

## Lesson 1 – After the War



*Celebration on the streets of London after the surrender of Germany in May 1945*

### It's All Over (Maybe?)

The date is May 8, 1945. Crowds are filling city streets all over the world. Germany has surrendered after a long, forceful takeover of various countries across Europe. A few months later, on September 2, a formal surrender by Japan takes place aboard the USS *Missouri*, anchored in Tokyo Bay.

Just weeks before, the Allied forces had issued the [Potsdam Declaration](#), a statement calling for the surrender of all Japanese armed forces during World War II. When it became clear that

Japan was not going to surrender, the United States Army Air Corps dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Three days later, on August 9, 1945, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

World leaders gathered together to try to rebuild what was left of countries, shattered lives, and displaced people. The loss was staggering. Many of those who had been responsible for unbelievable atrocities were brought to justice.

The world was poised to come together for a lasting peace. Unfortunately, true peace was fleeting. The next days and years would usher in the **Cold War**, lasting decades. The Cold War era lasted from 1946-1991.

The Cold War wasn't the only struggle that was to take place in the next few decades. The tiny nation of Israel was about to take its place on the world stage. The Civil Rights movement was going to shape the following decades, and rumblings of communism were beginning in Asia. But first, the Cold War.

Why exactly was it called a Cold War? Because, despite the apparent hostilities between the United States and the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), no actual military activity took place in the respective countries. This isn't to say that other locations in the world weren't affected by the animosity between the two superpowers. Their "war" was one of words, threats, and other actions. So how did it all happen?

What do you remember about the division of power during World War II?

On one side stood the Axis contingent. The German army was led by Hitler and his Nazi party. Joining Hitler were Italy and Japan, along with a few other countries. On the other side were the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain. They were known as the Allies. Other countries which fought for the Allied cause included France, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, and China.

### **Forgive and Forget?**

One of the heroes of the Christian faith has to be Cornelia “Corrie” ten Boom. She was born in the Netherlands in 1894 to a devout Christian family. During World War II, she and her family hid hundreds of Jews in their home. As you remember, the Nazis were rounding up Jews by the hundreds and sending them to concentration camps. The Nazis were also unsympathetic to anyone who tried to help the Jews. Corrie and her family were arrested, and she and her sister were sent to a concentration camp. She was the only one of her family to survive.

Later, Corrie wrote an exceptionally touching book called *The Hiding Place* about her experiences. She also began to speak all around Europe and eventually the world about her life in a concentration camp. In 1947, she was speaking in a church in Germany. She spoke of God’s forgiveness. She used the ocean to explain God’s forgiveness. “When we confess our sins, God casts them into the deepest ocean, gone forever,” she said.<sup>1</sup> After the service, a man approached Corrie, hat in hand. She was horrified to realize that this man had been a guard in the very concentration camp in which she had been imprisoned. He acknowledged his role during the war, but he told Corrie that he had accepted Christ as his Savior and knew that God had forgiven him of all his sins. He then asked Corrie to forgive him, as well.



*Corrie ten Boom*

Corrie froze. But then she remembered that God told us that unless we forgive others, He cannot forgive us. She stepped out in faith and clasped his hand. Corrie described it like this: “The current started in my shoulder, raced down my arm, sprang into our joined hands. And then this healing warmth seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes. ‘I forgive you, brother!’ I cried. ‘With all my heart.’”

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<sup>1</sup> Boom, Corrie Ten, and Jamie Buckingham. *Tramp for the Lord*. CLC Publications, 2008.

What would you have done in Corrie's situation? Would it have been easy to forgive a man who had been a part of such horrors?

### What Remained

Overall, Europe was a difficult place to live after the war. Germany had lost its sovereignty as a nation-state.

Areas of France had been decimated, and it also needed to reform its government after being under German control.

Great Britain had suffered great losses and was virtually bankrupt.



*Berlin after the war*

The Soviet army had experienced catastrophic casualties, and Stalin was anxious to secure his borders with communist-friendly states.

We need to talk a little about the numbers before we can move on. World War II began in September 1939 after Germany attacked Poland. In five and a half

years, 45 million people in Europe were killed, 60 million people worldwide. 13 million of those killed were victims of Nazi crimes.

After the war ended, more than 20 million children, 7 million freed camp laborers, and approximately 400,000 concentration camp inmates were left homeless. Germany had poured all its resources into the war. The countryside had been battered by warfare for years.

Read this speech British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery gave in May 1945.

“Displaced Persons’ were roaming about the country, often looting as they went. Transportation and communication services had ceased to function. Agriculture and industry were largely at a standstill. Food was scarce and there was a serious risk of famine and disease during the coming months. And to crown it all there was no central government in being, and the machinery whereby a central government could function no longer existed.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Montgomery, Bernard, Viscount of Alamein. *The Memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery*. Pen & Sword Military, 2005.

By 1946, the British zone had reduced the average German citizen's food allotment to 1,000 calories a day. That average lowered even further during the winter of 1947–1948, also called the Hunger Winter. Are you curious to see how many calories you eat in a day? Go to this link at [caloriecounter.org](http://caloriecounter.org) and see. Many people died of starvation that winter. It wasn't that the British were treating the people poorly. They themselves were experiencing shortages and poverty at home, as well.

Many children had lost their parents or at least one parent during the war. Schools were not adequately staffed, and many had to meet in shelled-out structures.

Disease ran rampant in Berlin after the war. Typhoid fever, dysentery, and diphtheria epidemics swept through the city. There weren't enough doctors, nurses, or medical supplies to take care of the need.

Shame and resentment may have been natural feelings for the average German citizens. Many probably felt betrayed by their former leaders, and when the [Nuremberg Trials](#) began in 1945, more horrors of the war were brought to light.

Held in Nuremberg, Germany, the Nuremberg Trials were a series of thirteen trials between 1945 and 1949. They were held for the purpose of bringing Nazi war criminals to justice. Adolf Hitler had committed suicide, but other Nazi party officials and high-ranking military officers were indicted on charges of crimes against peace and crimes against humanity. In this, the world agreed.



*The trial of Karl Brandt, Adolf Hitler's personal physician and Reich Commissar for Health and Sanitation*

## Conflict

While these countries were allied in their fight against [Adolf Hitler](#), there were significant ideological differences between them. In 1922, the Soviet Union rose out of a communist ideology. Those in power had assassinated the royal family, and for more than twenty years, the Soviet government had tried to prove to the rest of the world that communism was working. [Franklin Roosevelt](#) downplayed the ideological differences between the United States and the Soviet Union. The goal was to win against Hitler. When dissimilarities between the two countries would emerge, Roosevelt insisted that his personal relationship with Stalin would see them through troubled times.

At the [Yalta Conference](#) of 1945, the three major players in the Allied Camp reached significant agreements. They issued a Declaration of Liberated Europe.

A major purpose of the declaration was “to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of governments responsive to the will of the people.”<sup>3</sup>



*The Big Three at Yalta*

Never again, these leaders swore, would specific groups of people be marginalized or would a tyrant like Hitler be able to grasp power. However, within a few months, the American government realized that perhaps Stalin didn't intend to fulfill his part in the same manner as the westernized world. The Soviet government was seizing and occupying parts of Eastern Europe in an effort to protect its own borders. The Soviet government also realized that Western-style democratic elections were not likely to produce pro-Soviet governments. For their part, they had suffered catastrophic losses from Hitler's army moving into the Soviet Union during the war. Some historians believe that nearly 20 million Russians died during World War II.

The Soviet Union believed in a central government. The communist party was controlled by a **dictator** ([Joseph Stalin](#)). The United States government divided its power. Decisions were made by the president and Congress who had been elected by its citizens. The United States favored democratic elections and believed that economic growth was key to a peaceful world.

There was also a significant development among the Allied forces. President Roosevelt died in April 1945. His successor was his vice president, [Harry Truman](#). Truman was thrown onto the world stage fairly quickly, and tensions were about to escalate.

### **The Long Telegram**

In 1946, the ambassador in Moscow, [George F. Kennan](#), sent the **Long Telegram** to the US Secretary of State. He warned that the Soviet

*There is nothing new in the world except the history you do not know.*

*Harry S Truman*

<sup>3</sup> “Declaration on Liberated Europe,” Yalta , February 10, 1945, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Malta/d454>

government believed that “there would be no peaceful coexistence” between capitalists and communists. The message was dire. Not only were the Soviets interested in expanding their own borders, but they were also intent on spreading communism.

Read this portion of the Long Telegram.

“Toward colonial areas and backward or dependent peoples, Soviet policy, even on official plane, will be directed toward weakening of power and influence and contacts of advanced Western nations, on theory that in so far as this policy is successful, there will be created a vacuum which will favor Communist-Soviet penetration. Soviet pressure for participation in trusteeship arrangements thus represents, in my opinion, a desire to be in a position to complicate and inhibit exertion of Western influence at such points rather than to provide major channel for exerting of Soviet power. Latter motive is not lacking, but for this Soviets prefer to rely on other channels than official trusteeship arrangements. Thus we may expect to find Soviets asking for admission everywhere to trusteeship or similar arrangements and using levers thus acquired to weaken Western influence among such peoples.”<sup>4</sup>

In his Long Telegram, Kennan advised that the step going forward was to pursue a policy of containment. He maintained that the United States needed to contain the spread of communism around the world.

In our next lesson, we will discuss the Iron Curtain and policy decisions for **containment** by the Truman administration. For now, begin working through the assignments on the **Answer, Discuss & Explore Lesson 1** page.

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<sup>4</sup> Kennan, George. “Long Telegram.” *George Kennan’s “Long Telegram,”* nsarchive2.gwu.edu/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm.

## UNIT 1 EXTRAS

Here are some activities you can do to add to your study. Choose one or all to do! Just remember to run any movie selections past your parents.

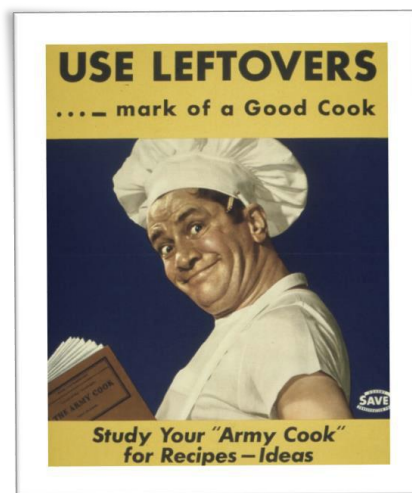
One of your assignments during this unit is to create a report on a missionary. While you can use whatever resources you choose for your report, consider reading a missionary biography. YWAM Publishing has a great selection. Another good autobiography is *The Hiding Place* by Corrie ten Boom.

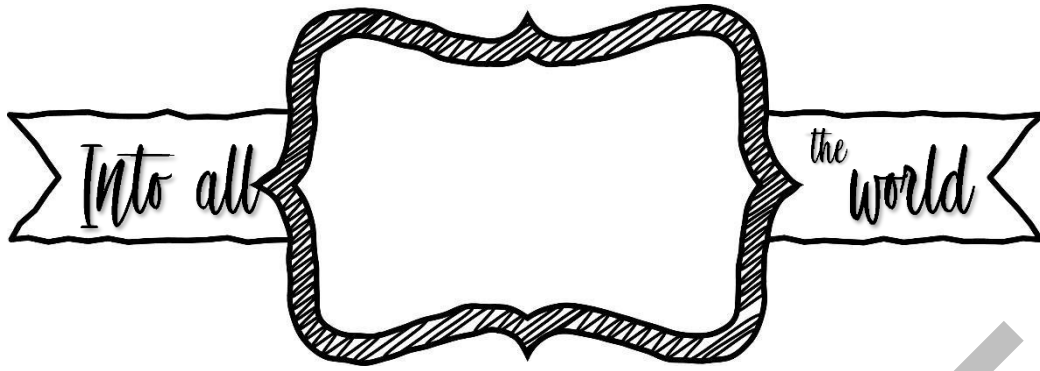
Have a movie musical marathon featuring several movies made during the war to promote good feelings and patriotism. By the end of 1945, six of the top ten box-office winners were musicals. See if you can find one at the library or online. Here is a list to choose from: *Thrill of a Romance* (1945), *Anchors Aweigh* (1945), *The Harvey Girls* (1945), *State Fair* (1945), *The Dolly Sisters* (1945), and *Up in Arms* (1945).

The Russian Revolution is a sad part of history. Have you ever seen the animated movie *Anastasia*? Did you know that Czar Nicholas II had a daughter named Anastasia, and in the 1920s, a woman claiming to be the real Anastasia surfaced even though the royal family had been executed in 1918. For years, people have speculated that one of the royal children actually survived. There are a few other versions of this story available, including a 1956 version starring Yul Brynner and Ingrid Bergman.

Write a report on President Truman. You can use the *Presidential Biographical Organizer* or the *Pizza Report Project*.

Make a meal using recipes from the 1940s from [this site](#).

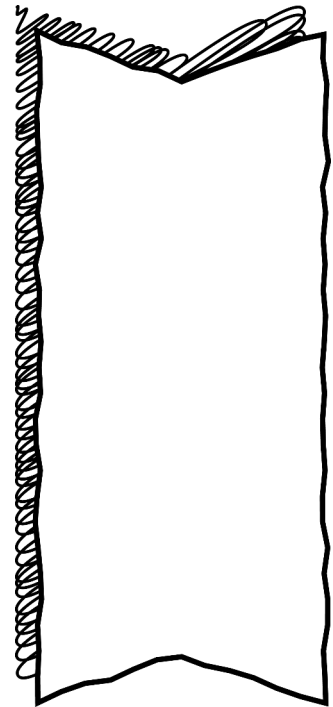




Lined writing area with 10 horizontal lines.

Lined writing area with 10 horizontal lines.

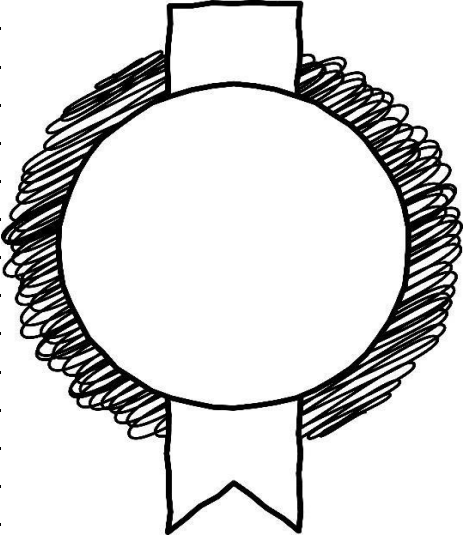
Lined writing area with 20 horizontal lines.



# US AND MODERN WORLD HISTORY – UNIT 1



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 horizontal lines. A large, stylized 'SAMPLE' watermark is overlaid diagonally across the page.



Additional handwriting practice lines consisting of 10 horizontal lines.

# PRESIDENTIAL BIOGRAPHY ORGANIZER

Use this sheet to help you gather information on your president. You may want to write these notes on index cards or another sheet of paper. Below is the information you will need to include in your biography. Your biography must be at least four paragraphs but may be more if you find a lot of information you would like to share. You may type or handwrite your report. Keep a copy in a history notebook.

## Paragraph #1: His childhood/early years

- What is the name of your president?
- When and where was he born?
- What did he do in his early years as a child and a young adult?
- Whom did he marry, and how many children did he have?
- Did he go to college? If so, what college did he graduate from, and what did he study?
- What was his occupation before he was elected president?

## Paragraph #2: His presidency

- When was he elected President of the United States?
- When was his term in office?
- Who was his vice president?
- What political party did he represent?

## Paragraph #3: Major events

- Describe in detail at least one specific major event that happened during his term as president. Remember to answer who, what, when, where, why, and how.

## Paragraph #4: Conclusion

- Summarize the life of your president.
- Give one or two fun facts that most people do not know about your president.

Write down three sources that you used to find your information. Be sure to check for spelling and grammar mistakes!

# BIOGRAPHY PIZZA PROJECT

## INGREDIENTS:

- Round piece of paper – 12” diameter
- Scissors
- Glue
- Ruler
- Pencil/Markers/Crayons



## PREPARATION:

- Cut the round paper for the crust.
- Divide the crust into 8 slices.  
(Use a ruler to make equal slices.)
- Using the headings below, label each slice at the top.
- Fill each slice according to each category.

## HEADINGS. REQUIREMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

**CHILDHOOD:** Write about where this person grew up or share an interesting story from their childhood.

**EDUCATION:** Write about where and what this person studied in school.

**FAMOUS QUOTES:** List some of the better-known things this person has said.

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Use photos and drawings to illustrate your person or events. Label your pictures by putting captions that explain them.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** Write about what it was that made this person famous.

**TIMELINE:** Communicate at least five important events in the person’s life or subject.

**OCCUPATION:** Explain what it is this person did for a living.

**FUN FACTS:** Make a list of interesting facts about this person’s life.

**Decorate your Pizza Project as you wish!**

# Answer, Discuss, and Explore – Lesson 1

## Timeline

Research the following and record the dates on your timeline

- Yalta Conference
- Roosevelt Dies
- Germany Surrenders in 1945
- The Nuremberg Trials Begin
- United Nations Founded in San Francisco
- Potsdam Conference
- Atomic Bomb at Hiroshima
- Atomic Bomb at Nagasaki
- Japan Surrenders



## Faith Point

There is no doubt that this time period in history was full of uncertainty. The world had just witnessed terrible atrocities. It is tempting for men to try and solve the world's problems using the wisdom of man.

We often find "things" to give us peace or to take refuge in. The Bible tells us this in Isaiah 43:1-3.

*"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.'"*

Isn't that comforting? No matter what happens in our crazy world, God has called us by name! He is our God and our Savior!

## Explore Some More

Take a look at [this footage](#) from the Potsdam Conference. Can you identify the Big Three?

[Listen to President Truman's radio announcement](#) about Germany's surrender.

Take a look at [these photographs](#) from the Nuremberg Trial.

## Discussion

In your history notebook answer the following questions.

- Describe some of the hardships faced by Germans after World War II.
- Why was this time period called the Cold War?
- What were some of the differences between the USSR (Soviet Union) and the United States?
- What did George F. Kennan warn the United States about? What was his solution?