

INTERACTIVE MAP LESSON:

LIVING IN THE COLD WAR

RECOMMENDED TIME

90 minutes

OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

- Explain what the Cold War was.
- Name the two opposing sides of the Cold War.
- List events that contributed to the Cold War.
- Analyze how the Cold War affected life in the United States.

LEARNING CONNECTIONS

- **Learning Styles:** linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial
- **Skills Mastery:** drawing conclusions, making comparisons

RESOURCE

- **Interactive Map:** [Living in the Cold War](#)

CONTEXT

Three nations that had been important world powers before World War II—Germany, Japan, and Great Britain—lay largely in ruins after the war. The two remaining global powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—soon faced off in a struggle for international dominance. The alliance that had brought these two mighty nations together during the war dissolved as political and economic tensions increased during the late 1940s. At the root of this Cold War—so-called because there was no actual fighting—was distrust on both sides. This distrust was fueled by anticommunism in the United States and anti-capitalism in the Soviet Union, the struggle for dominance in the field of atomic energy, and the fear of nuclear war. Anti-communistic sentiments led to serious conflicts at home and overseas, and the fear of nuclear war profoundly affected American culture during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

Developing Cultural, Historical, and Sociopolitical Literacy. In this lesson, students will learn about what the Cold War was, which nations were involved in it, what events contributed to its escalation, and how the Cold War affected life in the United States.

OPEN

1. Present the information from the Context section to students in the form of a brief lecture. Tell students that they will be learning more about the Cold War and the factors that contributed to its escalation as well as how it affected life in the United States. As students begin exploring the Living in the Cold War Interactive Map, ask them to pay particular attention to how the Cold War affected American culture.

TEACH

2. Have students explore the Living in the Cold War Interactive Map on a computer. Students may work individually or in small groups, depending on the number of computers available.
3. Have students complete the online review at the end of the interactive map. Check their scores to confirm their overall understanding of the material presented in the interactive map activity. If time permits, allow students who received low scores on the review to explore the interactive map further. Encourage them to take notes on the electronic notepad that is available to them throughout the activity.

If many students in the class experience difficulty with the interactive map activity and review, you may wish to have them complete one or more of the optional activities below to ensure mastery of the learning objectives.

CLOSE

4. **Linking Past to Present and Making Comparisons.** Tell students that the Cold War did not come to an end until the late 1980s. Ask them if they see any lingering evidence today of the intense anticommunism and fear of nuclear war that they learned about while exploring the Living in the Cold War Interactive Map.

OPTIONS

- **Synthesizing Information.** Have students create a class Cold War scrapbook. Items that individual students create for the scrapbook should relate to elements that caused the Cold War, events that escalated it, and its effects on American life and culture between 1946 and 1964. Students might create newspaper clippings, advertisements for items such as bomb shelters, propagandistic items such as posters or bumper stickers, or any other item that illustrates the Cold War during this period. Students may refer to the Living in the Cold War Interactive Map for information and ideas. To assess students' work or to guide students, use the [Scrapbooks Rubric](#).
- **Using Historical Imagination.** Have each student write two or three journal entries from the perspective of a young person living between 1946 and 1964. Each journal entry should pertain to life in the Cold War and/or events of the Cold War during this time period. To assess students' work or to guide students, use the [Journals Rubric](#).