

# **Teaching American History Project**

## **Cold War Battle Grounds**

### ***Arms Race, Space Race, Sports***

By: Ryan Broderick and Bobby Skarvelas

**Grade:** 9-12

**Length of Period:** 1-2 class periods

**Inquiry:** Students will investigate the meaning and implications of a “cold” war. Even though the United States and the Soviet Union never waged violent war against each other, alternative battles were fought on many fronts. Some of these fronts include the arms race, the space race, and sporting contests. Students will watch video clips, analyze photographs, and discuss findings. The key question is, “Was the Cold War fought with something other than military means?”

#### **Objectives:**

Students will know and be able to:

- Identify the key components of a cold war
- Analyze primary source documents
- Interpret historical meaning from film
- Review importance of arms race, space race, and sports in the Cold War

#### **Materials:**

- Cold War Fact Sheets
- Duck and Cover Video  
-found at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- Movie Clip from Apollo 13  
- JFK Speech
- Movie Clip from Rocky IV  
-Rocky’s speech at end of movie after match
- Al Michael’s Broadcast from 1980 “Miracle on Ice”
- Movie Clip from “Miracle”  
-final period of U.S.A. vs. the Soviets
- USA Basketball article (optional)  
-article found at [http://www.usabasketball.com/history/moly\\_1972.html](http://www.usabasketball.com/history/moly_1972.html)

**Activities:**

- Initiation- Write the word cold on the board. Ask students to discuss the definitions of the word. What might a cold war be?
- Brief Lecture- Origins of Cold War and actuality that there was no physical war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Introduce alternate forms of battle that were fought during the Cold War.
- Hand out the fact sheets. Go over the arms race fact sheet as a class.
- Free write for five minutes - How do you think the countries building up each other's weapons avoided an actual war?
- Show the duck and cover video. What type of atmosphere was present in the United States at that time? How does this video relate to the threat of terrorism today?
- Display the quote by JFK. "We hope to beat them (Soviets) and demonstrate that starting behind them as we did by a couple years, by God, we passed them. I think it would be a helluva thing for us."
- Show the JFK film clip from Apollo 13. Why do you think the space race was so important to the president?
- Discuss the significance of sports in society. What importance do you think sports had in the Cold War?
- Show Rocky IV clip. Demonstrate that this is a fictional movie, yet still takes on these larger social issues of the time.
- Play CD of Al Michaels's broadcast of the USA-USSR 1980 Olympic hockey game. Show movie clip from *Miracle*. Compared to the Space Race and Arms race, where do sports rank in importance as a component of the Cold War?
- Closure- Why were these competitions between the United States and Soviet Union important?

**Assessment:**

- Informal assessment takes place in the form of student interaction and participation within the class.
- Class discussion.
- Check and monitor progress.
- Formal assessment takes place through the free write.

**CT State Standards:**

Educational experiences in **Grades 9-12** will assure that students:

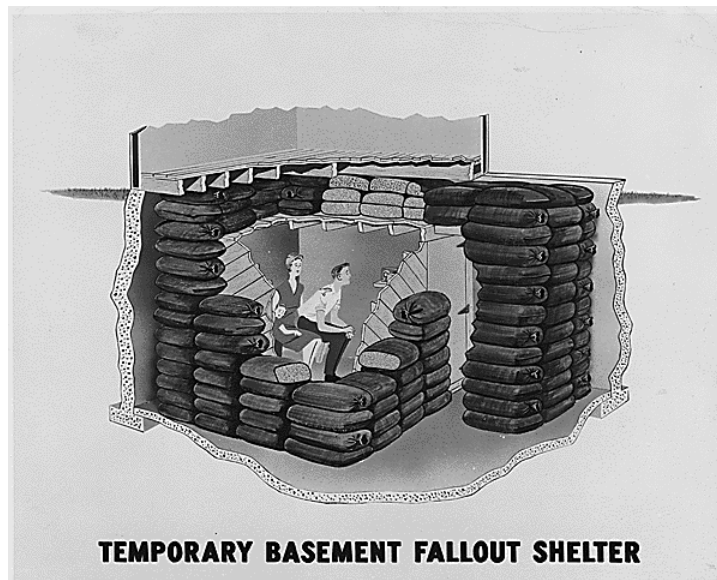
- formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources
- use primary source documents to analyze multiple perspectives
- identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods

# Cold War Fact Sheet



## **Arms Race:**

- An arms race is a competition between nations to have the most powerful weapons. In this case it took place 1960-1980.
- With Cold War tensions heightening at the start of the 1960s, the superpowers (the United States and the Soviet Union) are drawn into an escalating arms race.
- Both countries began to test their nuclear weapons. The flash from a 50-megaton Soviet nuclear bomb test in 1961 was visible 600 miles away. In other words, if it had been dropped on Detroit, people in New York would have been able to see it.
- **September 1961: Fallout Shelters**  
In a letter published in LIFE magazine, President Kennedy advises Americans to build fallout shelters.
- **March 1983: Star Wars**  
U.S. President Ronald Reagan announces the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Commonly known as Star Wars, SDI is envisioned as a satellite-based nuclear defense system, which would destroy incoming missiles and warheads in space.



## Space Race:

- A space race is a competition between two or more states, international organizations, or nongovernmental organizations to advance in space exploration and technology. The most famous space race, was the one between the United States and the Soviet Union that took place from 1957 and 1975, most notably in relation to their efforts to land a human being on the Moon and return him to Earth.
- “We hope to beat them (Soviets) and demonstrate that starting behind them as we did by a couple years, by God, we passed them. I think it would be a helluva thing for us.”

- President John F. Kennedy, 1962

- The first living creatures that the United States ever sent into space were two mice, named Benjy and Laska, in 1958. The first animal to go into space was a dog, sent up by the Russians. Astronauts are not allowed to eat beans before they go into space because passing wind in a spacesuit damages them.
- The space race began in the late 1940's. By the mid 1960's, the Soviets were clearly leading this space race. They put the first satellite in space, the first man in space, and orbited the moon with satellites that took pictures. Up until the mid 1960's, the Soviets were clearly more advanced in the space race than the United States.
- In 1961, President Kennedy declared that he wanted to put a man on the moon and return him home safely before the Soviets.

