

From the Cold War era to the early 21st century

**Write a title for each paragraph. Choose from the following:** *The modern Civil Rights Movement - The Cold War - Cultural and political changes - The United States in the 21st century*

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After World War II the two superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union – competed to expand their influence all over the world. Each group believed that its ideas and political systems could best guarantee security, liberty, equality and prosperity in modern times. This rivalry was called the Cold War because it did not result in actual war between the two superpowers, but led to many military operations and smaller wars all over the world. Each side armed heavily in preparation for an immensely destructive global nuclear war.

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After World War II African Americans still suffered from discrimination. In the early 1950s those who were better educated than their parents began to protest and attempted to gain the same equal rights as white people. They started a movement demanding equal civil rights, political and economic self-sufficiency and racial dignity. The Civil Rights Movement was characterised by large campaigns of civil resistance and acts of non-violent protest. This helped the movement become popular and successful. The federal government passed Civil Rights Acts which made the country a more just and humane society for all.

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The 1960s and 1970s also produced anti-war movements and advances in the rights of women, homosexuals, immigrant workers and Native Americans. Americans also became concerned about the environment and, in 1970, celebrated the first Earth Day. In the late 1980s and early 1990s Americans witnessed the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the fall of Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, and the end of the Cold War. The United States became the world's leading power.

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Today America faces serious economic difficulties, significant competition with China and India, security of energy supply and national insecurity. It has to redefine its role as a global leader according to the new reality – a very unstable and complicated world, which has changed dramatically from the 20th century.

**Choose the correct answer.**

1. After World War II the two superpowers were
  - A) the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.
  - B) Eastern Europe and the United States.
  - C) the Soviet Union and the United States.
2. The rivalry between the two superpowers was called the Cold War because
  - A) it produced the melting of icebergs.
  - B) there was no large-scale direct fighting between the Soviet Union and the United States. They were heavily arming themselves in preparation of an immensely destructive global nuclear war.
  - C) it was fought in winter.

3. The Cold War ended in 1991 because
  - A) the United States had to cope with serious economic difficulties.
  - B) the Soviet Union became very powerful.
  - C) the Soviet Union collapsed.
4. The modern Civil Rights Movement started because
  - A) African Americans suffered from discrimination.
  - B) African Americans did not want to vote.
  - C) African Americans wanted to live and work in black neighbourhoods.
5. The Civil Rights Movement became popular and successful because it was characterised by
  - A) violent activities.
  - B) acts of non-violent protest.
  - C) large campaigns of civil resistance and acts of non-violent protest.
6. The 1960s and 1970s were also characterised by
  - A) anti-war movements and advances in the rights of women, homosexuals, immigrant workers and Native Americans.
  - B) anti-war movements and advances in the rights of women.
  - C) anti-war movements and advances in the rights of women and immigrant workers.
7. In 1970, Americans celebrated the first Earth Day because they
  - A) did not want cleaner water, air and land.
  - B) became concerned about the environment.
  - C) wanted to save small cities.
8. The United States became the world's leading power in the 1990s because
  - A) it defeated Iraq.
  - B) the country experienced rapid economic growth.
  - C) the Soviet Union collapsed, the Soviet satellite states of Eastern Europe were free and Communism ended.
9. Today, America has to redefine its role as a global leader because
  - A) we don't live in a complicated world.
  - B) we live in a less complicated world.
  - C) we live in a much more complicated and unstable world.