

Topics:

U.S. early involvement in Vietnam

- French occupation Vietnam / U.S. support (how/why did U.S. support French?)
- What did the U.S. fear most in South East Asia?
- Domino Theory
- Ho Chi Minh – Who is he? What did he do? What did he want?
- Geneva Accords – What did they do? Why does North attack South after this?
- What are the lessons a country should be aware of after the defeat of French at Dien Bien Phu?

U.S. Military Action: Why / how U.S. gets military involved?

- Gulf of Tonkin Resolution: What was it a response to? What is it? What happened after?
- U.S. Approach to Vietnam war. How did U.S. soldiers fight? Americanization. Pacification. What are these terms?
- Vietcong – Who are they? How do they fight in the war?
- Who's fighting who?
- NVA(North Vietnamese Army) – who are they? Who Supports them?
- ARVN (South Vietnamese Army) – who are they? Who supports them? Are they effective? Why/why not?
- The TET Offensive: What happened? Why is this an important event? What did it show Americans?
- Credibility Gap: What is it? Why does it occur? What specific events influence it? 2 examples.
- Hawks vs. Doves: What does each want and why? 3 reasons each.

Presidential Policies

- Nixon vs. Johnson's Approach to war
- The carrot and the Stick
- Vietnamization
- Pentagon Papers
- War Powers Resolution
- Treaty of Paris

Possible Essay Questions:

1. Legacy of Vietnam: What are the lessons from Vietnam that citizens and governments need to remember?

2. Johnson starts out as a very popular president. Why does he lose popular, American support? Why do many Americans lose interest in the war and want out?
3. Why does U.S. military involvement in Vietnam seem like the right course of action at that point in history?
4. What do you think would have been the wisest choice for the U.S. to do regarding Vietnam? Use historical examples to make your case.
5. How and why did the U.S. government lose credibility during the Vietnam war? What was the public reaction? Cite at least 3 specific events.
6. How did the power of the presidency change during the Vietnam war? What did congress do to increase and limit it? Do you agree with Congress's actions? Why or why not?
7. Did the U.S. lose the Vietnam war? Why or why not? What realistically could have been done to change the outcome of the war? (Nuclear war is not an option!)
8. Compare and contrast the policies of President Johnson and President Nixon regarding the Vietnam War.
9. What difficulties did the U.S. face in fighting the Vietnam War? Consider **ALL** the limiting factors (public support, limited military, who's helping fight, enemy strategies, soldiers (draft vs. enlisted)).