THE KENNEDY AND JOHNSON YEARS
1961 - 1969
STANDARDS

• SSUSH20 The student will analyze the domestic and international impact of the Cold War on the United States.
• c. Describe the Cuban Revolution, the Bay of Pigs, and the Cuban missile crisis.
• d. Describe the Vietnam War, the Tet offensive, and growing opposition to the war.
• SSUSH21 The student will explain economic growth and its impact on the United States, 1945-1970.
• b. Describe the impact television has had on American culture; include the presidential debates (Kennedy/Nixon, 1960) and news coverage of the Civil Rights Movement.
• SSUSH23 The student will describe and assess the impact of political developments between 1945 and 1970.
• a. Describe the Warren Court and the expansion of individual rights as seen in the Miranda decision.
• b. Describe the political impact of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy; include the impact on civil rights legislation.
• c. Explain Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society; include the establishment of Medicare.
• d. Describe the social and political turmoil of 1968; include the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, and the events surrounding the Democratic National Convention.
ESSENTIAL QUESTION

• EQ: Despite the progressive accomplishments of the decade, why were the 1960s full of social and political turmoil?
KENNEDY TAKE OFFICE

- 1960 – JFK defeats VP Richard Nixon in one of the closest popular vote races in history.
- The JFK/Nixon televised debates had a tremendous impact on the election. Some argue these TV debates were the reason Kennedy won.
- Kennedy became the first (and only) Catholic to be elected President. And up until that time he was the youngest elected as well.
KENNEDY AND THE COLD WAR

- 1959 – Cuban Revolution turns Cuba Communist; led by Fidel Castro
- April 1961 – Kennedy proceeds with CIA plan to invade Cuba and overthrow Castro
- This attempt (known as the Bay of Pigs) fails; Kennedy embarrassed, US image ruined
KENNEDY AND THE COLD WAR

- October 1962 – Cuban Missile Crisis begins.
- US discovers nuclear missile in Cuba, 90 miles from Miami, FL.
- US had similar missiles stationed in Turkey.
- For 13 days the world was on the brink of nuclear war.
- Crisis was averted when JFK and Russian leader Nikita Khrushchev agree to withdrawal missiles from respective bases.
KENNEDY AND THE SPACE RACE

• April 1961 – Russians put a man in space; Kennedy then vows to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade.
• He would not live to see his dream realized on July 20, 1969 when Apollo 11 landed on the moon.
• “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind” – Neil Armstrong
• Kennedy Space Center in Orlando named in his honor
KENNEDY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

• Because of his narrow win in 1960, Kennedy was reluctant to pursue major Civil Rights legislation.
• However after violence erupted across the South, he changed his mind.
• Together with his brother, Attorney General Robert "Bobby" Kennedy, JFK pressed for sweeping Civil Rights legislation.
JFK ASSASSINATED

• November 23rd, 1963 – During a trip to Dallas, TX Kennedy is shot while riding in a motorcade.
• Alleged “lone gunman” Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested hours later.
• Oswald himself was killed on live TV by gunman Jack Ruby.
• Numerous conspiracy theories still circulate as to why JFK was killed.
After the death of JFK, LBJ becomes President.

Despite being from Texas, Johnson politically supported Civil Rights.

He vowed to continue the work of JFK.
JOHNSON’S “GREAT SOCIETY”

- Johnson’s vision for America was known as the “Great Society”.
- He pushed for legislation that would:
  - End poverty
  - Provide job training to young people
  - Improve education
  - End the “Quota System” on immigration
  - Provide medical care for the elderly (Medicare) and the poor (Medicaid).
In 1964, LBJ runs for President against conservative Barry Goldwater of Arizona. The conservative movement was gaining ground for years during and after the New Deal era. Conservatives believe in a smaller federal government in all aspects from economic to social issues. Infamous “Daisy” ad used fear of nuclear war to help LBJ attain votes.
WARREN COURT EXPANDS INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS

- During the 1960s the Supreme Court took the lead on controversial social, religious and political issues.
- Court was led by Chief Justice Earl Warren who also guided the court in the Brown v. Board ruling of 1954.
- Gideon v. Wainwright (1963) – All accused criminals had the right to a lawyer whether they could afford one or not.
- Miranda v. Arizona (1966) – All accused criminals had to be informed of his or her 5th and 6th amendment rights before being questioned.
- These included the right to an attorney and protection against self-incrimination.
- “You have the right to remain silent...”
THE VIETNAM WAR

- Despite the efforts to improve America domestically, the nation was experiencing a foreign policy nightmare: the Vietnam War.
- Seen as another front in the Cold War; an attempt to stop the spread of communism.
- North Vietnam was communist; supported by the Soviet Union.
- South Vietnam was democratic; supported by the US.
- US came to the aid of South Vietnam in an effort to stop the North from invading and turning the South communist.
1968: A YEAR OF TURMOIL

- Dr. Martin Luther King – assassinated on April 4th.
- Robert Kennedy – JFK’s brother; ran for president in 1968; assassinated June 6th while campaigning in California.
- Nation mourns the loss of two heroes within weeks of each other.
1968 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

- Held in Chicago at the end of August.
- Distraught by failure in Vietnam War, LBJ announced earlier that he would not run again.
- Angry mob riots broke out between police and protestors over Civil Rights issues and Vietnam opposition.
- Mayor Richard Dailey sent in Chicago Police and the IL National Guard to regain control.
Despite the progressive accomplishments of the decade, why were the 1960s full of political and social turmoil?

Include:

- Cuban Missile Crisis
- JFK’s Assassination
- Vietnam War
- Martin Luther King Jr.’s Assassination
- Robert Kennedy’s Assassination
- Riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention