

Tuesday's In-class Cold War Essay

Okay, so you might be nervous about writing without being able to use notes on this essay. Do not worry. The best thing you can do is prepare by: (1) looking over your blue paper; (2) watching the videos on the Cold War that we put on our Twitter feed; (3) making sure you understand the events we learned about by discussing them with someone; and (4) reading some in your own history textbook (look at the *italicized* pages that are listed on the blue paper). **Also**, bring your writing handbook; we give you a grade boost of up to two points if you demonstrate improvement in the skills we indicated for you.

For body paragraph topics, find topics that are broad enough to discuss a variety of examples. For example, writing that the Soviet Union is primarily to blame for the Cold War due to its aggression in Cuba only allows you to discuss the Cuban Missile Crisis. Better topics include:

- writing about leaders' behaviors (Stalin and Khrushchev, Truman and Kennedy/Johnson) -- making poor diplomatic decisions, openly pursuing a foreign policy that antagonizes the other country
- writing about regions -- the Soviet's or U.S.'s policies in Germany, their actions in Europe, their actions in Asia
- writing about time periods -- actions taken just after World War II, actions taken between the Korean War era and the early 1970s

There are, of course, other ways to structure body paragraphs. These are just a few to get you thinking.

As for counterarguments, here is an example to give you some ideas.

TS: The Soviet Union is primarily responsible for the tensions of the Cold War era due to its aggression during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. (*This would not be a great body paragraph topic, because it focuses on only one event – but this will still help you see how a counterargument could be used.*)

BP development: discussion of all the things the U.S.S.R. did during this period that could be considered aggressive: sending ships to Cuba with nuclear missiles, sending 5000 military personnel to help the Cubans with military needs, shooting down an American U-2 spy plane; discuss how all of these things raised tension (Cuba only 90 miles from U.S. shore, just 10-minute missile flight to Washington, helping the only communist gov't in the Western hemisphere)

Counterargument: Some might claim that the U.S. precipitated (caused) this aggression in the Soviet Union because in the year prior the U.S. had supported a Cuban-exile led failed takeover of the Cuban government. While the U.S. certainly had created a hostile environment in the Caribbean due to these actions, this action alone should not be considered as raising the stakes during the Cold War. Both the East and West during this time period intervened in other countries' affairs – in Hungary and Greece just after World War II, in Korea in the 1950s, for example – and the U.S. was merely applying the principles of the Truman Doctrine of supporting freedom. Clearly, it is the U.S.S.R. that raised the stakes during the Cold War with its action in Cuba.

The terms below will be listed on the essay prompt. You should just be sure you know who/what these are . . .

Terms/Concepts/Groups

Eastern Bloc
satellite nations
nuclear weapons
containment
Iron Curtain
domino theory
ideology
Marshall Plan
38th parallel
guerillas
Viet Cong / Viet Minh
Berlin Wall
Cominform
Truman Doctrine
NATO and Warsaw Pact
arms race
buffer zone
MAD
sphere of influence

Events

Berlin blockade/airlift
Tehran Conference
Yalta Conference
Potsdam Conference
Korean War
Cuban missile crisis
Vietnam War
Berlin Wall built
Bay of Pigs

Countries

Germany (East and West)
Hungary
Czechoslovakia
Poland
China
Vietnam
Cuba
Yugoslavia
Greece
Korea (North and South)

People

Ho Chi Minh
Dwight D. Eisenhower
Lyndon B. Johnson
Franklin Roosevelt
Joseph Stalin

Fulgencio Batista
Fidel Castro
John F. Kennedy
Nikita Khrushchev
Leonid Brezhnev
Harry Truman
Richard M. Nixon
Mao Zedong
János Kádár
Imre Nagy
Kim Il-sung
Gen. Douglas MacArthur