Choices Beyond Borders

How U.S. foreign policy changes and takes effect

9-12.GOV.57 "Describe the characteristics of United States foreign policy and how it has been created and implemented over time."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one U.S. foreign policy goal in each paragraph, circle the people or groups that helped create a policy, and number one action in each paragraph that put a policy into practice, from earliest to latest.

Three Moments in U.S. Foreign Policy

1. In 1793, war between Britain and France tested the new United States. President George Washington issued a proclamation of neutrality, announcing that the country would not join either side. Staying out of Europe's war protected a young nation whose army and finances were limited. Yet neutrality was not simply a president's wish. Congress had authority over declaring war and funding the military, while Washington directed diplomacy as president. U.S. officials put neutrality into practice by warning Americans not to equip private ships to attack either side. This early policy favored security and independence over binding military commitments abroad.

2. After World War II, U.S. leaders saw a different danger: possible Soviet aggression against Western Europe. In 1949, the United States and other countries formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO. Its members agreed that an attack on one would be treated as an attack on all, with each taking action it considered necessary. President Harry Truman supported the alliance, and the Senate gave its consent to the treaty, as the Constitution requires for treaties. The United States then stationed troops in Europe as part of its commitment. Collective defense replaced the earlier preference for avoiding lasting military alliances.

3. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 raised another question: how could the United States support Ukraine without sending U.S. troops to fight Russia directly? President Joe Biden's administration imposed economic sanctions on Russia and sent military equipment to Ukraine. Congress approved funding for aid, shaping how long that assistance could continue. The policy aimed to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and support European security while limiting the risk of direct war between nuclear powers. Across these cases, U.S. foreign policy changed with perceived threats, but presidents, Congress, and, for treaties, the Senate shared roles in making it; diplomacy, alliances, aid, and sanctions helped carry it out.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What goal shaped the 1793 neutrality policy, and what did U.S. officials do to put it into practice?

2. How was the NATO policy created, and what did the United States do to carry out its commitment?

3. What did the United States seek to accomplish in Ukraine in 2022, and how did the president's administration and Congress each act?

4. How did the U.S. approach to military alliances change between 1793 and 1949, and what security concern shaped each choice?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A country across the ocean suffers a major earthquake and asks the United States for help. Write one paragraph that proposes a foreign policy response: state a goal, explain what the president and Congress would each do, describe two ways to carry out the policy, and compare your proposal with one policy in the passage.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.GOV.57

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one U.S. foreign policy goal in each paragraph, circle the people or groups that helped create a policy, and number one action in each paragraph that put a policy into practice, from earliest to latest. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What goal shaped the 1793 neutrality policy, and what did U.S. officials do to put it into practice?	**The policy aimed to protect the young nation's security and independence by staying out of the war. Officials warned Americans not to equip private ships to attack either side.**
2	How was the NATO policy created, and what did the United States do to carry out its commitment?	**President Truman supported the alliance, and the Senate consented to the treaty. The United States stationed troops in Europe.**
3	What did the United States seek to accomplish in Ukraine in 2022, and how did the president's administration and Congress each act?	**The United States sought to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and support European security without fighting Russia directly. The administration imposed sanctions and sent military equipment; Congress approved funding for aid.**
4	How did the U.S. approach to military alliances change between 1793 and 1949, and what security concern shaped each choice?	**In 1793, the United States favored avoiding binding military commitments to stay out of Europe's war. In 1949, it joined a collective defense alliance in response to possible Soviet aggression against Western Europe.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The United States should help save lives after the earthquake and strengthen its relationship with the affected country. The president could coordinate with its government and direct federal agencies to offer assistance. Congress could approve funds for the response. The United States could send emergency medical supplies and work with other countries to deliver clean water. Like the policy toward Ukraine, this plan uses aid to support another country. Unlike that policy, it responds to a natural disaster rather than an invasion.

Accept accurate paraphrases of the passage's goals, government roles, and actions. For the open task, accept other feasible forms of disaster assistance if the response distinguishes the president's role from Congress's funding role and makes a valid comparison.