

Promises and Pressures

Analyze Great Society goals alongside the costs of the Vietnam War.

8.9c "The Great Society programs of President Lyndon Johnson strengthened efforts aimed at reducing poverty and providing health care for the elderly, but the Vietnam War drained resources and divided society."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about Great Society programs and write M for Medicare, D for Medicaid, or P for another anti-poverty effort. Circle details showing how the Vietnam War affected resources or divided people.

A Nation Pulled in Two Directions

- ① In the 1960s, President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society expanded the federal government's response to poverty and health needs. Medicare, created in 1965, helped people age 65 and older pay for hospital and medical care. Medicaid, also created in 1965, provided health coverage for eligible people with low incomes, including many children, parents, older adults, and people with disabilities. These programs did not have the same eligibility rules. Medicare was mainly based on age, while Medicaid was based on income and need.
- ② Great Society leaders also tried to reduce poverty through education, job training, and local community projects. Head Start gave preschool children from low-income families early learning and health services. Job Corps offered training to young people. At the same time, the United States sent more troops and supplies to the Vietnam War. Military spending competed with domestic spending. As the war grew more costly, less political attention and fewer resources were available for some Great Society plans.
- ③ The war also changed public debate. Many young men could be drafted into military service, making the conflict personal for families and students. Some Americans supported the war, but others questioned its goals and human costs. A growing peace movement organized marches, campus protests, and public speeches against the war. The counterculture, a youth movement that often challenged traditional values, overlapped with antiwar activism. Arguments about the draft and the war helped divide communities, families, and the nation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How were Medicare and Medicaid different in the people they were designed to help?

2 Name two ways the Great Society tried to reduce poverty besides Medicare and Medicaid.

3 How did the growing Vietnam War affect Great Society plans?

4 Explain how the draft helped the Vietnam War divide society.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences as if you were advising a national leader in 1968. State one Great Society priority you would protect, explain one decision about war spending, and predict one possible public reaction to the government's choices.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details about Great Society programs and write M for Medicare, D for Medicaid, or P for another anti-poverty effort. Circle details showing how the Vietnam War affected resources or divided people. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How were Medicare and Medicaid different in the people they were designed to help?	Medicare mainly helped people age 65 and older. Medicaid provided health coverage for eligible people with low incomes and need.
2	Name two ways the Great Society tried to reduce poverty besides Medicare and Medicaid.	It supported education, job training, and local community projects. Head Start and Job Corps are specific examples.
3	How did the growing Vietnam War affect Great Society plans?	Military spending competed with domestic spending, so fewer resources and less political attention were available for some Great Society plans.
4	Explain how the draft helped the Vietnam War divide society.	Because many young men could be drafted, the war affected families and students personally. Some people supported the war, while others joined protests and the peace movement.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would continue funding Head Start because early learning and health services can help children from low-income families. I would limit new war spending because it competes with domestic programs for resources. If leaders ignored both costs, more people might join the peace movement or criticize the government's priorities.

Accept equivalent descriptions of Medicare as age-based and Medicaid as income- and need-based. For the open response, check for exactly three sentences that include a Great Society priority, a war-spending choice, and a plausible public reaction.