

1. French Indochina

1	Who controlled Vietnam before WWII?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The French took control of Vietnam and it's surrounding countries in the 19th Century. It was known as French Indochina French rule was harsh for the Vietnamese people
2	Who were the Vietminh?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> During WWII, Japan invaded and occupied Indochina Japanese rule was even more difficult than French rule had been Ho Chi Minh, a Vietnamese Communist, formed a resistance group to fight against the Japanese
3	What was the First Indochina War?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> After the Japanese surrender, France decided to fight to regain control over it's old colony The Vietminh continued to fight for Vietnamese independence The war ended in 1954 with French defeat at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu
4	What did the Geneva Conference agree?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In 1954, representatives from Vietnam, the Vietminh, France and the USA met in Geneva They agreed that Vietnam would be split along the 17th Parallel – to be reunited in 1965 with an election The North would be run by Ho Chi Minh and the South would be run by Ngo Dinh Diem

3. Early US involvement

1	Why did the US get involved?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The US were fearful of the spread of communism in Asia, especially after the outcome of the Korean War By the mid 1950s, US politicians were convinced that the USSR and China were committed to spread communism Eisenhower first used the term Domino Theory to describe his fear of Laos, Cambodia and Thailand becoming communist if Vietnam did
2	Eisenhower's actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In November 1955 Eisenhower sent military advisors to train the ARVN Between 1955 and 1960 he sent nearly \$2 billion in aid to South Vietnam Between 1954-1961 he gave Diem 78% of the US foreign aid budget

2. Diem's Rule

1	How did Diem rule?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> He was a harsh and corrupt ruler He was an extreme Catholic and oppressed Buddhists in his country He took lands off peasants to give to his friends and family He rigged the 1955 election in South Vietnam and arrested anyone who opposed him
2	Who opposed Diem?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Buddhists organized hunger strikes, mass rallies and press conferences A monk called Thich Quang Duc burned himself alive while other Buddhists handed out leaflets calling for change The NLF were a nationalist group who wanted to unite Vietnam The NFL targeted Diem's officials
3	Civil War in South Vietnam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> By 1957, civil war broke out between the NLF and the ARVN The NLF were sent money and supplies by Ho Chi Minh The ARVN had the support of the USA, who sent money, weapons, military vehicles and military advisors Over the 1950s the USA sent \$1.6 billion to the ARVN In 1961 Kennedy became US president and decided to withdraw his support for Diem Diem and his brother were killed in a coup by his own generals in November 1963

Key word	Definition
17th Parallel	The dividing line between North Vietnam and South Vietnam
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam - The national army of South Vietnam.
Containment	The US policy of limiting the spread of any more communism.
Democratic Republic of Vietnam	The name given to the North of Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh
Domino Theory	The political idea that if one nation fell to Communism, the surrounding ones would too
French Indochina	The French colonial term for Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam
Guerrilla Tactics	A type of warfare that relies on surprise raids and sabotaging communication and supply lines
NLF	National Liberation Front. Formed to fight against Diem's rule
Republic of Vietnam	The corrupt, U.S.-backed government of South Vietnam
Strategic Hamlet Programme	A programme that forced peasants to leave Vietcong controlled areas into fortified villages
Viet Cong (VC)	Slang term for the North Vietnam army used by the USA
Vietminh	Vietnamese Communist resistance forces, based in northern Vietnam and led by Ho Chi Minh

4. How did USA become directly involved in Vietnam?

1	President Johnson's views	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When Kennedy was assassinated, his vice president Johnson took over. He was re-elected in 1964 He wanted to continue Kennedy's peaceful involvement but his advisors wanted him to become more involved Johnson set up Operation 34A to send mercenaries into North Vietnam and US naval ships into the Gulf of Tonkin
2	What was the Gulf of Tonkin incident?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> One naval ship patrolling the Gulf of Tonkin was the USS Maddox In August, when the Maddox was thought to have been attacked by North Vietnamese boats, Johnson used this as justification to declare war
3	The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7th August 1964, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was passed This gave the president permission to take any military action necessary Within six months, the US had launched a mass bombing campaign By March 1965, 3500 US marines arrived in South Vietnam

5. Vietcong tactics

1	Guerrilla tactics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Guerrilla fighters did not wear uniform so they were hard to tell apart from civilians They work in small groups, attacked and raided enemy camps in surprise attacks These tactics are designed to destroy the morale of the enemy
2	The Ho Chi Minh Trail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> This was a 15,000 km supply route for the North Vietnamese government to supply the Vietcong with weapons The Vietcong received 60 tonnes of supplies, weapons and equipment per day
3	Hanging on the belt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Vietcong stayed close to the US troops so they could launch surprise attacks Around 51% of US casualties were caused by Vietcong ambushes This was also a way to avoid bombing attacks
4	Chu Chi Tunnels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Vietcong built a tunnel system over 300km long to avoid detection They contained workshops, hospitals, storehouses and kitchens
5	Booby traps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Punji traps were booby traps made of sharpened bamboo – the Vietcong would tip the spikes with excrement to create infection Bouncing betties were land mines that launched into the air and exploded at stomach height 10% of US deaths were caused by Vietcong booby traps

6. US tactics

1	Operation Rolling Thunder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> This was a mass bombing campaign targeting North Vietnamese government buildings From 1964-1967 1 million tonnes of bombs were dropped
2	Search and destroy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A tactic where US soldiers would search villages for Vietcong soldiers and destroy the village as a warning They became known as zippo raids after the lighter used to burn down the village This caused terror and hatred for the US
4	Cluster bombs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes called pineapple bombs. They exploded in the air and released up to 600 smaller bombs to cause injury and attract medics to the scene
5	Chemical weapons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agent Orange was a highly toxic weed killer the US used to destroy the jungle Agent Blue was used to destroy crops and disrupt the Vietcong's food supplies These chemical weapons could birth defects in newborns Napalm was used to burn through jungles but would also burn through skin and bone.
6	Impact of US tactics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The tactics were horrific and caused hatred of the US as many innocent civilians were killed There was some success in disrupting the supply lines but not for long

Key word	Definition
Agent Blue/Orange	A chemical herbicide and defoliant that U.S. forces sprayed to expose Vietcong hideouts
Bouncing Betty	A form of landmine used by the US troops in Vietnam
Cluster Bomb	Bombs used to cause maximum damage and attract medics for a second explosion
Fragging	When US servicemen killed their own superior officers
Napalm	A flammable, sprayable, gasoline-based gel used by the US troops
Operation Rolling Thunder	Blanket bombing tactic used by the US troops
Search and Destroy	US military strategy of proactively to locate and kill Viet Cong forces.
Zippo raid	Search and destroy missions which involved burning down Vietnamese villages

7. Morale

1	What was US morale like?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> US soldiers became disheartened from repeated ambush attacks Some were traumatised by the effects of the tactics there were using
2	Impact of low morale	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Some soldiers began to blame the Vietnamese people and taking out their frustrations on them Some soldiers became so frustrated that they would murder their commanding officers to avoid carrying out their orders

7. The Tet offensive

1	What was the Tet offensive?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On 30th January 1968, there was a temporary ceasefire to honour the Vietnamese new year 2. 84,000 Vietcong and North Vietnamese troops attacked over 100 towns, cities and US bases 3. There was also an attack on the US embassy in Saigon
2	How did it end?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Although the Vietcong had early successes 2. The US forces quickly regained control of the attacked areas 3. Around 50,000 North Vietnamese and 10,000 Vietcong fighters were killed while only 10,000 US and ARVN troops were killed
3	Why was it important?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was a major political and psychological victory for the Vietcong 2. The offensive was filmed and photographed by US journalists
4	Impact of the Tet Offensive	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After the offensive the US public became increasingly disillusioned with the war – they realised the US weren't close to winning 2. At the end of March, Johnson announced that he would not be running for re-election 3. General Westmoreland (head of US forces in Vietnam) was replaced in June 4. US forces used an enormous amount of artillery and air power – the war was costing \$30 billion a year 5. A huge number of Vietnamese civilians were killed during the offensive – leading to further opposition.

8. The My Lai Massacre

1	Background to the massacre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Charlie company were a unit of the US army. 2. They suffered 28 casualties including 5 dead as a result of sniper attacks and booby traps
2	What was the My Lai Massacre?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In early March, it was reported that a Vietcong base in 200 the My Lai area. 2. Charlie company were ordered to go on a search and destroy mission 3. They began firing as soon as they landed and destroying houses 4. No Vietcong guerrillas were discovered. 5. The soldiers killed somewhere between 300 and 500 civilians. 6. Some soldiers also tortured and raped some of the villagers
3	What happened afterwards?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When the US troops returned they reported that only 22 civilians had been killed and the rest were Vietcong fighters. 2. In March 1969 a soldier named Ronald Ridenhour wrote letters to 30 US politicians and military officials exposing the massacre 3. Time magazine published photographs of the massacre taken by an official army photographer
4	The Investigations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There were 2 investigations into the massacre. 2. The final report concluded that the Charlie company were guilty of murdering unarmed civilians and recommended action against the men guilty of rape, murder and cover-up 3. In early 1970, 14 high-ranking army officials were charged with covering up the truth but most charges were dropped 4. Only Lieutenant Calley was charge guilty with the murder of 109 people. He was sentenced to life in prison. 5. After some protest, President Nixon was released in November 1974
6	Impact of the massacre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The US were deeply shocked by the brutality of their own troops 2. Mistrust of the army and the government increased 3. In late 1969, around 700,000 people protested against the war in Washington

7. Anti-war protest under Johnson

1	Why did people oppose the Vietnam war?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some people objected on moral grounds, asking why humans were bombing other humans 2. Other people questioned why the US were fighting instead of helping South Vietnam 3. People were shocked by the imaged of their own soldiers being killed- the average age of a Vietnam combat soldier was 19. 4. Martin Luther King declared he was against the war, arguing that the money should be spent on the problems in the USA. 5. The draft system was unfair, especially when there were a disproportionate amount of black people being drafted. 6. Many men, known as draft dodgers, tried to avoid being called up to the army – famously Muhammad Ali was arrested for draft dodging 7. Johnson had promised to improve the USA with his Great Society Project, but instead the war was costing \$30 billion a year
2	How did people protest?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In October 1965 there were anti war protests in more than 90 US cities 2. In October 1967 100,000 protesters gathered at the Lincoln memorial 3. An organization called the SDS began organizing 'teach ins' and organized lectures 4. Often protests became violent and protestors clashed with the police 5. Johnson was personally criticised., student protestors chanted "Hey, hey LBJ! How many kids did you kill today?"