

Rebuilding Changes Power

Read how postwar recovery shaped a new world order.

USII.7.b “describing the Marshall Plan’s objectives for rebuilding Europe, the occupation and reconstruction of Japan, and the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as superpowers;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentences that describe rebuilding Europe or Japan. Circle details that show why the United States and the Soviet Union became superpowers.

After the War

- ① After World War II ended in 1945, much of Europe faced ruined cities, damaged factories, food shortages, and homelessness. The United States offered the Marshall Plan in 1947. This program gave money, supplies, and technical help to European countries that chose to participate. Its main objectives were to rebuild economies, restore trade, and help people meet basic needs. U.S. leaders also hoped that recovery would support stable democratic governments and make desperate people less likely to support communist parties.
- ② Japan surrendered in 1945, and Allied forces occupied the country until 1952. The United States led the occupation, with General Douglas MacArthur serving as the chief commander. Occupation leaders changed Japan's government and society. A new constitution, which took effect in 1947, created a democratic government and limited Japan's military. Land reforms reduced the power of large landowners. As Japan rebuilt homes, factories, and schools, the United States provided aid and encouraged economic recovery. These changes helped Japan become a peaceful, democratic ally of the United States.
- ③ By the late 1940s, the United States and the Soviet Union had emerged as superpowers, nations able to influence events far beyond their borders. Both had large armed forces and powerful economies compared with war-damaged countries. The United States used aid, trade, and alliances to build influence in Western Europe and Japan. The Soviet Union controlled or strongly influenced governments in Eastern Europe. Each nation had nuclear weapons, and each promoted a different system: U.S. democracy and capitalism, Soviet communism and a command economy. Their rivalry shaped the Cold War.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What were two objectives of the Marshall Plan?

2 Why did U.S. leaders think economic recovery in Europe could limit support for communist parties?

3 Name two changes made in Japan during the occupation.

4 What two facts from the passage show that the United States and the Soviet Union were superpowers?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences answering this question: How did rebuilding after World War II connect to the rise of the United States and Soviet Union as superpowers? Use one detail about U.S. rebuilding efforts and one detail about Soviet influence in Europe.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentences that describe rebuilding Europe or Japan. Circle details that show why the United States and the Soviet Union became superpowers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What were two objectives of the Marshall Plan?	Any two: rebuild European economies, restore trade, and help people meet basic needs.
2	Why did U.S. leaders think economic recovery in Europe could limit support for communist parties?	They believed people who were less desperate would be less likely to support communist parties.
3	Name two changes made in Japan during the occupation.	Any two: a democratic government was created through a new constitution, Japan's military was limited, and land reforms reduced the power of large landowners.
4	What two facts from the passage show that the United States and the Soviet Union were superpowers?	Any two: they had large armed forces, powerful economies, nuclear weapons, and the ability to influence events beyond their borders.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

U.S. rebuilding efforts gave it influence because the Marshall Plan helped European economies recover and aid supported Japan's recovery. The Soviet Union built influence by controlling or strongly influencing governments in Eastern Europe. These actions helped both nations affect events outside their own borders, which was a key feature of superpowers.

For Questions 1, 3, and 4, accept any two accurate details named in the passage. For the open response, look for exactly three sentences that connect U.S. rebuilding, Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, and superpower influence.