

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – Cold War Document Analysis & Document-Based Question Essay
From Geri Dineen

Grade – 11

Length of class period – 45 mins for document analysis & review in class; additional time for students to write essay

Inquiry – How did the Cold War affect United States domestic policy and American society?

Objectives –

1. Students will analyze primary source documents to determine their meaning.
2. Students will synthesize document analysis with what they have learned about this time period through in class activity and assigned outside work.

Materials – DBQ packet

Activities –

1. Individual – students analyze primary source documents (see activity sheet below).
2. Whole class – students discuss and debate document analysis.
3. Individual – students produce analytic essay responding to inquiry question.

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson? – Student essays will be assessed for accurate representation of prior learning and primary source analysis.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

- 2.1 Find relevant and accurate information from a variety of sources to answer a historical/Social Studies question.
- 2.4 Analyze and explain multipurpose visual materials.
- 2.5 Interpret social/political messages of political cartoons.

2.7 Create written work that analyzes a historical event using various news media sources.

3.1 Use evidence to develop an interpretation of a historical event.

U.S. History: Document-Based Question Activity
~ **The Cold War** ~

This activity has two parts:

- 1) an analysis of selected primary source documents
- 2) an essay based on your document analysis and your knowledge of United States history

This activity is designed to assess your ability to work with historical documents and compose a historically accurate, critical essay. Some of the documents have been edited for the purpose of this activity. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be represented in the document.

Historical Context:

Following World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as two superpowers. This created a rivalry between the two nations that became known as the Cold War. While the Cold War affected United States foreign policy, it also had a great effect on United States domestic policy and on American society.

Task: Using information from the documents and your knowledge of United States history, answer the questions that follow each document.

Document 1

1. According to this passage, what was the specific purpose of this executive order?

Part I

INVESTIGATION OF APPLICANTS

There shall be a loyalty investigation of every person entering the civilian employment of any department or agency of the executive branch of the Federal Government. . . .

Part V

STANDARDS [for Employment]

Activities and associations of an applicant or employee which may be considered in connection with the determination of disloyalty may include one or more of the following:

Membership in, affiliation with or sympathetic association with any foreign or domestic organization, association, movement, group or combination of persons, designated by the Attorney General as totalitarian, fascist, communist, or subversive, or as having adopted a policy of advocating or approving the commission of acts of force or violence to deny other persons their rights under the Constitution of the United States, or as seeking to alter the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means. . . .

— Executive Order 9835, President Harry Truman, 1947

Document 2

2. What criticism was the cartoonist making of the House Committee in Un-American Activities?



Document 3

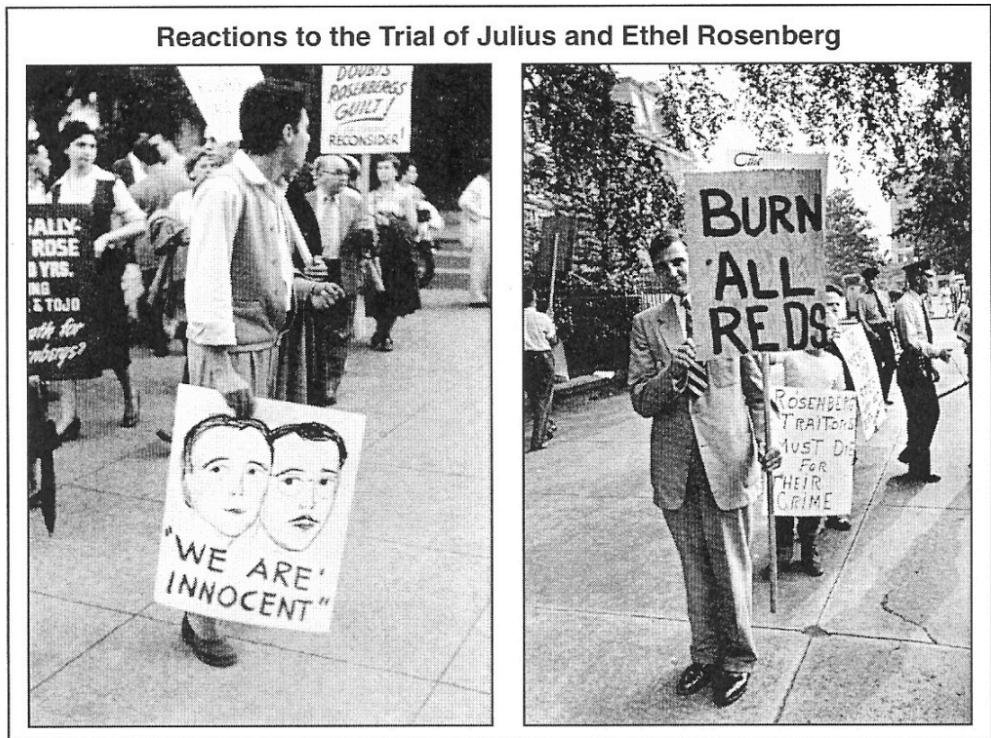
| The Most Important Problem Facing the United States 1953-1962 | |
|---|--|
| 1953 | Korean War |
| 1954 | Threat of war |
| 1955 | Working out a peace |
| 1956 | Threat of war |
| 1957 | Keeping out of war |
| 1958 | Economic conditions |
| 1959 | Keeping peace |
| 1960 | Relations with the Soviet Union |
| 1961 | Prices and inflation |
| 1962 | War, peace, and international tensions |

Source: The Gallup Poll of Public Opinion, Vols. 2 and 3, Random House (adapted)

3. According to these Gallup Poll results, what was the dominant problem in the United States between 1953 and 1962?

Document 4

4. According to these photographs, what impact did the Rosenberg trial have on American society?



Source: Elliot Erwitt, Magnum Photos

Document 5



Building a Bomb Shelter

Source: Loomis Dean, *Life Magazine*, 1951

5. What does this picture [“Building a Bomb Shelter”] show about the effect of the Cold War on American society?

Document 6

**Sputnik's Effect on Education
in the United States**

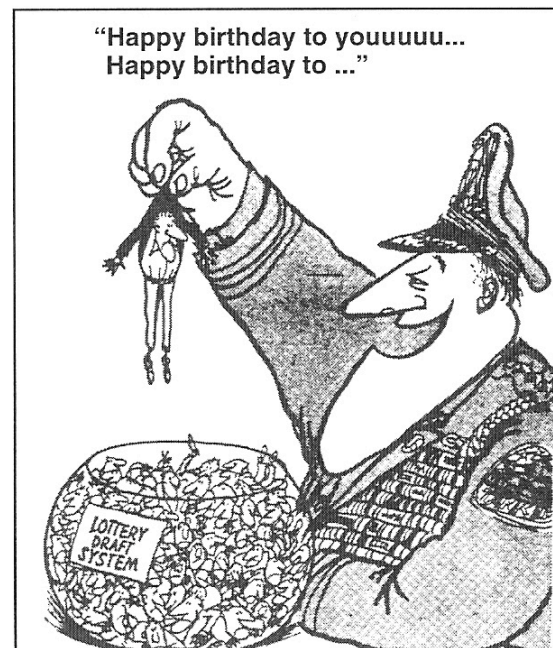


Source: Herblock, *The Washington Post*, 1957 (adapted)

6. How did the cartoonist believe education in the United States was affected by the launching of the Soviet satellite, *Sputnik*?

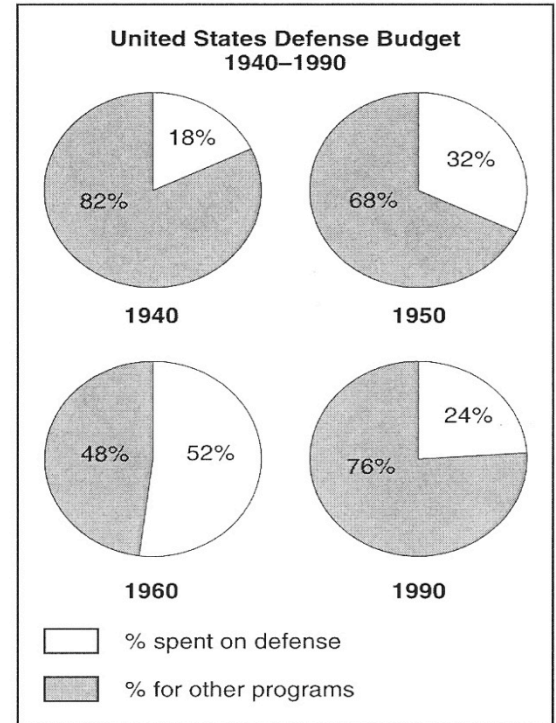
Document 7

7. According to the cartoonist, how did the Cold War affect American males who were approaching their eighteenth birthday?



Document 8

8. According to the graph, how did the Cold War affect the United States defense budget?



— *United States Budget, Historical Tables*
Source: <http://w3.access.gpo.gov/usbudget/fy2000> (adapted)

Part 2 Task: Using information from the documents *and your knowledge of United States history*, write an essay that answers the question:

HOW DID THE COLD WAR AFFECT UNITED STATES DOMESTIC POLICY AND AMERICAN SOCIETY?

- Guidelines:** Be sure to address the question in accordance with the directions [above].
- Incorporate information from the documents
 - Incorporate relevant outside information (things you've learned in class, or through assigned outside work)
 - Support the theme with pertinent facts, examples, and details
 - Use a logical and clear plan of organization

Teacher's Reference for Assessment

DBQ: Cold War

1. Specific purpose of Executive Order 9835
 - To investigate new government employees
 - To make sure all employees were loyal (not disloyal)
 - To make sure all government workers were not Communist
2. Cartoonist criticism of HUAC
 - Running over people's civil rights
 - Didn't care who they hurt in their hunt for Communists
 - Over-zealous
3. Gallup Poll – dominant problem in U.S. 1953-1962
 - Avoiding war
 - International tensions
 - Soviet Union
 - Relations with Soviet Union
 - Ending or keeping out of war
4. Impact of Rosenberg trial on American society
 - Debate over their fate – innocence or guilt
 - Protests in support of their execution or innocence
 - Divided society
5. What picture shows about effect of Cold War on society
 - Families built bomb shelters
 - People were afraid of nuclear war or destruction
6. Cartoonist's perspective of effect of *Sputnik* launch on U.S. education
 - More emphasis placed on science in schools
 - Science more important than general education
 - General education left behind while science education moves ahead
 - Federal government focusing on science at expense of general education
 - Focus on science education will weaken foundation of general education – weaken overall educational program – collapse
7. Cartoonist's idea of how Cold War affected American males approaching 18th birthday
 - 18 year olds eligible for draft
 - Lottery system necessary to support war
8. Cold War effect on U.S. defense budget
 - Larger % of federal budget spend on defense
 - 1950-1960 – defense spending increased from 32%-52% of total budget
 - % of budget spent on defense continued to increase until the Cold War was over

Teacher's Reference for Assessment

Cold War DBQ-based Essay

Key Ideas from Documents

Effect of Cold War on Domestic Policy

- Doc 1 – Federal government established a loyalty program
- Doc 2 – HUAC searched for Communists
- Doc 3 – Concerns about war were greater than concerns about domestic issues
- Doc 4 – Federal government put Julius & Ethel Rosenberg on trial
- Doc 5 – Federal government encouraged the building of bomb shelters
- Doc 6 – Science became more important in American education as a result of Sputnik
- Doc 7 – Lottery draft system for American males
- Doc 8 – Percent of federal monies spent on defense increased between 1950-1960

Effect of Cold War on American Society

- Doc 1 – Membership in certain organizations became grounds for termination of employment or not being hired for a job
- Doc 2 – HUAC disrupted the lives of many Americans
- Doc 3 – Americans were worried about war between 1953-1962
- Doc 4 – Rosenberg trial created divisiveness in the U.S. with some believing the federal government went too far in hunting for Communists
- Doc 5 – Families built bomb shelters – American people became fearful
- Doc 6 – General education suffered at the expense of science education
- Doc 7 – American males became subject to the draft on their 18th birthday
- Doc 8 – Percentage of federal budget spent on defense limited spending in other areas – reduced domestic spending

Relevant Outside Information (explored/discussed in class or unit homework)

Effect of Cold War on Domestic Policy

- Soviet expansion concerned Americans (Greece, Turkey, Eastern Europe) – Domino Theory
- Fear of communism → Congress actively investigated threats of communism in the U.S.
- Communist expansion in Far East (China, Southeast Asia, Korea) → increased military spending and American presence around the globe
- Development of atomic bomb led to development of more powerful H-bomb → increased fears in U.S. → escalation of nuclear threat
- Federal government committed to put suspected spies on trial
- National Defense Education Act → emphasis on math, science
- Space race became national priority
- Draft instituted after WW II
- High defense spending undercut domestic programs → Great Society?
- Détente led to scientific and cultural exchanges (Nixon)

Effect of Cold War on American Society

- Commitment to containment → increased taxes to fund military activity
- Loyalty oaths required for federal and state employment
- McCarthy hearings → blacklisting, televised hearings, accusations of communist infiltration or influence in U.S. army and in high-ranking government positions, Hollywood Ten
- McCarthyism → threatened civil liberties and intimidated political leaders; loss of jobs to those questioned
- Duck and Cover drills in schools
- Fallout shelters built in many communities
- Americans feared loss of global status
- Military manpower needs led to elimination of draft deferments → Vietnam War
- Draft became controversial → protests
- Generational divisions → elder 'establishment' v. youth
- Younger generation loses faith in elders → distrust, no hope, no leadership – Port Huron Statement