Power Without Sides

Military alliances, nuclear risk, and choices during the Cold War

MWH.C.7.1.D "Compare military power shifts caused by the war and a proliferation of nuclear armaments, describing the impact of transnational organizations and alliances (e.g., United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show how military power changed, circle the names of organizations or alliances, and number two goals of non-alignment. Use your marks to compare how countries responded to the Cold War.

Choosing Security After World War II

1 In 1945, the wreckage of World War II left Germany and Japan defeated and much of Europe weakened. The United States and the Soviet Union emerged with far greater military reach than most other countries. In August 1945, the United States used atomic bombs against Japan; in 1949, the Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb. As both powers built more nuclear weapons, a direct war between them threatened destruction on an unprecedented scale. Their rivalry reached far beyond their borders, as governments around the world faced pressure to choose sides in a conflict now called the Cold War.

2 The United Nations, founded in 1945, offered countries a place to negotiate disputes and seek collective security. Yet its Security Council could be blocked when a permanent member used its veto. Military alliances made sharper commitments. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, formed in 1949, linked the United States, Canada, and Western European states in a pledge to treat an attack on one as an attack on all. In 1955, the Soviet Union and Eastern European governments formed the Warsaw Pact, a rival military alliance. Each bloc gathered armed partners; neither the UN nor the alliances removed the danger of nuclear war.

3 Not every country wanted protection through a superpower's military bloc. In 1961, leaders from newly independent and other countries met in Belgrade to launch the Non-Aligned Movement. They sought freedom to make their own foreign policy choices rather than formally join either Cold War alliance. They also opposed colonial rule and urged peaceful coexistence. Non-alignment did not mean every member agreed on every issue or avoided contact with the superpowers. It meant resisting pressure to let either bloc dictate their policies. Compared with an alliance's promise of joint defense, this approach put political independence first while leaving states to find other ways to protect themselves.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did military power shift after World War II, and how did the spread of nuclear weapons raise the stakes of that shift?

2. How were NATO and the Warsaw Pact alike, and how did they differ?

3. How did the UN's approach to security differ from a military alliance's approach, and what limit did the UN face?

4. Why might a country choose the Non-Aligned Movement instead of joining a Cold War alliance? Include a goal and a trade-off.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise a newly independent country in 1961. Write a four-sentence policy statement that compares military alliances with UN diplomacy, explains how nuclear weapons affect your choice, and states whether your country would pursue non-alignment and why.

ANSWER KEY

Power Without Sides

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.7.1.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show how military power changed, circle the names of organizations or alliances, and number two goals of non-alignment. Use your marks to compare how countries responded to the Cold War. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did military power shift after World War II, and how did the spread of nuclear weapons raise the stakes of that shift?	**Germany and Japan were defeated and much of Europe weakened, while the United States and Soviet Union gained greater military reach. Once both powers had nuclear weapons, a direct war threatened unprecedented destruction.**
2	How were NATO and the Warsaw Pact alike, and how did they differ?	**Both gathered armed partners in the Cold War. NATO linked the United States, Canada, and Western European states; the Warsaw Pact linked the Soviet Union and Eastern European governments.**
3	How did the UN's approach to security differ from a military alliance's approach, and what limit did the UN face?	**The UN offered a place to negotiate disputes and seek collective security, while alliances made military commitments. A permanent member's veto could block Security Council action.**
4	Why might a country choose the Non-Aligned Movement instead of joining a Cold War alliance? Include a goal and a trade-off.	**It could keep control of its foreign policy and resist pressure from either bloc, but it would not gain an alliance's promise of joint defense.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our country will not join either Cold War military alliance because we want to make our own foreign policy choices. NATO and the Warsaw Pact offer armed partners, while the United Nations gives states a place to negotiate, though a Security Council veto can block action. Nuclear weapons make a clash between the blocs especially dangerous, so we will seek security through diplomacy rather than a military pledge to either side. We will pursue non-alignment, oppose colonial rule, and work for peaceful coexistence while keeping the freedom to speak with both powers.

Accept a different policy choice if the statement accurately compares alliances with UN diplomacy, accounts for nuclear risk, and explains how the choice relates to non-alignment. Responses to the open task should contain four sentences.