

The Cuban Missile Crisis: Considering Its Place in Cold War History

Fifth edition. December 2017.

STUDENT READINGS

This unit features a role play of the Cuban Missile Crisis. After reading “Cold War Tension,” students are provided with a description of events, outlines of positions, and primary source excerpts with which to prepare their arguments. The first section of the student readings provides the historical context needed to engage in the deliberation.

Part I: Cold War Tension (1945-1962)

Selected Key Events	Selected Key People	Selected Key Terms
Berlin Blockade, 1948 Rio Pact, 1947 CIA Coup in Guatemala, 1954 Batista resignation, 1959 Bay of Pigs, 1961 Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962	Winston Churchill Joseph Stalin Harry Truman Mao Zedong Dwight Eisenhower Fidel Castro John F. Kennedy Nikita Khrushchev	Iron Curtain Truman Doctrine NATO OAS Guerrilla war, 1953-1958 Jupiter missiles

Epilogue (1962 and beyond)

- Debriefs the simulation with detailed descriptions of critical events and diplomatic steps taken in October 1962.
- Explains how Kennedy and Khrushchev ultimately de-escalated the conflict.
- Summarizes what happened in Cuba subsequently and creates a bridge to the Choices unit, *History, Revolution, and Reform: New Directions for Cuba*.
- Considers historical memory through details revealed at meetings held in 1992, when documents were declassified.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LESSONS

A short description of each lesson can be found on the unit webpage [here](#).

Students will:

Inquire about the circumstances that brought the United States to the brink of nuclear war.

Use primary source excerpts to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of three policy options: pursue diplomacy, blockade Cuba, or airstrike and invade.

Analyze graphs of economic trends.

Annotate maps to understand the political geography of the era.

LINKS FOR FURTHER CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Videos - A free online [video collection](#) accompanies this unit, and the videos are incorporated throughout the Digital Editions. These selected videos highlight under-represented voices:

- [What was the Cuban Missile Crisis?](#)
- [How did many Cubans view U.S. influence in the 1950s?](#)
- [What was the Cuban Missile Crisis like from the Soviet perspective?](#)

Print Format - This unit [preview](#) includes the table of contents, a reading excerpt, and a sample lesson plan.

Digital Editions Format - Interested in what the Digital Editions format looks like? Check out our web-based curriculum [here](#).