

Study Guide: The Vietnam War (1954-1975)

THE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- To what extent was the 1950s an age of conformity in regard to politics, society, and culture?
- Were the failures of the Vietnam War due primarily to a misunderstanding of Vietnamese politics and culture or a reluctance to “win at all costs”?
- To what extent did the 1960s mark a turning point in U.S. History?

IN A NUTSHELL:

- After the French failed to take control of Vietnam, the U.S. spent over twenty years trying to protect a non-communist government in South Vietnam.
- Efforts to stop the communist takeover of South Vietnam caused much protest and division within the United States.
- Communist forces took control of South Vietnam in 1975.

KEY TERMS

EVENTS

Battle of Dien Bien Phu, 1954
Geneva Accords, 1954
U.S. aid to South Vietnam begins, 1955
Ngo Dinh Diem assassinated, 1963
Gulf of Tonkin Resolutions, 1964
U.S. ground troops arrive in Vietnam, 1965
Tet Offensive, 1968
My Lai massacre, 1968
“Vietnamization” begins, 1969
U.S. invasion of Cambodia, 1970
Kent State killings, 1970
U.S. invasion of Laos, 1971
Pentagon Papers leaked, 1971
U.S. troops pulled out of Vietnam, 1973
War Powers Act, 1973
South Vietnam falls to communists, 1975

PEOPLE

Harry Truman
Dwight Eisenhower
John Kennedy
Lyndon Johnson
Richard Nixon
Gerald Ford
Ho Chi Minh
Ngo Dinh Diem
Robert McNamara
Robert Kennedy
Hubert Humphrey

OTHER TERMS

Domino theory
National Liberation Front (NLF)
Vietcong
ARVN
hawk
dove
search and destroy
Agent Orange
Napalm
Vietnam Veterans Against the War