

Essential Questions and Answers... The Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1958

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. What was the Cold War?	A period of enormous tension between the 2 superpowers (USA and USSR) and their allies, 1945-1991. There was no direct fighting between the USA and USSR (a hot war).
2. What were their different ideologies? (Ideas about how to run a country.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The USA was capitalist and democratic. They believed in free elections with a choice of political parties and more freedom for their people (democratic). People could own their own companies (capitalist). The USSR (or Soviet Union) was communist. There were no free elections-only one political party was allowed. The people had few freedoms. The country owned all industry (factories and companies).
3. How did their different ideologies help cause the Cold War?	After World War Two, the USSR thought the USA wanted to destroy communism. The USA thought the USSR wanted to destroy capitalism and democracy and spread communism. They were scared of each other and didn't trust each other.
4. What was the Grand Alliance ?	The name given to the USA, USSR and Great Britain who were the allies fighting Nazi Germany in World War Two.
5. What happened at the Tehran Conference in November 1943?	<p>The 'Big Three', Roosevelt (USA), Churchill (Britain) and Stalin (USSR), met to plan how to win World War Two. They agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The USA and GB would launch an attack on Germany from Western Europe to ease pressure on the USSR on the Eastern Front. The USSR would provide troops to help the USA defeat Japan (but only after Germany had been defeated). A United Nations organisation would be set up after the war. <p>Stalin and Roosevelt got on well. Roosevelt sided with Stalin in the decisions, not with Churchill.</p>
6. When was the Yalta Conference ?	February 1945, before World War Two had ended.
7. Who went to the Yalta Conference?	The 'Big Three': Roosevelt (USA), Churchill (Britain) and Stalin (USSR).
8. What did they agree at the Yalta Conference?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To divide Germany into 4 zones (once it had been defeated). Britain, France, the USA and the USSR would get a zone each to 'look after' until Germany had recovered after WWII. Berlin (the capital of Germany) was also divided into 4 zones. The USSR agreed to allow free elections in Poland and other Eastern European countries (the countries its army had freed from Germany in the war). Germany would pay reparations once they were defeated.
9. When was the Potsdam Conference ?	July 1945. War in Europe was over but the war in the Pacific (against Japan) was still going on.
10. Who went to the Potsdam Conference?	Stalin (USSR), Truman (USA) and Attlee (Britain).
11. What did they agree at the Potsdam Conference?	Many of the plans from Yalta were finalised e.g. the 4 zones and reparations.
12. What did they argue about at the Potsdam Conference?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of reparations Germany should pay. The USSR wanted more, the USA and Britain wanted less because they thought a stronger Germany could be a buffer (a block) to the spread of communism. Poland: the USSR had not allowed free elections there and had arrested non-communists. The atom bomb: Truman did not tell Stalin the USA had the A bomb and planned to use it on Japan. This angered Stalin.
13. What effect did the USA's atom bombs have?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The USA dropped 2 bombs: 1 on Hiroshima (which killed 135 000 people) and 1 on Nagasaki (which killed 70 000 people). This caused Japan to surrender, ending WWII. It angered and scared the USSR. Stalin thought the USA might use the atom bomb against the USSR.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It started the arms race.
14. What were the Long and Novikov telegrams ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Long telegram was sent by George Kennan, an important American diplomat, to President Truman. It said the USSR was aggressive and that the USA should take firm action against Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe. The Novikov telegram was sent by the Soviet ambassador to the USA to Stalin. It said America wanted world dominance and was increasing its armed forces. Both telegrams helped create suspicion and fear between the USA and the USSR.
15. Where did communism spread to in Eastern Europe?	Communist governments were set up (between 1945-1948) in countries in Eastern Europe that were occupied by the Soviet Union's army e.g. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany.
16. How did this help cause the Cold War?	The USA was angry because the USSR had not allowed free elections in these countries (as they had agreed at Yalta). The USA was scared because communism was spreading quickly in Europe. The USSR wanted friendly countries near them (as a buffer) as they were scared the USA wanted to destroy communism.
17. What was the Iron Curtain ?	A nickname given by Winston Churchill to the divide between communist and capitalist countries in Europe. It was a political and economic division, not a physical divide.
18. What was the Truman Doctrine ?	An American plan to help any country threatened by communism. It was shared in a speech in March 1947 by President Truman. It was designed to stop communism spreading (called containment).
19. Which countries did the USA help through the Truman Doctrine?	Greece and Turkey. The USA gave them \$400 million of aid. This helped them defeat the communists. The USA was then allowed to put missile sites on Turkey on the border with the USSR. This scared the USSR as they did not have nuclear weapons yet.
20. What was the Marshall Plan ?	An American plan to help countries recover in Europe after WWII. Marshall Aid (\$15 billion) was given to 16 countries e.g. Britain and West Germany. It came in the form of products, like machinery and fertilisers.
21. Why did the USA give Marshall Aid to Europe?	Because they wanted to stop communism spreading any further in Europe. They thought poor countries were more likely to become communist so, by making countries richer they were stopping communism spreading.
22. How did the Marshall Plan help cause the Cold War?	It scared and angered the USSR. Marshall Aid was offered to communist countries in Eastern Europe (Stalin's area of influence). He didn't let them have it as he was scared they would not stay communist. He accused the USA of trying to spread capitalism and trying to destroy communism.
23. What was Comecon ?	This was the Soviet version of Marshall Aid, set up in 1949. Economic aid and support was given to Eastern European communist countries, such as Hungary and East Germany.
24. What was Cominform ?	A Soviet political organisation designed to increase Soviet control over other communist countries in Eastern Europe. For example, they were told not to have contact with non-communist countries and to concentrate on trading with communist countries.
25. What happened to Berlin after WWII?	It was divided into 4 zones. In 1948, the American, British and French zones joined together to form West Germany and West Berlin (called 'Trizonia'). It recovered with the help of Marshall Aid and got a new currency, the Deutschmark. East Germany and East Berlin (the communist parts) were still poor. People left East Germany to go to West Germany.
26. What did Stalin do about this?	He blockaded the road, rail and canal routes into West Berlin in June 1948.
27. Why did he blockade West Berlin?	He wanted the West (USA, Britain, France) to give up on West Berlin by starving the 2 million people there and let it become communist.
28. What did the West do about it?	They flew in supplies to West Berlin (called the airlift or 'Operation Vittles'). (By Spring 1949, the West were flying in 8000 tons of food and fuel a day.
29. When did Stalin call off the blockade?	May 1949.

30. How did the Berlin Blockade and Airlift make the Cold War worse?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It caused tension between the USA and the USSR and could have caused war if Stalin had dared to shoot at the planes. Any hopes of joining Germany back together were gone. It remained divided into the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) until the end of the Cold War. It led to the setting up of NATO (which led to the setting up of the Warsaw Pact).
31. What was NATO ?	The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. It was set up in 1949. It was a military alliance of capitalist and democratic countries e.g. USA, Britain, France, Canada. They all agreed to go to war if one of them was attacked.
32. How did it make the Cold War worse?	It made the USSR feel scared as it surrounded them. It meant the USA had military bases (and nuclear weapons) in Europe near the USSR and communist countries.
33. What was the Warsaw Pact ?	A military alliance of communist countries (e.g. USSR, East Germany, Hungary, Poland). It was set up in 1955 after West Germany was allowed to join NATO. Each country promised to go to war together if any of them was attacked.
34. What was peaceful co-existence ?	Stalin died in 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev became the new leader of the USSR. He talked of communist and capitalist countries living together peacefully. This talk of 'getting on' was known as a 'thaw' in the Cold War.
35. What was the Hungarian Rising, 1956 ?	An uprising by the people of Hungary and new laws (reforms) by the leader, Imre Nagy, which made Hungary less 'communist' e.g. non-communists were allowed to be part of the government; free elections were promised; Hungary wanted to leave the Warsaw Pact.
36. Why did the people of Hungary think they could change the communist system?	Stalin had died and Khrushchev's talk of peaceful co-existence. When the people of Poland had rebelled they had been allowed to have some more freedoms.
37. What did the USSR do about the uprising?	In November, they sent 6000 tanks into Hungary to crush the uprising. Over 30 000 Hungarians were killed and 200 000 ran away to western Europe. Imre Nagy was replaced by a communist loyal to the USSR (Kadar). Nagy was arrested and executed. All new freedoms were removed.
38. Did the West do anything to help the Hungarian people?	No. The USA did not want to interfere in a communist country that was controlled by the USSR because they were scared of a nuclear war. (Both the USSR and the USA had nuclear weapons by now.)
39. What were the results of the Hungarian Rising?	It showed the USSR were not prepared to let communist countries have more freedoms. It ended the thaw in the Cold War. The West was criticised for not helping Hungary. It worsened relations between the USA and the USSR and led to the Cold War getting 'colder' in the 1960s.
40. What was the arms race ?	A 'race' between the USA and the USSR to develop better weapons than the enemy.
41. What was the space race ?	A 'race' between the USA and the USSR to get into space, land on the moon etc. This would show that their country was better than the other because they had the best technology.
42. What were the main developments in the arms and space race, 1945-1958?	<p>1945-USA developed the atom bomb (the A bomb) and dropped one on Hiroshima and one on Nagasaki in WWII.</p> <p>1949-USSR developed the A bomb.</p> <p>1952-USA got the H bomb.</p> <p>1953-USSR got the H bomb.</p> <p>1957-USSR got the 1st satellite into space (Sputnik). For the 1st time, they had 'overtaken' the USA. The rocket technology led to the development of inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) by both sides. Sputnik 2 got the 1st animal in space (Laika).</p> <p>1958 –USA got their 1st satellite into space.</p>
43. What does nuclear deterrent mean?	Both the USA and USSR were scared to use nuclear weapons against the other because they knew the other country would fire them back and destroy them. Both countries had enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world.

