

Key vocabulary: match the meanings with the words.

Key term	Meaning
Deutsche mark	East Germany.
Bizonia	The USSR's interference in Eastern European elections in order to create satellite states.
Salami tactics	The USA and British zones joined together.
Federal Republic of Germany	The USA, British and French zones joined together.
Democratic Republic of Germany	West Germany.
Trizonia	The policy of making a move that forces the other side to respond. This is dangerous and can escalate.
Brinkmanship	West German currency introduced in 1948.



Your task is to understand what happened in Berlin in 1948 and why. Your team is either:

USSR - Stalin and his politburo




OR

USA - Truman and his White House Senior Advisors

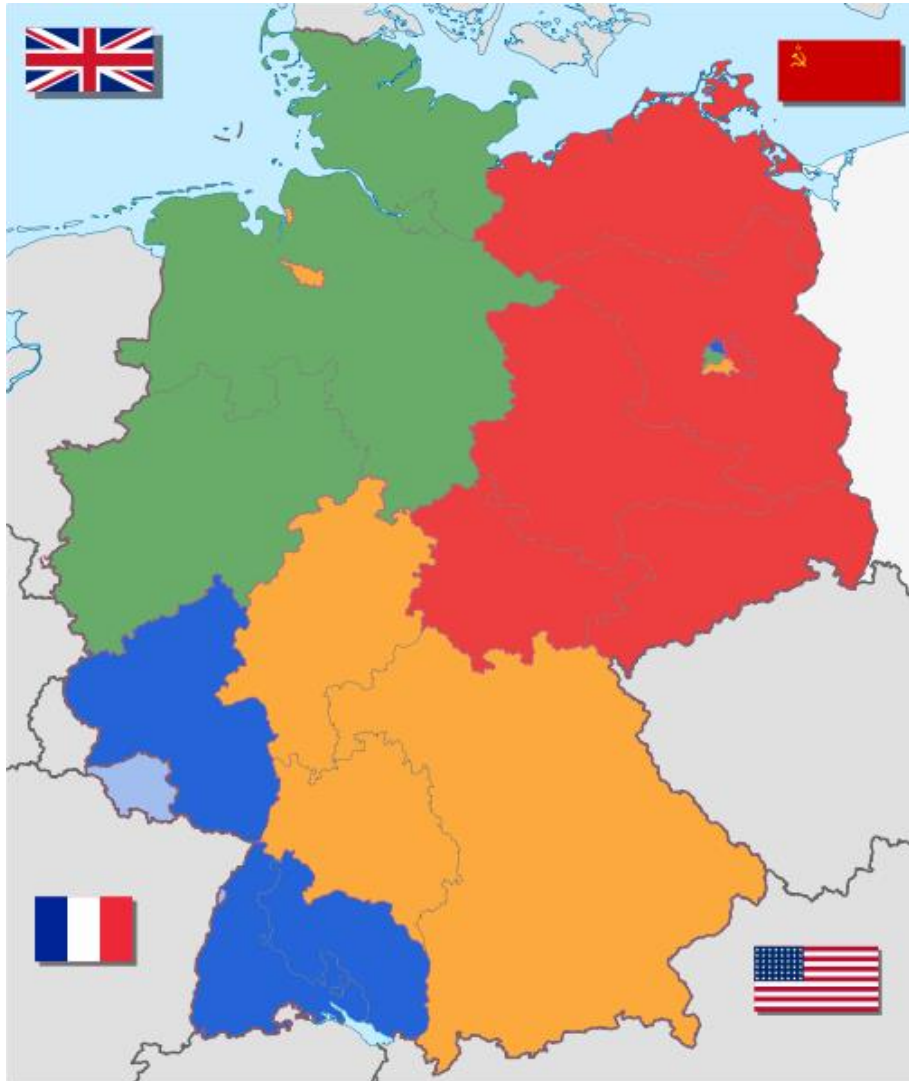



Background

1. It is 1948, list below as many reasons as possible why you are distrustful of the other superpower.
2. Write a speech to air your concerns to the UN Security Council. The teams will be ranked on the quality of their persuasive writing and argument.



The question of Germany

3. Research: what have the West (USA, Britain and France) have done by late 1948 to strengthen Western Germany? Annotate the map to explain.
4. Draw the Saar and the Ruhr on to the map. Why are they significant?



By WikiNight2 [GFDL (<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>)], via Wikimedia Commons

5. Write a speech to the UN to update them on the developing situation in Germany:

<p>USA</p> 	<p>Why have you done this to Western Germany? Explain your rationale for your actions. Use the term 'Red menace' in your speech.</p>
<p>USSR</p> 	<p>You have been extracting reparations from Eastern Germany (the Second World War cost you over \$20 billion) in the form of money, goods, agricultural products and factories. Why does the action of the West worry you? Condemn the West's actions and include the phrase 'Dollar imperialism'.</p>

Crisis over Berlin - brinkmanship!



It is 23 June 1948. The USSR has cut off West Berlin from the West claiming 'technical difficulties' have left the roads, canals and railways and even electrical supplies cut. West Berlin now has enough food and fuel for only 6 weeks.

American General Lucius Clay suggests that the US and British drive armed convoys down the autobahns (motorways) towards Berlin! Truman instead decides to fly in supplies by air to Templehoff Airport in Berlin. This will risk US and British airmen's lives.





Berlin children-Berlin airlift / 1948 / Credit: akg-images / Universal Images Group / Copyright © akg-images / For Education Use Only. This and millions of other educational images are available through Britannica Image Quest. For a free trial, please visit www.britannica.co.uk/trial

Use the internet and textbooks to research the answers to the questions below.

<p>6. Give four reasons why this in your view is the best policy.</p> <p>7. Give examples of the success this course of action and how they showed US power.</p> <p>8. You have placed 60 B52 bombers in Britain with nuclear warheads ready to fly. Would you use them against Russia? Explain your answer.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">USA</p> 
<p>6. Why have you set up this blockade?</p> <p>7. What do you hope will be the beneficial outcomes of such action for the USSR and Eastern Europe?</p> <p>8. Why do you decide not to shoot down the US planes flying into Berlin?</p> <p>9. What do you do to disrupt those planes?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">USSR</p> 

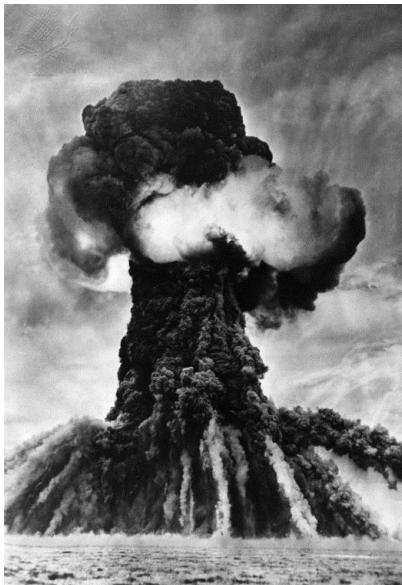
The blockade ends

After nearly 1 year, 275,000 flights and 2.3 million tons of supplies, the USSR backed down.

<p style="text-align: center;">USA</p> 	<p>You set up NATO immediately after the crisis, sent more money to Europe and set up the CIA and the National Security Council.</p> <p>9. Why did you do this? Explain your rationale.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">USSR</p> 	<p>10. Why did you back down? Explain your rationale.</p>



Lastly

In 1949 the USSR detonated an atomic Bomb and China declared itself communist in October 1949.



The first soviet atomic bomb test, first lightning (первая молния), ussr, august 29, 1949. / Credit: Sovfoto / Universal Images Group / Copyright © Universal Images Group / For Education Use Only. This and millions of other educational images are available through Britannica Image Quest. For a free trial, please visit www.britannica.co.uk/trial

Crowds in Peking, China, welcome victorious Communist troops following the withdrawal of Nationalist forces from the city, 31 January 1949. / Credit: The Granger Collection / Universal Images Group / Copyright © The Granger Collection / For Education Use Only. This and millions of other educational images are available through Britannica Image Quest. For a free trial, please visit www.britannica.co.uk/trial

<p style="text-align: center;">USA</p> 	<p>10. How does this change your view of the USSR?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">USSR</p> 	<p>11. How does this change your view of the Cold War?</p>

Key question

To what extent was the Berlin Airlift of 1948 a turning point in the Cold War? Explain your answer fully.

Teacher notes

This activity is designed to get GCSE students thinking about the decisions made by the USA and USSR during the Berlin crisis 1948-9. Students will require access to the internet and textbooks to research their answers - this could be via mobile phones.

Students should be placed in teams - either representing the USA or USSR. They then respond to all the questions in role.

It may be worth using a timer (try the [Teachit timer](#) for free) to allow students five minutes for each speech writing task. They will also require paper or could write in their exercise books.

Key term match up

Key Term	Meaning
Federal Republic of Germany	East Germany.
Democratic Republic of Germany	West Germany.
Deutsche mark	West German currency introduced in 1948.
Bizonia	The USA and British zones joined together.
Salami Tactics	The USSR's interference in Eastern European elections in order to create satellite states. In 1948 they were close to invading Yugoslavia whose leader Tito had resisted their control and the non-communist leaders Gomulka (Poland) and Husak of Czechoslovakia were arrested in show trials and non-communists were purged! Masayrk (Czech Foreign Minister) was thrown out of a window!
Trizonia	The USA, British and French zones joined together.
Brinkmanship	The policy of making a move that forces the other side to respond. This is dangerous and can escalate (get worse).

The final task asks students to consider the significance of the Berlin blockade and airlift as a turning point in the Cold War. This works well as a homework activity and can be adapted to fit the question stem types for GCSE.