Rivals and Turning Points

Trace how technology, conflict, and reform changed the Cold War.

SS24.WH.15 "Trace the progression of the Cold War from the end of World War II to the collapse of the Soviet Union. 15a Explain the development of new technologies and their significance in the nuclear arms race and space race..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one technology and its effect, circle two opposing actions in one Asian war, and number three late Cold War changes in time order.

From Rivalry to Collapse

1. In 1945, the United States and Soviet Union emerged from World War II as rivals. Soviet control spread across Eastern Europe, while the United States tried to contain communism through aid and alliances. Both nations developed hydrogen bombs, far more powerful than the atomic bombs used in 1945. Missiles that could cross oceans made a nuclear strike possible without sending bombers. Fear of retaliation helped deter direct war between the rivals, but it did not prevent wars elsewhere.

2. Rocket technology served two races. The Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957; its success pushed the United States to invest in space research. The same advances improved long-range nuclear missiles. In Korea, communist North Korea invaded the South in 1950. US-led United Nations troops defended South Korea, while China fought for the North. Later, the United States sent troops to prevent a communist takeover of South Vietnam; communist North Vietnam fought to unite the country. Containment and communist expansion turned local struggles into wider wars.

3. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan increased US defense spending and later negotiated arms reductions with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev loosened political controls, but his reforms could not fix the economy or keep the Soviet republics together. Communist governments fell across Eastern Europe in 1989. In 1991, Boris Yeltsin, Russia's president, resisted a coup against Gorbachev and led Russia as the Soviet Union dissolved. Russia then struggled to build democratic institutions and a free-market economy amid severe economic hardship.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did rocket advances affect both the space race and the nuclear arms race?

2. How did opposing efforts to contain or spread communism widen the war in Korea?

3. The passage says fear of retaliation helped prevent direct war between the rivals. Why did that fear not prevent the United States from fighting in Vietnam?

4. How did Reagan, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin each shape the Cold War's end, and what challenge remained for Russia?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence news report dated 1991. Connect one earlier Cold War development to a change in the 1980s or 1991, judge which change mattered most in ending the rivalry, and describe one challenge Russia still faced.

ANSWER KEY

Rivals and Turning Points

GRADE 9 · SS24.WH.15

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one technology and its effect, circle two opposing actions in one Asian war, and number three late Cold War changes in time order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did rocket advances affect both the space race and the nuclear arms race?	**They enabled the launch of Sputnik and improved long-range nuclear missiles.**
2	How did opposing efforts to contain or spread communism widen the war in Korea?	**US-led United Nations troops defended South Korea after the communist North invaded, while China fought for the North.**
3	The passage says fear of retaliation helped prevent direct war between the rivals. Why did that fear not prevent the United States from fighting in Vietnam?	**The United States fought to prevent a communist takeover of South Vietnam rather than fighting the Soviet Union directly.**
4	How did Reagan, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin each shape the Cold War's end, and what challenge remained for Russia?	**Reagan increased defense spending and negotiated arms reductions. Gorbachev loosened political controls. Yeltsin resisted a coup and led Russia as the Soviet Union dissolved. Russia struggled to build democratic institutions and a free-market economy amid hardship.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For decades, long-range missiles made a direct war between the United States and Soviet Union dangerous. The rivals competed in space and fought over communism in other countries. In the 1980s, Reagan and Gorbachev negotiated arms reductions as Gorbachev loosened political controls. Gorbachev's reforms mattered most to the rivalry's end because Soviet control weakened and the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991. Russia now faces the hard task of building democratic institutions and a free-market economy during severe economic hardship.

Accept other supported judgments in Part 3 if the report connects developments across time and explains the choice. Students may identify either the Korean or Vietnam War for the opposing actions they circle.