

Year 9 Learn Sheet

Final Assessment *Who ran the world in the 20th century? Key ideas and events*

The USA had capitalist ideology...

Encouraged private ownership of homes, businesses and giving people freedom in their lives



The USSR had a communist ideology...

The state (government) owns all businesses and homes on behalf of the people. However, freedoms are limited and you cannot vote for your leaders



Key events of the 20th century



End of Second World War (Aug 1945)

The dropping of nuclear weapons on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the USA signalled the end of the war.

- People have since debated whether killing 110,000+ people was morally correct;
- Stalin, the leader of the USSR was angry with the USA, who refused to share nuclear weapons technology;
- Stalin had hoped to invade Japan and spread communism;
- The USA wanted to send a signal to the USSR that they were the world's main superpower;
- Stalin made sure that the USSR had nuclear weapons by 1949.

Life in East Germany

After WW2, the armies of Russia slowly moved out of the Eastern European countries they freed from the Nazis. But the idea of communism was forced to remain.

- In 1949 Germany was split in two - the East was communist, the West was capitalist;
- While not everyone living in East Germany liked communism, many people did;
- Crime was very rare in East Germany because everyone had the same (basic) standard of living;
- Women had better rights - they were expected to pursue careers and childcare was free!

Space Race (1950s-1960s)

Both the USSR and USA invested heavily in rocket technology. This would help them improve the range of their nuclear weapons and could give them the prestige of being the first country to get into space.

- The USSR won the race to space at the beginning;
- Oct 1957 - the USSR sends the first satellite into orbit - Sputnik;
- Nov 1957 - the USSR sends the first animal into space - Laika the dog;
- April 1961 - the USSR sends the first human into space, Yuri Gagarin;
- The USA responded in kind, eventually sending the first people to the Moon in 1969.



Building of the Berlin Wall (1961)

For some time the USSR had been concerned about the number of refugees fleeing from communist Eastern Europe through East Berlin to West Berlin. Since 1945 West Berlin had remained capitalist, under the management of the USA, Britain and France. Around 3 million people had moved, legally, from East Berlin to the West for a better life.

Khrushchev, the leader of the USSR, couldn't tolerate communism looking bad. His solution was to order the building of a wall/barrier surrounding capitalist West Berlin. This would stop the movement of people, imprisoning them in the communist East. Khrushchev's excuse for building the Wall was to stop capitalist spies from entering East Germany.

Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

In the summer of 1962, the USSR secretly put nuclear missiles on the island of Cuba. Cuba had become an ally of the USSR. When the USA finally found out about the missiles in Oct 1962, their President, Kennedy, had to act quickly because:

- The missiles, if launched, could kill 80 million Americans;
- Khrushchev didn't want to fire the missiles (he was trying to put on pressure to take over West Berlin) but any mistake or misunderstanding could see them being used;
- If the missiles were fired, the USA and her allies would fire back. The world would fall into nuclear war;
- Kennedy's solution was to create a quarantine that blocked USSR ships from bringing more missiles to Cuba, and agreed with Khrushchev that Cuban missiles (USSR) and Turkish missiles (USA) would be withdrawn;
- A telephone hotline was set up to ensure the two sides communicated in future, and the testing of nuclear weapons was banned above ground.

Key words:

Ideologies - a set of ideas (e.g. communism)

Fascism - a racist ideology that believed in an Aryan 'master race' that should enslave or murder all other races

Allies - friends in war

Cold War - the name given to the conflict between the USA and USSR after WW2 for world dominance. There was no direct fighting; instead moments when nuclear war seemed likely.

The USA (capitalists) and USSR (communists) were **not easy friends**. They believed in two **different ways to run the world**.

However, both the USSR and USA believed that their ideologies were better than **fascism**, the belief that Nazi Germany had. So, both the USA and USSR fought as allies in WW2.