

Lines of Division

Trace how Cold War competition changed alliances and borders.

8.7a “The Cold War was an ongoing struggle between the two nuclear superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. The Cold War shaped the reconstruction of national boundaries and political alliances across the globe.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three changes in boundaries or alliances. Circle the explanation of why nuclear weapons made direct war dangerous.

A World Divided

- ① After World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union competed for global influence. The Soviet Union first tested an atomic bomb in 1949; both became nuclear superpowers. Each built larger arsenals, fearing the other's weapons. This arms race made direct war risky because either side could cause enormous destruction. The rivals also competed through diplomacy, aid, military bases, and support for other governments.
- ② Germany showed how the Cold War reshaped boundaries and alliances. After the war, Germany was divided into occupation zones. In 1949, the western zones became West Germany, allied with the United States and its Western European partners. The Soviet zone became East Germany, allied with the Soviet Union. Berlin, located inside East Germany, was also divided. In 1961, East German authorities built the Berlin Wall to stop many people from leaving for West Berlin. The division became a powerful symbol of the conflict.
- ③ Political alliances spread beyond Germany. In 1949, the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations formed NATO, promising collective defense. In 1955, the Soviet Union and Eastern European allies formed the Warsaw Pact. Some newly independent nations chose not to join either bloc. Leaders of countries such as India and Yugoslavia helped build the Non-Aligned Movement. In places including Korea and Vietnam, Cold War competition influenced conflicts, as each superpower backed different sides. These choices shaped governments, borders, and relationships around the world.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did the arms race make a direct war between the United States and the Soviet Union risky?

2 How did Cold War competition change Germany after World War II? Include the alliances of West Germany and East Germany.

3 How did NATO and the Warsaw Pact show that the Cold War created political alliances?

4 What choice did non-aligned nations make, and which two countries helped build the Non-Aligned Movement?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine that you lead a newly independent country during the Cold War. Write three sentences explaining whether your country will join a United States-led alliance, join a Soviet-led alliance, or remain non-aligned, and explain one effect that choice could have on your country's relations or border security.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three changes in boundaries or alliances. Circle the explanation of why nuclear weapons made direct war dangerous. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did the arms race make a direct war between the United States and the Soviet Union risky?	Both sides had nuclear weapons and could cause enormous destruction.
2	How did Cold War competition change Germany after World War II? Include the alliances of West Germany and East Germany.	Germany was divided. West Germany allied with the United States and Western European partners, while East Germany allied with the Soviet Union.
3	How did NATO and the Warsaw Pact show that the Cold War created political alliances?	NATO united the United States, Canada, and Western European nations for collective defense. The Warsaw Pact united the Soviet Union with Eastern European allies.
4	What choice did non-aligned nations make, and which two countries helped build the Non-Aligned Movement?	They chose not to join either Cold War bloc. India and Yugoslavia helped build the Non-Aligned Movement.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Republic of Luma will remain non-aligned because its leaders do not want to join either military bloc. Luma will trade with both sides but will not allow foreign military bases near its borders. This policy could reduce pressure to take sides, although both superpowers may still compete for influence in Luma.

Accept accurate explanations that connect nuclear weapons to the danger of direct war and connect Cold War blocs to changed alliances or divided territories. For the open response, accept any historically plausible choice with a clear effect on relations or border security.