



## CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

*Students will have a solid understating of the Cuban Missile Crisis, America's role and U.S. Presidential foreign policy throughout this historic event.*

---

### LESSON PLAN

#### Introduction

If one speaks to the generations of the 1950s and early 1960s and asks them to name one of the most significant and frightening events of their lifetime, the responses will most definitely include the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis. This lesson plan will allow students to understand the threat of this event and the role played by major policy makers in the United States and in the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

#### Lesson Objective

In this lesson, students will learn about significant historical figures and events of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Students will then work in teams to review the information and present their findings to the class.

#### Problem

What is the historic context and significance of the Cuban Missile Crisis? How was the threat of nuclear attack averted? How is foreign diplomacy/policy used to avert this crisis?

#### Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson plan students will be able to answer:

- What was the background to the events in Cuba?
- How successful were early attempts at 'containment'?
- Why was the USSR interested in helping Cuba?
- What happened during the Cuban Missile/October Crisis?
- What was the outcome of the crisis?
- Work cooperatively in teams to select the appropriate sequence of events as they happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

**Grade Level:** 8-12

**National Social Studies Standards:**

**Chronological Thinking, Historical Comprehension, Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making.**

**National English Standards:**

**Acquisition of Vocabulary, Communication; Oral and Visual.**

**Materials Required:**

- Attached PowerPoint
- Attached "order" activity cards

### **Preparation for activity:**

- The teacher will review with the class, the history and key terms included in the attached PowerPoint presentation. This overview will allow students to have a solid understanding of the concept of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

### **Procedures:**

- Begin by showing the Cuban Missile Crisis PowerPoint presentation. Emphasize the key names and terms significant to this event.
- Explain to the students that each team will be implementing these names and terms at the conclusion of class.
- Students will be assigned to work in groups of 3-4.
- Problem:
  - In what order did the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis occur ?
- Following this introduction to the event, using the “order” activity cards student will decide as teams in what order these historic events occurred.
- Students will present their group’s findings to the class.

### **Extension:**

- Divide students into groups A or B. Group A must produce a short press release explaining the background, key events and outcome of the Cuban Missile Crisis from an Soviet perspective. Group B, must do the same but, from an American perspective.
- Teachers can also use editorial cartoons contained in the PowerPoint to encourage student analysis of content. Student can begin to answer questions such as; “What is the cartoon speaking about?” “What are the hidden messages?” An example question for this exercise is contained on slide 6 within the PowerPoint.

### **Resources:**

LaFeber, Walter. “The American Age: U.S. Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad 1750 to the Present”. (New York: NY, W.W. Horton and Co.) 597-604.

Nalty, Bernard. “Winged Shield, Winged Sword: A History of the U.S. Air Force”. (Washington DC: Air Force History and Museum Programs). 179-180.

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/colc.html>

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject\\_menus/msc\\_cubamenu.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/msc_cubamenu.asp)

<http://library.thinkquest.org/11046/days/timeline.html>

<http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/education>

# CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

PUT THE EVENTS IN ORDER ACTIVITY CARDS

Bay of Pigs occurs

U.S. spy planes take pictures over USSR

Cuba receive thousands of armaments from USSR

Spy planes observe Soviet ships loaded with missiles headed for Cuba

US breaks off diplomatic relations with Cuba

Khrushchev asks Kennedy to move U.S. missile from Turkey

Fidel Castro overthrows Battista

Kennedy lifts "quarantine"

Kennedy "quarantines" Cuba

Photos show continued construction on Cuban missile sites

Khrushchev agrees to remove missiles

Kennedy asks Khrushchev to remove weapons from Cuba

Khrushchev agrees to negotiate if the "quarantine" is lifted

Khrushchev refuses to acknowledge "quarantine"

U.S. spy plane is shot down over Cuba and the pilot is killed

Soviets deny that missiles are "in place"

Soviet ships head toward "quarantine" zone