

Was Containment a Success?

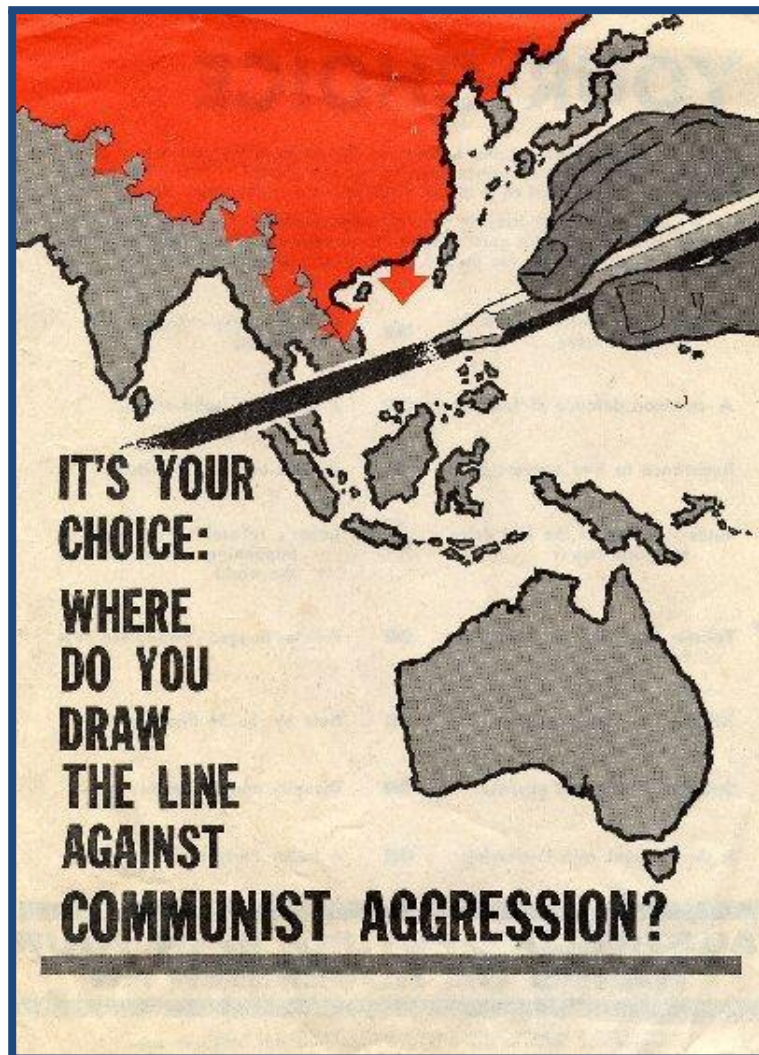


Image found online: <https://studyingthehumanities.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/containment.jpg>

Supporting Questions

1. What policies did the United States put into place to limit or contain post WWII ideas or theories?
2. What post WWII ideas or theories threatened the United States?
3. To what extent were United States policies effective?

11th Grade US History Inquiry

The Cold War Policies: Containment

Compelling Question	Was Containment a success?
SC Standards for Social Studies	USHC-7.5 Analyze the impact of the Cold War on national security and individual freedom, including the containment policy and the role of military alliances, the effects of the “Red Scare” and McCarthyism, the conflicts in Korea and the Middle East, the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall, the Cuban missile crisis, and the nuclear arms race.
Staging the Question	View a picture of falling dominoes and discuss why this became a metaphor for U.S. Cold War policies.

Supporting Question 1 What policies did the United States put into place to limit or contain post WWII ideas or theories?	Supporting Question 2 What post WWII ideas or theories threatened the United States?	Supporting Question 3 To what extent were United States containment policies effective?
Formative Performance Task Create a list of policies the U.S. employed to combat geo-political threats after WWII.	Formative Performance Task Create an annotated map that shows where political problems were most pronounced and explain the threat these areas posed to the U.S.	Formative Performance Task Write a claim and counterclaim about the extent to which the U.S. containment policies were successful.
Featured Sources Source A: Department of State: Description of the Truman Doctrine Source B: Department of State: Description of the Marshall Plan Source C: GWU: Kennan “Long Telegram”	Source A: Mapping History: Cold War Map Source B: Department of State: Description of the Berlin Airlift Source C: Media Rich Learning: Cold War Part 1 – From World War to Cold War	Source A: UNH: Contemporary editorial about the effectiveness of the Marshall Plan Source B: National Archives: Description of the Korean Conflict Source C: Department of State: Description of NSC-68

Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT Was Containment a Success? Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that discusses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical sources while acknowledging competing views. EXTENSION Participate in a classroom forum on whether containment as a response to communism in the 1950s-60s is seen as a success today.
Taking Informed Action	UNDERSTAND Investigate a current threat caused by differing ideas/theories focusing on one or more groups of people who are trying to make a change economically or politically in U.S. policy. ASSESS Examine the extent to which the current threat is successful and state one’s personal perspective on the justification of the threat. ACT Write an editorial for the school or local newspaper on a current “threat or issue arising from different ideas/theories”. In this editorial, students can discuss their positions on the efforts of those engaged in these “threats” and the extent to which those efforts are currently successful.

*Featured sources are suggested and links are provided. It may be that these links are broken and we apologize in advance for the inconvenience.

Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of Containment. By investigating the compelling question “Was Containment a Success?” students evaluate the need for and policies of containment. The formative performance tasks build on knowledge and skills through the course of the inquiry and help students make judgments on the policies of containment. Students create an evidence-based argument about the relative success or failure of containment.

In addition to the standards listed previously, this inquiry highlights the standard:

- **Era9.5.USH.3** Analyze sources of conflict and confrontation during the post-World War II era (e.g., atomic bomb, Truman Doctrine, Korea, Vietnam, China, Berlin, Afghanistan, Cuba).

Note: This inquiry is expected to take eight to ten 40-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries in order to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “Was Containment a Success?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument supported by evidence while acknowledging competing perspectives.

Staging the Compelling Question

In staging the compelling question, “Was Containment a Success?” teachers may prompt students with a picture of falling dominoes and participating in a discussion as to how and why this became a metaphor for U.S. Cold War policies.

Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question—“What policies did the United States put into place to limit or contain post WWII ideas or theories?”—has students investigate sources and discuss various types of responses and organize them by name. The formative performance task asks students to create a list of policies that the U.S. employed to combat geo-political threats after WWII. The featured sources for this question introduce students to the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the Kennan statement on Containment. Featured Source A is a brief state department statement on the features of the Truman Plan and its goals. Featured Source B is a brief state department statement on the features of the Marshall Plan and its goals. Featured Source C is the statement by

George Kennan that first mentioned containment and it gives a broader view of the overall goals of the containment policy itself.

Links to Featured Sources:

Source A: Department of State: [Description of the Truman Doctrine](#)

Source B: Department of State: [Description of the Marshall Plan](#)

Source C: GWU: [Kennan "Long Telegram"](#)

Supporting Question 2

For the second supporting question—*"What post WWII ideas or theories threatened the U.S.?"*—students need to analyze both texts and maps (if available) to determine where communism or other non-democratic ideas were circulating. In addition to the resources from the previous supporting question, the featured sources provide students with additional materials that allow them to visualize the areas our interests possibly could be threatened with any spread of communism or anti-democracy sentiment. Featured Source A is an interactive Cold War Map. Featured Source B is a state department statement on the Berlin Airlift. Featured Source C is a pair of YouTube videos that give a thorough background of the differing philosophies of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union and can help students visualize the areas most threatened and the nature of those threats.

Links to Featured Sources:

Source A: Mapping History: [Cold War Map](#)

Source B: Department of State: [Description of the Berlin Airlift](#)

Source C: Media Rich Learning: [Cold War Part 1 – From World War to Cold War](#)

Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question—*"To what extent were U.S. policies effective?"* asks students to write a claim and counterclaim about the extent to which the U.S. containment policies were effective. In addition to the previous featured sources, the sources for this task give students different views on the historical perspective on containment. Featured Source A asks if the Marshall Plan didn't propel the Cold War. Featured Source B is another view of the Korean conflict. Featured Source C is Vietnam as part of the Domino Theory.

Links to Featured Sources:

Source A: UNH: [Contemporary editorial about the effectiveness of the Marshall Plan](#)

Source B: National Archives: [Description of the Korean Conflict](#)

Source C: Department of State: [Description of NSC-68](#)

Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined eight varied documents from the end of WWII and into the Cold War.

Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understandings and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students construct an evidence-based

argument using multiple sources to answer the compelling question “Was Containment Successful?”. It is important to note that students’ arguments could take a variety of forms, including a detailed outline, poster, or essay.

Students’ arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- *The U.S. policy of containment was successful in keeping Americans aware of world events and wary of growing Soviet power as well as giving the U.S. a sense of victory because of no actual war.*
- *The U.S. policy of containment was only one of many elements of foreign policy and could not be the sole cause of failure that lead to several nations falling to Communism.*
- *Containment as a concept was easy to promote and understand, but was difficult to produce when it came to nations we neither influenced nor could fully support.*

To extend their arguments, teachers may have students participate in a classroom forum on whether containment as response to communism in the 1950s-60s is seen as a success today.

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by drawing on their understandings of Containment. To *understand*, students can investigate a current issue in the United States that seems to promote disagreement and potential conflict by focusing on groups protesting or advocating change. To *assess* the issue, students determine if a containment type policy could be effective in controlling challenging or conflicting thoughts and ideas today. To *act*, students write an editorial for the school or local newspaper on a current issue that has conflicting theories/ideas. Within the editorial students should discuss their positions on the efforts of those engaged in the conflict and the extent to which those efforts are currently successful.