

Interests and Tensions

Analyze how competing interests shaped U.S. policy in the Middle East.

11.9c "American strategic interests in the Middle East grew with the Cold War, the creation of the State of Israel, and the increased United States dependence on Middle Eastern oil..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Label evidence of three U.S. interests: 1 for Cold War rivalry, 2 for support for Israel, 3 for oil access.

Why the Middle East Mattered

- ① After World War II, U.S. leaders sought to limit Soviet influence in the Middle East. In 1948, President Truman recognized the new State of Israel. Washington also sought cooperation with Arab governments for regional security. Supporting Israel while maintaining those relationships often created competing priorities. Regional governments pursued their own goals rather than simply following either superpower.
- ② Oil added another interest. During the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, Arab oil-producing states imposed an embargo against the United States in response to its support for Israel. Production cuts and the embargo contributed to shortages and sharply higher prices. Americans experienced how conflict abroad could affect transportation and household costs. U.S. leaders sought dependable oil supplies while managing alliances and regional diplomacy. Oil policy and support for Israel could pull in different directions.
- ③ In 1978, President Carter hosted Egyptian President Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin at Camp David. Their accords provided a framework for the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty, the first between Israel and an Arab state. Washington supported negotiations to reduce the risk of wider war and strengthen partnerships. Egypt and Israel also pursued their own security interests. The accords did not resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or end regional tensions. Diplomatic progress between two states could therefore coexist with continuing disputes elsewhere.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What three strategic interests led the United States to pay close attention to the Middle East?

2 How did U.S. recognition and support of Israel create a policy challenge with Arab governments?

3 Why did the United States support the Camp David Accords, and what important conflict did the accords not resolve?

4 According to the passage, how did the 1973 oil embargo connect a Middle East conflict to life in the United States?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Imagine advising U.S. leaders during the 1973 crisis, before Camp David. In four sentences, recommend an approach addressing two interests and explain a trade-off.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Label evidence of three U.S. interests: 1 for Cold War rivalry, 2 for support for Israel, 3 for oil access. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What three strategic interests led the United States to pay close attention to the Middle East?	Limiting Soviet influence, supporting Israel while managing relations with Arab states, and protecting access to Middle Eastern oil.
2	How did U.S. recognition and support of Israel create a policy challenge with Arab governments?	The United States had to support Israel while also maintaining relationships with Arab governments whose cooperation mattered for regional security.
3	Why did the United States support the Camp David Accords, and what important conflict did the accords not resolve?	The United States believed peace between Egypt and Israel could reduce the risk of a wider war and strengthen U.S. partnerships. The accords did not resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
4	According to the passage, how did the 1973 oil embargo connect a Middle East conflict to life in the United States?	The embargo and production cuts contributed to oil shortages and higher prices, affecting transportation and household costs in the United States.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would seek a cease-fire while supporting Israel's security. Reducing fighting could also reduce the danger of greater Soviet involvement. Diplomacy with Arab governments might help address the oil embargo. Support for Israel could still strain those relationships, so the approach would involve difficult negotiations.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect U.S. policy to Cold War competition, support for Israel, and oil access. For Part 3, responses should name at least two interests, propose a plausible policy approach, and explain a tension between goals.