by balancing the budget. The chapter also covers Carter's "Crisis of Confidence" speech that followed his unsuccessful efforts to obtain a comprehensive energy policy. The chapter notes that the speech was generally interpreted as Carter blaming Americans for his failure to lead them. Carter's loss to Ronald Reagan in 1980 is presented as nearly a forgone conclusion given the Democratic president's failure to inspire the American people.

The graphic organizer question asks students to assign a letter grade to each of Carter's initiatives as president and then to explain the reasons for all of them. An essay question follows that asks all students to write a comprehensive report evaluating Carter's performance as president. The "For Further Consideration" section provides students with detailed knowledge of the many Impressive projects sponsored and completed by Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter through the center they founded after Carter left office. Students who read this section are asked to include his activities as a philanthropist in their evaluation of his contributions to the United States and the world.

### Objectives:

Students will:

- learn that Jimmy Carter entered office with noble aims that he by and large failed to achieve
- realize that Carter's work with Egypt and Israel was the most successful peace initiative in 30 years of Middle East diplomacy
- understand that Carter faced essentially the same domestic and foreign policy issues that the Ford administration was unable to resolve and also failed to solve them

- learn more about stagflation, the Camp David Accords, the need for a comprehensive energy policy, the hostage crisis, and Carter's "Crisis in Confidence" speech

Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section and inform students they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** Start by asking students if they know what it means to be a "born-again Christian." Next, ask whether Carter was able to give concrete expression of his religious ideals through his foreign policy and legislative accomplishments. Allow students to refer to their graphic organizer chart to provide you with answers to this question. Encourage students who read the "For Further Consideration" section to share what they learned from this reading. Work this information into an evaluation of Jimmy Carter not only as a president, but also as a human being.

I also suggest that you spend some time discussing the importance of specific topics covered in this chapter:

- Did Carter have any viable alternatives to resolving the hostage crisis?
- Was Carter any more successful than Ford in dealing with stagflation and the energy crisis?

**Chapter 8. James Earl Carter:  
A Born-Again Peanut Farmer as President  
I-Chart**

	<b>Who was Jimmy Carter and what were his core values?</b>	<b>What did he fail to accomplish?</b>	<b>What were his lifetime accomplishments?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 8, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 8, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to know about this subject</b>			





Chapter 8—James Earl Carter: A Born-Again Peanut Farmer as President

<p><b>puppet government</b></p>	<p><b>persevere</b></p>	<p><b>born-again Christian</b></p>
<p><b>dwindle</b></p>	<p><b>embassy</b></p>	<p><b>subservient</b></p>
<p><b>substantial</b></p>	<p><b>fluctuate</b></p>	<p><b>exasperate</b></p>

## Chapter 8—James Earl Carter: A Born-Again Peanut Farmer as President

Describes a considerable amount, value, or importance	To slowly decrease	Government led by someone who actually takes orders from someone behind the scenes
To change from one position to another in a way that can't be predicted	A building that houses official representatives (led by an ambassador) to another government	To stay with a belief or action over a long period of time
To make someone very angry by doing something that annoys him or her	Subjecting one's own needs or wishes to others	A person who has a religious conversion experience in which they accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior

## Chapter 8

# James Earl Carter: A Born-Again Peanut Farmer as President

### Introduction

After Gerald Ford proved unable to restore Americans' confidence in their government, Americans wanted a leader who was honest, courageous, articulate, and inspiring. James Earl Carter Jr., a born-again Christian with a missionary's zeal to do good works, aspired to be that person. The oldest son of a peanut farmer in Plains, Georgia (population 500), Jimmy, as he preferred to be called, received his college education at the U.S. Naval Academy. Following graduation in 1946, he served in the Navy for seven years. Upon the death of his father, he returned to Plains to manage the family's peanut farm. This left him time to enter local politics, rise to the position of state senator in 1962, and succeed in his second attempt to become Georgia's governor in 1970. In his inaugural address as governor he gained national recognition by announcing that "I say to you quite frankly that the time for racial discrimination is over. No poor, rural, weak, or black person should ever have to bear the additional burden of being deprived of the opportunity of an education, a job, or simple justice."



President James Earl  
(Jimmy) Carter

Supremely confident in his abilities, Carter announced his plan to run for president of the United States in 1974 and spent the next two years giving innumerable speeches in his quest for the Democratic nomination. Having become his party's candidate, Carter almost blew a 33 percent lead in the polls and won the 1976 election by a small margin. One of the mistakes this pious "born-again Christian" made was confessing in an interview published in *Playboy* magazine that he had "looked on a lot of woman with lust."

After delivering his inaugural address on January 17, 1977, President Carter, in the company of his wife and children, surprised Washington by walking down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House instead of riding in a car, as had been the tradition. His address, as well as his campaign, let the American people know what kind of a president he hoped to be. He would "adjust to changing times and still hold to underlying principles." He would help create "a new spirit of unity and trust" for a government that would "at the same time be both competent and compassionate." To be true to ourselves, he noted, "we must be true to others," and not "behave in foreign places as to violate our rules and standards here at home." Furthermore, the president pledged "perseverance and wisdom in our efforts to limit the world's armaments to those necessary for each nation's own domestic security."

There is no doubt that Carter set high goals for himself. At the end of this chapter you will be asked to decide how well he lived up to his own standards as president, and how well he lived up to yours.

### **The Problems Confronting President Carter**

Reflecting back to his first days as president, Carter summed up the problems he faced when he took office:

I inherited some terrible circumstances when I became president. Economically, we had a very high inflation rate, and we had an oil embargo against our country from the Arab members of OPEC. Of course, we had four wars in the Middle East in the previous 25 years. We didn't have diplomatic relations with China, and we had a crisis in the Panama Canal Zone. So we had quite a lot to deal with...<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the problems Carter mentioned in this 2009 interview, he might have added the ones that arose while he was president: Iranian militants took 52 Americans hostage in Tehran, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, and unemployment increased at home. This chapter will first cover foreign policy problems and then domestic problems.

### **President Carter's Foreign Policy**

Carter's commitment to advancing human rights created a problem when he attempted to extend Nixon's and Ford's strategic arms limitation talks with the Soviet Union. The Soviet leadership under Premier Leonid Brezhnev was more than a little annoyed by Carter making an issue of how the Soviets treated their own citizens. Carter also annoyed the Soviets by raising issues in his disarmament talks that the Ford/Kissinger foreign policy team had already resolved. It took more than three years of negotiations for the two sides to come to an agreement on the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs), submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), as well as strategic bombers that each side would be allowed to have and how many could be armed with multiple independently targeted warheads. The military on both sides feared that the other country had an advantage in the final agreement. Carter finally submitted the treaty (called SALT II) to the U.S. Senate, where it faced strong opposition.

On December 27, 1979, not long after the SALT II treaty was submitted to Congress, the Soviet Union launched an attack on Afghanistan in order to support a puppet government it had established there years earlier. (Actually, the U.S. had been secretly aiding the Afghans, who objected to communist rule of their country and the

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1 Moni Basu, "Carter Reflects on His Inauguration," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, January 18, 2009



A Soviet tank rolls through  
an Afghan village

non-Islamic customs forced on their people). Carter could not let this act of aggression stand. He withdrew the SALT treaty from the U.S. Senate, increased arms shipments to the Afghan opposition, and stopped grain sales to the Soviets. He also cancelled U.S. participation in the Olympic games that had been scheduled for Moscow in the summer of 1980. This spoiled the one opportunity many dedicated young athletes had to participate in international competition.

### A Diplomatic Triumph and a Disaster

Carter won his greatest diplomatic triumph in helping Israel and Egypt negotiate a peace treaty. He invited the leaders of both countries to the United States, spent 13 days with them in the presidential retreat in Maryland (Camp David), and used his persuasive powers to overcome years of mutual suspicion. The final peace treaty between Israel and Egypt provided that Egypt would establish normal diplomatic relations with Israel and that Israel would withdraw its forces from the Sinai Peninsula and cede the territory back to Egypt. In addition, Egypt would allow Israeli ships to use the Suez Canal. The Camp David Accords, as they were called, improved Carter's approval rating from 38 percent to 50 percent, but the glow it inspired did not last long.



Begin, Carter and Sadat at Camp David

Long before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, trouble was brewing in Iran. In 1953, a U.S. sponsored, CIA-engineered revolution had restored Shah Reza Pahlavi, the unpopular leader of Iran, to his throne. His autocratic rule, rejection of Islamic traditions, brutal suppression of dissent, and seeming subservience to the United States sparked a revolution against him and led to his eventual expulsion from Iran. Carter made the mistake of allowing this one-time ally of the United States to come to New York for medical treatment. Carter refused the Iranian government's demand to return the Shah to Iran, where he would stand trial. In retaliation, on November 4, 1979, enraged Iranian students stormed the American Embassy in Tehran and took 63 Americans hostage (11 were later released.) Carter refused the Iranian government's demand that he return the Shah, give it the money the Shah held in various banks, and apologize for previous American treatment of Iran. Carter refused, tried backdoor diplomacy, and took some symbolic actions against Iran. Basically, he remained powerless in this embarrassing situation while his prestige dwindled. In desperation, Carter consented to a risky scheme that his subordinates concocted to rescue the hostages, which involved a daring raid into Tehran, overcoming the hostages' captors,



trucking the freed Americans to an abandoned airport far from the city, and flying them to safety. The plan failed in its early stages, and Carter had no choice but to continue backdoor negotiations with Iran. By the time a deal was worked out for the hostages' release, they had been held in captivity for 444 days. As a final humiliation, Iran returned the hostages to the U.S. on the very day that President Reagan was inaugurated.



Freed American hostages board a military plane returning them to the U.S.

## **President Carter's Domestic Policies**

Carter faced the same problem with the economy that had exasperated Nixon and Ford—stagflation. When Carter became president, the rates of inflation and unemployment hovered in the neighborhood of seven percent. Directing his efforts at reducing unemployment, Carter committed himself to supporting a large stimulus package combining tax cuts with increases in government spending. However, as unemployment decreased, inflation increased, and Carter decided to forego the tax cut. As the economy continued to fluctuate between decreased economic growth and increased inflation, Carter managed to antagonize congressmen on both sides of the aisle by again committing himself to a stimulus package and then announcing cuts in federal spending in order to balance the budget.

Carter's attempts to deal with the energy crisis produced some results. His administration enforced the automobile mileage requirements passed during the previous administration. He established a Cabinet position for energy that highlighted his commitment to increasing production and reducing consumption. However, his grand proposal for serious efforts to reduce dependence on foreign oil fell between the environmentalists' opposition to increased drilling, the oil and natural gas industries' opposition to price controls, and consumers' opposition to increased energy taxes. Besides providing tax credits for taking steps to conserve energy and supporting research in renewable energy, Carter accomplished little.

## **The “Crisis in Confidence” Speech**

Following Congress's rejection of most parts of his energy proposals, the president spent ten days at Camp David with his advisors and many public citizens. Upon returning from his retreat, Carter delivered a speech to the nation in which he characterized the problems faced by Americans as a crisis in spirit. Due to the impact of the assassinations of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King; the losses encountered in Vietnam; and the declining value of the dollar,



Carter giving his “crisis in confidence” speech

Americans were losing their traditional optimism and faith in their country. This, the president concluded, was reflected in a failure of leadership in Washington:

What you see too often in Washington and elsewhere around the country is a system of government that seems incapable of action. You see a Congress twisted and pulled in every direction by hundreds of well-financed and powerful special interests. You see every extreme position defended to the last vote, almost to the last breath by one unyielding group or another. You often see a balanced and a fair approach that demands sacrifice, a little sacrifice from everyone, abandoned like an orphan without support and without friends.

Whereas Carter had talked about the lack of confidence in America, many people interpreted his speech as blaming the American people for losing confidence in him. Criticism of the president came from liberal Democrats as well as from conservative Republicans. Senator Ted Kennedy (the last of the Kennedy brothers) then challenged Carter for the 1980 Democratic presidential nomination. Hurt by memories of his automobile accident 11 years earlier that had resulted in the death of a young female intern, Kennedy's candidacy fizzled. Meanwhile, Republicans nominated a former movie actor who had twice been elected governor of California. That governor, Ronald Reagan, opposed most if not all of the Great Society programs, rejected arms limitation talks and efforts at détente, favored expanding the size of America's military, promised a substantial cut in taxes, and offered a cheery prediction that America's best days were still to come. In contrast to Carter's more subdued message urging belt tightening, energy conservation, and sacrifice, the peanut farmer from Georgia did not stand a chance of winning reelection.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

In the space provided on the following chart, give President Carter a grade (A, C, or F) for each of the following activities and then explain the reasons you gave him that grade:

<b>Carter's Act/s or Initiative</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Reason for assigning the grade you chose</b>
Inaugural speech as Governor of Georgia		
Promises made at inauguration as president		
Disarmament talks with Soviets		
Responding to the Afghan invasion		
Helping Egypt and Israel negotiate		
Handling hostage crisis		
Handling the economy		
Handling conservation		
Explaining the "crisis in confidence"		



**B. Essay:**

Write an essay of no fewer than 200 words explaining whether you judge Carter's performance in domestic and foreign affairs as a success or a failure. Was he solely responsible for his failures or did he face problems that were almost impossible to resolve?

## **For Further Consideration: Jimmy Carter's Post-Presidential Career**

Jimmy Carter called himself a “born again” Christian. After he left the presidency, he became a “born-again leader.” His popularity rating stood at a mere 31 percent when he left office in 1981; it had risen to 65 percent 28 years later.

Most of Jimmy Carter's increase in popularity most likely resulted from the work of the Carter Center. The Center is devoted to many humanitarian causes, including advancing human rights, promoting democracy, resolving international conflict, and monitoring elections. Numbers illustrate that the Center's successes are truly astonishing. For instance, the Center has been instrumental in reducing an ancient debilitating illness known as New Guinean disease from 3.5 million cases in 1986 to



Carter with Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and George H.W. Bush in 2004

fewer than 10,000 cases 20 years later. The Center has monitored 70 different elections in 28 different countries. It has helped resolve crises in a number of countries, including Haiti, Bosnia, Ethiopia, Israel, and North Korea. In Israel, Carter helped broker an agreement that almost led to the resolution of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. His work with North Korea temporarily halted its attempts to produce nuclear weapons. His efforts regarding Haiti averted an international invasion and helped restore Haiti's democratically elected president to power.

In 2002, Carter's work was recognized when he became the third U.S. president to receive the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize. However, his work was far from done. Inspired by the work of Habitat for Humanity, Carter founded his own home-building foundation and has donated a week each year since 1984 to participating (along with his wife and hundreds of volunteers) in building low-income housing in locations ranging from his own native Georgia to China and Cambodia.

**Summarize Jimmy Carter's contributions to the well-being of others after leaving the White House, then write a strong paragraph explaining how what you learned about Carter's post-presidential career has affected your appreciation of him as a man and as a president. Be prepared to share your ideas with your classmates.**

## Chapter 9. Ronald Reagan: An Actor as President

### Overview:

Readers learn that Ronald Reagan was born in the Midwest, played high school and college football, and became a sports announcer before launching a successful career as an actor. The chapter describes how Reagan later became president of the Screen Actors Guild and cooperated with House Un-American Activities Committee investigations. It traces Reagan's political career from his speech supporting Barry Goldwater in 1964 to his relatively successful eight years as California's governor. It quotes from Reagan's speeches proclaiming his political philosophy and explains supply-side theory.

As president, Reagan had the opportunity to put his conservative philosophy into action. The chapter reveals the effects of tax cuts on revenues and the deficit. It reports on Reagan's attempts to reduce environmental regulations and to deregulate business, and it lists a number of laws and regulations that were overturned or ignored by the Reagan administration. Students are asked what qualities made Reagan a successful presidential candidate and whether implementing his philosophy was good for America. The "For Further Consideration" section provides a conservative writer's criticism of the Reagan Revolution as not going far enough. Advanced students are asked to reevaluate their views of Reagan based on these charges.

### Objectives:

Students will:

- learn about Ronald Reagan's career as an actor, president of the Screen Actor's Guild, and governor of California
- become familiar with Reagan's political philosophy (on domestic issues) and his qualifications for becoming president
- discuss whether Reagan's policies, as implemented, were good for the United States

### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section. Inform students they will be expected to write their answers to all Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**In class:** Start by asking students what they thought of Ronald Reagan before reading their assignment and whether anything they read changed their minds. Review students' responses to the question of why so many Americans, despite some reservations, voted for him. Ask what his philosophy of government was, write pertinent information on the board, and ask for the reasoning that supports supply-

side theory. Once you are sure that all students understand the theory, ask them to share their answers to the question of whether the way Reagan implemented his philosophy was good for America. Make sure students discuss the effects of supply-side economics on revenues and on the debt. Ask students how they regard the effects Reagan's deregulations had on business and the environment. Do they agree with the decisions to delay introduction of passive restraint systems in cars and trucks, delay implementation of fuel efficiency standards, and not require factory inspections of automobile emissions? While discussing whether Reagan's presidency should be highly regarded, encourage students who read the "For Further Consideration" section to contribute any insights they gained from that reading.

## Chapter 9. Ronald Reagan: An Actor as President

### I-Chart

	<b>What I know about Ronald Reagan's career before he became president</b>	<b>What I know about Ronald Reagan's political philosophy</b>	<b>What I know about the effects of Reagan's domestic policies</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 9, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 9, Part II</b>			
<b>What I still would like to learn about this subject</b>			



Chapter 9—Ronald Reagan: An Actor as President

<b>appropriations</b>		
<b>GNP</b>	<b>supply-side economics</b>	<b>Oval Office</b>
<b>emission</b>	<b>coattails</b>	<b>presided over</b>
	<b>alcoholic</b>	
	<b>greener pastures</b>	

## Chapter 9—Ronald Reagan: An Actor as President

Discharge from some form of combustion	Gross National Product—everything produced in one country in one year	Money set aside for a certain purpose
The White House office of the president of the United States	Belief that cuts in taxes result in economic growth and increases in revenues	A term describing a place where things are better
Was in charge when something happened	Refers to a popular presidential candidate drawing votes for congressional candidates representing the same party	A person who can't control his/her consumption of alcohol



## Chapter 9

# Ronald Reagan: An Actor as President

### Introduction



Reagan as a football player at Eureka College. He later became famous for playing the part of Notre Dame football star George Gipp in a movie.

Ronald Reagan was born in Illinois in 1911 and lived in several different communities in northern Illinois before his family settled in Dixon. His father was an active Democrat, an alcoholic, and a shoe salesman who worked for a New Deal agency during the Depression. His mother, a deeply religious woman, devoted herself to raising her children. “Dutch,” as his father called him, was an excellent swimmer and a good enough football player to win a scholarship to a local college. He was a popular student, acted, and was elected president of his senior class. Reagan graduated during the Depression and found work as a sports announcer at an Iowa radio station. He was good at his job and gained a large following. Feeling a need to pursue greener pastures, he went to Los Angeles, signed a movie contract, and starred in a large number of B-grade movies, usually in the role of the handsome hero who saved the fair maiden in distress. He made a name for himself portraying football player George Gipp in a movie about fabled Notre Dame coach Knute

Rockne. During World War II, Reagan made films for the armed services. Although he never left the United States during the war years, he later told the Prime Minister of Israel that he had helped make a film of U.S. soldiers liberating a concentration camp.

After World War II, he received fewer movie roles and devoted more and more of his time to the board of the Screen Actors Guild. He led the guild through a divisive strike and was president when pro-Soviet actors allegedly tried to gain control of the organization. Reagan testified before a congressional committee that communists were attempting to gain control of the movie industry. “The so-called Communist Party,” he later wrote, “is nothing less than a Russian-American [Organization] owing allegiance to Russia and supporting Russia’s plan to conquer the world.” Later, he helped insure that actors and writers who had refused to swear they were not communists or refused to “rat” on anyone that was a communist were barred from making movies.



Reagan testifying before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947

From the time he became politically aware up until the late 1940s, Reagan had embraced the Democratic Party and admired President Roosevelt. He even supported President Truman’s bid for reelection in 1948. However, because he became convinced

that liberals and Democrats had no interest in protecting the movie industry from communist influences, his political beliefs began to shift to the right. Other factors in his political conversion were the high taxes he had to pay on his million-dollar movie contract with Warner Brothers and his feeling that the government had wasted a good deal of money during World War II. His second wife, Nancy Davis, and her family also influenced his political conversion. Furthermore, in Reagan's post-movie career he had given inspirational speeches for General Electric supporting the views of this huge corporation on government regulations and corporate taxes.

In this chapter and the next, you will learn more about Ronald Reagan's conservative political philosophy and his deep distrust of the Soviet Union. You will then be asked whether Reagan's sentiments helped steer the U.S. in the right direction.

### **Reagan's Path to the White House**

By 1964, Ronald Reagan had established a reputation as a spokesperson for conservative Republican causes. However, his speech in favor of his friend and Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater made Reagan a leading spokesperson against Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs. Reading the following excerpts will provide you with a sense of why Reagan's rhetoric appealed to so many Americans:

This is the issue of this election: whether we believe in our capacity for self-government or whether we abandon the American revolution and confess that a little intellectual elite in a far-distant capitol can plan our lives for us better than we can plan them ourselves.

...“the full power of centralized government”—this was the very thing the Founding Fathers sought to minimize. They knew that governments don't control things. A government can't control the economy without controlling people. And they know when a government sets out to do that, it must use force and coercion to achieve its purpose. They also knew...that outside of its legitimate functions, government does nothing as well or as economically as the private sector of the economy.

Our natural, unalienable rights are now considered to be a dispensation of government, and freedom has never been so fragile, so close to slipping from our grasp as it is at this moment.

Before actually becoming the Republican Party's choice for president, Reagan had to overcome many preconceived notions about him. Several people regarded him as nothing more than a movie actor reciting lines that others had written. Actually, he wrote his own speeches, committed them to memory, and delivered them with simple anecdotes that made his message clear. Many people believed he could not hold his own unless carefully coached on what he should say. In reality, he got the best of Robert Kennedy in a debate on U.S. policy in Vietnam in 1967. Many thought he was a

trigger-happy fool who would get the U.S. into a nuclear war. Actually, he believed that if the United States would stand firmly for what it knew was right, the Soviet Union would back down. Finally, many people believed that he was so committed to his conservative beliefs that he would be unable to govern. In reality, when he served as California's governor for eight years he managed to work with the Democrat-dominated legislature and make the concessions needed to run the state effectively. He supported the highest tax increase in California's history. He negotiated for significant welfare reform by exchanging tighter eligibility requirements for higher cash payments to recipients. He increased appropriations for education and presided over the doubling of state spending.



Reagan being sworn in as California governor, 1967

Having answered many of his detractors, Reagan won his party's nomination and ran for president against Jimmy Carter. The election was not even close. Reagan not only won by a large majority, but he was also able to help many Republican congressmen ride to office on his coattails.

### **Domestic Affairs Under President Reagan**

During his inaugural address, Reagan expressed his disgust with the current tax system in America:

...those who do work are denied a fair return for their labor by a tax system which penalizes successful achievement and keeps us from maintaining full productivity...

He also noted:

For decades, we have piled deficit upon deficit, mortgaging our future and our children's future for the temporary convenience of the present. To continue this long trend is to guarantee tremendous social, cultural, political, and economic upheavals....

We must act today in order to preserve tomorrow. And let there be no misunderstanding—we are going to begin to act, beginning today.

### **Revenues, Spending, and Deficits Under Reagan and Bush**

Those who followed the political campaign already knew that Reagan had committed himself to two seemingly contradictory goals: cutting taxes and reducing the federal debt. The question was: how would this be possible? Part of the answer

lay in decreasing government spending for domestic programs. However, Reagan had also complained that America's defenses had deteriorated during the Carter years and that the U.S. would need to spend a great deal of money to make its military strong enough to deter Soviet aggression. He proposed increasing defense spending by 1.4 trillion dollars.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Spending</b>	<b>Deficit</b>
<b>1979</b>	463.3	504.0	-39.6
<b>1980</b>	517.1	590.9	-73.1
<b>1981</b>	599.3	678.2	-73.9
<b>1982</b>	617.8	745.7	-120.6
<b>1983</b>	600.6	808.4	-207.7
<b>1984</b>	666.5	851.9	-185.3
<b>1985</b>	734.1	946.4	-221.5
<b>1986</b>	769.2	990.4	-237.9
<b>1987</b>	854.4	1,004.1	-168.4
<b>1988</b>	909.3	1,064.5	-192.3
<b>1989</b>	991.2	1,143.8	-205.4
<b>1990</b>	1,032.1	1,253.1	-277.6
<b>1991</b>	1,055.1	1,324.3	-321.4
<b>1992</b>	1,091.3	1,381.6	-340.4
<b>1993</b>	1,154.5	1,409.5	-300.4

Reagan thought he could cut taxes, increase spending, and balance the budget because he believed in a theory known as supply-side economics. Supply-siders argued that high taxes discouraged people from working hard, starting businesses and making investments. Cutting taxes, therefore, would create enough additional economic growth to allow the government to collect enough money to make up for the lower tax rates. Time would tell whether this theory would work.

Reagan had some trouble getting 48 Democrats to support his plan to reduce taxes. It required him to bypass Congress and appeal directly to the American people. It also required individual meetings with scores of congressional representatives. By the end of the summer, he signed a bill calling for a 25 percent reduction in taxes on

individuals and corporations, with the highest rate reduced from 70 percent to 50 percent and eventually down to 28 percent. Some claimed the tax cuts helped save the super-rich enough to buy a Lexus, a middle-class family enough to buy four tires, and the poor enough to buy a couple of gallons of gasoline. However, tax cuts increased savings and made more money available to invest.

## Regulations: Environmental and Business

You may remember that in his 1964 speech, Reagan said, “those Founding Fathers [knew] that outside of its legitimate functions, government does nothing as well or as economically as the private sector of the economy.”



Secretary of the Interior  
James G. Watt

Government regulations, he claimed, cost consumers an additional \$100 billion a year. Reagan carried this belief into the Oval Office and acted on that conviction. Although he loved the outdoors and enjoyed riding his horses and chopping wood on his ranch in California, he did not believe that the environment needed any special protections. His Secretary of the Interior, James G. Watt, shared that belief. Some have characterized Watt as one of the “most blatantly anti-environmental political appointees” in America’s history. Under Watt’s direction, funding for environmental programs and federal regulatory powers decreased, and regulation of oil and mining companies was reduced. Watt advocated eliminating the Land and Water

Conservation fund, resisted accepting private donations for conservation purposes, and suggested opening 80 million acres of undeveloped land for drilling for oil and for mining. He actually leased a billion acres of coastal land for drilling. His work, however, was so controversial that he was forced to resign after two years.

Although deregulation represented a cornerstone of Ronald Reagan’s business philosophy, he did less of it than expected by his critics and supporters. He could claim no responsibility for deregulating airlines or passing the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, though he did deregulate intercity busing. He could take credit for passing the Depository Institution Act that allowed savings and loans associations to make risky investments. This act led (either directly or indirectly) to the failure of 745 savings-and-loans associations, which cost the federal government \$124 billion dollars to pay customers’ losses when their S&L associations failed.

Most of the deregulation activities practiced by the Reagan administration consisted of removing or delaying 34 different Environmental Protection Agency and automobile-safety regulations. The suspended rules included requiring air bags or other automatic passive-restraint systems in cars and trucks, requiring automobile bumpers to withstand a five-mile-per-hour impact, testing vehicles at factories to determine if they met federal fuel emission requirements, and enforcing fuel economy standards.

## Student Activities

### A. Student Exercises:

1. How did Ronald Reagan convince Americans that he was the right man to be president of the United States?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Evaluate Reagan's policies by examining whether they seemed to have worked.  
Cover:
  - a. tax cuts
  - b. deregulation

### B. Essay

Based on what you know about Reagan's philosophy and the success of his domestic policies, do you think that similar policies should be followed today? Why or why not?



## For Further Consideration

Many conservatives were disappointed because they thought that Reagan did not carry out the policies he had advocated. Read the following excerpts carefully and decide whether you agree with the author and how you would respond to his charges.

Ronald Reagan's faithful followers claim he has used his skills as the Great Communicator to reverse the growth of Leviathan [the federal government] and inaugurate a new era of liberty and free markets. Reagan himself said, "It is time to check and reverse the growth of government."

In 1980, Jimmy Carter's last year as president, the federal government spent a whopping 27.9 percent of "national income" (an obnoxious term for the private wealth produced by the American people). Reagan assaulted the free-spending Carter administration throughout his campaign in 1980. So how did the Reagan administration do? At the end of the first quarter of 1988, federal spending accounted for 28.7 percent of "national income."...

Even Ford and Carter did a better job at cutting government. Their combined presidential terms account for an increase of 1.4 percent—compared with Reagan's 3 percent—in the government's take of "national income." And in nominal terms, there has been a 60 percent increase in government spending, thanks mainly to Reagan's requested budgets, which were only marginally smaller than the spending Congress voted.

His budget cuts were actually cuts in projected spending, not absolute cuts in current spending levels. As Reagan put it, "We're not attempting to cut either spending or taxing levels below that which we presently have."

The result has been unprecedented government debt. Reagan has tripled the Gross Federal Debt, from \$900 billion to \$2.7 trillion. Ford and Carter in their combined terms could only double it. It took 31 years to accomplish the first postwar debt tripling, yet Reagan did it in eight.

If we look at government revenues as a percentage of "national income," we find little change from the Carter days, despite heralded "tax cuts." In 1980, revenues were 25.1 percent of "national income." In the first quarter of 1988 they were 24.7 percent.

Reagan came into office proposing to cut personal income and business taxes. The Economic Recovery Act was supposed to reduce revenues by \$749 billion over five years. But this was quickly reversed with the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982. TEFRA—the largest tax increase in American history—was designed to raise \$214.1 billion over five years, and took back many of the business tax savings enacted the year before...

Some deregulation has occurred for banks, intercity buses, ocean shipping, and energy. But nothing good has happened in health, safety, and environmental regulations, which cost Americans billions of dollars, [and] ignore property rights...

By now it should not be surprising that the size of the bureaucracy has also grown. Today, there are 230,000 more civilian government workers than in 1980, bringing the total to almost three million. Reagan even promoted the creation of a new federal Department of Veterans' Affairs to join the Departments of Education and Energy, which his administration was supposed to eliminate.<sup>1</sup>

**Summarize the writer's arguments and comment on how well you think he supports them. Given what you have learned about Ronald Reagan's policies and his presidency, how would you respond to the writer? Write a strong paragraph supporting your conclusion and come to class prepared to present your thinking, listen to the opinions of others, and to defend your own or change your mind.**

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1 Sheldon L. Richman, "The Sad Legacy of Ronald Reagan," *The Free Market*, Volume VI, No. 10, October 1988

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## Chapter 10. President Reagan and the “Evil Empire”

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter examines President Reagan’s foreign policy. It begins by affirming Reagan’s title as a “Cold Warrior” and proceeds by discussing his policy regarding Central America. Readers will learn how Reagan continued to support the Contras’ attempts to overthrow the left-leaning Sandinista government in Nicaragua despite Congress’s disapproval. Readers are informed that, when Congress halted the U.S. Treasury’s support for the Contras, Reagan’s National Security Council turned to friendly governments and private foundations to finance the continuation of clandestine opposition activities in Nicaragua. Colonel Oliver North handled a complex assortment of airlines, money-laundering banks, and an alliance with the Medellin drug cartel to continue operations. The chapter tells how this scheme became exposed with the revelation that North funded Contra operations by illegally selling arms to Iran, and that Reagan escaped prosecution by claiming ignorance of the matter. Students are asked to assess Reagan’s role in the entire Contra affair.

The chapter also discusses Reagan’s conversion from the convictions he expressed in his “evil empire” statement to his endorsement of an Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force agreement with the Soviet Union, despite objections from hardliners. The chapter also covers Reagan’s decision to support his Strategic Defense Initiative and his insistence not to bargain away SDI in disarmament talks.

The “For Further Consideration” section provides information and arguments on both sides for commending either Reagan or Gorbachev for the thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations. This collaboration raises the question of whether Reagan deserves credit for winning or ending the Cold War.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- realize that Reagan was more than marginally responsible for secretly funding the Contras with money obtained from foreign countries
- learn that the Iran-Contra hostages-and-weapons deal was a rogue operation using Colonel North’s network of semi-legal Contra arms suppliers
- understand that Reagan was so enamored by the possibility that SDI could protect the U.S. from a missile attack that he refused to use it as a bargaining chip to get the INF agreement
- see that Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev developed a personal relationship that encouraged Reagan to negotiate a meaningful disarmament agreement with the Soviet Union
- discuss the question of whether Reagan was more instrumental than Gorbachev

in creating the thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union

Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned sections(s).

**During class:** Start by asking students to give you an overview of the material covered in this chapter, and then review their answers to the Graphic Organizer questions. Be sure you let them know that answers are a matter of personal preference and not necessarily right or wrong. Next, ask students to: a) trace Reagan’s conversion from Cold Warrior to peacemaker; b) discuss whether Reagan was right to circumvent both Boland Amendments and continue the flow of aid to the Contras; and c) decide whether Reagan should have been excused, reprimanded, or impeached for his connections with the various schemes to funnel military supplies to the Contras.

Finally, review the events leading to the end of the Cold War. Have students who read the “For Further Consideration” section conduct a discussion on whether it appears that Reagan’s “vision, patience, and [diplomatic] skill” enabled the U.S. to “win the Cold War” or if it seems that the U.S.’s victory “was a gift of Gorbachev.” Time permitting, devote an entire class period to examine this issue.

## Chapter 10. President Reagan and the “Evil Empire”

### I-Chart

	Who were the Contras, and what were the arguments for and against supporting them?	To what extent did Ronald Reagan defy Congress’s intention by supporting the Contras?	What was the INF agreement, and was Gorbachev more responsible for reaching it than Reagan?
What I already know			
What I learned from Chapter 10, Part I			
What I learned from Chapter 10, Part II			
What I would still like to learn about this subject			



Chapter 10—President Reagan and the “Evil Empire”

<b>SOB</b>	<b>enamored</b>	<b>disengagement</b>
<b>blackmail</b>	<b>sovereignty</b>	<b>deniability</b>
<b>Marxist-Leninist</b>	<b>interdiction</b>	<b>surveillance</b>

## Chapter 10—President Reagan and the “Evil Empire”

Separating oneself or something from someone or something else	Taken with, in love with; strongly in favor of	An negative term used to insult someone
Keeping someone uninformed so they can deny knowledge of something	Having rule over an area, such as that exercised by a king	To threaten someone if they don't perform as directed
Spying on a person or a group, especially if one suspects illegal activity	Interruption, as with a military supply line	Describes ideas that follow the thinking of the two men who founded and shaped communism

## Chapter 10

# President Reagan and the “Evil Empire”

### Introduction

In two of Ronald Reagan’s most famous statements, he referred to the Soviet Union as an “evil empire” and advised Americans to commit themselves to “the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.” He believed this evil manifested itself in two ways: 1) by assisting the “Marxist Sandinista takeover of Nicaragua and [their] attempt to destabilize” Central America, and 2) by “acquiring the means to obliterate or cripple our land-based missile system and blackmail us into submission.” Reagan devoted the better part of his eight years in office to confronting these supposed threats to the existence of the United States. This chapter will describe how Reagan implemented his Central American policy, how he advocated building a weapons system that would destroy incoming missiles before they could reach the United States, and how he entered into serious negotiations with the Soviet Union.

### Reagan’s Central American Policy



The flag of the Sandinistas, also known as the FSLN (*Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional*)

takeover represented a dangerous extension of a communist-leaning movement in Central America. Liberals thought the Sandinistas were a democratic force that would make social changes needed to help impoverished Nicaraguans.

Claiming the Sandinistas were not only imposing socialist policies on Nicaragua but also trying to overthrow governments of neighboring countries, Reagan obtained money for the CIA to interrupt supplies to revolutionaries in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The CIA also received money to organize, train, and supply an opposition group

For years Anastasio Somoza ruled Nicaragua. He was a corrupt tyrant, but his anti-communism, his ability to maintain order, and his pro-business policies led the U.S. to support him. “He might be an SOB,” President Franklin Roosevelt allegedly said while referring to Somoza’s father, “but he is our SOB.” In any case, in 1979 a group known as the Sandinistas overthrew Somoza’s government. Reagan and many conservative Republicans and Democrats thought this



Map of Nicaragua

with whatever it needed to stop the Sandinistas. When Congress came to believe that the money was being used for purposes other than interdicting supplies, it passed the Boland Amendment, which prohibited the U.S. from attempting to overthrow the Sandinista government. However, the CIA was caught placing mines around Nicaraguan harbors. Nicaragua filed a complaint against the U.S. in the International Court of Justice. Two years later, the court voted 12 to 3 that the U.S. was “in breach of its obligations under customary international law not to use force against another State, not to intervene in its affairs, not to violate its sovereignty, and not to interrupt peaceful maritime commerce.” The Reagan administration ignored this decision, but Congress revised the Boland Amendment to prohibit expenditures “for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua.” Funds for these purposes could not be made available to the CIA, the Defense Department, or to any “entity of the U.S. involved in intelligence activities.” Reagan evaded this restriction. Saudi Arabia “offered” the U.S. a million dollars a month (later raised to two million dollars) to aid the Contras, and the U.S. asked other countries and private foundations to support the effort. Millions of dollars siphoned from these sources were funneled into a vast network used to arm, train, and supply the Contras. The organization, referred to as the Enterprise, employed a private airline to handle its shipments. This semi-legal network included banks that laundered money and used the Medellin drug cartel to shuttle their products to the U.S. and return with supplies for the Contras.

This was an off-the-books operation. A marine colonel by the name of Oliver North administered it. He reported to the director of the CIA, William Casey, and National Security Advisors Robert McFarlane and John Poindexter. There is no agreement as to what extent Reagan was aware of what was happening, but it’s difficult to imagine that he did not know. When the Sandinistas shot down a CIA plane carrying supplies to the Contras, the U.S. news media began discovering other embarrassing facts. Reagan denied that anything illegal was going on. When more bits and pieces of the secret operations were revealed, the president claimed that the restrictions imposed by the Boland Amendment only applied to the Defense Department and the CIA, and not to the National Security Agency. Even if it did apply to the NSA, Reagan argued that the amendment illegally deprived the president of his constitutional power to act as commander-in-chief.



Oliver North's  
booking photo

It is possible that the secret financing of the Contras would have continued without an outcry from Congress and the public. However, Reagan foolishly allowed subordinates to agree to negotiate with Iran for the purpose of freeing American hostages. The price for freeing these hostages was for the U.S. to sell missiles to Iran. However, Iran had been declared a terror-sponsoring nation and U.S. law forbade Americans to supply, sell, or provide Iran with weapons. Further investigations revealed that Oliver North had diverted the profits from the illegal sale of arms to the Contras. Reagan claimed he had no knowledge of the transaction and that North and McFarlane



had destroyed incriminating documents. As investigations continued, Reagan made a half-hearted confession: “I told the American people I did not trade arms for hostages. My heart and my best intentions still tell me that is true, but the facts and the evidence tell me that it is not.” National Security Advisor Poindexter covered for Reagan by testifying he deliberately did not ask the president so that he could argue “deniability.” No smoking gun was found that proved Reagan authorized or had prior knowledge of the sale of arms to Iran and the diversion of profits to the Contras. No effort arose to impeach the president. However, Reagan’s popularity diminished from 67 percent to 46 percent, and the entire incident tarnished his record.

### **Reagan Disarms the “Evil Empire”**

We have already established that Reagan had a powerful dislike and distrust for what he called the “evil empire.” In keeping with these sentiments, he made no effort to have the Senate ratify the SALT II agreement President Carter had negotiated. Nor did he initiate disarmament talks with the Soviet Union. He believed the only way to get the Soviets serious about disarming was to build up the U.S. arsenal to the point that the Soviets would feel they could not compete. In his first year as president, Reagan asked for a 41 percent increase in defense spending. This money and more went to reinstate the abandoned B-1 bomber program, a B-2 bomber, a 600-ship navy, nuclear submarines, 17,000 nuclear warheads, and much more. All the aforementioned cost two trillion dollars, 25 percent of all government spending during his two terms in office. “You spend what you need,” Reagan explained.

Yet Reagan remained unsatisfied with the continued expansion of conventional and nuclear weapons. As time went by, he became more aware that all these weapons could not prevent a nuclear attack from destroying the U.S. “A nuclear war,” he realized “cannot be won and must never be fought. In such a war between two great powers one has to ask if ever we launched those weapons at each other where would the survivors live.”

Nuclear scientists (including the father of the hydrogen bomb, Edward Teller) led Reagan to become enamored with the idea that America had the technological know-how to develop a shield that would protect the U.S. from any missile. As two scientists later involved in this project put it:

The first layer in the defense system—the “boost phase” defense—goes into effect as soon as a Soviet first-strike missile, or “booster,” carrying multiple warheads rises above the atmosphere at the beginning of its trajectory. This boost-phase defense—based on the interception and destruction by nonnuclear projectiles—depends on satellites for the surveillance of the Soviet missile field and the tracking of missiles as they rise from their silos. These operations can only be carried out from space platforms orbiting over the Soviet Union.

Despite the serious purpose of this program, which had the imposing title “Strategic Defense Initiative,” skeptics called it “Star Wars” after the popular movie of the same name. Reagan insisted on including research for SDI in his budget, and Congress authorized billions of dollars for this scientific experiment.

## Real Disarmament

While Reagan built up America’s nuclear arsenal, the American people had grown wary of spending billions of dollars on weapons. In 1982, popular support for a “nuclear freeze” led a million people to crowd into New York City’s Central Park. America’s allies in Europe, who would bear the brunt of a nuclear exchange, called for nuclear disengagement. Reagan felt pressured to come up with some form of a disarmament plan. He proposed what was called a “Zero-option.” It called for the Soviets to dismantle their new and powerful SS-20 missiles from central Europe in exchange for the U.S. not installing its Pershing II missiles in western Europe.



Mikhail Gorbachev

In the meantime, Mikhail Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, a position equivalent to President of the United States. Unlike other communist leaders, Gorbachev had a sincere interest in making changes in the Soviet Union. He realized that the Soviets lagged far behind the U.S. and the West in producing goods for consumers. Soviet citizens had to stand in long lines every day waiting to buy essentials such as meat, bread, and vegetables; even owning a telephone or a television set—let alone a car—was considered a luxury. Gorbachev realized his country spent too much money on defense and that some understanding with the United States was necessary in order to devote more of the nation’s resources to improving the lives of Soviet people. At the same time, Gorbachev decided to allow more freedom for the Soviet people and more autonomy for the eastern European countries the USSR controlled. In short, Gorbachev became the kind of leader that dispelled the image of the “evil empire.”

Reagan and Gorbachev met for the first time in Geneva, Switzerland in 1984. Reagan turned on the charm and the two leaders seemed to become instant friends. Though they didn’t reach an agreement, the General Secretary and the president prepared to meet again.

The two leaders met again in Reykjavik, Iceland in 1986. Away from advisors, Gorbachev and Reagan discussed the possibilities of a world without nuclear weapons. Gorbachev, however, insisted that the U.S. had to first stop working on its Strategic Defense Initiative. Reagan would not agree to give up his missile shield. Gorbachev revised his goals and proposed a nuclear-free Europe, with both sides withdrawing their intermediate range ballistic missiles. The Soviets would give up their SS-20 rockets and the U.S. would dismantle its Pershing missiles. Again, eliminating SDI came up in the conversation and proved to be a deal-breaker. Reagan offered to

share SDI technology with the Soviet Union, but Gorbachev could not put full faith in such a proposal.

Although the two sides couldn't reach an agreement in Reykjavik, they had come very close. Subsequent bargaining by negotiators resulted in Gorbachev dropping his opposition to SDI while West Germany expressed a willingness to dismantle the Pershing missiles stationed within its borders. The Soviets and the U.S. agreed to allow inspectors from both sides to determine whether the other was honoring the agreement.



Gorbachev and Reagan signing the INF Treaty in the White House on December 7, 1987. It was the first disarmament treaty signed by the two countries that actually reduced the number of missile launchers each side could maintain.

Gorbachev came to the United States in December 1987 to sign the disarmament treaty known as the INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) agreement. Reagan managed to overcome the opposition from hardliners in the U.S. who opposed any mutual concessions with the Soviet Union, and convinced the Senate to ratify the treaty by an overwhelming majority.

The INF Treaty came about because of—and furthered—a noticeable thawing of Cold War relations between the U.S. and the USSR. Reagan deserves credit for befriending Gorbachev, overcoming his distrust of the “evil empire,” and reaching a deal that, for the first time in the relationship of the two countries, resulted in real disarmament.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

Which of the following indicate that President Reagan a) was seeking peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union, b) was a Cold Warrior, or c) neither a nor b. Place each phrase where appropriate and be prepared to defend your choices during class. There may be legitimate differences of opinions over certain choices.

<b>a. Seeking peaceful coexistence</b>	<b>b. Cold Warrior</b>	<b>c. Neither a nor b.</b>

“Evil empire” statement	Proposing the “Zero-option”	Ignoring UN condemnation	Meeting in Geneva with Gorbachev
Signing the INF Treaty	Realizing that few could survive a nuclear war	Supporting the Contras’ clandestine operations	Offering to share SDI with the Soviet Union
Refusing to negotiate on SDI	Trading weapons for hostages	Continuing supplying Contras	Proposing SDI
	Convincing the Senate to ratify INF Treaty	Denying knowledge of the Iran-Contra deal	

**B. Essay Questions.**

Answer one of the following:

1. Do you think that Reagan should have been praised, condemned, or impeached for his involvement in the Iran-Contra affair?
2. Account as best you can for Reagan's image changing from Cold Warrior to peacemaker.

## For Further Consideration: Does Reagan Deserve Credit for Ending the Cold War?

Just as the Iran-Contra affair occurred on Ronald Reagan's watch, the collapse of communism occurred while he was president. By the time Reagan left office in 1989, the Soviet Union had withdrawn from its disastrous war in Afghanistan, ended support for the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and stopped aiding Castro in Cuba. Furthermore, Gorbachev had disowned his predecessors' policy of suppressing revolts in eastern Europe: the Berlin Wall came tumbling down in 1989, and within a short time the Soviet Union broke apart into the 15 Soviet Socialist Republics (see map). It is no exaggeration to say that, after 50 years of hostilities between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the Cold War had ended and the United States and its allies were the winners.

Commonwealth of Independent States - European States



- 1987—INF Treaty signed
- 1987—Before a huge crowd in Berlin, Reagan urges, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall”
- 1988—Reagan on goodwill visit with Gorbachev; charms Soviet people
- 1989—Gorbachev tells the people in eastern Europe they are free to choose their own form of government
- 1989—Hungary rejects communism and opens border with East Germany. Thousands enter East Germany.
- 1989—Berlin Wall torn down by a huge crowd; the two Berlins (east and west) are no longer divided
- 1989—Bloodless revolution ousts communist government in Czechoslovakia
- 1990—Gorbachev allows political parties in the Soviet Union other than the communists to run for office
- 1990—Soviet satellite nations along the Baltic start breaking away from the Soviet Union and form independent countries
- 1990—A coup in Moscow overthrows Gorbachev; Boris Yeltsin replaces him as head of Soviet Union
- 1990—Fifteen former Republics break away from Soviet Union and form the Commonwealth of Independent States



Conservative author Dinesh D'Souza credited Ronald Reagan with this victory:

Through a combination of vision, tenacity, patience, and improvisational skill, [Ronald Reagan] produced "the most stunning diplomatic feat of the modern era." Or as Margaret Thatcher put it, "Ronald Reagan won the Cold War without firing a shot."

Liberal historian William Chafe was less willing to credit Reagan:

The triumph was above all a gift of Gorbachev, who for his own reasons had entered onto the world stage with a commitment to radical change in the Soviet Union.

**Do you find the conservative or liberal viewpoint more convincing? Write a strong paragraph supporting your point of view and come to class prepared to share your opinion, listen to the ideas of others, and either defend your own or change your thinking.**



President Reagan in Berlin, giving a speech in which he urged, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall." Two years later, Germans tore down the wall which had divided East and West Berlin since 1961.





## Chapter 11. President George H.W. Bush

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter portrays the first President Bush as successful in his foreign policy but unable to satisfy his party's conservative base or the American public when it came to economic issues. A brief biography introduces Bush as a war hero, a success in the oil business, a master of many administrative positions, and Ronald Reagan's loyal vice-president. Readers learn of the difficulties Bush had honoring his "Read my lips—no new taxes" pledge while he was trying to balance the budget and work with a Democratic Congress. Students will learn how Bush successfully handled the collapsing Soviet Union by maintaining a good personal relationship with Mikhail Gorbachev, and later used his friendships with foreign leaders to convince a coalition of 34 countries to eventually force Saddam Hussein's troops to leave Kuwait. The narrative stops with Bush halting combat operations after a 100-hour ground attack that left Hussein in power with half of his elite units still intact. This decision is discussed in the "For Further Consideration" section by providing documents supporting both sides of the question of whether Bush ceased combat operations too soon.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- realize that George Bush had a variety of experiences that prepared him for becoming president
- learn that Bush essentially did an excellent job in handling the collapse of the Soviet Union and gathering a coalition of countries to eventually drive Iraq out of Kuwait, but may have halted the coalition's advance too soon
- be prepared to revisit the question of leaving Iraq with Saddam Hussein still in control of his country
- evaluate Bush-Reagan economic policies in relationship to their effect on income distribution in the United States

#### Strategy

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering their assigned section(s)

**In class:** I suggest you start class by getting a feeling about what students think about George H.W. Bush and make sure they don't confuse him with his son, George W. Bush. Next, I would ask students if they have any questions about the chapter before answering the Student Activities questions. When they are prepared for this exercise, have them tell you and their classmates how they answered the graphic organizer

exercise, making it clear that in some cases none of the answers are necessarily right or wrong. This should encourage students to express their own opinions. You may want to have students break into groups and discuss their answers in this more informal setting. Before discussing the essay question, ask students why so many people agreed and disagreed with Reagan's economic policies. At this point, students should be able to explain why they would or would not vote to reelect George H.W. Bush, and you should leave some time for students to explain how they think about the question of whether the U.S. should have continued the war until Hussein had been driven from power.

## Chapter 11. President George H.W. Bush I-Chart

	<b>What was good or bad about Bush's domestic policies?</b>	<b>How did Bush handle the collapse of the Soviet Union?</b>	<b>How did Bush get Iraq to leave Kuwait without overthrowing the Iraqi government?</b>
<b>What I already knew</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 11, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 11, Part II</b>			
<b>What I still would like to learn about the subject</b>			



Chapter 11—President George H.W. Bush

<p><b>debt and deficit</b></p>	<p><b>died-in-the-wool</b></p>	<p><b>“new world order”</b></p>
<p><b>furlough</b></p>	<p><b>highest income bracket</b></p>	<p><b>intact</b></p>
<p><b>uncharacteristically</b></p>	<p><b>political base</b></p>	<p><b>coalition</b></p>

## Chapter 11—President George H.W. Bush

President Bush's vision for a post-Cold War world, in which countries would work together against aggressor nations	Refers to a person who firmly believes in something	Debt is the amount owed; deficit is what occurs when more is spent than is earned
Not broken apart	The highest bracket is taxed at the highest rate. Lower brackets are taxed at a lower rate. The first several thousand dollars earned by the richest person in America are taxed at the same rate as the poorest person in America.	Time off from regular assignments
A group (could be people or countries) who work together for a common purpose	Refers to the most ardent supporters of a political party; politicians who "alienate the base" stand little chance of winning election	Not expected based on past experience

## Chapter 11

# President George H.W. Bush

### Introduction

In many ways, George H.W. Bush was the most experienced politician ever to become president of the United States. He was the son of a well-known senator who had been a successful businessman. Bush enlisted in the armed forces immediately after turning 18 and became the youngest pilot in the U.S., flying 58 missions. Right after the war he attended Yale University, where he starred on its baseball team before graduating with honors in only three years. He turned down an opportunity to become a Rhodes scholar and moved to Texas in order to make his fortune in the oil business. He and a partner started their own firm, and with financing arranged through family contacts, risked everything on an unproven oil field. The site yielded 71 gushing wells and made Bush a millionaire. Not satisfied with merely making money, Bush joined the local branch of the Texas Republican Party and quickly rose to the position of party chairman. In 1964, he failed in his bid for a seat in the U.S. Senate but twice won election to the House of Representatives. Bush subsequently served as National Chairman of the Republican Party, ambassador to the United Nations, ambassador to China, and chief of the Central Intelligence Agency. After two unsuccessful attempts to become his party's nominee for president, he agreed to be Ronald Reagan's running mate in 1980. Following eight years of loyal service as second-in-command, Bush secured the Republican Party's nomination for president. In a tough fight with Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts, Bush uncharacteristically took the low road. He questioned his opponent's patriotism, his commitment to family values, and his stance on crime. One campaign advertisement heaped blame on Dukakis for a convicted murder's weekend furlough during which the man twice raped a woman. This strategy proved successful as Bush turned a 17 percent shortfall in the polls into an 8 percent victory on Election Day. In his inaugural address, Bush promised to make America "kinder in the face of the Nation and gentler in the face of the world." More significantly, he promised never to increase taxes: "Read my lips," he proclaimed, "No new taxes."

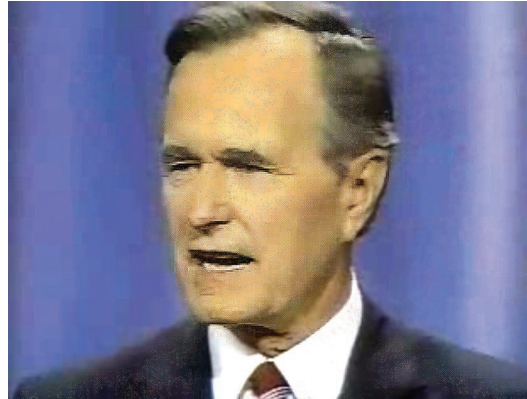


A scholar and athlete at Yale, Bush played first base on two teams that went to the national championship game. This photo shows Bush with baseball legend Babe Ruth in 1948.

In this chapter, you will learn how Bush dealt with three of the most important problems facing the nation during the late 1980s and early 1990s: 1) the lagging economy and the blooming budget deficit; 2) the collapse of the Soviet Union; and, 3) Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Just as voters at that time did and historians ever since have done, you will be asked to evaluate President Bush's performance regarding these three problems.

## **“Read My Lips”**

The Reagan administration broke one of the president’s promises by failing to come even close to balancing the budget. During Reagan’s eight years as president, the national debt increased from \$914 billion to nearly one trillion dollars. In the last year of the Carter administration, the deficit stood at \$73 billion, and in the last year of Reagan’s second term, it rose to \$295 billion. Bush aimed to reduce the deficit, which could only be done by raising taxes or cutting spending. Since the Democrats controlled both houses of Congress, Bush had no choice but to work with the opposing party. In a skirmish over the budget that lasted well into the summer of 1990, Bush found himself faced with a dilemma. He had either to accept an immediate tax increase (sweetened with delayed cuts in expenditures), a budget he did not like, or enormous cuts in Social Security, food stamps, defense spending, education, and welfare.



Bush giving his “read my lips” speech

The first course would cause Bush to violate his “read my lips” pledge and lose the support of his party’s base. The second course would maintain the support of his Republican base, but cause widespread difficulties for people dependent on federal spending. Bush chose to accept the Democrats’ budget, which included a tax increase from 28 percent to 31 percent in the highest income bracket. The tax increase didn’t balance the budget for the next year, failed to win Bush support from Democrats, and succeeded only in alienating dyed-in-the-wool Republicans.

## **Presiding Over the Collapse of the Soviet Union**

The collapse of the Soviet Union began while Reagan was president, but its complete downfall occurred while Bush stood at the helm. It may be the natural instinct for anyone to rub salt in the wounds of a falling enemy, but this was not in Bush’s character. His gift for getting along with people was to a large part due to his ability to put himself in their place and treat them with civility. Bush was president in 1989 when jubilant German mobs climbed on top of the Berlin Wall and used sledgehammers to dismantle this symbol of Soviet tyranny. Bush met with his Soviet counterpart during the period in which Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland were overthrowing their communist rulers and replacing them with leaders of their own choosing. Bush refrained from taking provocative actions when the Soviet Union briefly tried to halt the democratization process in Lithuania: he managed to talk Mikhail Gorbachev into allowing the newly united Germany to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; he transferred his support from Gorbachev to Boris Yeltsin when the latter took control of Russia; and he watched while the 15 republics that once formed the Soviet Union became independent countries.



## Iraq and Kuwait



Map of Kuwait, bordered by  
Iraq and Saudi Arabia

Kuwait. The U.S. did not issue any warning that it would resist an overt act of aggression against Kuwait, and Arab neighbors in the region believed Hussein was merely bluffing. Iraq then invaded Kuwait with 540,000 men and 580 tanks on August 2, 1990. The fighting lasted for two days and stopped in Kuwait, but within striking distance of Saudi Arabia's oilfields. Altogether, Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia possessed almost 50 percent of the world's known oil reserves.

Even many politically aware Americans at the time did not know that during Iraq's war with Iran in the 1980s, the U.S. provided Iraq with military aid, including chemical and biological agents that Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein, used against his own people. After the war with Iran ended, Hussein was deeply in debt. He blamed Kuwait for not canceling its share of this obligation. Hussein also claimed that this oil-rich kingdom was actually a part of Iraq. In addition, Hussein charged Kuwait with drilling for oil at an angle in order to siphon it out from under Iraq's land. He ordered more than 120,000 soldiers to his border with



Bush addressing Congress during the Iraq War. Most voted against going to war against Iraq and regretted their vote afterwards. Senator and 2004 presidential candidate John Kerry said he voted for the war before he voted against it.

Bush supported a UN resolution for Iraq to withdraw its troops. After some hesitation, he used his personal ties with many of the world's leaders to gather support from some 34 different countries. The U.S. led the way by dispatching 100,000 soldiers to protect Saudi Arabia and its oilfields. At first, Bush asked this coalition to stop all trade with Iraq and then ordered the U.S. Navy to enforce the blockade. Later, he



An American soldier atop a captured Iraqi tank

asked cooperating countries to provide money, supplies, and/or troops in order to let Iraq know that the U.S. and its allies were determined. Altogether, more than 900,000 troops (three-quarters were American) stood ready to invade if sanctions failed. In November, Bush pushed a resolution through the United Nations giving Saddam Hussein until January 15th to leave Kuwait or face war. Shortly before that deadline, on January 12, 1991, Bush convinced Congress to give him power to use "all means

necessary” to remove Iraq’s troops from Kuwait. Despite Iraq’s blatant aggression and the exaggerated reports of atrocities, the resolution passed the Senate by a majority of only five votes. On January 16, 1991, U.S. planes began a devastating attack on Iraqi forces that lasted a full six weeks. On February 27th, U.S. and coalition forces invaded Iraq. Within two days 38,000 Iraqi soldiers surrendered, and 27 of 42 Iraqi divisions were destroyed. After 100 hours of fighting with the loss of only 148 American lives, Bush called off the assault. He felt the U.S. had only a slight chance of catching Saddam Hussein, and that the U.S. and coalition forces were not authorized or prepared to seize, occupy, and govern Iraq. Unfortunately, this left some Iraqi divisions in the field.

One journal, often critical of President Bush, gave him high marks for handling the Kuwait crisis:

Mr. Bush’s sterling qualities came through in this crisis, namely, his energy, the deeper toughness that underlies his gentlemanly demeanor, and his skill in dealing with the leaders of foreign nations. No matter that the Administration greatly underestimated the Iraqi threat until the day of the invasion, or that it wavered for a day or so in its response. In the crunch the President came through, and he deserves full credit for that.<sup>1</sup>

### **“It’s the economy, stupid!”**

When the Gulf War ended, Bush’s popularity rating stood at an astounding 89 percent. It reflected Americans’ support for a man who had led a major coalition that won a successful war with hardly any loss of American lives, and at a low cost to the U.S. (coalition countries supplied \$52 billion of the \$61.1 billion spent by the U.S.). Three years later, this same man got only 37 percent of the vote in his attempt to get reelected. How can we explain this dramatic turnaround in popularity?

When Bill Clinton ran against Bush in 1992, his election strategy was summed up in the phrase, “It’s the economy, stupid,” which campaign manager James Carville coined and then put up on a sign in Clinton’s headquarters. Flushed with the success of the Gulf War campaign, saddled with a political party that was insensitive to the real financial problems of large numbers of Americans, and incapable of revealing his compassionate side to the American public, Bush failed to realize the truth in Clinton’s motto.

Americans had many reasons to be unhappy with Bush’s economic leadership. Unemployment had increased to 7 percent, but even those who had jobs were dissatisfied. Purchasing power for 85 percent of Americans had not increased during the years of the Reagan and Bush administrations. One percent of Americans owned 40 percent of its wealth. The difference between incomes of the rich and the poor had

1 “Quick on the Draw—George Bush and Middle East Crisis,” *National Review*, Sept 3, 1990

increased.<sup>2</sup> While the highest income bracket paid only by the richest Americans got reduced from 70 percent to 28 percent, minimum wage had not changed. During his nearly four years in office, Bush did not respond to these problems. He vetoed an increase in the minimum wage, opposed extending benefits for the unemployed, proposed cuts in social spending, and attempted to reduce the capital gains tax. Though he promised a new economic plan, he never introduced this plan before the election. On social issues, he opposed a woman's right to have an abortion, but admitted he would support his granddaughter's right to decide whether to have one if burdened with an unwanted pregnancy. He also appointed an African American, Clarence Thomas, to the Supreme Court, who in his confirmation hearings faced serious charges of sexually harassing a woman who worked in his office.



Ross Perot

While many Republicans chastised Bush for allowing a slight increase in the top income bracket, he faced another challenger besides Clinton in the election: Ross Perot, an eccentric billionaire who financed his own campaign and siphoned off more votes from Bush than he did from Clinton. The final tally showed Bush garnered only 37 percent of the vote, Clinton got 43 percent, and Perot picked up 19 percent.

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<sup>2</sup> While the income of the upper 20 percent increased from approximately 42 percent to 45 percent of the total, the share of the lowest 20 percent fell from approximately 5 percent to 4 percent.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

Each of the phrases below represents either: a) a reason for voting for George H.W. Bush, b) a reason for voting for someone other than Bush, or c) neither a good reason for or against voting for Bush. Place each phrase under the appropriate heading in the accompanying chart. Make sure Bush did all the things that either represent reasons to vote for him or not to vote for him. Since several choices are matters of opinion, make sure you can defend your decisions if challenged.

Reason for voting for Bush	Reason for voting for someone other than Bush	Neither a good reason for voting for Bush nor for someone else

Was the youngest Navy flier during WWII	Getting coalition to fight in Iraq	Warning Saddam Hussein not to invade Kuwait
Balancing the budget	Graduated with honors in three years	Helped protect oil supply
Stand against raising taxes on highest incomes	Experienced in many different government jobs	Loyal to Reagan
Defeated Iraq in the Gulf War	Was a successful businessman	Ending the draft
Supported granddaughter's right to choose	Not taking coalition forces to Baghdad	Getting the USSR to agree to allow Germany to join NATO

### B. Essay

In no fewer than 150 words, write an essay explaining why you would have voted for or against George H.W. Bush in 1992, or why you would not have been able to make up your mind. Base your decision on his domestic as well as his foreign policies.

### For Further Consideration: Did President Bush End the War Too Soon?

Criticism was muted at the time, but many still objected to Bush ending the war while allowing Saddam Hussein to remain in power with half of his best units at full strength, a fleet of helicopters at his command, and possibly possessing chemical and biological weapons.

President Bush Made the Right Decision	President Bush Ended the War too Soon
Saddam Hussein was still in power and much of his army was intact. But the president had good reasons for the decision. The war had been fought to liberate Kuwait—a clear, single objective. To continue to fight for other reasons would have cost American lives and killed many thousands of Iraqis. The coalition in support of liberating Kuwait would break apart on the question of a larger war. Furthermore, the conquest of Iraq might saddle the United States with long responsibility as an occupying power. And finally, the elimination of Iraq would upset the balance of power in the Gulf to the advantage of Iran. <sup>3</sup>	Our eventual objectives must be...the overthrow of Saddam and the permanent reduction of Iraqi military power...Better a crushing blow now than any peaceful solution that leaves Saddam free in five years' time to renew his bid for supreme power in the Arab world, armed with nuclear weapons and a prestige born of outwitting the United States. <sup>4</sup>
	With a Saddam regime lingering on even in a crippled state to make propaganda and mount terrorism, there would be little prospect of the more stable Gulf envisioned in the United Nations resolutions or Mr. Bush's new world order. <sup>5</sup>

**Write a strong paragraph supporting one side of the argument above and come to class prepared to present your position, listen to the thinking of others, and either defend your opinion or change your mind.**

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.presidentprofiles.com/Kennedy-Bush/George-Bush-The-persian-gulf-war.html>

<sup>4</sup> "Quick on the Draw—George Bush and Middle East Crisis," *National Review*, Sept 3, 1990

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in John J. Miller and Ramesh Ponnuru, "The Gulf War Ended Too Soon," *Washington Bulletin*, October 10, 2001



## Chapter 12: President Clinton's Domestic Policies

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter provides a brief overview of the “man from Hope,” his career (beginning with his meteoric rise to the Arkansas governorship), and a review of the various scandals that hindered his progress. Students learn that some of the more divisive policies of Clinton’s first term—including stem cell research, allowing gays in the armed forces, and ending restrictions on providing aid to countries that could be used to pay for abortions—helped stoke the Republican resurgence of 1994. The chapter concentrates on the Clinton health care plan and the battle to balance the budget by raising taxes. It also covers the triangulation strategy Clinton used to entice Republicans to vote for his proposals.

The “For Further Consideration” section raises the question of federally financed childcare and provides convincing arguments for both the pro and con sides. The chapter as a whole encourages students to choose between a liberal or conservative view on a number of important domestic issues discussed during Clinton’s two terms in office. The following chapter covers Clinton’s foreign policy.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- understand the need for universal healthcare, learn the essentials of the Clinton plan, and analyze arguments for and against it
- learn how increasing taxes can help balance the budget
- understand the concept of triangulation as practiced by Clinton
- discuss whether the federal government should provide taxpayer funds to finance child care

#### Strategy:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all Student Activities questions covering the assigned sections.

**During class:** Start by asking students to share their opinions about Bill Clinton based on what they have just read along with whatever they may have heard about him. Next, inquire whether they have questions concerning any of Clinton’s legislative initiatives and provide full answers to their inquiries. After that, ask students to explain with which of Clinton’s policy initiatives they agree or disagree and why. Expect a vigorous discussion about some of these initiatives. You may wish to avoid discussing triangulation entirely or use an examination of this topic to have students speculate

how this concept could be used to find common ground between socially conscious liberals and budget-conscious conservatives.

The “For Further Consideration” question may be worth using a generous portion of class time to discuss because it raises questions concerning the role of government and the responsibilities of families. I may add that this dilemma lies at the heart of many arguments between liberals and conservatives that triangulation could potentially resolve.



## Chapter 12: President Clinton's Domestic Policies

### I-Chart

	<b>What was Clinton's tax proposal and how did it affect the economy?</b>	<b>What was Clinton's healthcare plan and should it have become law?</b>	<b>What does the term "triangulation" mean and how did Clinton use this idea?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 12, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 12, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to learn about this subject</b>			



Chapter 12—President Clinton’s Domestic Policies

<b>liaison</b>	<b>impropriety</b>	<b>moderate</b>
<b>down comforter</b>	<b>GDP</b>	<b>bonanza</b>
<b>bipartisan</b>	<b>unfunded mandate</b>	<b>battlefield cohesion</b>

## Chapter 12—President Clinton's Domestic Policies

Supported by two political parties that usually disagree	Blanket-like device stuffed with feathers to use as a cover while sleeping	Referred to here as a romantic relationship between two people who aren't married to each other
Performance required by government for which no money is provided	Gross Domestic Product: everything produced in a country	Conduct not considered appropriate or socially acceptable
Close personal and trusting relationships between soldiers or sailors serving together	Something that yields great riches or success	Someone who doesn't take extreme stands on social, economic, moral, or political issues

## Chapter 12

# President Clinton's Domestic Policies

### Introduction

William Jefferson Blythe's biological father died in an automobile accident before his son was born. His stepfather, Roger Clinton, was an alcoholic who abused his mother; nevertheless Bill Blythe changed his last name to Clinton. Raised in Arkansas in relative poverty, Bill Clinton nevertheless attended an excellent public school, won a scholarship to Georgetown University, spent two years in England as a Rhodes scholar, and earned a law degree at Yale. He returned to Arkansas to teach law at a local university, entered local politics, and was elected state attorney general in 1976. Two years later, at the age of 32, he became the youngest governor in the United States. He lost his bid for reelection in 1980, but learned enough from his mistakes to win election again and serve five more two-year terms. He distinguished himself as the "education governor" and gained fame outside his native Arkansas by founding and chairing the Democratic Leadership Council. He led the council in the direction of taking more moderate positions on economic and social issues.



Clinton meeting President Carter in 1978

Clinton made his bid to become president in 1992. His campaign for the nomination was hurt by rumors of illicit sexual encounters and a confession that he had smoked marijuana in college, but claimed it was only once and that he never inhaled. In the campaign against the no-longer-popular George Bush, Clinton emphasized economic issues and promised to reform the health care system. He was elected with only 43 percent of the popular vote. Bush and third-party candidate Ross Perot shared the other 57 percent.

During his two terms as president, Clinton was charged with a string of improprieties—some sexual and others financial. The list includes a failed real estate deal (Whitewater) in Arkansas, favors from a savings-and-loan, misplacement of files needed to investigate his wife's law career, the supposed suicide of a longtime aide, and a sexual liaison in the Oval Office. One of these charges was serious enough to get the House of Representatives to impeach Clinton before the Senate exonerated him. Other charges resulted in Clinton getting disbarred from practicing law in Arkansas. These allegations kept Clinton's name in the headlines and certainly detracted from his ability to govern. Ultimately, however, the American public (if not the Republican Party) seemed to forgive the president for his shortcomings and admired him for his intelligence, eloquence, empathy, and accomplishments.

This chapter will review how Clinton carried out his domestic policies as president. Three important issues will be discussed: fiscal policy (taxing and spending), healthcare, and success in dealing with a hostile Congress. The next chapter will deal with Clinton's foreign policy.

## **Fiscal Policy**

"It's the economy, stupid," was the motto adopted by the Clinton campaign in order to focus on President Bush's greatest weakness. Unemployment had reached a high of 7.9 percent during the Bush presidency, and the deficit hovered in the neighborhood of \$250 billion. However, Clinton's proposed solutions to these problems didn't differ much from those of his predecessor's. In a legislative battle in which not one Republican representative supported him, Clinton managed to get Congress to raise taxes from 31 percent to 39.6 percent on the part of family income in excess of \$250,000, while also making modest cuts in defense and in social programs. Coupled with the Federal Reserve Board's lowering of interest rates, this plan led to an economic bonanza. Unemployment fell to 4 percent. During Clinton's eight years in office, the economy created 22.2 million new jobs and the deficit declined to the extent that the government registered a moderate surplus during the final two years of Clinton's second term.

Despite the cuts in benefits, Democrats were satisfied with the results of Clinton's fiscal policies because they produced much-needed economic growth and reduced the debt and deficit. Republicans were not happy because the Democrats raised taxes on the very rich and spent too much money on government programs. Republicans could point out that Democrats increased spending on social programs from \$1.41 trillion in 1993 to \$1.72 trillion in 1998. Democrats could point out that under their stewardship the percent of GDP spent by the government on social programs decreased from 21.5 percent to 19.1 percent.

## **Healthcare**

In a speech he gave in September 1993, Clinton explained the problem Americans faced obtaining affordable health insurance:

Millions of Americans are just a pink slip away from losing their health insurance, and one serious illness away from losing all their savings. Millions more are locked into the jobs they have now just because they or someone in their family has once been sick and they have what is called the preexisting condition. And on any given day, over 37 million Americans—most of them working people and their little children—have no health insurance at all. And in spite of all this, our medical bills are growing at over twice the rate of inflation, and the United States spends over a third more of its income on healthcare than any other nation on Earth.

Early in his campaign for president, Clinton decided to make a proposal for universal healthcare a central part of his platform. Five days after his inauguration, he appointed his wife, Hillary, to head a task force to develop a detailed plan. After months of intense deliberation, this task force of 500 was ready to present its plan to Congress.

It was a complicated plan and it took more than 1300 pages to explain in full detail. The highlights included:

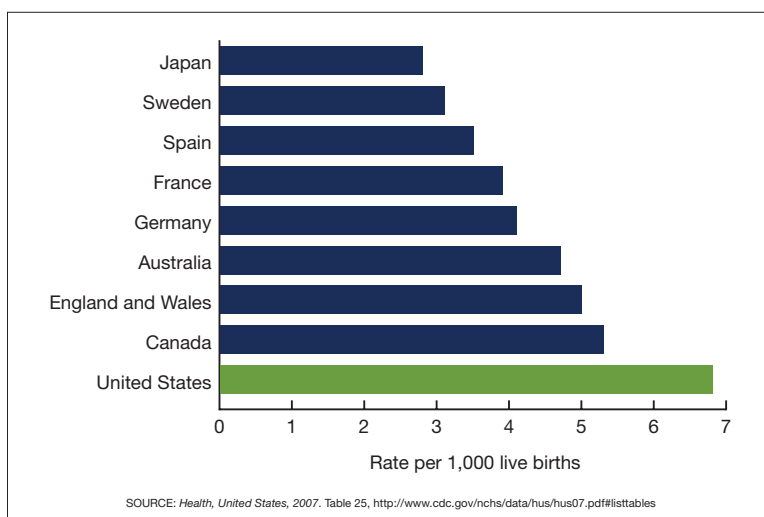
- All employers (with some federal assistance for small businesses) would be required to pay 80% of the cost of each employee's health insurance. The employee would be required to pay the other 20%.
- The insurance would be provided by one of several regional alliances of private insurers.
- The federal government would pay the employer's share for unemployed individuals.

The plan had several advantages. Employees could choose from a variety of plans from different alliances. Each plan would provide for the same coverage and co-payments, making it easier to compare plans. Each insurance alliance would have to accept all applicants, regardless of age or previous medical history, so that none could gear their plans to only those customers least likely to get sick. Patients would still be able to choose from a list of doctors provided by the plan.

### Should the Country Have Adopted the Clinton Healthcare Plan Proposal?

The healthcare plan produced by the Hillary Clinton task force raised many issues. We only have time to cover two of them: 1) Is health care a right that the federal government could and should provide to everyone? 2) Was the Clinton plan a reasonable way to provide this health care? You have the opportunity to read arguments on each side of these questions.

**Infant mortality rates: Selected countries, 2004**



In many other areas that indicate good health, the U.S. lags far behind other industrialized countries. Unlike the U.S., all of these countries have a form of a universal health care plan.

People Need Healthcare	Huge Bureaucracy and Massive Tax Increases
<p>People need health care. We may not need cars or computers or down comforters, but in order to live, we need to be able to ward off and recover from disease, and seek treatment (without fear of bankruptcy) when injuries or illnesses present themselves...But even the most healthy among us could still get hit by a bus or be diagnosed with cancer. And we need to feel secure that there is a functioning health care industry ready to help us put the pieces back together, should the need arise...regardless of our financial status or position in the rest of the free market system in which we live.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Under the Clinton plan, the government would have...created a huge new bureaucracy and required massive tax increases...The Clinton plan would have required every business in America to provide health care coverage to its employees, regardless of cost. The mandate would have devastated small businesses and cost thousands of jobs. Such policies would have been “community rated,” meaning that people would pay exactly the same premium regardless of whether they were healthy or on their deathbed...That would have meant a huge premium increase for young and healthy people.<sup>2</sup></p>



Hillary Clinton addressing the AMA in 1993

Many groups opposed the Clinton plan, not the least of which was the insurance industry. However, the defeat of the plan (called “Hillarycare” by its detractors) was not solely the fault of the incredibly well-financed lobby that opposed it. Many Americans had sincere reservations about both the concept and the plan itself. As of 2009, the U.S. still did not have a comprehensive universal health plan, and the issue of whether the U.S. should have one as well as what form it should take has not yet been decided.

## Triangulation

During what would normally have been a president’s “honeymoon” period, Clinton antagonized many people by easing restrictions on stem-cell research and resuming healthcare assistance to countries that taught contraception and/or performed abortions. He also banned the sale of assault weapons.

Clinton started his presidency on another controversial note. His first main initiative was to fulfill a campaign promise made to gay Americans to stop barring

1 Duncan Cross, “The Right To Health Care,” *Colorado Health Insurance Insider*, October 2, 2008

2 by Michael D. Tanner, “The Return of Hillarycare?” *Charlotte Observer*, November 20, 2006



gay men and women from serving in the military. Thousands had been denied the opportunity to serve or were discharged when their sexual orientation was revealed. After much wrangling, the final decision became known as “don’t ask, don’t tell.” In other words, a homosexual male or female could serve in the armed forces as long as they did not reveal their sexual orientation. This compromise did not satisfy gay Americans who wanted the right to serve their country without hiding their sexual orientation. Nor did this compromise satisfy those in and out of the military who thought the presence of homosexual soldiers would hurt battlefield cohesion.

Clinton barely passed his budget and Congress defeated his healthcare plan. In addition, his stand on stem-cell research, abortion, “don’t ask, don’t tell,” and gun control made him unpopular with a large section of Americans. The Congressional elections in 1994 added to his woes. The Republican Party gained 54 seats in the House of Representatives and nine seats in the Senate, giving them control of both houses of Congress for the first time in more than 50 years. Not only did they have a majority, but under the dynamic leadership of Representative Newt Gingrich they had a plan. It was called Contract with America and included:

- A balanced budget/tax limitation amendment
- Cuts in social spending from this summer’s “crime [prevention]” bill to fund prison construction and additional law enforcement to keep people secure
- Discourag[ing] illegitimacy and teen pregnancy by prohibiting welfare to minor mothers and denying increased AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] for additional children while on welfare, and enact[ing] a tough two-years-and-out provision with work requirements
- strengthening rights of parents in their children’s education; stronger child pornography laws
- restoration of the essential parts of our national security funding to strengthen our national defense and maintain our credibility around the world
- capital gains cut and [stop] unfunded mandate reform
- reasonable limits on punitive damages and reform of product liability laws

Up against a determined Republican majority, Clinton resorted to a strategy called “triangulation.” The strategy called for the president to package proposals desired by liberal Democrats with language and provisions that would please conservative Republicans. For instance, a proposal to provide “family leave time” would free a parent from working while caring for a newborn baby, a sick child, or a spouse. This law supported the Republicans’ concern with family values. Another law Clinton proposed met the concern of Republicans seeking to reduce crime: fund an addition of 100,000 policemen to patrol the streets in major cities, towns, and rural areas. A third “triangulated” program Clinton adopted was to “end welfare as we know it.” He supported a bipartisan bill which reduced the time a parent could receive AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) assistance to a total of five years, required

recipients to work 20 hours a week, and withheld increases in welfare payments to women who had more children while receiving AFDC assistance. Another program, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), assisted working families with earnings below the poverty level. Clinton wanted to expand the program in 1993, and he resisted cuts in EITC in 1995. The program aided approximately 45 million people. Payments averaged a bit more than a \$1000 per family and cost the government about \$20 billion a year. Stressing family values, the president argued for not cutting benefits: “If they’re willing to work [full time], no matter how meager their incomes, we want to lift them above poverty.”



Clinton speaking at an EITC event, 1993

## Student Activities

### A. Student Exercise

Select two of the following Clinton proposals and write a sentence or two explaining why you agree or disagree with them. Be prepared to defend your opinion if challenged in class.

- a. Raise taxes on the part of a family's income in excess of \$250,000 from 31 percent to 39.6 percent.
- b. Pay for local communities to hire 100,000 more policemen.
- c. Pay working families the difference between their income and the official government-designated poverty level (about \$18,000 for a family of four in 2009).
- d. Provide universal healthcare along the lines of the Clinton proposal.

### Essay:

How well do you think Bill Clinton handled domestic policy? Explain the reasons for your answer in an essay of no fewer than 150 words.

## For Further Consideration: More Federally Financed Childcare?

On January 7, 1998, President Clinton proposed a five-year plan costing \$20 billion to improve childcare for the children of American working families. The money would be used to help working families pay for childcare, improve the quality of care, increase the supply of good afterschool programs, and promote early learning. Not everyone thought these were good ideas. What follows are arguments for and against the program:

Quality Care for all Children	Unfair to Parents who Take Care of their Own Children
<p>Over 35% of children lack adequate preparation to enter kindergarten and often fall behind their peers. Those who fall behind tend to stay behind. Only 70% of our children will leave high school with a diploma. Yet, the evidence is equally clear that children who have high quality early care and education experiences are much more likely to do well in school and to stay in school. But here's the problem. There's a gap between what we know and what we do. Even though we know that every \$1 invested in quality programs yields between \$4 and \$17 in social and economic benefits, we still don't have enough high quality programs. We don't have enough highly trained teachers and staff, and we aren't providing quality services to many, many of our children.</p> <p>"As a society, we cannot afford to postpone investing in children until they become adults, nor can we wait until they reach school age—a time when it may be too late to intervene," stated James Heckman, PhD., Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences in a special report for the Ounce of Prevention Fund. "The best evidence supports the policy prescription: invest in the very young and improve</p>	<p>President Clinton's current proposal to subsidize formal day-care use and penalize parental care of children is irrational and unfair. Under Clinton's plan, middle-class parents who hire others to care for their children will receive tax cuts to subsidize day-care costs, but parents who make a great financial sacrifice so that one parent can remain at home to care for their young children will be denied tax relief.</p> <p>The Clinton proposal targets over \$20 billion of the projected budget surplus on one kind of service: the care of children outside of the family environment and away from parents. It reflects a desire to expand the welfare state rather than return surplus tax dollars to hardworking and overtaxed families with children...</p> <p>President Clinton's plan to enlarge and enrich the U.S. day-care industry is discriminatory and fails to address the real wants and needs of parents and children. Congress should reject this plan and instead provide broad-based tax reductions to all taxpaying families with children.</p>

basic learning and socialization skills.”  
It’s time to say yes now to giving all our  
children the very best start.<sup>3</sup>

It should not discriminate in favor of one  
group of parents who pay for professional  
day care.<sup>4</sup>

**Write a strong paragraph either supporting Clinton’s call for more federal dollars to support childcare or opposing his plan. Come to class prepared to present your position, listen to the thinking of others, and either defend your opinion or change your mind.**

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3 Linda Freedman, “Arguments for Supporting Early Care and Education Programs,” New Advocacy Video Underscores Educational Productions, [linda@edpro.com](mailto:linda@edpro.com)

4 Robert E. Rector and Patrick F. Fagan, “The Clinton Day Care Proposal: An Attack on Parents and Children,” The Heritage Foundation, January 14, 1998



## Chapter 13. President Clinton's Foreign Policy

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter examines only four of the many foreign policy challenges with which President Clinton had to deal: Somalia, Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia, and the long-simmering Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is covered in the “For Further Consideration” section. Each of the four challenges is explained in as much detail as possible in the allotted space.

The chapter begins with a single graphic description of the horrors the Hutus inflicted upon the Tutsis and then asks students to think about in what situations the U.S. must act and lead. The chapter continues by depicting the Somalian disaster, centering on the “Blackhawk Down” scenario in Mogadishu that led Clinton to evacuate American troops and, in effect, end the mission. Next, the Rwanda tragedy is described along with Clinton’s later anguish for having discouraged an international effort to end the slaughter. The chapter then concentrates on the events leading to the belated air support for Bosnian victims of Serbian aggression and on Clinton convincing the warring factions to negotiate a settlement in Dayton, Ohio. The “For Further Consideration” section provides a brief summation of the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation and asks students to present the events to their classmates from the perspective of either a Palestinian or an Israeli, and to explain what they think the other side needs to do to achieve a lasting peace in the region.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- realize Clinton and the U.S. faced a series of foreign policy challenges that created humanitarian crises, for which the U.S. had no clear course of action
- discuss how the U.S. should have responded to three different foreign policy crises (Somalia, Rwanda, and former Yugoslavia) in which American interests were not immediately at risk
- appreciate the difficulty in resolving the dispute between Palestinians and Israelis

#### Strategies:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the “For Further Consideration” section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all Student Activities questions covering the assigned sections.

**During class:** You may wish to start by reminding students that the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union, but that worldwide problems requiring America’s attention continued. You may also wish to tell them that the problems they read

about involved humanitarian crises, but challenges remained involving U.S. relations with Russia, communist China, North Korea, and many other areas of the world. Proceed by asking students how they would interpret the guidelines Secretary of State Madeline Albright laid out regarding when the U.S. should act and lead. How does this advice pertain to the crises they studied? Go in-depth into each crisis by reviewing students' answers to the Graphic Organizer question, and make sure that each student understands enough about each country to draw some conclusions about what happened there and why the U.S. acted as it did. Next, proceed by asking students to share their answers to the question of whether the president's responses to each of the three crises were appropriate. There probably won't be enough time left in the period to cover the Israeli-Palestinian question, so it would be best to leave the discussion for another day.



## Chapter 13. President Clinton's Foreign Policy

### I-Chart

	<b>Why did the U.S. intervene in Somalia and then abort the mission?</b>	<b>What happened in Rwanda? Was the U.S. right not to intervene?</b>	<b>What was the history of the Bosnian-Serb conflict, and how did belated intervention help contain it?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 13, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 13, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to learn</b>			



Chapter 13—President Clinton’s Foreign Policy

**clan**

**melee**

**atrocities**

**devastate**

**stabilize**

**carnage**

**anarchy**

**contingent**

**tormentor**

## Chapter 13—President Clinton's Foreign Policy

Horrible acts committed upon others	A noisy and confused fight	A group of families, often organized into a separate unit of society
Widespread slaughter, usually of human beings	To bring order to a chaotic situation	To destroy completely; could be physical destruction or emotional
Someone who causes mental or physical pain	As a noun, a group of people; as an adjective, dependent upon	A condition where there is no organized society, no government services, and a great deal of disorder



American forces there to complete the mission.

Then there was the perennial problem involving the Israelis and the Palestinians. Clinton had to consider whether he should try to get the leaders of these countries together in order to find a way to end their 40-plus years of conflict.

Another problem arose in the former Yugoslavia, when the Serbians made war on and defeated Croats, and then attacked Bosnia. While the world community stood by, a Serb army devastated Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital. Pictures of this carnage flashed around the world through the media, and eventually international pressure convinced Serbia to withdraw from Sarajevo. However, the Serbs continued what they referred to as “ethnic cleansing,” attacking towns that were supposed to be safe havens and protected by UN peacekeepers. What should the United States have done?

By reading this chapter, you will learn what Clinton did to handle all of these problems, and you will be asked to evaluate his responses. Did he ignore the real needs of people in these areas? Did he do all that could be expected? Should he, instead of the limited actions he took, have made a much larger commitment of American money and manpower?

## Somalia

U.S. involvement in Somalia came after evidence that this country of about nine million people was suffering a humanitarian disaster. Its longtime and increasingly brutal dictator was overthrown in 1991 while George Bush was still president. The country then divided into a collection of warring clans. Private relief agencies attempted to provide food and needed medical supplies to starving Somalis, but various private armies that sought to control the distribution of humanitarian aid disrupted their efforts. These armies attacked aid ships and prevented them from docking, fired upon cargo aircraft, and subjected public and private aid agencies to threats, robbery, and extortion. Meanwhile, hundreds if not thousands of poverty-stricken refugees starved to death every day. Attempts to protect relief workers with privately armed native Somalis proved unsuccessful. Shamed into action, Bush sent supplies and ordered 25,000 U.S. soldiers to protect aid workers while they delivered them. Responding to calls from the UN, a total of 38,000 soldiers from 24 different countries came to Somalia. This massive intervention seemed to succeed, as the troops restored order, delivered supplies, and allowed normal life to resume. By this time Clinton had become president, he and other countries involved in stabilizing Somalia began withdrawing their troops, believing that the U.S./UN mission had succeeded. Without international forces to stop them, however, war between contending Somali factions resumed. Resistance to delivering aid came primarily from a would-be dictator of Somalia by the name of Mohammed Farrah Aidid. Determined to get rid of Aidid's



Refugee camp in Somalia, 1993

interference, U.S. elite troops began conducting raids intended to find him and his lieutenants. The seventh raid of this kind resulted in tragedy for American soldiers. Two helicopters sent to support the troops assigned to capture Aidid's assistants were shot



U.S. Rangers under fire during the Battle of Mogadishu

down, hostile clansmen pinned down the original raiding party with gunfire, and rescue operations were delayed. In the ensuing melee in the crowded city of Mogadishu, jeering Somalis dragged one American soldier through the streets; a total of 18 Americans were killed and 73 were wounded. Americans who saw this skirmish on television wondered why the U.S. was trying to help people who were warring among themselves. Clinton sent 5300 more soldiers to Somalia, but their mission was

to assure an orderly withdrawal of the forces already there. With the withdrawal of U.S. troops, all humanitarian aid stopped, and Somalia continued its descent into anarchy. A total of 148 Americans died in this attempt at humanitarian aid, which cost \$1.7 billion.

## Rwanda

If anything, the situation in Rwanda was worse than the one in Somalia. Long dominated by the Tutsi minority, Rwanda's Hutus decided to even the score. Beginning in April 1994, they began an all-out attack on their former tormentors. Encouraged by radio broadcasts telling them to murder their neighboring Tutsis, the Hutus began an outbreak of violence seldom witnessed in human history. Armed with machetes, swarms of Hutus invaded Tutsi's homes and commenced slaughters like the one described in the beginning of this chapter.



Skulls of Rwandan genocide victims

Clinton's response to this slaughter was somewhat influenced by events in Somalia. After a horde of Hutus killed ten U.N. peacekeepers, he advised other European powers not to interfere. The slaughter continued for more than three months. About 800,000 Tutsis were killed; in retaliation, the Tutsis killed untold thousands of Hutus. We cannot know whether Clinton could have led a number of nations in a peacekeeping mission into Rwanda and prevented the endless killings. However, on a visit to Rwanda in July 2005, he repeated a sincere expression of regret for what he admitted was his "personal failure" to lead.

## Former Yugoslavia

(You may wish to review the information about the former country of Yugoslavia covered on the first page of this chapter.) During his election campaign against President Bush, Clinton criticized him for standing by and doing nothing about the



“ethnic cleansing” occurring in Bosnia. However, at the beginning of his presidency Clinton had no idea what the U.S. and European countries should do to stop the slaughter of Muslims in Bosnia. Before the end of his two terms as president, he took some tentative and successful steps to stop the slaughter and restore civic life.



Slobodan Milosevic

Shortly after Bosnia declared independence from the Serb-dominated Yugoslavian Union in 1991, Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic authorized an attack on Bosnia-Herzegovina's capital, Sarajevo. Serb snipers shot and killed Bosnians who dared to come out of their houses, eventually killing 3500 children. Atrocities continued as Serb soldiers captured parts of Sarajevo and rounded up Muslims, dragged them into concentration camps, killed the men, and raped the women. These outrages continued as Serbian soldiers followed Muslim families fleeing Sarajevo to surrounding villages. The killings stopped only temporarily when Clinton threatened Milosevic that NATO forces would bomb Serb artillery positions around Sarajevo unless they withdrew. However, the carnage continued. Serbian troops attacked villages filled with Muslim refugees that the UN had declared as safe havens. Finally, the systematic slaughter of 8000 Muslim men and boys in the town of Srebrenica led to a massive U.S.-led NATO bombing campaign against Serbian artillery. While the bombing stilled Serbia's heavy weapons, Bosnian and Croatian Muslims recaptured half of Bosnia. Having lost his military advantage, Milosevic agreed to negotiate a peace agreement with Bosnia and Croatia. Clinton conducted peace talks in Dayton, Ohio in November 1995 and the two sides reached an agreement. The treaty gave more territory to the Serbs than to the Bosnians. As flawed as the agreement was, ten years later an objective observer said:

We are talking about a country that has been only a decade ago through a horrendous, horrendous war, during which people were killed on the basis of their names. And, that nowadays all those people are living together, trying to form the joint state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>2</sup>



Leaders signing the Dayton Peace Accords

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by: Barry Wood, “10 Years After Dayton Agreement Efforts Still Continue to Revive Bosnia,” Voice of America, November 17, 2005



## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

- Place each occurrence described below under the appropriate heading. Each answer can be used only once, and all empty boxes must be filled

Somalia	Rwanda	Former Yugoslavia

Warlords	800,000 slaughtered	Helicopters down
Civil war	Tribal conflict	Mass starvation
U.S. and European countries did nothing	Ethnic slaughter	NATO forces involved
Serbs vs. Bosnians	U.S. troops sent	Ethnic slaughter
Central Africa	On African east coast	Europe
Slobodan Milosevic	Different nationalities	Hutus and Tutsis

- By whatever standard you choose to judge President Clinton, which of these crises do you think he handled best and which did he handle worst? Write at least four sentences to support your answer.

## For Further Consideration: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

One of the longest-standing conflicts between two groups is the hostility between Israelis and Palestinians. There probably is no way to be completely objective about the origins of the problems, but let us summarize a few important points.

In biblical times, the Jewish people had a homeland in what is now Israel, but were driven from it. They resettled in many parts of Europe, primarily in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Germany.

Around 1897, Jews began looking to return to their country of origin, but many (especially those in Germany) were satisfied living where they were and had established a place for themselves in their new country.

In the 1930s, Adolph Hitler came to power in Germany, in part by blaming the German Jews for all of the country's problems. In 1939, Germany began attacking neighboring countries, and in 1942, Hitler decided that the "final solution" to the "Jewish problem" was to kill all of them. In all, the Nazis murdered six million Jews.

Jews who survived the Holocaust emerged more determined than ever to reclaim their own homeland and established a colony in an area called Palestine. Jews were already living there in peace with the Palestinians, but with the arrival of thousands of Jewish refugees, the Palestinians began to get nervous.

In 1948, the world officially recognized a Jewish state called Israel, and soon afterwards their Arab neighbors attacked them. In the battles that followed, many Palestinians living in the region were either driven out or fled in terror from their homes and farms. Some stayed and lived among Jews in what became Israel, but most ended up in refugee camps in neighboring countries—particularly Lebanon and Jordan. None of the other Arab countries would take in large numbers of these refugees.

Israeli Jews and their Arab neighbors fought two other wars, with Israel winning both of them. In 1967, the Israelis occupied the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank (see map), thereby displacing even



more Palestinians. They also took control of a part of Egypt called the Sinai that was mostly desert.

In a peace treaty negotiated with help from President Jimmy Carter, Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for diplomatic recognition. Egypt became the first Arab country to recognize Israel's right to exist.

During the 1980s, real problems arose between Israel and the Palestinians. The Palestinians rose up in a rebellion against Israel, called the *intifada*. Despite some half-hearted attempts, the two sides made no significant progress toward reaching a peace agreement, and Israel actually invaded Lebanon in order to stop attacks on its lands from Palestinian refugees.



Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat shake hands as President Bill Clinton watches

In 1993, Palestinians and Israelis met secretly with one another in Oslo, Norway and drafted what might, with goodwill on both sides, have become an outline for a permanent peace agreement. Leaders of both sides came to Washington, D.C. where President Clinton encouraged them to shake hands. As photographs of this historic moment appeared on the front pages of newspapers worldwide, many people thought this was the beginning of an end to the Israeli-Palestinian problem.

However, the problems did not stop. Palestinians, led by Yassir Arafat and his Palestinian Liberation Organization, continued hurling shells and sending suicide bombers into Israel, and Israel continued building "settlements" for Jewish families on land in the West Bank that Israel had conquered in 1967.

As the result of some arm-twisting, Clinton got the leaders of Israel and the PLO to come to the United States. After several weeks, the two sides came as close to reaching a settlement as they ever had. Israeli leader Ehud Barak agreed to turn the Gaza Strip and most of the West Bank over to the Palestinians, and offered to allow Palestinians to control the holy places in the city of Jerusalem connected with Islam. However, he was not willing to return more than a handful of lands taken from the Palestinians to their original owners. Arafat turned down Israel's offer without making a counterproposal. Despite everything Clinton could do, the talks ended on that note, and as of 2009, the peace process remained stalled.

**Retell the story of Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the point of view of either an Israeli or a Palestinian. After that, explain what you believe the other side needs to do in order to establish a lasting peace between the two groups. Come to class prepared to present your answers, listen to the thinking of others, and either defend your opinion or change your mind.**



## Chapter 14. The Second President Bush's Domestic Policy

### Teacher Page

#### Overview

After providing a brief overview of George W. Bush's pre-presidential career and discussing the dispute over the 2000 election, this chapter focuses on three major domestic policy proposals Bush made: the three tax cuts, the No Child Left Behind Act, and faith-based charitable initiatives. The chapter explains two different reasons for cutting taxes and provides information, a pie chart, and a graph to help students decide whether wealthy Americans are overtaxed and if those with lower incomes should pay more. After presenting the rationale for the federal government funneling social benefits through faith-based institutions, the chapter asks students whether such aid violates the traditional separation between church and state. Finally, the "For Further Consideration" section presents examples of proposals to cut domestic spending and asks whether Bush's announced intention to provide underprivileged Americans with hope was undermined by his propensity to cut government revenues.

#### Objectives

Students will:

- examine the effects of Bush's tax cuts on families with different incomes, on social programs, and on the deficit
- familiarize themselves with Bush's educational reforms and discuss the success of these measures in improving opportunities for disadvantaged children
- learn the rationale for the federal government's funding of faith-based social initiatives and understand the separation-of-church-and-state issues it raises
- decide whether Bush's domestic programs came close to achieving his announced intentions

#### Strategies

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**During class:** You may want to start by asking students to share their responses to the ten Graphic Organizer questions. The questions have enough ambiguity to provide students with an opportunity to use many different facts to respond to them and to generate lively discussions. Leave time for students to decide whether upper-income taxes were cut too far. You may also want to discuss the two other initiatives Bush proposed by first asking students whether they think more testing and penalties for schools that don't meet standards is likely to help disadvantaged students learn more math and science. You may then ask students whether the way Bush wanted to

practice faith-based initiatives would break traditional boundaries between church and state. Finally, leave time for advanced students to disclose some of the budget cuts made while Bush was president and to then explain whether they think that his policies would lead the disadvantaged to believe that the “American dream” was attainable for them.

## Chapter 14. The Second President Bush's Domestic Policy I-Chart

	<b>The effect of the Bush tax cuts</b>	<b>How No Child Left Behind was supposed to work and whether it would accomplish its objective</b>	<b>Arguments for faith based initiatives, and whether they violated Constitutional provisions for separation of church and state</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from reading Chapter 14, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from reading Chapter 14, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to learn</b>			





Chapter 14—The Second President Bush’s Domestic Policy

<b>conservative</b>	<b>tort reform</b>	<b>tanked</b>
<b>priorities</b>	<b>Pentagon</b>	<b>liberal</b>
<b>executive directive</b>	<b>proficiency</b>	<b>compassionate conservative</b>

## Chapter 14—The Second President Bush's Domestic Policy

Order by a high government official, such as the president, that must be followed.	Items of greatest importance	Person who opposes big government, favors low taxes, and opposes abortion and same-sex marriage.
Skill or special ability.	Headquarters for high officials in the Defense Department; located close to Washington, D.C.	Making changes in the rules regarding civil law
Conservative person who believes in government helping those who really need it.	Person who wants government to help people, wants taxes on high incomes, and usually supports a woman's right to choose and same-sex marriage.	Slang for failing or decreasing significantly

## Chapter 14

# The Second President Bush's Domestic Policy

### Introduction

The office of the president of the U.S. is not a job that is passed down from father to son. Before George W. Bush became president, only one other son of



George W. Bush wearing his Texas Air National Guard uniform

a president, John Quincy Adams, had risen to his father's post. George W. Bush, son of George H.W. Bush, went to the same preparatory school as his father before attending Yale. However, while his father graduated from Yale with honors, the younger Bush was an average student; while his father was an accomplished athlete, the younger Bush played stickball; while his father flew 58 combat missions during World War II, the younger Bush joined the Texas Air National Guard during the Vietnam War, had no combat experience, and requested and obtained an early discharge. After graduating from Harvard Business School with a degree in Business Administration, Bush followed his father's footsteps by entering the oil business in Texas. He managed to sell his smallholdings at a profit before oil prices tanked, and he entered into a partnership that bought a

professional baseball team, the Texas Rangers. In between, Bush spent time helping a Republican in an unsuccessful senatorial campaign in Alabama, assisted his father in various political campaigns, and ran unsuccessfully to represent his district in Congress. Bush was outgoing and well liked, but he never achieved the success his father enjoyed until his stint as part-owner of the Rangers. He attended almost every game, enjoyed the companionship of players and fans, and made a reputation for himself as a friendly and generous executive. Because of his popularity and name recognition, "W" decided to run for governor. He surrounded himself with a loyal and knowledgeable staff, focused on four political issues (juvenile crime, education, welfare, and tort reform), and defeated a popular Democrat by an overwhelming majority. After a successful first term, where he was known for his ability to work with Democrats, he became the first Texas governor to serve two consecutive four-year terms. Even before he won reelection, influential Republicans began grooming him for a run at the presidency. Packaged as a "uniter" and not a "divider," and as a "compassionate conservative" whose favorite philosopher was Jesus Christ, Bush endorsed "family values," personal responsibility and local control. In the pivotal South Carolina Republican primary, his main opponent, war hero John McCain, was unfairly smeared as the husband of a drug-addicted wife, the father of an illegitimate black child, and in favor of a woman's right to have an abortion.<sup>1</sup> The Bush campaign swamped the airwaves with attack ads and defeated the outspent McCain campaign. After losing the

<sup>1</sup> None of these charges were true.

Michigan primary, where Democrats turned out and voted for McCain, Bush swept the rest of the primaries and captured his party's nomination.

### **A Hotly Contested Election**

Only one other election in all of American history was decided by as slim a margin as the election of 2000. The Democratic ticket of Al Gore and Joseph Lieberman received 50,999,897 votes, and the George W. Bush/Dick Cheney ticket received 50,456,002 votes. The electoral vote, however, seemed to favor the Republicans by a count of 271 to 266. Democrats challenged the popular vote count in Florida in part because of something called “hanging chads” (paper ballots with incompletely punched holes which made it difficult to detect whether the voter meant to vote for a specific candidate or leave the ballot blank.) With hundreds of ballots with hanging chads uncounted, Bush carried the state by 900 votes. The Democrats demanded a recount in a number of counties using the disputed paper ballots. Florida's voting commissioner (a Republican who worked on the Bush campaign) ruled there should not be a recount. The Florida Supreme Court overturned her ruling, but the U.S. Supreme Court then overturned that decision by a 5-4 majority. Thus, after 37 days of suspense all 25 of Florida's electoral votes went to Bush and he won the election by five electoral votes.

Bush's eight years in office can be divided into two distinct parts. The first part lasted eight months and focused strictly on domestic issues. The big initiatives Bush proposed were education reform, which shocked some conservative Republicans, and a tax cut, which pleased nearly all Republicans. He had also begun working on his other priority: faith-based initiatives. Then, on September 11, 2001, terrorists took over two airliners and flew them into the two towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. A third plane crashed into the Pentagon, and on a fourth passengers wrestled control of the plane away from terrorists and died in the ensuing crash landing.

In the first part of this chapter, you will learn more about Bush's education, tax, and faith-based initiatives. In the second part, you will read about the proposed reductions in domestic spending due to revenue shortfalls. The next chapter will cover Bush's attempt to punish the instigators of the 9/11 tragedy and his decision to rid the Middle East of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

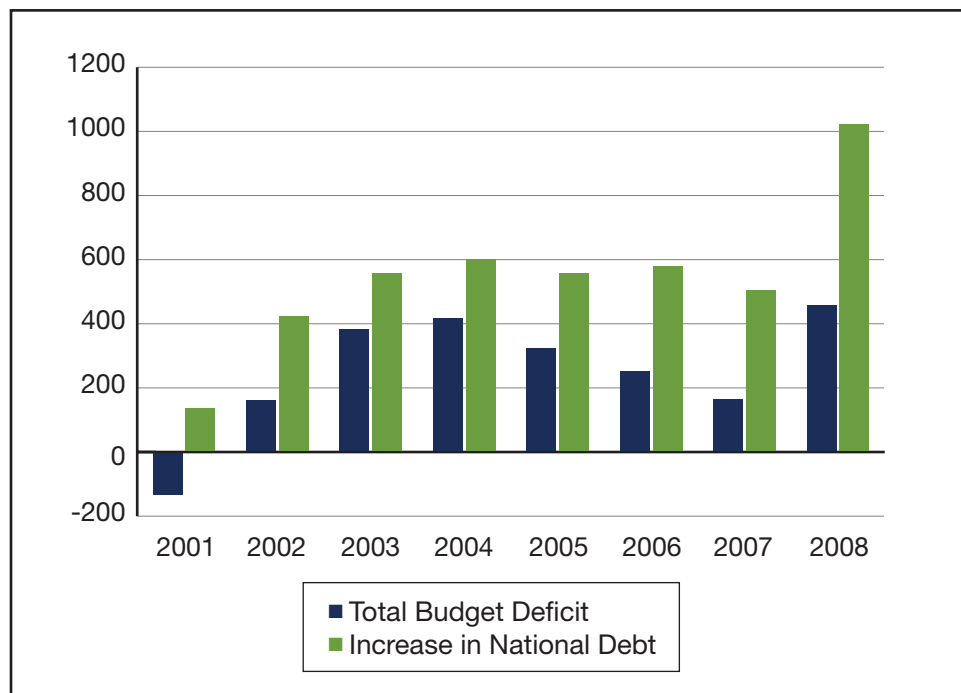
### **Cutting Taxes**

During his campaign for president, Bush frequently framed his argument for a cut in taxes as follows:

It's your money. My tax cuts will give you a chance to set your priorities for your family. It says that we in the federal government have a fundamental trust in the people of America, and that's where our faith should be—in the people. The best government is that which trusts America, and there's no better way to make that trust explicit than to share your money with you.<sup>2</sup>

At the time candidate Bush promised a tax cut, the U.S. economy was strong, the federal budget showed a healthy surplus, and the country was not at war. By the time Bush actually asked Congress for a tax cut that would total \$1.6 trillion, the economy had fallen into a recession. Bush justified his call for a tax reduction by claiming that it would stimulate growth. Congress responded by cutting taxes by \$1.35 trillion over a ten-year period. During Bush's eight years in office, Congress cut taxes two more times. By this time, the economy had recovered from the recession, but the U.S. had gone to war in Afghanistan and Iraq. The results of increased expenditures for these wars, coupled with two more tax cuts during the Bush years, appear in the following chart:

**Total Deficits vs. National Debt Increases (\$ Billions)**



The rationale for these tax cuts was that all Americans would have more to spend. Bush claimed that the first tax cut would save the average American family of four \$1600 a year. Critics of the cut claimed the average had been calculated by adding up what every family saved and dividing that number by the number of families;

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Peter Singer, *The President of Good & Evil—The Ethics of George W. Bush*, Dutton, 2004, p. 11

they claimed that the richest families actually saved \$45,000 a year and the majority of families earning less than \$73,000 would save \$350 a year. (See the end-of-chapter activities questions for more information to help you decide whether the tax cut was fair.)

### **No Child Left Behind: Education Reform**

In a campaign speech in Indiana in 1999, Bush showed the side of his nature that supported his claim to be a “compassionate conservative”:

We will carry a message of hope and renewal to every community in this country. We will tell every American, “The dream is for you.” Tell forgotten children in failed schools, “The dream is for you.” Tell families, from the barrios of LA to the Rio Grande Valley: “*El sueño americano es para ti.*” Tell men and women in our decaying cities, “The dream is for you.” Tell confused young people, starved of ideals, “The dream is for you.”

As president, Bush proposed an initiative that also supported his claim of being a “uniter and not a divider.” Working with Democrats, Bush proposed and Congress passed an educational reform law that was supposed to guarantee that “no child will be left behind.” Title I of this law would:

...ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

To accomplish this and other educational purposes, Congress would appropriate \$13 billion the first year and increase this expenditure to \$25 billion a year by 2007.<sup>3</sup> According to the law, all public schools had to give standardized tests. These tests had to show yearly progress toward proficiency in English and math by 95 percent of students in all subgroups (such as black, Hispanic, white, and those with limited English proficiency) by the year 2014. Schools that failed to make yearly progress had to offer special services to assist students who didn’t achieve the required test scores, and the school may have had to replace school personnel, extend the school day, or lose federal funding. Some praised the law for focusing attention on students who lagged behind their peers; others criticized it for narrowly defining achievement as success on standardized tests in only two subjects and not allowing enough time for such subjects as art and music, science, social studies, and foreign languages. Similar criticisms have been directed at state tests requiring students to demonstrate

<sup>3</sup> As of 2006, actual spending for No Child Left Behind was \$40 billion less than promised when the law was passed.

proficiency in certain subjects in order to graduate from high school. Some teachers claim these standardized exams force them to “teach for the test” and prevent them from exploring any topic in depth. Other teachers believe the tests establish standards and ensure that important topics get covered.

### **Faith Based Initiatives**

During his campaign, candidate Bush expressed his belief that helping individuals live a good life does not require additional government programs:

In the past, presidents have declared wars on poverty and promised to create a great society. But these grand gestures and honorable aims were frustrated. They have become a warning, not an example. We found that government can spend money, but it can't put hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives. Churches and synagogues and mosques and charities that warm the cold of life do this. A quiet river of goodness and kindness that cuts through stone.

Bush felt strongly about using religious (faith-based) charities to perform such services as drug counseling, feeding the hungry, etc. In fact, his first two executive orders directed government agencies not to discriminate against religious organizations in awarding contracts to perform these kinds of services. The president sent a proposal to Congress that it pass a law which would allow religious organizations to receive federal funds even though they would not hire people of a different faith to work in their agencies. Congress felt such a regulation would discriminate against people of certain faiths and against nonbelievers and refused to pass this legislation. Bush responded by issuing an executive order “to ensure a level playing field for faith-based organizations” and to not require them to change their “identity” by hiring people who were not members of their church. Opponents did not have enough votes in Congress to overturn this order.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer

Below you will find ten statements about George W. Bush. After every statement, provide factual evidence indicating why you agree or disagree with that statement.

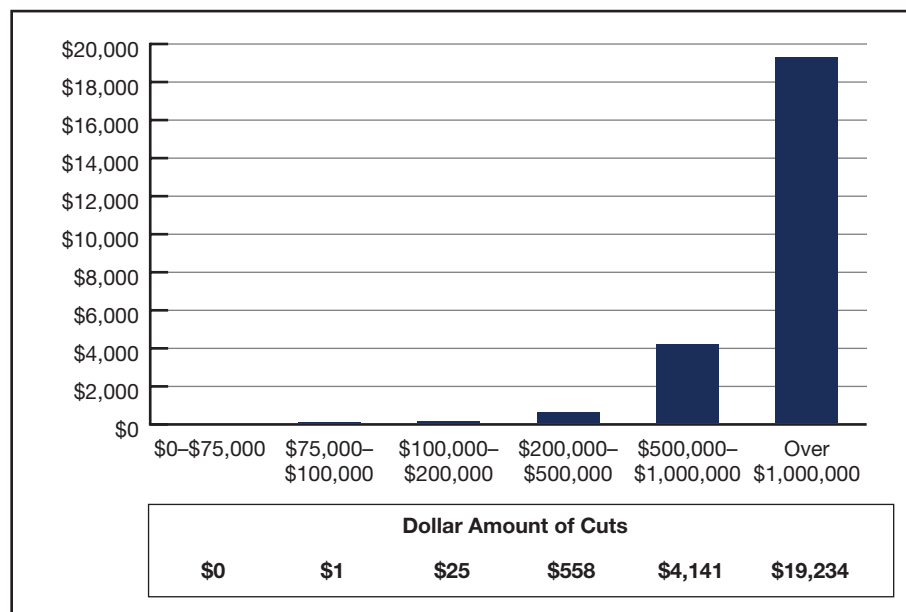
Statements about George W. Bush	Your Comments
His family had very little political influence	
He had a great record at Yale, in the Vietnam War, and in the Oil business	
He had a successful record as governor of Texas	
He ran a clean primary campaign against John McCain	
He had no idea of what he wanted to do when he became president	
He won in a landslide	
He was able to get Congress to pass the important laws that he really wanted	
He said he wanted to help the rich and run up a big government debt	
His education program was meant to help disadvantaged children	
Bush's faith-based initiatives did not jeopardize the principle of separation of church and state	
The laws he was able to get passed showed he was a "compassionate conservative"	



## B. Analyzing Tax Cuts

Liberals and conservatives, as well as many economists, disagree with one another over the effects of the Bush (and Reagan) tax cuts on people of various income levels. Did the cuts help the wealthy more than people with low and moderate incomes? Did the wealthy pay more than their fair share, and should their taxes have been cut while the taxes of the less wealthy got raised in order to provide the government with the money it needed? In 2005, the top 1 percent of income earners (those with an annual adjusted gross income of \$365,000 and higher) paid 39 percent of all federal income taxes; in 1999, they paid 36 percent. Look at the accompanying charts and come to class ready to explain your answers.

**Average 2010 Tax Cuts**



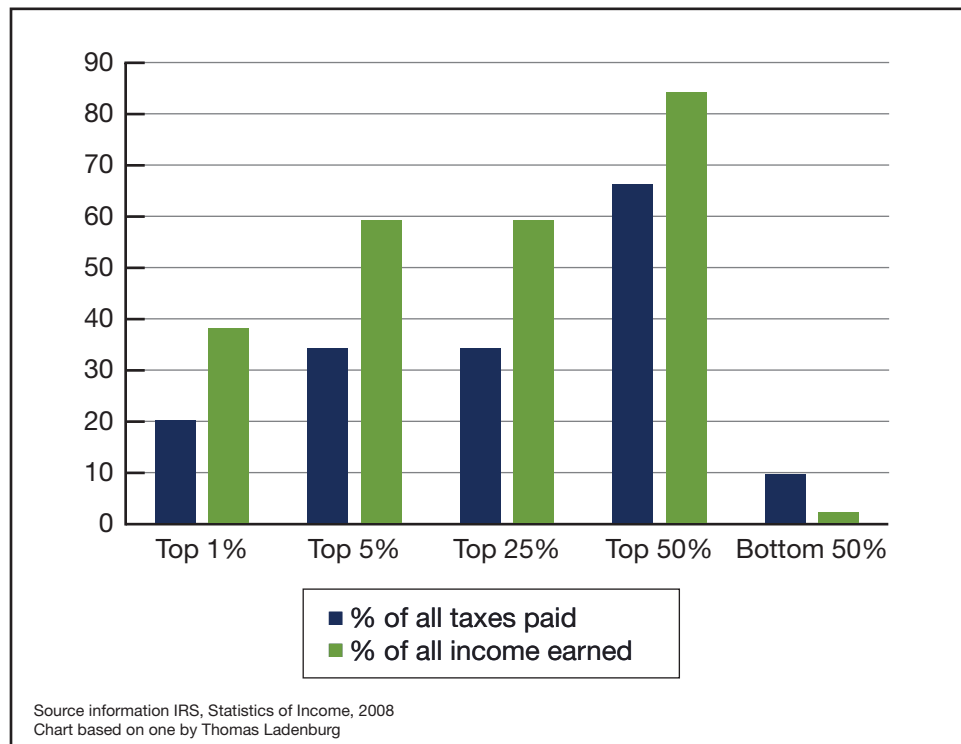
**Savings from Bush Tax Cuts by Income Class between 2001–2010**

Average Household Income	Average Saving per Household per Year	Total Saving by Households in Income Class between 2001–2010 (also: cost to government)
18,000 and less	\$81.70	\$31 billion
36,000–64,000	\$906	\$416 billion
550,000 and more	\$48,800	\$550,000
<b>Total Savings in Taxes paid</b>		<b>2.34 trillion dollars</b>
<b>Total Loss of Government Revenue</b>		<b>2.34 trillion dollars</b>

Source of information: Urban Institute—Brookings Institution  
Tax Policy Center Microsimulation Model

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### Taxes Paid by Various Income Groups



## **For Further Consideration: Government Spending Reduced**

The following quotes taken from articles on Web sites show a small part of the proposed reductions in spending while George W. Bush was president of the United States.

### **“Bush Budget Cuts Target Environment, Social Programs”**

Law enforcers say Bush budget cuts would hamper anti-gang efforts...The federal budget plan proposed Monday by President George W. Bush calls for reduced spending on the environment, agriculture, education, low-income housing aid, and health care...The Bush budget would also cut spending at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Department of Energy.<sup>4</sup>

### **“Bush’s Budget Cuts Aid to Displaced Workers”**

The president’s 2009 budget, released on Monday, may total up to a record breaking \$3.1 trillion, but most Americans won’t be seeing the big bucks next year. National security and defense are getting the largest boost from Bush’s budget, while domestic programs are frozen or cut...The dislocated worker program is one such domestic program that has taken a bullet—to the tune of a \$271 million budget reduction. The dislocated worker program provides grants to states to provide job training, career guidance, job placement, and other services for dislocated workers, including those who have lost their jobs due to trade. Yet if the President’s cut is adopted, nearly 65,000 fewer workers will receive job training and other services to help them find work.<sup>5</sup>

### **“Budget Cuts Environment, Funds Nuclear Weapons”**

Bush asked Congress to fund the first new U.S. nuclear weapons in two decades and requested additional funding to build a new nuclear bomb making plant. The budget requests \$10 million for the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program and \$100 million to begin construction on a new plutonium pit facility. Plutonium pits are the cores of atomic weapons...The Bush budget eliminates a \$5 million EPA program to restore the San Francisco Bay. It cuts air pollution programs, including more than \$31 million dollars for grants to states, and eliminates a \$10 million dollar program that would help clean up the air in some of California’s most polluted communities. It eliminates funding for a new national registry to track global warming pollution.<sup>6</sup>

4 J.R. Pegg, Entertainment News Service, February 8, 2005

5 Center for American Progress, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/02/displaced/displaced.html>, February 5, 2008

6 Environment News Service, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/feb2008/2008-02-05-05.asp>, 2008

### **“Bush Budget Cuts Will Cripple U.S. Teaching Hospitals and Erode Medical Progress”**

The AAMC [Association of American Medical Colleges] strongly opposes the administration’s proposal to slash Medicare payments to America’s teaching hospitals. Cutting indirect medical education (IME) payments by more than 60 percent, combined with other Medicare cuts affecting all hospitals, will have devastating results. Millions of Medicare patients—as well as the uninsured, the disabled, and the severely ill—rely on teaching hospitals for health care and community services. Such unprecedented cuts to these institutions will endanger their ability to provide the full spectrum of patient care and treatment, erode their fragile trauma and emergency services, and impede the progress they have made in advancing the health of all Americans through education and medical research.<sup>7</sup>

### **“Bush Budget Cuts Could Hurt Small Businesses”**

President Bush’s budget outline cuts funding to the U.S. Small Business Administration by 43 percent, from \$900 million to \$540 million, and imposes a total of \$168 million in new fees on small businesses seeking the agency’s loans and assistance. This includes \$12 million in new fees imposed on small businesses that use some 1,000 agency-funded Small Business Development Centers located across the country, serving small business owners, many of whom are minority and women entrepreneurs who are leading the way in business creation. At the current time, the centers do not charge fees.<sup>8</sup>

### **“Bush’s Budget Cuts Life Science Dollars”**

In his FY [fiscal year] 2009 budget, released this morning, President George W. Bush calls to freeze the National Institutes of Health’s budget at last year’s level of about \$29 billion while shaving more than \$370 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s 2008 budget...The president’s budget also suggests decreasing research funding at the U.S. Department of Agriculture by more than \$350 million, but proposes increasing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) budget by 5.7 percent over last year, giving the agency \$2.4 billion in FY 2009.<sup>9</sup>

7 Medical News Today, <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/96407.php>

8 Priscilla Y. Huff, Women’s ENews, <http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/518/context/archive>

9 Bob Grant, TheScientist.com, <http://www.the-scientist.com/blog/display/54277/>

### **“Bush Budget Cuts Domestic Violence Funding”**

One month after he held a ceremony in the Oval Office to sign legislation that would authorize a considerable increase in funding to aid victims of domestic violence, Bush proposed an overall cut to domestic violence programs and services and included no funding for the law’s new programs, effectively placing them on indefinite hold... The administration requested \$546 million for domestic violence programs in fiscal 2007, a decrease of \$20 million—or 3.5 percent—from the amount appropriated in 2006, the anti-violence network’s figures indicate. The amount does not include any funding for 21 newly enacted programs, the largest of which is a \$50 million program that provides services for survivors of sexual assault.<sup>10</sup>

### **“Bush Budget Cuts Money for Calif. Firefighting”**

Democratic lawmakers complained Monday that President Bush’s 2009 budget proposal cuts money for firefighters and fire prevention in the wake of last fall’s devastating wildfires in California. There’s less money for hazardous fuels reduction in the budget blueprint Bush sent to Congress on Monday, and a program that provides federal grants directly to local fire departments is cut by more than 50 percent, according to California Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein.<sup>11</sup>

### **“War Distracts From Bush’s Budget Cuts”**

One of Bush’s signature programs was “No Child Left Behind.” The House Republican budget cuts education funding by 10.2 percent below the reduced level proposed by President Bush, which had proposed to cut several billion previously approved by Congress.<sup>12</sup>

### **“Bush Budget Cuts Federal Health Programs Vital to the Health of All Children”**

President Bush’s Fiscal Year 2009 budget cuts federal health programs vital to the future of health and health care for all children. On top of an \$18.2 billion cut in Medicaid, the nation’s single largest payer of children’s health care for working families, the President’s budget also cuts \$700 million from discretionary health programs that children depend on, ranging from poison control hotlines to funding for training children’s doctors.<sup>13</sup>

10 Pacific Views, <http://www.pacificviews.org/weblog/archives/001799.html>. February 17, 2006

11 KCBS/AP, <http://www.kcbs.com/pages/1594096.php?>, February 4, 2008

12 Robert Kuttner, *The Boston Globe*, March 26, 2003

13 PRNewswire-USNewswire, <http://www.bio-medicine.org/medicine-news-1/Bush-Budget-Cuts-Federal-Health-Programs-Vital-to-the-Health-of-All-Children-11415-1/>, February 8, 2008

**Based on everything you know about Bush's stated objectives, his policies, and their effects on the economy, write two strong paragraphs explaining which of the following statements best expresses your opinion of George W. Bush's domestic program:**

- a. His domestic program failed to accomplish his stated objectives.**
- b. His domestic program was good for the country.**

**Come to class prepared to share your opinion, listen to the ideas of others, and either defend your own or change your thinking.**

## Chapter 15. President George W. Bush and the War in Iraq

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter deals almost exclusively with the events leading to the Iraq war and with the war itself. The chapter describes Bush's encounter with Russian President Vladimir Putin before focusing on the events of September 11th. It quotes from Bush's speech promising "to bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies." A good deal of space is used to describe Saddam Hussein's 12-year-long efforts to disrupt the UN's mandated search for biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons of mass destruction. This is followed by excerpts from Bush's September 2002 speech in which he called Hussein a "homicidal dictator addicted to weapons of mass destruction" and excerpts from Howard Zinn's article refuting Bush's argument for a preemptive war. The Graphic Organizer question asks students to explain the significance of events that led to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and an essay question asks students whether sufficient justification existed for the U.S. to attack Iraq. The "For Further Consideration" section provides a quick summary of the fighting, beginning with "shock and awe" and ending with the attempt to establish a democratic government in Iraq.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- realize that Bush's based his case for going to war against Iraq on the claim that Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator who had weapons of mass destruction
- learn that Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction
- understand that after initial successes, the U.S. invasion forces spent many difficult years attempting to create a peaceful democratic state in Iraq

#### Strategy:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "For Further Consideration" section and inform students that they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned readings.

**In class:** Start by asking students whether they agree with Bush's assertion that those responsible for 9/11 should be brought to justice. Next, ask students to share their answers to the Graphic Organizer question. When you have made sure that they understand the significance of these events, ask students to make the case for declaring war on Iraq. Provide an opportunity for students who oppose the war to give their opinions. Ask whether enough evidence existed to support each of the following reasons for war:

- a. Hussein had weapons of mass destruction he was planning to use against the United States.
- b. Hussein's agents played a significant role in planning and/or executing the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers.
- c. The people of Iraq would greet American troops as liberators.
- d. The U.S. was obliged to establish democracy in the Middle East.

Make sure that students who completed the "For Further Consideration" section reveal what they have learned from reading the description of the Iraq war.

If you have the time to allow for an extra day on this topic, assign students to research recent events in Iraq, share what they have learned with their classmates, and discuss the effects of the war on Iraq, the Middle East, and America's security.



## Chapter 15. President George W. Bush and the War in Iraq

### I-Chart

	<b>What were the reasons for the U.S. going to war against Iraq?</b>	<b>What were the reasons against going to war against Iraq?</b>	<b>How well did the U.S. succeed in accomplishing its objectives?</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 15, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 15, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to learn about the subject</b>			



## Chapter 15—President George W. Bush and the War in Iraq

**obligation****tranquil****empowered****factional  
fighting****alleged****prohibited****Shiite  
and Sunni****illicit****enclave**

Chapter 15—President George W. Bush and the War in Iraq

Opposing religious factions in Iraq. The Sunni, a minority, supported Saddam Hussein. The Shiites, a majority, were treated badly by Hussein.	Fighting among small groups	Something that must be done
Illegal	Claimed but not proven	Quiet
A small territory that is different from the rest; often refers to an area where an ethnic minority resides	Not allowed	Given the power or the authority to do something

## Chapter 15

# President George W. Bush and the War in Iraq

### Introduction

When George W. Bush took office in January 2001, the international world was fairly tranquil. Fighting had ceased in the Balkans, the former Soviet Union had been reduced to 16 separate republics, the civil war in Rwanda had ended, and the United States seemed safe from attack by foreign powers.

In his first months as president, Bush made obligatory trips to Mexico and Canada. In June 2001, he traveled to Europe, where he conferred with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and ended his trip with a get-acquainted meeting with Russian leader Vladimir Putin. After talking with the Russian president for 90 minutes, Bush reported that he had gotten a sense of “Putin’s soul” and found him to be straightforward and trustworthy.



Nearly three months later, on September 11, 2001, Americans stood in shock after Islamic terrorists hijacked two passenger airliners and deliberately steered them into the gigantic World Trade Center skyscrapers in New York City (also known as the “twin towers”). Terrorists also hijacked another plane and crashed it into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the U.S. Defense Department. A fourth plane, possibly headed for the White House or another target in the nation’s capital, crashed

in rural Pennsylvania after passengers fought the hijackers for control of the aircraft. Not counting the 19 hijackers, a total of 2974 people died in these horrific attacks. President Bush rallied the American people behind him, promising that, “Tonight, we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.”

This “just anger” led the United States to attack two countries that supposedly harbored terrorists. The initial attack came against Afghanistan. The rulers of Afghanistan, the Taliban, had harbored the terrorist organization Al Qaeda, who set up training camps there and plotted the 9/11 attacks. The second country, Iraq, was governed by Saddam Hussein, a ruthless dictator. The remainder of this chapter will examine Bush’s decision to wage war on Iraq and the consequences of that decision.

## **War with Iraq: The Decision**

You may recall that George H.W. Bush had waged war against Iraq following Hussein's naked aggression against oil-rich Kuwait. The Gulf War, as this conflict was called, ended on March 3, 1991 after six weeks of bombardments and 100 hours of ground combat. The agreement that ended the war reduced Hussein's ability to harm his neighbors or support international terrorism. Furthermore, Hussein promised to halt all attempts to develop nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons as well as the missiles needed to deliver them, and he agreed to destroy the supplies he had on hand. He also agreed to allow a United Nations team of inspectors "unconditional and unrestricted access" to any suspected weapons sites to check whether he had actually disarmed. In addition, Iraq was prohibited from selling oil or importing foreign goods until UN inspectors certified that the country had completely complied with its promises. Iraq committed itself to free Kuwaiti prisoners, return supplies looted from Kuwait, and end its (alleged) support for international terror. All of these restrictions were intended to protect the region and the world from Saddam Hussein.

## **Saddam Hussein Suppresses Domestic Rebellions**

As soon as Hussein's forces surrendered, spontaneous uprisings from Shiites in the south and Kurds in the north challenged his rule. With the Shiites unable to acquire weapons or receive expected help from the United States, Hussein's Republican Guard crushed the revolt.<sup>1</sup> Remnants of the Shiite uprising scattered and fled for their lives. In the north, Hussein's troops overwhelmed the Kurdish guerillas and entire Kurdish villages fled into high mountains. Some 700,000 Kurds survived only because the U.S. supplied tents and food rations. Eventually, the Kurds established a semi-autonomous state. However, Iraqi forces continued to harass them, and internal divisions arose, on several occasions blossoming into murderous factional fighting.

## **Hussein vs. the UN Inspection Team**

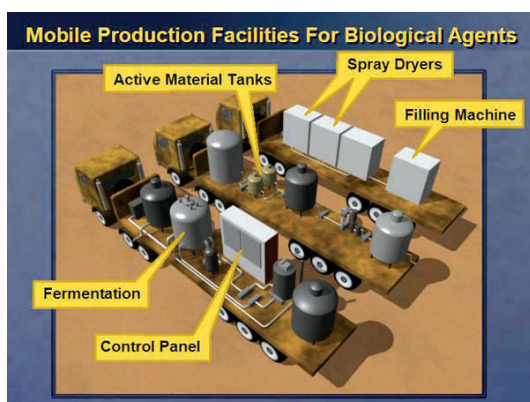
From the outset, it became clear that Hussein would not submit to the UN inspectors. The UN inspection team, known as the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq or UNSCOM, encountered opposition at every turn. The team members were greeted by gunshots fired over their heads shortly after arriving in Iraq. They held their ground and in a country twice the size of Idaho, received reluctant permission from the Iraqi government to begin their search for hidden weapons. A cat-and-mouse game followed over the next 12 years, typified by Hussein's denial that illicit weapons existed followed by revelations of documents and secret weapon caches that exposed these statements as false. Hussein cited excuses such as national security as justification for repeatedly denying inspectors access to suspected locations of weapons.

In a particularly intense confrontation, Iraqi officials denied inspectors access to

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<sup>1</sup> The Republican Guard was composed of elite regiments that had not been destroyed in the war; they were fiercely loyal to Hussein.

any of Hussein's numerous palaces that covered many square miles, claiming that they were "national treasures." At times, inspectors were expelled from Iraq and only allowed to return following threats of or actual bombing by American and British planes. When inspector Richard Butler insisted on inspecting a single site for further evidence of biological weapons, Hussein refused his request. Butler returned to UN headquarters and reported his difficulties to the Security Council. Iraq once more promised full compliance. Butler returned to Iraq, but he and his team of inspectors were again denied access to suspected sites. While he was reporting this behavior to the Security Council, the U.S. and Great Britain showed their displeasure by bombing suspected weapons sites. Iraq responded by stopping all inspections. Inspectors were not allowed back into Iraq for several years.



U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell used this illustration to claim that Hussein had hidden mobile production facilities for biological agents

## The Road to War

Nothing done under the leadership of President George H.W. Bush or his successor, President Bill Clinton, convinced the U.S. government that enough progress had been made to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction. When George W. Bush assumed office in January 2001, he brought a team of foreign policy experts with him who were determined to either get rid of Iraq's WMDs or rid Iraq and the world of Hussein entirely. Following the terrible events of 9/11, the war on terror became a front-burner issue in U.S.

politics. A seemingly successful war against the Taliban, who had permitted terrorist Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda followers to operate in Afghanistan, encouraged the Bush administration to look for other countries that supported international terrorism. Without convincing evidence, Bush accused Saddam Hussein of supporting Al Qaeda. The president suspected that the Iraqi dictator somehow had a hand in the 9/11 attacks. With the support of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Bush spoke to world leaders at the UN General Assembly and asked them to repel the "grave and gathering danger" of Iraq or to stand by and let the United States do it. Four days later, Hussein promised to allow UN weapons inspectors to return to Iraq and resume their work "without conditions." Three weeks before the 2002 midterm elections, a divided Congress voted to give Bush the power to go to war with Iraq if Hussein did not comply with UN resolutions.

Less than a month later, an inspection team headed by Hans Blix arrived in Baghdad. In February 2003, Blix delivered a report conceding that his inspectors had obtained more cooperation in accessing facilities. However, UN inspectors



Hans Blix<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Photo of Hans Blix from the IAEA Image Bank

still experienced harassment, and could not interview Iraqi scientists, employ aerial surveillance, or obtain answers to questions concerning undeclared materials. On February 5, 2003, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented the best evidence the U.S. had when he announced “that Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort to disarm as required by the international community.” Subsequent reports by UN inspectors indicated that cooperation by Iraqis had increased but remained insufficient. Significantly, they did not report any signs of nuclear-related activities. On March 7th, Blix added that he could not verify claims that Hussein was still hiding weapons.

Even without the March 7th report, Russia, Germany, and France became convinced that continuing inspections, would “lead to the full and effective disarmament of Iraq.” President Bush did not agree and warned Hussein that he had 48 hours in which to resign from his office or face war with the United States.

**The Case for and Against Going to War**

The Case for Going to War	The Case for Not Going to War
<p><b>1. President George W. Bush</b></p> <p>By its past and present actions, by its technological capabilities, by the merciless nature of its regime, Iraq is unique. As a former chief weapons inspector of the U.N. has said, “The fundamental problem with Iraq remains the nature of the regime, itself. Saddam Hussein is a homicidal dictator who is addicted to weapons of mass destruction.”</p> <p>We also must never forget the most vivid events of recent history. On September the 11th, 2001, America felt its vulnerability—even to threats that gather on the other side of the earth. We resolved then, and we are resolved today, to confront every threat, from any source, that could bring sudden terror and suffering to America.</p> <p>While there are many dangers in the world, the threat from Iraq stands alone—because it gathers the most serious dangers of our age in one place. Iraq’s weapons of mass</p>	<p><b>1. Historian Howard Zinn</b></p> <p>The fact that Iraq is a tyranny would not, in itself, constitute grounds for preemptive war. There are many tyrannies in the world, some kept in power by the United States. Saudi Arabia is only one example. That Iraq has cruelly attacked its Kurdish minority can hardly be a justification for war. After all, the United States remained silent, and indeed was a supporter of the Iraqi regime when it committed that act.</p> <p>Before Sept. 11 there was not the present excited talk about a strike on Iraq. Why would that event change the situation? There is no evidence of any connection between Iraq and that act of terrorism. Is it possible that the Bush administration is using the fear created by Sept. 11 to build support for a war on Iraq that otherwise has no legitimate justification?</p> <p>Other nations which killed hundreds of thousands of their own people (Indonesia,</p>



destruction are controlled by a murderous tyrant who has already used chemical weapons to kill thousands of people. This same tyrant has tried to dominate the Middle East, has invaded and brutally occupied a small neighbor...and holds an unrelenting hostility toward the United States.

Saddam Hussein is harboring terrorists and the instruments of terror, the instruments of mass death and destruction. And he cannot be trusted.

If we know Saddam Hussein has dangerous weapons today—and we do—does it make any sense for the world to wait to confront him as he grows even stronger and develops even more dangerous weapons?

Knowing these realities, America must not ignore the threat gathering against us. Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.

Guatemala) not only were not threatened with war, but received weapons from the United States.

Iraq's history of invading Kuwait is matched by other countries, among them the United States, which has invaded Vietnam, Cambodia, Grenada, and Panama.

True, Iraq may possess, may be developing “weapons of mass destruction.” But surely the possession of such weapons, if not used, does not constitute a clear and present danger justifying war.

Other nations have such weapons. Israel has nuclear weapons. Pakistan and India have nuclear weapons....And what country has by far the largest store of weapons of mass destruction in the world?

The talk of war has raised the question of American casualties, and rightly so. Are the lives of our young people to be expended in the dubious expectation that the demise of Saddam will bring democracy to Iraq? And what of the inevitable death of thousands of Iraqis?

## **2. Senator John McCain, September 12, 2002**

I am very certain that this military engagement will not be very difficult. It may entail the risk of American lives and treasure, but Saddam Hussein is vastly weaker than he was in 1991. He does not have the support of his people.

And I'd ask one question: What member of the Iraqi army is willing to die for Saddam Hussein when they know he's going to be taken out? So I don't think it's going to be nearly as difficult as some assume.

## **2. Senator Barack Obama, October 2, 2002**

I know that even a successful war against Iraq will require a U.S. occupation of undetermined length, at undetermined cost, with undetermined consequences. I know that an invasion of Iraq...will only fan the flames of the Middle East, and encourage the worst, rather than best, impulses of the Arab world, and strengthen the recruitment arm of Al Qaeda. I am not opposed to all wars. I'm opposed to dumb wars.

## Student Activities

### A. Graphic Organizer:

Explain the importance of the events in the appropriate place in the accompanying chart:

Event	Significance
September 11, 2001	
Bush's speech given on September 20, 2001	
Sanctions against Iraq	
Kurd and Shiite uprisings	
Hussein suppressing uprisings	
Presidential palaces	
Report made by Hans Blix	
Picture of portable bio laboratories	
Attitudes of Germany, Russia, and France	

**B. Student Essay**

Write an essay of no fewer than 150 words explaining whether the U.S. had sufficient reasons to attack Iraq in order to rid the Middle East and the world of Saddam Hussein.

## For Further Consideration: After Five Years of War

Shock and Awe! The strategy for a quick military victory in Iraq was to destroy the enemy's communications and its will to resist. To achieve this end, American generals planned an overpowering assault by U.S. planes and missiles accompanied by an effective land invasion by a coalition of America's allies. Operation Iraqi Freedom launched on March 20, 2003. It succeeded beyond expectations. Disheartened Iraqi soldiers discarded their uniforms and melted into the civilian population, surrendered, or fled. The Americans and the British suffered few casualties, and coalition forces achieved their military objectives without major losses.

Less than three weeks after the initial invasion, U.S. forces had made it to the heart of Baghdad, and on April 9, 2003, newspaper readers saw a picture meant to symbolize U.S. success in Iraq. It depicted Marines pulling down a statue of Hussein while a crowd of Iraqis cheered. Further analysis of the picture, however, showed that the crowd consisted of only 100 people.



The flight deck crew of the *USS Abraham Lincoln* salutes President Bush

Three weeks later, dressed in full Naval Air Force uniform, President Bush co-piloted a Navy bomber on to the decks of the *USS Abraham Lincoln* decorated with a banner proclaiming, "MISSION ACCOMPLISHED." "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended," the president declared, "in the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed."

Maybe the U.S. had won the war, but it hadn't yet achieved a lasting peace. Even before Bush's dramatic landing on the *USS Lincoln*, problems had begun to erupt. Left without a functioning government, the people in Baghdad and in other cities started an orgy of looting buildings and hospitals and removing priceless manuscripts and antiquities from the National Library and Museum. Only the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, guarded by American soldiers, was spared.

Meanwhile, Iraqis began to regard U.S. troops less as liberators and increasingly as an army of occupation. In a two-week time period ending on June 14, 2003, grenades and sniper fire killed nine Americans. As time went on and chaos reigned in the streets of Baghdad and other major cities, this small insurgency blossomed into a full-fledged guerrilla war. Jihadists from within and outside Iraq, former members of the Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party, deserters from the military, those with a grudge against neighbors, disgruntled Sunnis, unemployed youth, religious fanatics, and men as well as some women from various walks of life joined the insurgents. Suicide bombers, intending to kill and injure others, entered restaurants, joined lines of the unemployed, and responded to calls of police recruiters. Drivers of cars loaded with explosives stopped in front of stores, by open markets, next to apartment buildings, or

in the midst of traffic and detonated their vehicles with deadly results. Armed snipers fired at U.S. soldiers from well-concealed hideouts. Insurgents planted mines known as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) along roads and then detonated them by remote control as coalition force vehicles passed by.

Coalition soldiers became distracted from the job of liberating Iraqis and often had to focus solely on defending themselves. Eventually, soldiers became the cause and not just the objects of the rage directed against them. Innocent civilians whose homes soldiers searched for weapons, families of men arrested on mere suspicion, and families and friends of the innocent victims of misdirected fire all came to hate Americans. Finally, the stories of the mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison seemed to symbolize American insensitivity to the lives, values, and religious practices of Muslims. As insults and injuries—real or imagined, slight or exaggerated—piled up, Iraqis directed more and more hostility at the “infidels” whom they viewed as occupying Iraq.



U.S. soldiers Charles Graner and Sabrina Harman with Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison

## The Tragic Story of Fallujah

Few images have shocked Americans more than the sight of the charred and mutilated bodies of four U.S. contractors hung from a bridge in the Iraqi town of Fallujah while gleeful spectators cheered. Fallujah is a Sunni town of fewer than 300,000 that had formed its own government under a pro-American mayor when the war began. However, local citizens were disturbed when U.S. soldiers set up their headquarters in the center of town, took control of an Iraqi school, and imposed a curfew. A crowd gathered around the school demanding that it be returned to local authorities. Members of the crowd began throwing stones and Americans claimed others fired their guns at them:

One U.S. Army Sergeant said he just shot at what he saw. “And what I saw was targets,” he said. “Targets with weapons and they were going to harm me. It’s either them or me and I took the shot, sir, and I’m still here talking to you.”

More hostilities followed, but things quieted down after U.S. troops retreated to the outskirts of the town and left Fallujah to govern itself. Almost a year had passed when the horrifying incident involving the U.S. contractors occurred.

A large unit of U.S. Marines, accompanied by Iraqi soldiers, was sent to Fallujah to punish those responsible for the brutal killings of the four Americans. As they approached the city, Iraqi soldiers deserted. In the ensuing fight, the Marines lost 40

soldiers, and the insurgents lost more than ten times that number. The fighting lasted for most of the month and ended with American troops controlling half the city. In the following months, the insurgents imposed Shariah (Muslim) law in the sections they controlled. In November, the fighting started again, and before it ended, a total of 36,000 homes, 60 schools, and 65 mosques were destroyed; 90 percent of the population left the city.

Since the bloodshed of November 2004, the U.S. has made some progress in rebuilding Fallujah, as reported by an Associate Press writer in July 2006:



U.S. soldiers during the Second Battle of Fallujah, November 2004

FALLUJAH, Iraq (AP)—Clean water should flow to 80 percent of Fallujah's homes this fall, and by summer's end a planned wireless network will provide phone service and Internet access to thousands, a technological leap unimaginable just months ago...

Progress is mixed in Fallujah, the symbol of anti-American resistance until U.S. troops barreled through the city in November 2004 in the most intense urban combat of the Iraq war. Improvements have come, but slower than expected and on a smaller scale than planned.

City officials are still asking for more money to pay laborers to haul away seemingly endless piles of rubble. Still, U.S. officials say substantial advancements will become apparent this fall to the residents who have returned.<sup>3</sup>

## No Weapons of Mass Destruction Found

The issue's not inspectors. The issue is that [Saddam Hussein] has chemical weapons and he's used them. The issue is that he has and is developing biological weapons. The issue is that he's using nuclear weapons...He is actively pursuing nuclear weapons at this time...

—Vice President Dick Cheney, March 24, 2002

Two of the beliefs that led many Americans to support Bush's call for waging war on Iraq were: 1) Iraq was somehow responsible for destroying the World Trade

3 "Clean Water, Internet Coming Soon to Fallujah," The Associated Press, July 12th, 2006



Center and 2) Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and intended to use them against the U.S. No reliable evidence existed that Saddam Hussein had ties with Al Qaeda or played any part in the events of 9/11. According to the U.S. government's Iraq Survey Group (ISG) report issued in October 2004, Iraq's WMD program was destroyed during the Gulf War of 1991, and Hussein had discontinued Iraq's nuclear program at the same time.

## Progress Toward Democracy

Establishing a working democracy in Iraq was undoubtedly a priority for the U.S. "The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East," Bush told an audience five months before the invasion, "will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution." The president often declared that the United States had come to Iraq as a liberator and not as an occupier. In order to achieve this laudable goal, the U.S. instituted a three-stage plan to turn a country accustomed to cowering under the whip of a dictator into a functioning democratic state. The first step was to establish a civil authority under Iraqi leaders, but led by the U.S. The second step was to elect a legislature that would choose an interim prime minister, write a constitution, and prepare the country for a



Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Kamel al-Maliki shaking hands with U.S. soldiers

free and democratic election. The third step was to hold the election and let the elected National Assembly choose a prime minister who would appoint a cabinet for the Assembly to approve. A larger percent of eligible voters participated in the election for the National Assembly than had voted in the previous presidential election in the U.S. The Assembly then haggled for four months before deciding how to divide key cabinet posts between Shia, Kurd, and Sunni politicians. On May 20, 2006, Nouri Kamel al-Maliki finally took office as prime minister.

With Shiites and Sunnis seemingly taking turns killing one another, Maliki immediately attended to the growing problem of sectarian violence. He increased the number of policemen at various checkpoints, proposed pardoning insurgents who had not shed blood and were ready to lay down their weapons, and spoke in favor of starting a national dialogue between opposing factions. When violence seemed to increase instead of decline, Maliki warned that his plan was "the last opportunity...to avoid conflict and bloodshed," and admitted, "if we fail...I don't know what will be the destiny of Iraq."

**Prepare a written report on the Iraq War during the period from 2003 to 2008. Cite what you think are the most important facts, and based on what you have learned here and already know, explain whether the evidence indicates that the United States made the correct decision to go to war in Iraq. Come to class prepared to share your opinion, listen to the ideas of others, and either defend your own or change your thinking.**





## Chapter 16. Barack Obama: A Work in Progress

### Teacher Page

#### Overview:

This chapter was written just four months after Barack Obama became president and can do little more than provide a summary of his life and his successful presidential campaign. Rather than list Obama's achievements while in office, this chapter identifies the problems he faced. In addition, the chapter provides students with a list of Obama's important campaign promises under such headings as "Economic and Fiscal Policies," "Foreign Policy," "Health Care," and "Energy and Environment."<sup>1</sup> Students are asked to select five promises made by Obama and to write a few sentences explaining whether or not they think these proposals would be good for the country. The "For Further Consideration" section asks students to read and respond to Obama's statements of how to handle the large number of foreign policy problems he inherited from previous administrations.

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- become familiar with Obama's remarkable life story and successful campaign to become president
- understand the problems confronting the U.S. when Obama became president
- discuss their opinions about the Obama programs

#### Strategy:

**Before class:** Assign the chapter either up to or including the "Further Consideration" section. Inform students they will be expected to write their answers to all the Student Activities questions covering the assigned section(s).

**During class:** Start by asking students what they think of Barack Obama in general and what they believe was unique about his life's journey. Proceed by having students ask for your help in understanding Obama's campaign promises and review how much money was spent on the bailout and stimulus packages. Have students share their thoughts about Obama's campaign promises and whether they think they would benefit America. Continue by asking students who read the "For Further Consideration" section to tell their classmates what they learned from doing some research. If you have access to the Internet in class, you can browse PoliticalFact.com's "Obameter" by subject and learn which of Obama's proposals were implemented, rejected, compromised, in the works, or stalled. Be sure to tell students doing this research to press the "more" icon.

<sup>1</sup> The list is based on a campaign document titled "Obama and Biden's Plan for America: Blueprint for Change" and PoliticalFact.com's "Obameter" (<http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/promises/>).

## Chapter 16. Barack Obama: A Work in Progress

### I-Chart

	<b>Obama's early life and political career</b>	<b>Obama's campaign promises</b>	<b>How well Obama has succeeded in carrying out his promises</b>
<b>What I already know</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 16, Part I</b>			
<b>What I learned from Chapter 16, Part II</b>			
<b>What I would still like to learn about this subject</b>			

Chapter 16—Barack Obama: A Work in Progress

<b>keynote speaker</b>	<b>“palled around”</b>	<b>extract</b>
<b>prestigious</b>	<b>aspirants</b>	<b>deploy</b>
<b>community organizer</b>	<b>capitalize</b>	<b>Earned Income Tax Credit</b>

## Chapter 16—Barack Obama: A Work in Progress

Person who gives the most important speech at a meeting or conference	Having a very good reputation	Person who works in a community helping poor people help themselves
Hung around with someone who is a friend	People who want to obtain something	To take advantage of
To take something out, sometimes by force	To put something in place where it can be used	A payment instead of a tax to make a poor person somewhat better off

## Chapter 16

# Barack Obama: A Work in Progress

### Introduction

Barack Hussein Obama, the first African American to be elected President of the United States, is the son of a white woman from Kansas and a black man from Kenya. He was born in Hawaii and lived in Indonesia for four years before returning to his birth state. He graduated from Columbia University, spent several years as a community organizer in Chicago, attended Harvard Law School (where he presided over the prestigious *Harvard Review*), and returned to Chicago after graduating with highest honors. In the “Windy City,” he joined a law firm that specialized in civil rights cases and taught law at the University of Chicago. He served in the Illinois legislature for seven years and successfully campaigned for a seat in the U.S. Senate in 2004. During the same year he was asked to be the keynote speaker at the Democratic convention and, in the speech that made him famous, he thrilled his audience by declaring “there is not a liberal America and a conservative America; there is the United



Obama and his family after announcing his candidacy for president

States of America.” In November 2007, Obama decided to capitalize on his fame and declare himself a candidate for president. In a well-planned campaign backed by a record financial war chest and fueled by his inspiring speeches, Obama defeated a field of eight aspirants for the nomination. His main opponent was Hillary Clinton, wife of former President Bill Clinton, who hoped to become America’s first female president. John McCain, Obama’s Republican

opponent in the general election, chose a relatively unknown Alaskan governor, Sarah Palin, as his running mate. She spiced up the election campaign by appealing to the Republican base with charges that Obama advocated socialist policies and had “palled around” with William Ayers, who had formerly been part of an American terrorist group known as the Weather Underground. Despite these attacks, Obama won the election by a fairly comfortable margin—53 percent of the popular votes compared to McCain’s 46 percent—and an overwhelming majority of the electoral vote.

On the day president-elect Obama swore his oath to uphold the Constitution, he and his country faced a host of serious problems both foreign and domestic. At home, he inherited a failing economy teetering between a recession and a full-fledged depression. Unemployment stood at a 25-year high at 7.6 percent, 600,000 Americans lost their jobs every month, 265,000 homeowners received foreclosure notices in a single month, and giant brokerage houses and banks stood on the verge of bankruptcy, requiring \$517 billion in bailout loans to sustain them. In the worst week in its history, the Dow Jones stock market average lost 22.1 percent of its value. Overseas, the United States was actively involved in two wars, a belligerent Iran was on the verge of

developing nuclear weapons, and a hostile North Korea probably already had them. In the face of all these problems an all-time high number of 83 percent of those polled said that the country was “headed in the wrong direction.”

This chapter was written barely four months after Obama assumed office. It is therefore impossible at the time of this writing to know how successfully he dealt with the problems that faced him or how he handled events that challenged him in the future. You will be presented with a few of the many promises made by Obama in a campaign document called “Blueprint for Change.” You will be asked how well he has kept these promises.

## **Economy and Taxes**

- Enact a plan for immediate relief for the economy<sup>2</sup>
- Protect and promote home ownership
- Invest in manufacturing sector and create five million new “green” jobs (see Energy and Environment)
- Cut taxes for middle-class families, veterans, and senior citizens, and expand EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit)
- Repeal the Bush tax cut for wealthy Americans
- Pay for new government programs by increasing taxes or making cuts in other programs

## **Defense**

- Withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq in a responsible manner, preferably within 16 months after taking office
- Deploy an additional 17,000 troops to Afghanistan
- Cooperate with allies to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and North Korea from expanding its weapons program

## **Energy and Environment**

- Raise fuel economy requirements significantly
- Encourage use of renewable energy
- Create five million “green” jobs
- Reduce greenhouse gasses by 80 percent by 2050 under a “cap and trade” system

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<sup>2</sup> After much wrangling with Republicans, Congress passed a \$787 billion stimulus package in March 2009. It included \$215 billion dollars in tax cuts, \$116 billion in medical care (mainly to help states pay their obligations), \$123 billion for education and job training, \$51 billion for energy and the environment, \$45 billion for transportation, \$41 billion for the unemployed, \$21 billion for food assistance, and \$11 billion for direct state aid. This did not include the money spent to bail out large banks and brokerage houses, as well as the money intended to help automakers G.M. and Chrysler avoid bankruptcy.

**Health Care**

- Sign a universal health care bill providing affordable health insurance for all Americans

**Education**

- Extend Head Start programs to prepare disadvantaged students for school
- Fully fund No Child Left Behind, improve assessment techniques, and support public schools that need improvement
- Increase financial aid to make public, private, and community colleges affordable

**Miscellaneous**

- End the use of torture to extract information from prisoners
- Protect a woman's right to choose
- End funding for abstinence-only sex education
- Allow gays and lesbians to openly serve in the military
- Assure couples in civil unions the same rights as married couples

## Student Activities

### A. Student Exercises:

1. Select five proposals that interest you and write two sentences about each, explaining why you think it would or would not be good for the country.
2. Give an overall evaluation of President Obama's campaign promises and write a few sentences explaining why you believe one of the following:
  - a. Obama has made promises that he will be unable to keep and should not have made.
  - b. Obama has made a large number of campaign promises that will help the country in many different ways.
  - c. Obama is trying to do too many things for the people of this country that they should be doing for themselves.



## For Further Consideration: Obama's Foreign Policy

At the time he took office, President Obama faced an incredible number of foreign problems in addition to the domestic problems already discussed. Many 20th-century presidents had, for the most part, concentrated on a single foreign policy issue, such as the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the war in Vietnam, the invasion of Kuwait, or the danger allegedly posed by Iraq. In contrast, Obama faced an unusually large number of challenges. The Iraq war was winding down, but the U.S. still had 130,000 soldiers there. Its neighbor, Iran, was thought to be on the verge of developing nuclear weapons that would pose a threat to Israel. The Palestinians, longing for a country of their own, still would not recognize Israel's right to exist, and the Israelis would not stop building settlements on land they had taken from the Palestinians. In Asia, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban had the upper hand in the war in Afghanistan and threatened to destabilize Pakistan. The danger of terrorism by Muslim extremists continued to threaten the U.S., its allies, and other countries. In addition to these major threats to America's security, North Korea probably possessed nuclear weapons, most Africans were living in misery, and much of the world economy lay in shambles.

Obama's approach to all of these problems can be summarized in his own words. Read what he had to say and be prepared to decide whether you agree with his approach to America's security and values.

### In His Own Words

#### **In General**

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy.

To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.

#### **On Pakistan and Afghanistan**

So I want the American people to understand that we have a clear and focused goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future. That's the goal that must be achieved. That is a cause that could not be more just.

### **On Iraq**

By August 31, 2010, our combat mission in Iraq will end and Iraqi Security Forces will have full responsibility for major combat missions. After August 31, 2010, the mission of United States forces in Iraq will fundamentally change. Our forces will have three tasks: train, equip, and advise the Iraqi Security Forces; conduct targeted counterterrorism operations; and provide force protection for military and civilian personnel. The president intends to keep our commitment under the Status of Forces Agreement to remove all of our troops from Iraq by the end of 2011.

### **On the Israel and the Palestinians**

For decades then, there has been a stalemate: two peoples with legitimate aspirations, each with a painful history that makes compromise elusive. It's easy to point fingers—for Palestinians to point to the displacement brought about by Israel's founding, and for Israelis to point to the constant hostility and attacks throughout its history from within its borders as well as beyond. But if we see this conflict only from one side or the other, then we will be blind to the truth: The only resolution is for the aspirations of both sides to be met through two states, where Israelis and Palestinians each live in peace and security.

### **On Iran and Nuclear Weapons**

I recognize it will be hard to overcome decades of mistrust, but we will proceed with courage, rectitude, and resolve. There will be many issues to discuss between our two countries, and we are willing to move forward without preconditions on the basis of mutual respect. But it is clear to all concerned that when it comes to nuclear weapons, we have reached a decisive point. This is not simply about America's interests. It's about preventing a nuclear arms race in the Middle East that could lead this region and the world down a hugely dangerous path.

**After reading these quotations from President Obama, select two, and in a paragraph or two explain why you agree or disagree with them. Come to class prepared to share your opinion, listen to the ideas of others, and either defend your own or change your thinking.**