The Cold War

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. The Cold War is commonly described as a rivalry centered on which two countries?
   A. The United States and the Soviet Union
   B. France and the United Kingdom
   C. The Soviet Union and Canada
   D. The United States and Australia
   Correct answer: A. The United States and the Soviet Union
   The United States and the Soviet Union emerged from World War II as rival powers. Other countries took a range of positions in the resulting international order.

2. What organization was created by the North Atlantic Treaty signed in Washington in 1949?
   A. The Warsaw Pact
   B. The United Nations
   C. NATO
   D. The European Economic Community
   Correct answer: C. NATO
   The founding treaty created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, usually called NATO.

3. Which U.S. program provided aid to help rebuild European economies following World War II?
   A. The Great Society
   B. The Marshall Plan
   C. The New Deal
   D. The Apollo program
   Correct answer: B. The Marshall Plan
   The European Recovery Program became known as the Marshall Plan. It funded postwar recovery in participating European countries.

4. Which object, launched by the Soviet Union in 1957, became the first artificial satellite to orbit Earth?
   A. Luna 2
   B. Explorer 1
   C. Vostok 1
   D. Sputnik 1
   Correct answer: D. Sputnik 1
   Sputnik 1 was the first human-made object placed in orbit around Earth. Its launch drew worldwide attention to spaceflight.

5. When land access to West Berlin was blocked in 1948, what did the Berlin Airlift do?

A. It financed a new railway connecting Berlin to Paris.
B. It brought essential supplies to residents by air.
C. It brought the two German governments into one state.
D. It funded academic exchanges between the U.S. and Soviet Union.

Correct answer: B. It brought essential supplies to residents by air.
The airlift supplied West Berlin while land routes were blocked. Its cargo included necessities such as food and fuel.

6. A March 1947 speech by President Harry Truman asks Congress to assist two countries. Which pair is named in his initial request?

A. Greece and Türkiye
B. France and Spain
C. Norway and Sweden
D. India and Pakistan

Correct answer: A. Greece and Türkiye
Truman requested assistance for Greece and Türkiye. The policy set out in his speech became known as the Truman Doctrine.

7. A 1949 record refers to a council formed by the Soviet Union and several Eastern European governments to coordinate economic relations. Which organization was it?

A. The Council of Europe
B. The European Economic Community
C. The European Free Trade Association
D. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

Correct answer: D. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
The council, often called Comecon, organized economic cooperation among its members.

8. In 1959, Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev debated in an American model kitchen at an exhibition in Moscow. Why was a kitchen an apt setting for the exchange?

A. It was the control room of a joint scientific mission.
B. It was where a treaty for common household appliance standards was signed.
C. It provided a way to compare everyday living standards under rival economic systems.
D. It was used to negotiate the legal reunification of Germany.

Correct answer: C. It provided a way to compare everyday living standards under rival economic systems.
The model kitchen offered a familiar example of what people might buy and use. The leaders used it to debate the merits of their systems.

9. What shared position helped bring governments together at the first Non-Aligned summit in Belgrade in 1961?

A. They wanted room to make foreign-policy choices independently of the rival blocs.
B. They planned to merge their governments into one federation.
C. They intended to replace the United Nations with the summit.
D. They had agreed to give one superpower control of their foreign policies.

Correct answer: A. They wanted room to make foreign-policy choices independently of the rival blocs.

Non-alignment allowed governments to pursue policies without formally aligning with one Cold War bloc. Participants could still differ over individual issues.

10. In 1971, the People’s Republic of China invited American table tennis players to visit. How did this exchange fit into the relationship between the countries?

A. It took place after both countries had already exchanged ambassadors.
B. It ended diplomatic relations that had been in place since 1949.
C. It was part of an agreement to create a new international sports federation.
D. It was an early public opening before formal diplomatic relations were established.

Correct answer: D. It was an early public opening before formal diplomatic relations were established.

The trip was an instance of what became known as ping-pong diplomacy. The sporting contact helped signal a thaw in relations.

11. A photograph shows U.S. and Soviet crew members shaking hands in orbit in 1975. What can a historian conclude from the Apollo–Soyuz records?

A. The two governments had abandoned competition in every other field.
B. Their space programs merged into a single permanent agency.
C. The two countries cooperated on a crewed space mission.
D. One country took over the operation of the other country's space program.

Correct answer: C. The two countries cooperated on a crewed space mission.

Apollo–Soyuz was a joint mission involving astronauts and cosmonauts. It provides evidence of cooperation on that mission during a period of continued rivalry.

12. A historian looks for a 1975 commitment that civic groups could cite when calling for freedom of conscience and belief. Which part of the Helsinki Final Act fits?

A. Its provisions on industrial standards for exports
B. Its commitment to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms
C. Its recommendations on tourist accommodations
D. Its provisions on consular documents for visitors

Correct answer: B. Its commitment to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms

The Final Act included respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It explicitly covered freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief.

13. The 1972 Basic Treaty called for the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic to develop regular relations. Which caption most accurately explains its effect?

A. The two German states agreed to stop official contact with one another.
B. The two German states formed a unified national government.
C. The two German states became provinces of one neighboring country.
D. Two separate German states agreed to improve relations with one another.

Correct answer: D. Two separate German states agreed to improve relations with one another. The treaty established a framework for relations between the two governments while they continued to exist separately.

14. A museum label swaps the meanings of glasnost and perestroika. Which correction matches their use under Mikhail Gorbachev?

A. Glasnost encouraged greater openness, and perestroika meant restructuring.
B. Glasnost meant restructuring, and perestroika meant greater openness.
C. Glasnost created an economic bloc, and perestroika referred to sports exchanges.
D. Glasnost named a space program, and perestroika concerned cultural exhibitions only.

Correct answer: A. Glasnost encouraged greater openness, and perestroika meant restructuring. Glasnost referred to openness in public life and discussion. Perestroika referred to restructuring Soviet institutions and economic practices.

15. A December 1991 exhibit label calls the new North Atlantic Cooperation Council a continuation of the Warsaw Pact. Which caption correctly distinguishes the new council?

A. It replaced the United Nations as a diplomatic forum for all countries.
B. It kept membership limited to governments from the old Warsaw Pact.
C. It brought NATO allies and former Warsaw Pact countries together for dialogue.
D. It gave former Warsaw Pact countries NATO membership at their first meeting.

Correct answer: C. It brought NATO allies and former Warsaw Pact countries together for dialogue. The council began as a forum for consultation between NATO members and former Warsaw Pact countries. Participation in the council was separate from NATO membership.