

**SSUSH21a.** - Analyze the international policies and actions taken as a response to the Cold War including U.S. involvement in Cuba and the escalation of the war in Vietnam as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

**SSUSH21b.** - Connect major domestic issues to their social effects including the passage of civil rights legislation and Johnson's Great Society, following the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

**SSUSH21c.** - Describe the impact of television on American culture including the presidential debates (Kennedy/Nixon, 1960), news coverage of the Civil Rights Movement, the moon landing, and the war in Vietnam.

**SSUSH21d.** - Investigate the growth, influence, and tactics of civil rights groups, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Letter from Birmingham Jail, the I Have a Dream Speech, and Cesar Chavez.

**SSUSH21e.** - Describe the social and political turmoil of 1968 including the reactions to assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy, the Tet Offensive, and the presidential election.

## Cold War in 1960s, JFK, LBJ, & Civil Rights Movement

### Cold War in Cuba

The 1960s was a time when the Cold War escalated to what could have potentially become direct military action between the United States and the Soviet Union. Both nations were equipped with massive nuclear capability that threatened the safety of the entire world.

Cuba was a major exporter of sugar to the United States and received special incentives from the U.S. government. In 1952, General Fulgencio Batista overthrew the elected government of Cuba and established a military dictatorship. He allied himself with leading multinational businesses and mafia controlled hotels, casinos, and brothels. In 1953, Fidel and Raul Castro attempted to overthrow the Batista government. The coup attempt failed. In 1955, the Castro brothers were exiled from Cuba. In 1956, the brothers returned with a group of guerilla soldiers. They were able to overthrow the Batista government in 1958. Upon gaining control of Cuba, **Fidel Castro** named himself president for life. Castro's plans to nationalize foreign businesses and land reform policies alienated American businessmen and Cuba's wealthy citizens.



**Explain why the relationship with Cuba and the Soviet Union was critical after the Bay of Pigs.**

The United States began planning for the overthrow of Fidel Castro after realizing that Cuba's new leader had become a **Communist**. Unwilling to be seen as directly involved in the overthrow of a populist government such as Castro's, the United States used the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to train and carry out a coup against the Castro government. The plan was to land along the **Bay of Pigs** and use U.S. supplied aircraft to support the landing. On April 5, 1961, Cuban exiles landed but were crushed by the Cuban Army and Air Force. The newly elected Kennedy administration refused to use U.S. air support to cover the invasion forces. Captured exiles revealed the U.S. backing and Castro went to the Soviet Union for military and economic support. The Soviet Union saw Castro's gesture as a way to expand the Cold War into the western hemisphere.

The relationship between the United States and Cuba was further strained in 1962, when Castro allowed the installation of nuclear missiles on Cuba. Castro saw the placement of Soviet missiles and their supporting troops as a way of preventing future interference in Cuban affairs by the United States. When the missiles were discovered, the Kennedy administration ordered a naval blockade on Cuba rather than a direct military strike on the missiles. As nuclear warheads made their way to Cuba on Soviet ships, the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its missiles from Cuba if the United States would secretly withdraw its missiles from Turkey and pledge not to invade Cuba. Both sides agreed and the **Cuban Missile Crisis** was over after 13 days.

## Vietnam War

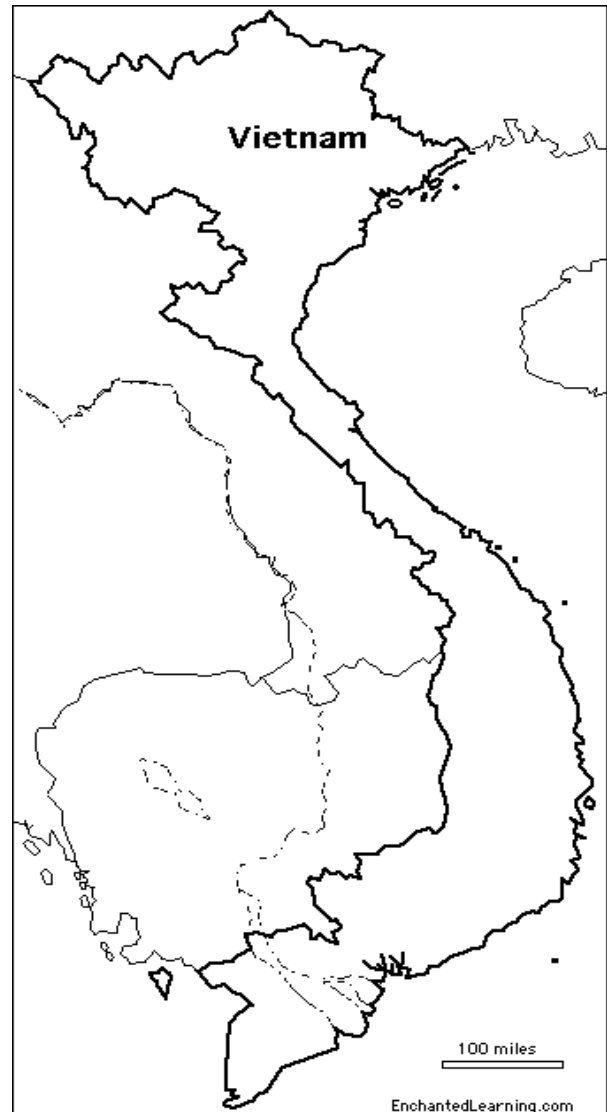
Vietnam became the site of a long struggle between communist and non-communist forces, each aided by their respective ideological superpower. Vietnam had been a colony of France during the late 19th century. The Japanese seized the region during World War II. In response to the takeover, the Vietnamese people organized a resistance movement, known as the **Vietminh**. They warred against both the Japanese and French. The organization was dominated by the communist party and led by **Ho Chi Minh**.

When WWII ended, the people of southern Vietnam did not want to be ruled from Hanoi in the north and did not wish to be communist. The United Nations divided the nation at the **17th parallel** and planned for an election that was to be held two years later to decide the unification of north and south. The South Vietnamese government rejected an all-Vietnam election because a communist backed guerilla movement, the **Vietcong**, had begun a terror campaign in the south. The Vietcong targeted village chiefs, schoolteachers, and government officials.

South Vietnam requested and received U.S. military support in the form of training for its armed forces. The United States believed a communist takeover of South Vietnam would lead to further expansion of communism in Asia. United States naval units in the Gulf of Tonkin supported the South Vietnamese Marine and Naval units as they staged a series of raids into North Vietnam. On August 2, 1964, North Vietnamese naval vessels were accused of attacking the United States Navy destroyers Maddox and Turner Joy. President Johnson responded by ordering an air attack on North Vietnamese naval bases. Prior to the U.S. attack, Johnson requested and received Congress's approval. Congress issued the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**, which gave the President authorization to conduct military operations in Southeast Asia without a formal declaration of war.

At the same time, President Johnson made a marked change in U.S. policy by placing ground troops into combat in South Vietnam. The United States sent troops to Vietnam to protect its bases. This increase in troop strength gradually grew to more than 500,000 men by 1968. The growth of U.S. military influence in the region led the communist strongholds of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China to give North Vietnam military aid.

The United States took action in both Cuba and Vietnam to contain communism. The situation in Cuba could have easily escalated to direct conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States but was averted when the Soviets backed down. The world was on the brink of yet another war, but the issue was resolved at the last minute. In Vietnam, the United States was gradually increasing its involvement in the region to contain communism. What began as military aid to the South Vietnamese, gave way to military training and eventually American forces engaged in combat with the communist fighters in the region. Both presidents Kennedy and Johnson made their foreign policy decisions based on what they believed would be important for protecting the United States and stopping the spread of communism. Tensions during the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union did not result in direct combat between the two superpowers because of **mutually assured destruction** (MAD).



**Identify the following locations on the map:**

- Hanoi
- Saigon
- 17<sup>th</sup> parallel
- Gulf of Tonkin
- Color North & South Vietnam different colors

## Domestic Policy – JFK & LBJ

Race relations and poverty in the United States were major issues in the 1960s. The Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum in an effort to speed up integration, as ruled on by the Supreme Court in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case. President John Kennedy supported Civil Rights legislation but it was being blocked in the Congress by Southern opposition.

**Kennedy's assassination** in 1963 had a significant effect on his domestic policy agenda, which became the responsibility of the new president Lyndon Johnson. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963.



Vice President Lyndon Johnson was sworn in as the new President aboard Air Force One, as it flew back to Washington D.C. carrying Kennedy's body. The assassination gave the new President, Lyndon Johnson, the political capital to force his domestic legislative package through Congress. The Civil Rights legislation that Kennedy supported but had not been able to get passed in the Congress was pushed through in 1964. Johnson depicted passage of the proposed Civil Rights law as being one of the best ways to honor the dead president's legacy. Congress responded to the call to action and passed the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**, which outlawed segregation in

American schools and other public places. The **Economic Opportunity Act of 1964** was also passed, which launched President Johnson's **War on Poverty**.

Civil Rights Act of 1964	Voting Rights Act of 1965	Great Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outlawed major forms of discrimination against Blacks and women</li><li>• Ended unequal application of voter registration requirements</li><li>• Ended racial segregation of schools, places of work, and facilities that served the general public ("public accommodations").</li><li>• Later, the law's provisions were extended to include private work facilities and wage discrimination against women.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Made it illegal for Black voters to be disenfranchised through unfair voter registration criteria.</li><li>• It ended the practice of using literacy tests as a qualification to vote</li><li>• Mandated federal oversight of elections in the Southern states (<i>this provision was overturned by the Supreme Court in 2013</i>).</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <u>War on Poverty</u> - 40 programs to eliminate poverty by improving living conditions &amp; enabling people to end the cycle of poverty.</li><li>2. <u>Education</u> - sixty separate bills provided for new &amp; better-equipped classrooms, minority scholarships, &amp; low-interest student loans.</li><li>3. <u>Medicare</u> - guaranteed health care to every American over 65 years old.</li><li>4. <u>Medicaid</u> - provided health care assistance to the poor.</li><li>5. <u>Environment</u> - introduced measures to reclaim clean air and drinking water.</li><li>6. <u>National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities</u> - created with the philosophy that artists, performers, and writers were a priceless part of the U.S.</li><li>7. <u>Job Corps</u> - provided job training for young men and women.</li><li>8. <u>Head Start</u> - program for four and five year olds from disadvantaged families.</li></ol>

## Impact of the Television



Although television predates World War II, it was not commercially feasible until after the production demands of the war subsided. Prior to World War II, radio and print were the dominant media by which news, entertainment, and marketing was delivered. By the late 1950s, television had replaced radio. The growth of television was dramatic. From 1939 to 1941, only an estimated 7,000 television sets had been purchased. By 1959, the number of television sets had grown to 67 million. **Television** had the same effect that radio had on the previous generation. Many Americans watched the same entertainment and news programming regardless of their location, which created a common national culture. Television news coverage impacted political and social events. Four events illustrate how television impacted modern American politics and social culture in the 1960s.

### Kennedy/Nixon Debate – 1960

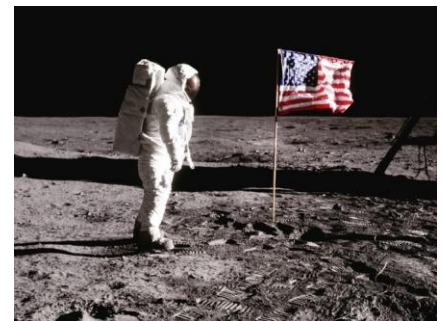
In the 1960 Presidential campaign between the Republican Richard Nixon and the Democrat John F. Kennedy, four nationally televised debates were held. While the substance of both campaigns was very similar, the candidates were not. Physically, the men were very different. Kennedy was tanned, clean-cut, and physically fit. Nixon was not particularly handsome, prone to excessive sweating, had a perpetual five o'clock shadow, and looked weak after a recent illness. According to ratings and polls, 74 million viewers watched and most deemed Kennedy to have been the debate's winner. In contrast, voters who had listened to the debate over the radio reported that they felt Nixon had come across as the more experienced and knowledgeable of the two candidates. Television proved that image matters.

### Civil Rights Movement

Civil rights leaders used media coverage to illuminate their issues. News footage of attack dogs biting demonstrators or fire hoses blasting children made for dramatic images and caused many viewers to question the equity of segregation laws. One of the most dramatic events broadcast was the Alabama State Patrol's attack of the Selma Marchers, which was shown right before a television drama on the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech was broadcast live to a nation-wide audience in 1963, bringing more awareness to the social issue of segregation that had yet to be resolved.

### Moon Landing

Americans were also fascinated by the ingenuity of the space program, which was soon able to send a man to the moon. The lunar module carrying Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the moon July 20, 1969. The television broadcast showed the astronauts planting an American flag on the moon. The **space race** between the United States and the Soviet Union was symbolically complete with the planting of the American flag in space.



### Vietnam War

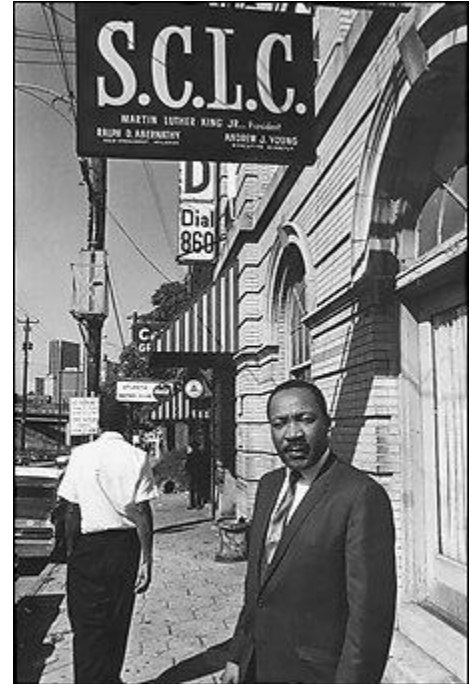
Television news reporters were also imbedded with troops in Vietnam. They broadcast nightly from combat zones and involved Americans in what became known as the first "living room war." People were watching the events unfold in Vietnam and also watching the protest movements in the United States on television. It was difficult for the government to convince Americans that victory in the war was eminent when they were seeing otherwise on the nightly news. Television proved it could sway public opinion through images.

## Civil Rights Movement, MLK, & Cesar Chavez

There were various Civil Rights organizations that were born in the 1960s and gained notoriety for their success. The **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)** grew out of the **1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott**. After achieving success and forcing an end to discriminatory practices in Montgomery, other groups followed the same methodology to end segregation on municipal bus lines.

The group, led by **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**, had as its goal to carry out **non-violent** crusades against the evils of second-class citizenship. SCLC members tended to be from large urban areas, where there was a strong, wealthy Black middle class. The growing reputation of Dr. King helped to draw a large number of northern elites to the Civil Rights cause. The SCLC used several different tactics to fight segregation. They filed class action lawsuits against state and local governments for failing to end segregation and used non-violent civil disobedience actions such as sit-ins, kneel-ins, and wade-ins. They also sponsored boycotts, mass rallies, and marches. Another important component of the SCLC agenda was to affect change in local politics by helping Blacks register to vote.

Another group that had a great impact on the Civil Rights Movement was the **Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**. SNCC (pronounced SNICK) grew out of an impromptu sit-in protest in Greensboro, North Carolina. A group of Black students worked to integrate lunch counters by staging sit-ins in which they seated themselves in the White-only dining sections. SNCC sought to create an organized movement composed primarily of students who would systematically challenge the legality of segregationist laws in the South. Members of the student group organized sit-ins across the South. They also arranged the Freedom Rides in 1961 to test the new federal laws that outlawed discrimination on interstate bus lines. SNCC was also heavily involved in organizing both the March on Washington in 1963 and the 1964 "Freedom Summer," which was a voter registration drive in Mississippi and Alabama. In 1964, the organization split after some members began to push the **Black Power Movement** and question the effectiveness of nonviolence. SNCC dropped "non-violence" from its name and became known as the Student National Coordinating Committee.



**Explain the importance of King & Chavez's non-violent tactics to achieve their goals of equality.**

In April 1963, Dr. King led sit-ins to protest the segregation of Birmingham, Alabama. The police arrested him for violating a city ordinance that banned sit-ins. While in jail, King read an appeal by a number of Alabama clergy urging him to end the protest and to allow time to take its course in ending segregation in the state. King's response to the clergy ultimately became a key document in the Civil Rights Movement. King's **'Letter from the Birmingham Jail'** was a defense of the non-violent methods being used to attack racism. King also criticized the clergy for urging patience in light of continued violence by stating, *"For years now I have heard the world 'Wait!' It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.' We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied.'"*

The **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom** was held on August 28, 1963. It was the largest demonstration for civil rights in U.S. history. Various civil rights organizations and their leaders spoke before the Lincoln Memorial, including Martin Luther King, Jr. King's seventeen-minute speech, *I Have a Dream*, was in part written remarks, but at the end of the

speech, King expanded his remarks. It was these extemporaneous remarks that have become perhaps one of the most famous pieces of American oratory in U.S. history.



The 1960s was also a time of greater organization to protest against Latino discrimination. The **United Farm Workers (UFW)** organized farm laborers in California. The UFW represented a largely Hispanic group in pressing for higher wages and better work conditions. It sought to gain concessions by using the non-violent tactics of the Civil Rights Movement. One of the primary leaders of the UFW was **Cesar Chavez**. He was the son of a poor, Mexican-American agricultural laborer. Determined to better the lives of his family and other Hispanic workers, Chavez began work as a community organizer. Chavez founded the first agricultural labor union in California, the **National Farm Worker's Association**. Chavez's primary tactic was to politically organize a community in order to influence elections.

### **Turmoil of 1968**

The cultural and political landscape of the 1960s seemed to come to a head in 1968. In addition to continued protests over the Vietnam War, there were assassinations that changed the political and social landscape, and a presidential election that was thrown into chaos.

The year 1968 began with the **Tet Offensive in the Vietnam War**. United States forces were unable to totally destroy communist forces in South Vietnam and communist forces lacked the ability to drive out the Americans. However, the United States commander, **General William Westmoreland**, was under the impression that the communist forces were on the verge of collapse as his publication of enemy body counts indicated. He urged Congress to authorize an additional 200,000 men to finish off the North Vietnamese Army and Vietcong once and for all.

The communist forces were not on the verge of defeat. They had instead withdrawn to their sanctuaries in Cambodia and Laos to rebuild and train. The North Vietnamese forces staged a massive offensive into the south in order to shatter the morale of the United States' and South Vietnamese units. The Tet Offensive, as it was called, occurred during the traditional lunar New Year festival. One hundred South Vietnamese cities were attacked simultaneously. Although initially caught off guard, the **ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam)** forces and U.S. forces rallied to counter-attack and inflict severe casualties on the Vietcong. Televised scenes of heavy street fighting in Saigon and Hue played out against Westmoreland's earlier report that the North Vietnamese Army and Vietcong were finished as a fighting force. The January Tet Offensive started 1968 in turmoil. The war, which the United States government said was nearing victory, was not close to ending as evidenced by the extreme force demonstrated by communist efforts in the Tet Offensive.

**Explain how television footage of the Tet Offensive decreased public support for the war in Vietnam.**

The presidential election of 1968 was thrown into chaos with President Johnson's surprise March 31st announcement that he would not seek nor accept the Democratic Party's nomination for a second term. The election was thus wide open less than nine months before the President was to be chosen on Election Day. The Democratic Party was divided over whom their candidate would be to challenge the Republican, Richard Nixon. Over the course of the spring of 1968, Robert Kennedy was picking up momentum within the Democratic Party. Two events further shook the nation.

Both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy were assassinated within a few months of one another. Dr. King's death was marked by riots in several cities despite the call for a non-violent response to his death by leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. His death further fragmented the Movement as the more aggressive Black Power effort began to take hold.

On June 5, 1968, **Robert Kennedy was assassinated** at a victory celebration in California on the night that he won that state's Democratic Party primary election. Sirhan, a Palestinian immigrant who was angry over Kennedy's

support of Israel, was responsible for shooting and killing the presidential candidate in the hotel immediately after he left the stage from giving his victory speech. It is thought that Kennedy's popularity and growing electoral strength may have resulted in his nomination for the Presidency had he not been killed.

The Democratic Party arrived in Chicago for their nominating convention without a clear frontrunner. The protest groups were in full force outside the convention hall and the city of Chicago struggled to maintain control. Various anti-war groups managed to become the main focus of media attention as the convention began. Chicago **Mayor, Richard J. Daley**, was a strong advocate of law and order. He used police and National Guard units to violently suppress groups who were attempting to disrupt the Democratic Convention. The confrontations between the police and demonstrators were broadcast live on national television. Demonstrators believed they would receive greater national support by inciting the police to action. However, the opposite reaction occurred. Most Americans, as they watched from home on television, were appalled by the protestors' challenges to policemen. The melee between police and protestors was portrayed differently based on who was recounting the event. The protestors blamed the police and the police blamed the protestors for the hostility.



The frenzied violence of the Democratic Convention played into the Republican campaign message. **Richard Nixon** claimed that he represented the "silent majority" of socially conservative Americans who had grown tired of the liberal excesses and violence of the 1960s. He won the election in November, beating out the Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey. The complex social and political issues of 1968 resulted in a transition for the Civil Rights Movement and the conservative Republican Party claiming the White House.

**Explain how the events of 1968 resulted in the election of Richard Nixon.**