

Vietnam War

Defending democracy: responses to fascism and communism [USII.T3]



Summarize the diplomatic and military policies on the War in Vietnam of Presidents Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon and explain the intended and unintended consequences of the Vietnam War the Vietnamese and Americans.

United States and globalization [USII.T5]

Using primary sources such as campaign literature and debates, news articles/analyses, editorials, and television coverage, analyze the important policies and events that took place during the presidencies of John F. Kennedy (e.g., the confrontation with Cuba over missile bases, the space exploration program, Kennedy's assassination), Lyndon Johnson (the Great Society programs, the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, the Vietnam War and anti-war movements, the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy), and Richard Nixon (the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, diplomacy with China, détente with the Soviet Union, the Watergate scandal, and Nixon's resignation).

The Cold War Era, 1945–1991 [WHII.T5]

Evaluate the importance of key military and political developments on the outcome of the Cold War. Students may use one of the following example to address this standard:
The policy of containment and its relation to the Korean War and the Vietnam War

Essential Questions:

1. What factors contributed to widespread US involvement in Vietnam, both before and during the conflict?
2. What responsibilities do nations have in helping provide for a peaceful world order?

Overview:

The United States' involvement in the Vietnam War was a significant and controversial period in American history. Beginning in the 1950s, the US provided financial, military, and logistical support to the South Vietnamese government, which was fighting against communist forces in North Vietnam. Over time, American involvement increased, with US troops being sent to Vietnam in large numbers by the mid-1960s. The war dragged on for over a decade, with the US employing a variety of tactics, including bombing campaigns and search and destroy missions, to defeat the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army.

The Vietnam War proved to be a costly and divisive conflict for the US, both in terms of human life and financial resources. Despite being one of the most powerful military forces in the world, the US struggled to achieve victory in Vietnam, with the conflict eventually ending in a stalemate. The war sparked widespread protests and opposition, with many Americans questioning

the morality and strategic value of US involvement in Vietnam. Ultimately, the Vietnam War had a profound impact on American society and politics, shaping attitudes towards foreign intervention and the role of the military in American life for years to come.

Materials:

Story Boards

Reader rails

Hoa Lo Prison (Hanoi Hilton) Exhibit

Activity Procedure:

Warm-up: Direct the students to read the Story board regarding the Vietnam war and become familiar with the map of SE Asia. Ask the students what they know about the conflict and why they think it began. Discuss the answers with them.

Assignment:

1. Divide the class into pairs or small groups.
2. Assign each group to a section of the exhibit:
 - a. Prisoners Interactive Display,
 - b. The Interrogation Room Video
 - c. The Prison Cell
 - d. The Operation Homecoming Display
3. Instruct the students at each station to gather information from the primary/secondary sources related to the Hanoi Hilton and ask students to analyze them, taking into account the context in which they were produced. Encourage students to ask questions and draw conclusions based on the evidence they find in the sources. Be prepared to report out 1 or 2 key notes that the group found interesting in their research (10-15 min)
4. Reconvene the groups and have them report their findings from their perspective areas.
5. Lead a discussion about what they learned from the Hanoi Hilton exhibit experience and how their understanding of the Hanoi Hilton and American POWs has been effected through this interaction.



Hanoi Hilton exhibit

Conclusion:

Allow students to ask any follow up questions and discussions based upon that they learned from the exercise.