

9 Examining activity: Beginning of the Cold War - What happened in Korea?

3. Now, in pairs, choose one of the following texts each and try to decide who took the first step at the beginning of the war. The texts are extracts taken from two different textbooks.

A

Upset by the fast and astonishing growth of the power of the Republic, the American invaders hastened the preparation of an aggressive war in order to destroy it in its infancy...The American imperialists furiously carried out the war project in 1950...The American invaders who had been preparing the war for a long time, alongside their puppets, finally initiated the war on June 25th of the 39th year of the Juche calendar. That dawn, the enemies unexpectedly attacked the North half of the Republic, and the war clouds hung over the once peaceful country, accompanied by the echoing roar of cannons.

Having passed the 38th parallel, the enemies crawled deeper and deeper into the northern half of the Republic...the invading forces of the enemies had to be eliminated and the threatened fate of our country and our people had to be saved.

B

When the overthrow of the South Korean government through social confusion became too difficult, the North Korean communists switched to a stick-and-carrot strategy: seeming to offer peaceful negotiations. However, instead they were analysing the right moment of attack and preparing themselves for it.

The North Korean communists prepared themselves for war. Kim Il-Sung secretly visited the Soviet Union and was promised the alliance of the Soviets and China in case of war. Finally, at dawn on June 25th, 1950 the North began their southward aggression along the 38th parallel. Taken by surprise at these unexpected attacks, the army of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) fought courageously to defend the liberty of the country... The armed provocation of the North Korean communists brought the UN Security Council around the table. A decree denounced the North Korean military action as illegal and as a threat to peace, and a decision was made to help the South. The UN army constituted the armies of 16 countries – among them, the United States, Great Britain and France – and joined the South Korean forces in the battle against the North.



A Korean girl with her brother on her back, in the middle of war.

- a) Work individually. Mark the main ideas of the text.
- b) How did the Korean War start according to your text? Which power helped each Korean side?

- c) Sit with your partner and tell each other your answer. Justify it with information from the text. Do they say the same? What are the similarities or differences? Why do you think this is the case?

- d) Which text is taken from each textbook? Provide quotes from the texts to support your answer.

<div> <div>KOREAN HISTORY</div> <div>(Kim Doojin, Dae Han Textbook Co., Seoul, 2001)</div> <div>Fragment is from this textbook</div> </div>	<div> <div>HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTION OF OUR GREAT LEADER KIM II-SUNG</div> <div>(Textbook Publishing Co., Pongyang, 1999)</div> <div>Fragment is from this textbook</div> </div>
<div>We have come to that conclusion in view of these text quotations:</div>	

e) Based on the information you have, which of these texts do you find more truthful or reliable? Why?

f) Do you know what happened in the Korean War? Is the information you have enough to know what really happened in the Korean War? If not, where could you find it?