

Power With Limits

Compare coalition warfare with cautious intervention in the 1990s.

11.11a “The United States created a coalition to defeat Iraq in the Persian Gulf War (1991), but was reluctant to commit American military power through the rest of the decade.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline evidence of military action with allies. Circle limits or reluctance. Compare the choices and consequences.

Coalition Victory, Cautious Decade

- ① Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990. President George H. W. Bush opposed the seizure of Kuwait’s independence and threats to regional security. Washington built a coalition including Arab states and other allies and obtained United Nations authorization for force. An air campaign and brief ground offensive expelled Iraqi forces in 1991. Bush stopped after liberating Kuwait rather than advancing to Baghdad to overthrow Saddam Hussein.
- ② The coalition restored Kuwait’s government and demonstrated international opposition to aggression. Avoiding an occupation limited the immediate U.S. commitment, but Hussein remained in power. The war also caused deaths, destruction, and environmental damage. Sanctions and confrontations continued afterward. Military victory achieved a defined goal without settling all regional problems. Debates about intervention therefore involved both what force could accomplish and what consequences might follow.
- ③ Later crises produced different responses. The United States did not send troops to stop Rwanda’s 1994 genocide. In Bosnia, delayed intervention gave way to NATO air strikes in 1995, diplomacy, and a peacekeeping deployment. In Kosovo in 1999, NATO conducted an air campaign without a ground invasion; U.S. troops subsequently joined the ground peacekeeping force. Memories of Vietnam and losses in Somalia contributed to fears about casualties and prolonged commitments. Those concerns competed with pressure to protect civilians. Caution did not mean that the United States avoided all military action throughout the decade.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What two actions show that the United States built an international coalition against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait?

2 What was one benefit and one limitation of stopping the Gulf War after liberating Kuwait?

3 How did the U.S. response to the genocide in Rwanda differ from its response in Kosovo?

4 What tension shaped U.S. foreign policy in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo? Use evidence from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a three-sentence policy memo about a fictional country where civilians face violence. Recommend coalition military action, limited action, or no direct U.S. military action. Use two lessons from the passage and name one possible benefit and one possible risk of your recommendation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline evidence of military action with allies. Circle limits or reluctance. Compare the choices and consequences. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two actions show that the United States built an international coalition against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait?	It assembled Arab states and other allies and obtained United Nations authorization for force.
2	What was one benefit and one limitation of stopping the Gulf War after liberating Kuwait?	Avoiding an occupation limited the immediate U.S. commitment, but Hussein remained in power and regional problems continued.
3	How did the U.S. response to the genocide in Rwanda differ from its response in Kosovo?	It did not send troops to stop Rwanda's genocide. For Kosovo, it participated in NATO's air campaign and later sent troops as part of the peacekeeping force.
4	What tension shaped U.S. foreign policy in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo? Use evidence from the passage.	Protecting civilians competed with fears of casualties and prolonged commitments, influenced by memories of Vietnam and losses in Somalia. Policies ranged from nonintervention to air strikes and peacekeeping.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I recommend that the United States seek United Nations support and a coalition for limited air protection of civilians in Lydora, but not send ground troops at first. The Kuwait campaign shows that a broad coalition can respond to aggression, while the decision not to occupy Iraq shows why leaders feared a costly long mission. This plan could protect people threatened by violence, but limited action may not fully end the conflict.

Accept answers that accurately contrast the coalition war in Kuwait with later cautious or limited responses. For the policy memo, accept different recommendations when students use two relevant lessons from the passage and identify a plausible benefit and risk.