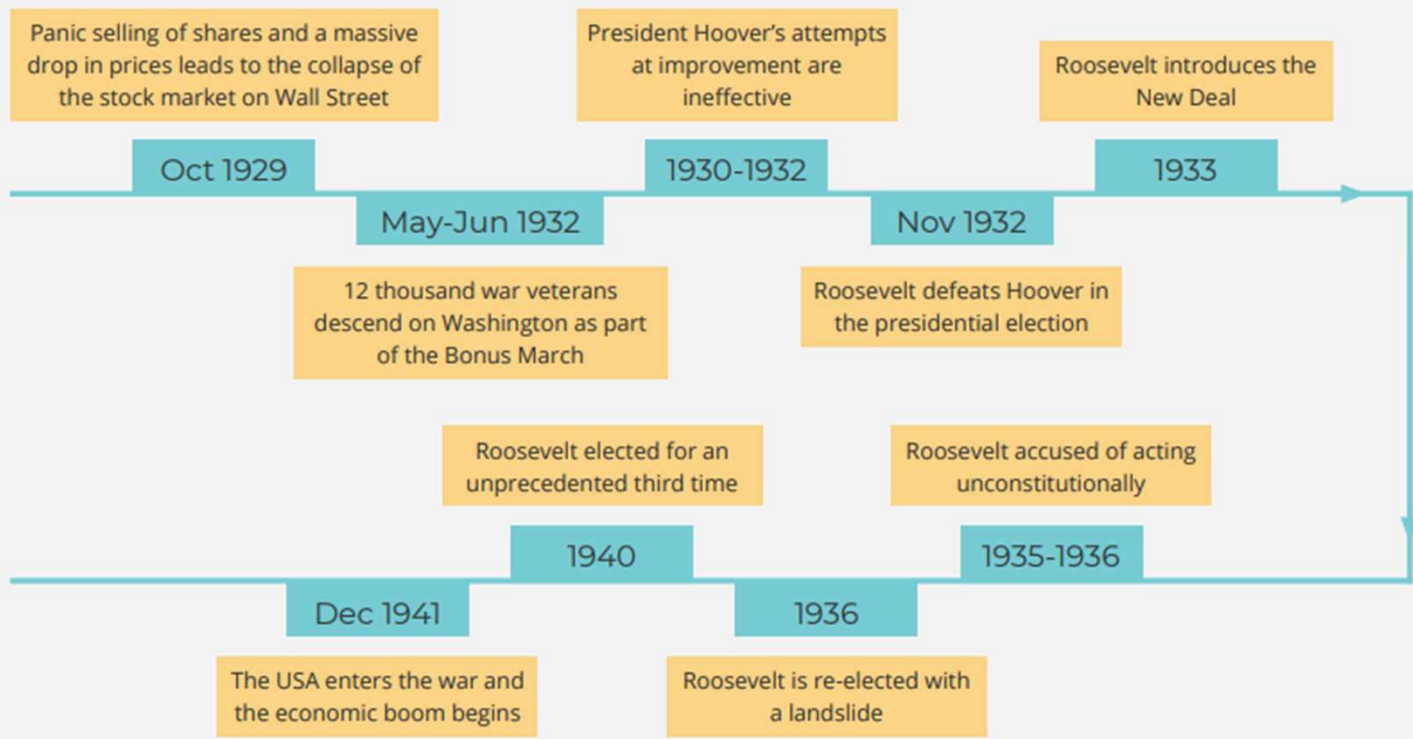


Key Question 1 : How was the USA affected by the Great Depression between 1929 and 1945?

Timeline of events



Key words	
Wall St Crash	the collapse of the US stock market in October 1929
Great Depression	the economic and social slump caused by the collapse of the stock market in 1929
Hooverville	shanty towns built for the unemployed
Hobo	an unemployed migrant seeking work
Bonus Army	war veterans demanding early payment of bonuses
New Deal	Roosevelt's policies to deal with the Great Depression
Alphabet Agencies	nickname given to the organisations within the New Deal
Rugged individualism	the view that Americans are responsible for their own lives and do not need external help
Balancing the budget	ensuring that government revenue matches spending

The impact of the Wall Street Crash

- In October 1929 panic selling of shares on the Wall Street Stock Exchange resulted in a loss of confidence in the financial sector.
- Share prices crashed causing the US stock market to collapse in what became known as the **Wall Street Crash**.
- Events were to lead to a huge economic and social **slump** which became known as the **Great Depression**.
- The collapse of the economy and a fall in demand for American goods led to huge increase in unemployment especially in the industrialised towns and cities as factories and businesses went bust.
- By 1933 upwards of 13 million were unemployed which represented one third of the working population.
- In 1932 war veterans marched to Washington demanding the early payment of war bonuses as part of the "**Bonus March**" which was brutally put down by the army on the orders of **President Hoover**.

Important concept

The USA entered an unprecedented time of economic and social hardship after the Wall St. Crash. Roosevelt's actions dealt partially with the issues but ultimately entry into the war lifted the USA out of depression.

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself - Roosevelt

Key Question 1 : How was the USA affected by the Great Depression between 1929 and 1945?

Republican attempts to deal with the crisis

- The Republican President **Hoover** faced criticism about how he dealt with the effects of the Depression.
- His approach was based on his belief of **balancing the budget** and he refused to borrow money in order to create jobs.
- The Republican belief in **"rugged individualism"** meant that individuals should not expect support from the government.
- In 1932, Hoover attempted to introduce measures in an attempt to address the crisis such as the **Emergency Relief Act** which gave \$300 million to state governments to help the unemployed. To many, his efforts were **"too little too late"**.
- His treatment of the **Bonus Marchers** created the impression that he did not care which gave rise to the slogan **"In Hoover we trusted, now we are busted"**.

Life during the Depression

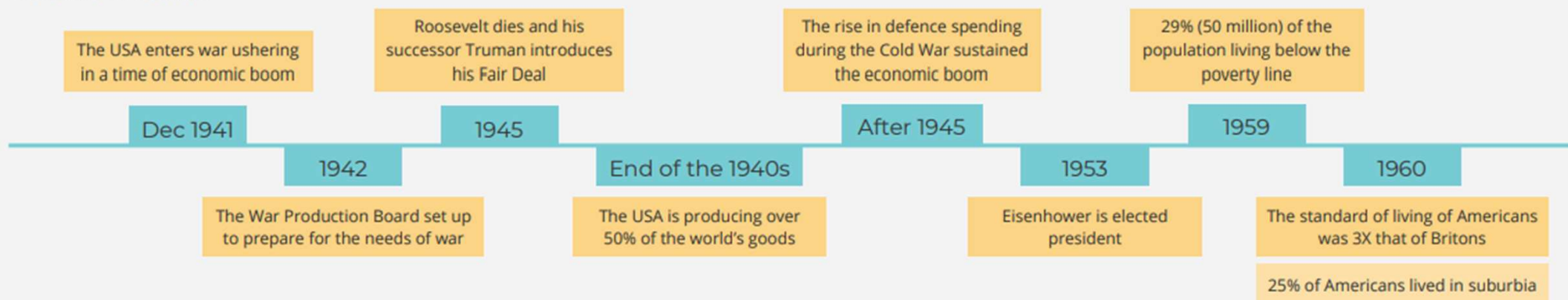
- As people lost their jobs and homes many moved into makeshift homes called **"Hoovervilles"** while others became **"hobos"** and drifted across the country in search of work.
- Black Americans were often first to be fired and by 1933 unemployment levels had reached 50%.
- Many farmers became **bankrupt** and more than one million left home in search of work.
- A combination of poor farming methods and drought compounded the situation especially in Oklahoma, New Mexico, Kansas and Arkansas.
- The Depression had a huge effect on family life:
 - the number of marriages dropped with a subsequent
 - reduction in the birth rate
 - the suicide rate rose dramatically
 - with no national system of social security, some 25% of the population were not receiving any income and were dependant on charity.

Roosevelt and the New Deal

- Roosevelt defeated Hoover with a landslide victory in the 1932 election. He promised direct federal action as part of his **New Deal** for the American people based on the **"three Rs" of relief, Recovery and Reform**.
- His first move was to stabilise the banking system.
- His **"fireside chats"** helped to reassure the people that his measures were workable.
- He established numerous organisations as part of his New Deal which became known as the **"Alphabet Agencies"**.
- The New Deal was successful in creating millions of jobs, improving conditions for farmers and creating a semi-welfare state for disadvantaged Americans.
- Roosevelt's policies were criticised by some for not doing enough and for being a short term fix. For others he did too much and his actions were un-American and unconstitutional.
- Ultimately it was the Second World War which lifted the Depression.

Key Question 2 : How had the economy of the USA changed by the 1960s?

Timeline of events



Key words

Lend Lease	system by which the USA aided wartime allies
War bonds	bought by citizens to help the war effort
Fair Deal	the domestic policies of Truman
Suburbia	residential areas outside towns and cities
Affluence	times of increased wealth and prosperity
Baby boom	a temporary marked increase in the birth rate
Gross National Product	total value of goods produced by a country in a given period
Hire purchase	buying on credit by paying instalments
Conscription	requirement for citizens to join the armed forces

Important concept

The war acted as a catalyst for recovery and in a time of relative prosperity many searched the "American Dream". However there was still "poverty amidst plenty".

Industrial output

- On entering war the US was put on a war footing and industry was geared to the production of armaments and military equipment.
- Roosevelt established the War Production Board and it was agreed which companies would produce which goods e.g. General Motors produced heavy machine guns.
- By 1944 the US was producing almost 50% of the weapons in the world.
- Industry expanded as a result of the Lend Lease programme to its allies.
- Increased job opportunities and conscription combined to reduce unemployment. In 1939 unemployment stood at 9.5 million, by 1944 it had dropped to 670,000.
- By 1945, the USA was clearly out of depression and had the most powerful economy in the world.

Post-war affluence

- Millions of US citizens had purchased war bonds in order to help the economy while providing personal savings and after the war they were cashed in and \$200 million entered the economy.
- The car industry began to boom again and sales of new cars rose to 6.7 million by 1950.
- There was a great demand for new houses for returning troops and together with low interest rates the construction industry boomed.
- The development of the Cold War in the 1950s which led to a rise in defence spending.
- Demands from war-ravaged Europe kept the order books of US companies full.
- Subsequent Presidents, Truman and Eisenhower, continued to promote economic and social progress which contributed to the prosperity of the times.

Key Question 2 : How had the economy of the USA changed by the 1960s?

Consumerism and suburbanisation

Consumerism – the years after the Second World War saw the emergence of an affluent society.

- With more spending power, US citizens were eager to buy consumer goods notably cars and televisions.
- The availability of hire purchase increased consumer credit and purchasing power.
- Increased efficiency and expertise of the workforce allowed for goods to be produced more quickly which lowered prices and increased demand.
- By 1944 the standard of living of the average American was three times that of the average Briton.
- Suburbanisation - many middle class citizens decided to abandon the pressures of city living and moved to new houses in the suburbs.
- Increased car ownership meant workers could to work and back.
- Houses were affordable as a result of low interest mortgages.
- Suburbanisation was central to the creation of the **"American Dream"**.

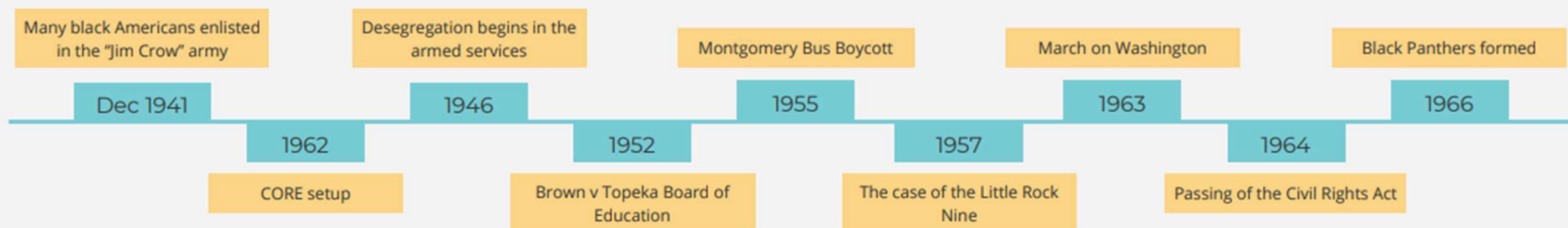
"Poverty amidst plenty"

- Not all Americans shared in the affluence of the post-war years.
- Many citizens, especially black Americans, remained part of a social underclass surviving under the poverty line.
- In 1955, 40% of New York`s ghettoised black Americans were recipients of welfare.
- The problem was regionalised – people in the southern states remained behind those of the north and the west coast.
- With no national health service, the USA lagged behind many European countries in providing pensions and welfare benefits.

Work hard, do your job. Trust in God. Have no fear. - Truman

Key Question 3 : Why was it difficult for black Americans to gain equal rights between 1941 - 1970?

Timeline of events



Key words

Segregation	enforced separation of racial groups in society
Jim Crow Laws	laws aimed to segregate and discriminate
Jim Crow Army	segregated regiments in the US armed forces
Sit-in	occupying an area as a form of passive resistance
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
Supreme Court	highest judicial body in the USA
Nation of Islam	African-American political and religious movement
Black Power	A movement based on racial pride and empowerment

Important concept

The war furthered civil rights but the pace was slow. After 1945, there were legal test cases that declared segregation unconstitutional but change remained slow and was regionalised. Racism continued even after governmental legislation was implemented.

The contribution of black Americans to the war effort

- On the outbreak of the war, many black Americans enlisted in "**Jim Crow**" segregated regiments carrying out menial tasks and dangerous work rather than seeing active service.
- As the war progressed, black Americans began to see action and served with distinction namely the **Tuskagee airmen** and the **761st Tank Battalion**
- **General Eisenhower** showed his support for integrated units and by the end of the war black American servicemen were serving in mixed units.
- By the end of the war many black Americans had become officers.
- De-segregation in the navy happened in 1946 and other branches of the military by 1948.
- With many black Americans on active service, opportunities improved for male and females in factories. They were still treated as second class citizens which gave rise to the "**Double V**" campaign - victory abroad and victory at home.
- Awareness of discrimination during the war led to increased membership of the **NAACP** and numbers rose from 50k to 450k.
- **CORE** was formed in 1942 and advocated peaceful resistance.

Civil Rights Legislation

- Civil Rights Act 1964 - banned racial discrimination in employment and gave black Americans equal rights to enter public places.
- Voting Rights Act 1965 - stopped racial discrimination over the right to vote and ended literacy tests.
- Supreme Court Ruling 1967 - ruled that state laws banning interracial marriages were unconstitutional.
- Fair Housing Act 1968 - racial discrimination made illegal in the property market.

I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear. - MLK

Key Question 3 : Why was it difficult for black Americans to gain equal rights between 1941 - 1970?

The issue of education

The injustice of segregation was highlighted in the issue of education:

- The first test case to challenge segregation occurred in the mid-west state of Kansas. The father of Linda Brown wanted her to attend a nearby white school and with the help of the **NAACP** took on the **Topeka Board of Education**. After losing in the state court the NAACP took the case to the **Supreme Court** who ruled that racial segregation in public places was **unconstitutional**.
- In September 1957, nine black American students attempted to enrol at the white-only **Little Rock High School**, Arkansas which was their right. The governor called in National Guardsmen to prevent the students from entering prompting **President Eisenhower** to send in federal troops to protect them.

Both cases showed that the issue of civil rights was now central to US politics and could no longer be ignored.

The roles of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X

Martin Luther King was a dominant figure in the fight for civil rights:

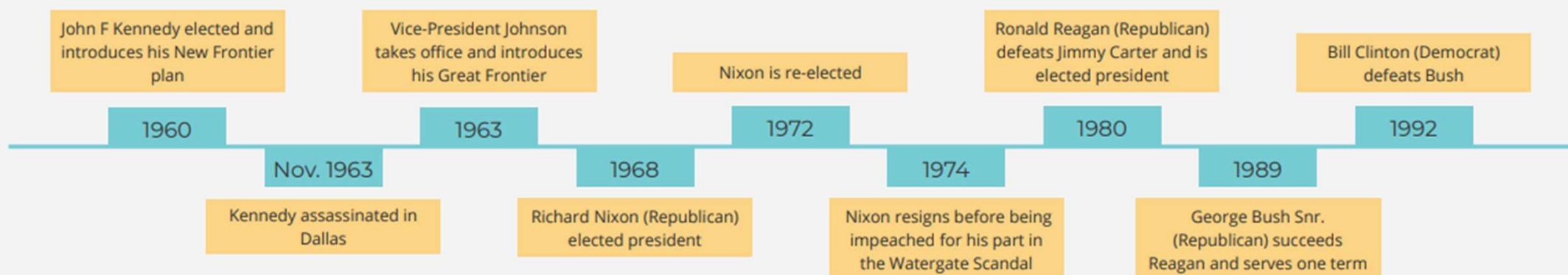
- His beliefs were based on non-violent, passive resistance rather than violence and favoured sit-ins, marches and boycotts.
- He came to prominence during the **Montgomery Bus Boycott** of 1955 which resulted in the **Supreme Court declaring** that segregation on busses was unconstitutional.
- King was a gifted orator and became the main voice of the **SCLC**.
- The high-mark of his ministry was the **March on Washington** in 1963 where he delivered his "I have a dream" speech to over 250k black and white supporters which put pressure on the president to consider the issue of civil rights.

Malcolm X had a huge impact on young black Americans:

- In 1952, Malcolm Little joined the **Nation of Islam** and, rejecting his "slave" name, changed his surname to "X".
- Rejecting King's peaceful approach he advocated violence and race war in order to achieve a separate black state.
- In 1964 he left the Nation of Islam and formed the Muslim Mosque Inc and the Organisation for Afro-American Unity.
- He encouraged black Americans to be proud of their heritage and to improve self-esteem and his ideas formed the basis of radical movements such as Black Power and the Black Panthers.

Key Question 4 : What were the main political developments in the USA between 1960 and 2000?

Timeline of events



Key words

New Frontier	the reform policies of Kennedy in the early 1960s
Budget deficit	a countries overspending
National Debt	monies owed by a country
Recession	a general slow down in economic growth
Reaganomics	nickname given to Reagan's economic policies
CREEP	campaign to Re-elect Pres. Nixon in 1972
Watergate Scandal	the "dirty tricks" campaign which led to Nixon's resignation
Impeachment	to bring the president to trial for treason
Indirect taxes	taxes levied on goods rather than income

Important concept

The early 1960s was a time of optimism but this was shattered by the assassination of Kennedy. The nation lost confidence in politics and politicians after Watergate but political credibility began to be restored with Reagan's presidency.

The greater our knowledge increases, the more our ignorance unfolds. - JFK

Nixon and Watergate

Richard Nixon (Republican) was elected president in 1968 and re-elected in 1972 but was forced to resign as a result of the **Watergate Scandal**.

- 1970 - Nixon set up the **Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP)** with permission to use any means necessary.
- June 1972 - five members of CREEP were arrested for a break-in at the Watergate offices of the Democrat Party.
- Nixon denied any knowledge of the incident, ordered a cover-up and was re-elected.
- January 1973 - the Watergate "burglars" were convicted.
- Nixon refused to cooperate initially but taped recordings confirmed his involvement.
- July 1974 - Congress decided to **impeach** Nixon.
- Aug. 1974 - Nixon resigned and was replaced by **Gerald Ford**.

The experience of Watergate led to a drop in public confidence in the government and president.

The domestic policies of Kennedy

November 1960 - John F Kennedy (Democrat) becomes president and introduces his **New Frontier** programme. The aim was to eradicate the evils of poverty, inequality and deprivation.

Civil Rights - Kennedy aimed at make America a fairer society by granting equal rights for black Americans. In February 1963 he presented a Civil Rights Bill to Congress but it was rejected.

The Economy - He purposely decided not to **balance the budget** to stimulate the economy and introduced tax cuts in order to boost speeding and reduce unemployment. He introduced a public work programme on roads and buildings and offered grants to companies to invest in new equipment.

Social Reform - Kennedy proposed an affordable system of health insurance (Medicare). He planned to increase the minimum wage. In 1963, his **Social Security Act** offered help to the elderly and unemployed, however he faced opposition in Congress and many of his initiatives were rejected.

Key Question 4: What were the main political developments in the USA between 1960 and 2000?

The Reagan Years

Ronald Reagan (Democrat) was elected president in 1980 and was re-elected in 1984.

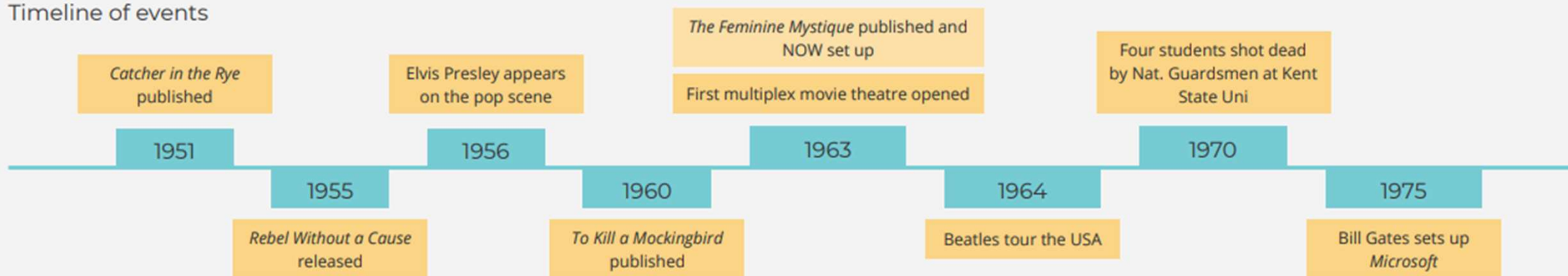
- He became president at a time of recession with high inflation and rising unemployment.
- He introduced an economic policy called "**Reaganomics**" which advocated tax cuts to encourage spending as part of "**trickle down**" thinking.
- He cut welfare payments including Medicare and slashed taxes
- he introduced the **Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI)** known as "**Stars Wars**" at huge cost which involved a nuclear umbrella to stop Soviet nuclear bombs from reaching America.
- In 1987 there was a severe stock market collapse due mainly to Reagan's policies.
- In 1988 he created the Office of **National Drug Control Policy** as part of his "war on drugs" programme.
- In 1989 the federal government was spending massively on research into AIDS.

Changes under Bush Senior and Clinton

- **George Bush Senior** (Republican) succeeded Reagan as president in 1989 and served one term in office at a time of economic problems.
- **The budget deficit** had trebled.
- Bush was forced to increase indirect taxes with increased taxation on the wealthy.
- He passed two important acts:
- **The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)** which banned discrimination in employment, public accommodation and transportation.
- **The Clean Air Act (1990)** which aimed to reduce smog, acid rain and pollution.
- **Bill Clinton** (Democrat) was elected in 1992 and served for two terms. He increased government spending, increased taxes and reduced the **national debt**. In 1996 he introduced a minimum hourly rate and proposed a **Health Security Bill**.
- There were moves to **impeach** Clinton over his indiscretion with an official.

Key Question 5 : How did American society change between 1950 and 2000?

Timeline of events



Key words

Anti-hero	character in a film lacking the qualities of the norm
Counterculture	way of life opposed to that regarded as normal
Beatnik	a member of the Beat Generation
Hippy	someone who rejects convention
Women's Liberation	a radical movement demanding female equality
Feminist	a supporter of equal rights of women
NOW	National Organisation for Women
Drive-in	a cinema where films can be watched from a car
SDS	students for a Democratic Society founded in 1959

Changes in music, entertainment, media and literature

Society was greatly influenced by changes in popular culture in the second half of the 20th century.

Music

1950s – Rock and roll took the US by storm with Elvis Presley and Little Richard popularising the new genre.
 1960s – British groups such as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and US bands like the Beach Boys were widely popular.
 1970s/80s – Heavy metal, disco and rap and hip-hop were popular.

Entertainment and the media - Cinema – drive-ins became popular and the first multiplex theatre opened in 1963.

1970s - Blockbusters such as *Jaws* (1975) and *Star Wars* (1977) dominated the movie scene. 1980s - Video players encouraged the hire of videos for home entertainment.

Television – By 1970 virtually every home had a television. In the 1960s Westerns were popular along with soap operas in the 1980s and chat shows in the 1990s.

Literature – landmark books such as *Catcher in the Rye* (1951) dealt with teenage angst, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) covered sensitive issues of the time, *On the Road* (1957) challenged the conventions of society and *Black Boy* (1971) focused on the issue of segregation.

Changes in youth culture

Arguably the biggest change in the 1950s was the emergence of a distinct youth culture.

1950s – teenagers had more money and leisure time than ever before and felt the need to express themselves in music, fashion and behaviour.

- “Beatniks” - dropped out of society.
- Teenagers became influenced by cult heroes such as **James Dean** who rebelled against their parents in particular and society in general.
- Music – stars such as Elvis influenced dress and behaviour in the **1950s** and in the **1960s** some dropped out of society and followed **hippy** lifestyles. They grew their hair, wore ethnic clothes, experimented with drugs and engaged in “free love”. Many settled in communes and San Francisco became the hippy capital of the USA.

Important concept

Society was influenced greatly by changes in popular culture with perhaps the most dramatic effect being the emergence of the teenager. The period was a time of experimentation and excess and important advances were made in music and literature along with the changing rights of women.

If you want to keep your memories you first have to live with them. - Bob Dylan

Key Question 5 : How did American society change between 1950 and 2000?

Student protest

1951 – the first student protest group – **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)** was set up and campaigned for more say in how courses and institutions should be run.

- During the 1960s many students became involved in various protest movements taking part in marches, freedom rides and sit-ins.
- At the time, young people were gaining a sense of freedom and were more prepared to express themselves.
- They were influenced by musicians of the time such as **Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix** and **Janis Joplin** who used their music to protest against injustice and war.
- Many opposed the draft for service in Vietnam and anti-war protest became a feature of the late 1960s.
- **1970** – student protest at **Kent State University, Ohio** resulted in the deaths of four protesters, shot dead by National Guardsmen.

The changing role of women

The Second World War had a liberating effect for many women but as the war ended many returned to roles as homemakers and to “traditional” occupations.

1950s – boredom with routine together with the introduction of labour saving devices encouraged some women to seek careers.

1960s – by 1960 women represented 50% of the workforce but a report of 1963 showed that they only received between 40 and 50% of the wages of men for doing the same job.

1963 – **Betty Friedan** published *The Feminine Mystique* which called for women to abandon traditional roles and seek careers.

1966 – Friedan and others set up the **National Organisation for Women (NOW)** which demanded equal rights for women.

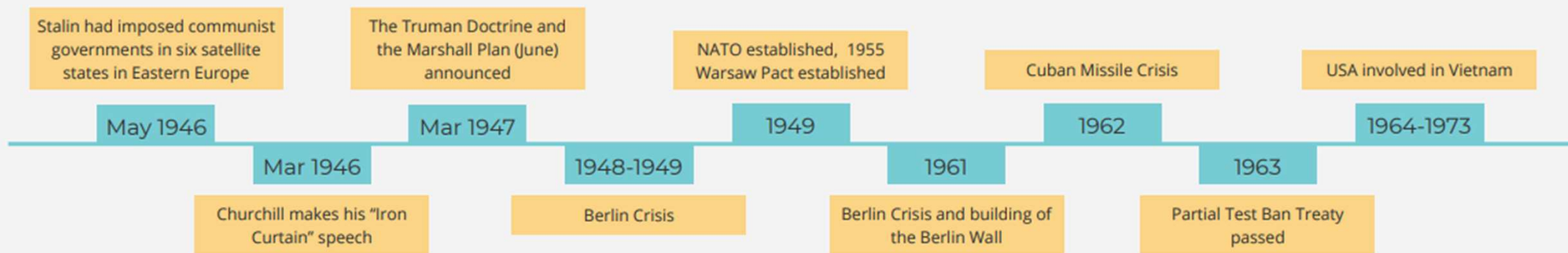
The more radical **Women's Liberation Movement** became active in challenging discrimination.

Laws such as the **Civil Rights Act (1964)** and the act of 1973 which legalised abortion helped secure more freedom.

Women continued to make progress in the 1980s but by 1995 the earnings of women were 75% of that of men.

Key Question 6 : Why did relation between the USA and the USSR deteriorate between 1945 and 1973?

Timeline of events



Key words

Cold War	conflict between the USA and USSR without direct action
Superpower	term to describe the most powerful countries
Iron Curtain	Churchill's reference to the split in Europe in 1946
Containment	actions of the US to prevent the spread of communism
Truman Doctrine	Truman's pledge to help any country threatened by communism
Marshall Aid	programme of economic aid given to countries
Domino Theory	belief in the knock-on effect of communism
NATO	a defensive alliance of countries headed by the USA
Vietcong	communist guerrilla force fighting in Vietnam

There is some risk involved in action. But there is more risk in failure to act. - Truman

Important concept

Relations between the post-war superpowers deteriorated as a result of ideological differences. Both resorted to a Cold War with no direct action and to fighting proxy wars.

The Truman Doctrine and containment of communism

The USA and USSR had put their political differences aside and become allies during the Second World War. With Germany defeated in May 1945 the two emerged as **superpowers** and entered a **Cold War** which was to last between 1945 and 1991.

Reasons for worsening relations

- The USSR had established communist in their **satellite states** in Eastern Europe.
- The USA failed to inform Stalin of the development of the atom bomb.
- When the Allies decided to divide post-war Germany, Stalin was clear that he opposed holding free elections in his zones of occupation.
- March 1946 – **Churchill's "iron curtain"** speech emphasised the division of Europe.
- March 1947- the **Truman Doctrine** was announced which committed the USA to contain and prevent communism as part of the **Domino Theory**.
- Truman's announcement was backed up by economic aid to countries threatened by communism as part of **Marshall Aid**.

The Berlin Crisis 1948-49

After the Second World War was split into four allied zones of occupation. Berlin, deep inside the Soviet zone, was divided in the same way.

- By June 1947 the US, British and French zones had merged and began to cooperate economically.
- 24 June 1948 – Stalin ordered that all communication links between West Berlin and West Germany should be **blocked**.
- In response the West organised an **airlift** to fly in supplies.
- May 1949 – Stalin stepped down and all routes into West Berlin were re-opened.
- Truman recognised the need for **collective security** and in 1949 the USA and 11 other western powers formed the **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)**.
- 1955 – the USSR set up its rival organisation – the **Warsaw Pact**.

The creation of two powerful military powers heightened the tensions of the Cold War.

Key Question 6 : Why did relation between the USA and the USSR deteriorate between 1945 and 1973?

The Cuban Missile Crisis

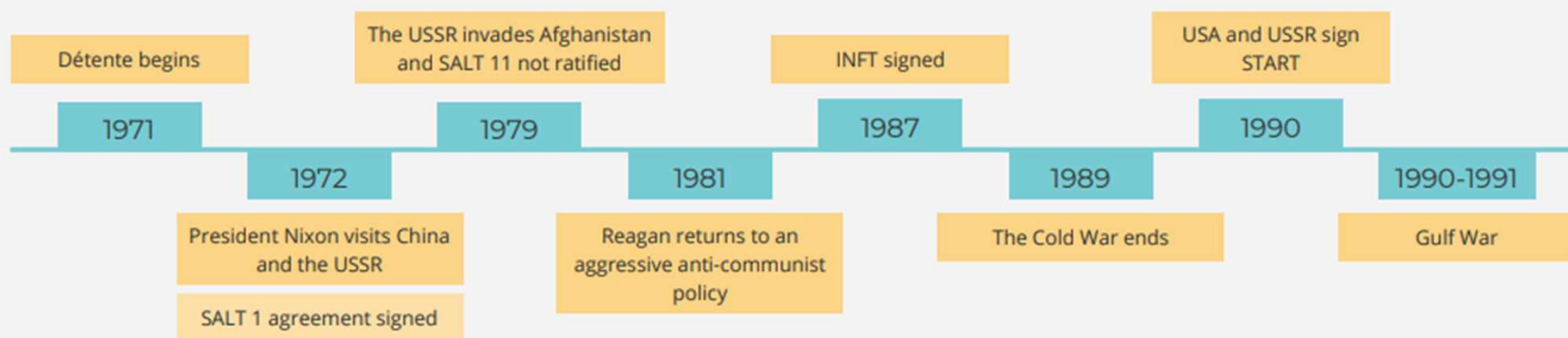
- January 1959 – The US backed leader of Cuba was overthrown by forces led by left-wing rebel, **Fidel Castro**.
- Castro strengthened trading links with the USSR at the expense of USA trade.
- It was feared that Castro would establish a communist state which, 90 miles off the mainland of the USA, would be an embarrassment and a danger.
- April 1945 – Kennedy supported an invasion of Cuba by exiles at the **Bay of Pigs** which failed.
- 14 October – A US spy plane spotted Soviet missile sites on Cuba.
- In order to prevent Soviet ships arriving at Cuba **Kennedy** imposed a naval blockade around the island.
- A stand-off ensued and **Khrushchev** agreed to turn his ships back and remove missiles from Cuba in return for the USA's removal of missiles from Turkey.
- Kennedy appeared to be the victor but both leaders were accused of **brinkmanship**.
- In order to improve future communication a **telephone hotline** was created between the White House and the Kremlin.
- 1963 – **A Test Ban Treaty** was signed banning nuclear testing.

US involvement in Vietnam

- 1954 – Vietnam was split into the communist north and the non-communist south.
- 1963 – In the south the government of **Ngo Dinh Dien** was overthrown triggering the fear of a communist takeover.
- August 1964 – A US destroyer was fired on by a N. Vietnamese patrol boat providing the USA with an excuse to send troops.
- 1965 – 1968 - The US fought a hi-tech war against the **Vietcong**
- US troops found it difficult to fight a **guerrilla war** and heavy losses and reports of brutality turned many Americans against the war
- The Vietcong were well supplied by China and the USSR and the **Tet Offensive** of 1968 showed that the US was struggling
- 1969 – **Nixon** began **Vietnamisation** and in 1973 a ceasefire was called.

Key Question 7 : What has been the USA's role in the search for peace since 1970?

Timeline of events



Communism didn't fall. It was pushed. - George Bush Snr.

Important concept

Since 1970 the USA has taken a proactive role in foreign affairs and become the broker of peace initiatives.

Key words

Détente	attempts to reduce tension during the Cold War
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
Helsinki Agreement	a declaration recognising human rights and moves towards better cooperation
"Ping-pong" diplomacy	the exchange of Chinese and American table tennis players which eased relations
Fundamentalism	religious extremism
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
SDI	Strategic Defence Initiative or "Star Wars"
INF	Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty
Operation Desert Storm	air offensive launched against Iraq in Jan 1991

Détente and attempts to limit arms

The term **détente** describes the period of thaw in relations between the USA and the USSR between 1971 and 1979 when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan.

A second period of détente occurred after 1985.

Reasons –

- to reduce the risk of nuclear war
- to reduce the huge cost of the arms race
- the USA was keen to improve relations with the USSR and China in the hope that both would help in negotiating an end to the war in Vietnam.

Attempts to limit arms –

- the **Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)** had begun in 1969 which led to the signing of the SALT 1 agreement in 1972 which limited the number of intercontinental missiles (ICBMs) and anti-ballistic missiles (ABMs)
- 1975 – the USA and USSR along with 33 other countries made a declaration of human rights known as the **Helsinki Agreements**.

Changing relations with the USSR and China

Changing relations with China

- Relations between China and the USSR had become strained by the end of the 1960s and **Nixon** hoped to take advantage with the aim of improving relations with China in order to help negotiate peace in Vietnam.
- 1971 – "**ping-pong diplomacy**" - the Chinese table tennis team invited the US team to Peking becoming the first US citizens to visit since 1949.
- February 1972 – Nixon became the first US president to visit China.
- trade links improved between the two countries.

Changing relations with the USSR

- December 1979 – the US Senate refused to sign up to **START II** following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
- The US Olympic team boycotted the Moscow Games of 1980.
- 1981 – **President Reagan** returned the US to an aggressive, anti-communist stance.
- 1985 – The new Soviet leader **Gorbachev** sought better relations with the USA and in 1987 signed the **Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty**.
- 1990 – **President Bush Snr** and **Gorbachev** began discussions for **Strategic Arms Limitation (START)** which called for the reduction of nuclear weapons over seven years.

The fall of communism and the end of the Cold War

On becoming leader of the USSR in 1985 **Gorbachev** began a process of reform which would lead to the collapse of communism and an end to the **Cold War**.

- 1989 – Gorbachev informed the leaders of the six communist states in Eastern Europe that the Soviet Union would no longer defend them.
- Members of the **Warsaw Pact** were told that they could make changes to their countries without external interference.
- November 1989 – The **Berlin Wall** was taken down and by the end of 1990 democratic governments had been returned in the Eastern bloc.
- Such events served to weaken the USSR and in 1990 the Baltic states declared themselves independent.
- 1991- Gorbachev resigned and the USSR split further into a **Commonwealth of International States**.

Europe was no longer divided between capitalism and communism and the Cold War was at an end.

US involvement in Iran, Iraq and the Gulf War

- The USA became increasingly involved in the Middle East in the 1980s and 1990s.

Iran

- January 1979 – The Shah of Iran, America's closest ally in the region was forced to abdicate.
- Iran fell under the control of a fundamentalist religious leader, the **Ayatollah Khomeini**, demanded an end to Western and more especially, American influence in the region.
- November 1979 – The US embassy in **Tehran** was stormed and 66 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.
- President Carter sanctioned a rescue mission in April 1980 which failed causing relations between the USA and Iran worsened.

The Gulf War (1990-91)

- August 1990 – The Iraqi leader **Saddam Hussein** ordered the invasion of **Kuwait** which threatened US economic interests (oil).
- The USA, Britain and others launched an invasion of Iraq leading to the defeat of Hussein.