

Cold War and Global Transformations Unit 9 Overview: World History II, 10th Grade

Driving Concept 6: World Wars (1870–1945)

In this driving concept students will evaluate the roles of nationalism and imperialism in global conflict in the 20th century. Students will analyze the causes, course and consequence of World War I and World War II, including the impact of genocide, migration, and new nation states. Students should analyze the ways in which these conflicts differed from prior global conflicts including the impact of the extreme violence of modern war, the global scale of politics and interconnectedness of people around the world, the increased impact of international politics on ordinary people, and the impact of mass political and ideological movements such as fascism, communism, anti-colonialism and suffragism.

Driving Concept 7: Cold War, Decolonization and Nation Building

Through this driving concept, students will evaluate the causes and consequence of major changes in global politics and social structures throughout the second half of the 20th century. Students will evaluate the contextual factors that influenced the Cold War. Students will also analyze the Chinese Communist Revolution and the process of decolonization, including the Partition of India. They will also explore the role of different leaders and movements in promoting African unity and independence, as well as the experiences of revolutionary movements in Central America and the Caribbean. In addition, students will examine the complex factors that contribute to unequal development, neocolonialism, and political and economic issues in developing nations.

Essential Question

How did revolutionary and anti-colonial movements for sovereignty and justice intersect with Cold War political agendas and rivalries?

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About This Unit

Unit 9: Cold War and Global Transformations examines how the global struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union shaped political, social, and revolutionary movements around the world from the late 1940s through the 1980s. The unit begins by exploring the onset of the Cold War, focusing on the competing ideologies of capitalism and communism, early tensions in Europe and Asia, and the emergence of U.S. containment policy. Students then examine how decolonization and nationalist movements in Africa and Asia intersected with Cold War rivalries, as new nations fought for sovereignty and faced pressure to align with one of the two superpowers. In the second half of the unit, students analyze revolutionary movements in countries, learning how internal resistance efforts became part of broader ideological battles. Finally, the unit focuses on Cold War confrontations and proxy wars, evaluating how global power struggles were experienced through civil wars, foreign interventions, and long-term conflict. Through the final assessment, a curated research paper, students will compare the strategies, motivations, and global impact of the U.S. and USSR during the Cold War, using primary and secondary sources to evaluate how each superpower shaped world affairs and influenced the pursuit of sovereignty and justice across different regions.

Use the Best Practices Repository for information on implementing every strategy and lesson activity!

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Priority Standards	
2.49	Evaluate the causes and consequences of dissent, disruption and resistance to colonization across Africa, including Ethiopia in the 19th and 20th centuries.
2.50	Evaluate the methods of and resistance to European colonialism in one society within Southeast Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries.
2.64	Analyze political, economic and social changes in the 1920s, including the rise of communism, the dismantling of Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and German empires, the Irish Civil War, the Chinese Civil War and the nationalization of countries in Latin America.
2.70	Analyze the short- and long-term economic, political, environmental and social consequences of World War II.
2.71	Compare the ideologies of socialism, communism, fascism and liberal democracy, and explain the reasons for their growth and decline around the world in the 20th century.
2.72	Evaluate the shift in global power dynamics after World War II and the reasons for the start of the Cold War.
2.74	Evaluate the campaign for Independence in India and the factors that led to the establishment of Indian sovereignty, including the reasons for and impact of the Partition of India.
2.75	Analyze the impact of the Chinese Communist Revolution on China, the world and the global spread of communism, including its historical background, political and economic developments, and the relationship between Taiwan and China.
2.76	Compare the approaches of different leaders in promoting African unity and independence in the 20th century, including the impact of the Pan-African movement on African nations and communities globally.
2.77	Evaluate the causes and impact of at least two African independence movements, such as those in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Kenya, Ghana, Algeria or Nigeria.
2.78	Analyze the impact of the struggle for economic autonomy, political sovereignty and social justice that led to revolutions in Guatemala, Cuba or Nicaragua.

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Priority Standards

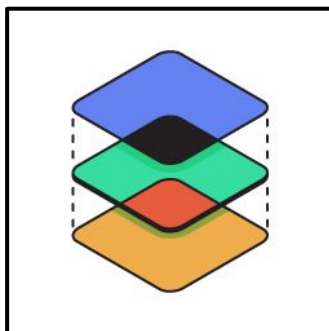
2.80	Evaluate the causes and consequences of proxy wars during the Cold War from the perspective of the inhabitants of Afghanistan, North and South Korea or Vietnam.
2.82	Analyze the causes and effects of the Iranian Revolution, and evaluate its impact on Iran and the global community.
2.83	Analyze the environmental impact of nuclear weapons, and evaluate the effectiveness of historic and modern efforts to limit nuclear arms.
2.84	Evaluate the reasons for rise of populist leaders in Guatemala, Argentina, Bolivia or Chile, and analyze the impact of American intervention on civil liberties and economic conditions in Latin America.
2.85	Analyze economic exploitation during the Cold War and decolonization eras, and evaluate the efficacy of different forms of resistance.

Additional Standards

2.52	Analyze the effects and legacy of settler colonialism in Kenya and Australia, including the displacement and marginalization of indigenous peoples, the exploitation of natural resources and the suppression of traditional cultural practices, and analyze the role of resistance movements on the struggle for independence and self-determination.
2.73	Evaluate the major ideological and economic distinctions between the Eastern and Western blocs, and explore the contextual factors that influenced the Cold War, including the non-aligned movement and the role of small non-aligned nations throughout the 20th century.
2.79	Evaluate the efficacy of the ideologies and methodologies of at least three nationalist leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh.
2.81	Analyze the reasons for the rise of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and analyze the course and consequences of the Cambodian Genocide.

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Unit Preview		
<i>Subtopic(s)</i>	<i>Compelling Question</i>	<i>Standard(s)</i>
Onset of the Cold War	In what ways did different visions for the post-World War II world lead to a new global conflict?	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 7.73, 2.75, 2.83
Decolonization & Nationalism	How did people in formerly colonized regions fight to reclaim control over their futures?	2.49, 2.50, 2.52, 2.64, 2.74, 2.75, 2.76, 2.77, 2.78, 2.79, 2.85
Global Revolutions	How did revolutions during the Cold War reflect and reshape both global conflict and local life?	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.78, 2.81, 2.82, 2.84
Confrontations & Proxy Wars	To what extent were Cold War conflicts expressions of internal resistance rather than external manipulation?	2.50, 2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.73, 2.75, 2.78, 2.79, 2.80, 2.85
Assessment: Curated Research Paper		All unit standards



Unit Focus Skill: Comparison

Thinking historically means identifying both the similarities and the differences between the people, places, events, and ideas studied in history.

The Onset of the Cold War: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 1 (90 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 2 (120 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	How did the Cold War become a global struggle for power, ideas, and survival in the nuclear age?	How did power global power struggles impact political developments in China compared to Europe?
STANDARD(S)	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 7.73, 2.83	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.73, 2.75
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Contextualization Causation Comparison	Contextualization Causation Comparison
DO FIRST	Frayer: Cold War Notice, Wonder, Think	Frayer: Iron Curtain Quote Analysis
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 1: Supporting Questions	The Cold War's First Battlegrounds Guided Notes
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	"What is the Context?" - Onset of the Cold War	Gallery Walks
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	Onset of the Cold War Webquest	Timeline Project
CONCLUSION	Comparison Graphic Organizer	Unit 9 Inquiry Journal Topic 1: Compelling Question

Decolonization & Nationalism: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 3 (90 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 4 (120 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 5 (60 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	How did religious and political tensions shape the outcome of India's independence movement?	In what ways did Pan-Africanism influence independence strategies across different African nations?	What arguments did postcolonial leaders use to support their nationalist visions for the future of their countries?
STANDARD(S)	2.74, 2.79, 2.85	2.49, 2.52, 2.76, 2.77, 2.79, 2.85	2.50, 2.64, 2.75, 2.78, 2.79
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Contextualization Historical Significance Perspective	Contextualization Causation Comparison	Contextualization Evaluating Evidence Comparison
DO FIRST	Frayer: Decolonization Vocabulary Matching	Frayer: Pan-Africanism Scenario Response	Frayer: Sovereignty Quote Analysis
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 2: Supporting Questions	African Independence Movements Guided Notes	Decolonization and Nationalism Triumphant Video Introduction
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	Advanced Organizer	Document Jigsaw	Evaluating Evidence Graphic Organizer
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	Silent Discussion	Inside/Outside Circle	Classroom Mingle
CONCLUSION	†Form Assessment - Gandhi - PER	Comparison Graphic Organizer	Unit 9 Inquiry Journal Topic 2: Compelling Question



Global Revolutions: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 6 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 7 (90 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	In what ways did revolutionary movements respond to both local and global pressures?	What makes a revolution historically significant?
STANDARD(S)	2.70, 2.78. 2.81, 2.82, 2.84	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.78. 2.81, 2.82, 2.84
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Contextualization Causation	Causation Historical Significance Comparison
DO FIRST	Frayer: Domino Theory Prediction	Frayer: Populism Give One, Get One
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 3: Supporting Questions	Significance of Cold War Revolutions Group Work
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	"What is the Context?" - Cold War Revolutions	You Be the Judge Class Discussion
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	†Document Analysis: Pāyandeh Bādā Irān (THINKS)	Final Verdict
CONCLUSION	Exit Ticket: DOK Question Generation	Unit 9 Inquiry Journal Topic 3: Compelling Question

Confrontations & Proxy Wars: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 8 (90 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 9 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 10 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 11 (60 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	How did the Korean War reflect Cold War rivalries?	In what ways did Cuba become a site of Cold War conflict?	How did foreign powers shape the outcome of the Vietnam War?	Why was Afghanistan a key site of Cold War rivalry?
STANDARD(S)	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.75, 2.80	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.78, 2.85	2.50, 2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.79, 2.80	2.70, 2.71, 2.72, 2.73, 2.80
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Contextualization Perspective Continuity and Change Over Time	Contextualization Continuity and Change Over Time Causation	Contextualization Perspective	Contextualization Causation Comparison
DO FIRST	Frayer: Proxy War Evaluate the Claim	Frayer: Containment Anticipatory Guide	Frayer: Partition Notice, Wonder, Think	Frayer: Geopolitics A-Z Guide
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 4: Supporting Questions	Guided Notes	"What is the Context?" - Vietnam War	Rainbow Highlighting
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	Advanced Organizer	Classroom Mingle & Continuity & Change Over Time Graphic Organizer	Perspectives of the Vietnam War Stations	Reduce it!
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	Perspectives of the Korean War Webquest	Review Anticipatory Guide (Optional)	NA	Comparison Graphic Organizer
CONCLUSION	Exit Ticket: Quickwrite	*Form Assessment - Cuban Missile Crisis - CAU	Exit Ticket: Triangle, Square, Circle	Unit 9 Inquiry Journal Topic 4: Compelling Question



Assessment: Topic Overview

	LESSON 12 (60 MINS)	<u>+LESSON 13 (210 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	Place-Based Lesson Extension <i>See page 11 for lesson options and view Best Practice Repository for additional information about implementation</i>	Compare the approaches taken by the United States and the Soviet Union in their efforts to retain power and control during the period of the Cold War.
STANDARD(S)		All unit standards
FOCUS SKILL(S)		Contextualization Comparison
DO FIRST		Global Cold War CRP Introduction
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH		Contextualization and Relevance of the Global Cold War
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE		Document Analysis & Essay Outline
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT		Essay Creation
CONCLUSION		CRP Self-Assessment and Essay Submission

Place Based Lesson Extension

	LESSON 12 (60 MINS)
SUPPORTING QUESTION	
STANDARD(S)	
FOCUS SKILL(S)	
DO FIRST	
OPTION 1 - PODCAST	
OPTION 2 - SYNCHRONOUS PRESENTATION	
OPTION 3 - FIELD TRIP	
CONCLUSION	Unit 9 Inquiry Journal Essential Question

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Unit Commentary:

Unit 9: Cold War and Global Transformations provides students with the opportunity to investigate how the ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union shaped political movements, revolutions, and national identities across the globe during the second half of the 20th century. The unit centers on the historical thinking skill of comparison, helping students trace the complex connections between global events and local experiences.

Topic 1 introduces the onset of the Cold War, where students analyze the differing post–World War II visions of the U.S. and USSR. Through case studies in Europe and China, students consider how early Cold War tensions escalated into a global standoff, and how containment, alliances, and ideology played out on the world stage.

Topic 2 turns to decolonization and nationalism, exploring the collapse of European empires and the rise of independence movements in Asia and Africa. Students analyze how movements in India, Kenya, Ghana, Algeria, and beyond intersected with Cold War rivalries, and how new nations navigated their sovereignty while facing pressure to align with either the capitalist or communist bloc. These lessons highlight the interplay between anti-colonial resistance and global ideological agendas.

Topic 3 focuses on global revolutions, examining how Cold War tensions helped ignite—or intensify—revolutionary movements in countries like Cuba, Iran, Cambodia, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. Students evaluate how revolutionary leaders responded to both internal injustices and international pressures, and how these revolutions reflected broader struggles over economic autonomy, political sovereignty, and social justice.

Topic 4 investigates Cold War confrontations and proxy wars, where students examine conflicts in Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. These lessons emphasize how global superpower rivalry played out through local civil wars, revolutions, and military interventions. Students explore the experiences of local inhabitants, resistance fighters, and global leaders, ultimately questioning the balance between internal agency and external manipulation.

The summative assessment for the unit is a curated research paper in which students compare the approaches and impacts of the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Drawing on a wide range of primary and secondary sources, students will analyze how each superpower shaped revolutionary movements, independence struggles, and global conflict. This assessment helps students synthesize the unit’s essential questions and develop historical arguments rooted in evidence.

Throughout the unit, students are asked to reflect on the significance of ideology, resistance, and power in shaping world history. They examine the ways in which Cold War rivalries intersected with local struggles, and consider how the legacy of these conflicts continues to shape international relations and national identities today.



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Suggested Readings and Helpful Resources:

For information on:

- [The Cold War: National WWII Museum of New Orleans](#)
- [US Involvement in the Cold War: JFK Library](#)
- [US Involvement in the Cold War: National Archives](#)
- Winston Churchill – *Iron Curtain Speech* (1946)
- Joseph Stalin – *Response to Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech* (1946)
- Harry Truman – *Truman Doctrine Speech* (1947)
- George Kennan – *The Long Telegram* (1946)
- John F. Kennedy – *Cuban Missile Crisis Speech* (1962)
- Nikita Khrushchev – *Letter to Kennedy During Cuban Missile Crisis* (1962)
- Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964)
- Soviet Report on U.S. Intervention in Afghanistan (1979)
- Jawaharlal Nehru – *Speech on Non-Alignment* (1956)
- Kwame Nkrumah – *Speech on African Socialism and Imperialism* (1960)
- Ho Chi Minh – *Declaration of Independence of Vietnam* (1945)
- President Sukarno's speech at the opening of the Bandung Conference (1955)
- Gaddis, John Lewis. *The Cold War: A New History* (2005)
- Kennan, George F. *The Sources of Soviet Conduct* (1947)
- Leffler, Melvyn P. *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (2007)
- Young, Marilyn B. *The Vietnam Wars: 1945-1990* (1991)
- Gilmour, David. *The British Empire: A History* (2019)
- Hobsbawm, Eric J. *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (1994)
- [Murray State University. Cold War Secondary Sources.](#)

Unit Pedagogical Resources:

- What is Comparison? Guide
- What is Comparison? Video

Museum Component:

- Optional Field Trip: Korean War Veterans Memorial