

Teacher Tool 229: Cuban Missile Crisis

Program 2 Study Guide

Study Guide for US History 22: History in the First Person: The Cuban Missile Crisis Program 2

Program Description and Objectives	Page 2
Program Format	Page 3-4
Standards	Page 6-7
Program-Related Activity Suggestions	Page 5
Supplemental Resources	Page 6



HEC-TV Live! Presents
History in the First Person: The Cuban Missile Crisis

Original Air Date: October 18, 2012

Grade Levels: 6-12

Program Description:

What was it like to live in America in 1962? How did that living change in October of that year when America discovered Soviet supported nuclear missile bases were being built in Cuba? What was it like to live under the specter of nuclear war? Take a step back into history with those who lived and fought during these important moments in American life. Give your history and journalism students the chance to experience the power of first person oral history as they interview and interact with people who lived during thirteen fateful days in October 1962. Fifty years after the event, what can they learn from a first person oral history that they can't learn from other primary or secondary sources? What new perspectives are gained when they pair the dates and facts of the event with the stories of people who lived that event?

Our focus in this program is not be exploring the specific historic details of those thirteen days in October, but is to provide students the rare and important opportunity to speak directly with those who lived through that event. What was it like to view President Kennedy's announcement on television? What was it like to watch as Ambassador Adlai Stevenson presented American satellite images before the United Nations Security Council? What was it like to read the newspapers each day and wonder what would happen next? What was it like to be an elementary or high school student at that time? What was it like to be a mother or father? What was it like to serve in the military during those days?

The program archive shows students interacting with civilian and military individuals who lived through the events. Your students will see images of the events, video excerpts from news stories of the time, and civil defense films of the time. Students should try to think like historians and journalists as they explore the memories of those involved in the events. What new insights can your students gain into early 1960's America when the Cold War was at its height? What comparisons can they draw between the foreign policy threats facing America today and the ones facing America then? We invite you and your students to view this archived program as they seek answers to these questions and more.

Program Objectives:

1. The participant will gain a greater understanding of what it meant to live in the early 1960's and experience The Cold War first hand.
2. The participant will interact with individuals providing primary source accounts of recent world events.
3. The participant will meet people and hear stories from diverse perspectives.

Program Format:

Time codes are provided in blue to help you find specific segments in the program.

1. Welcome and Introduction—Student groups and experts are introduced and welcomed to the program. The program begins with newsreel footage of President Kennedy’s October 22, 1962 announcement to the nation on the situation in Cuba and the establishment of a naval blockade around the island. **(00:00 to 04:09)**

2. Interaction with the Guests—Students hear directly from individuals who lived during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Images and video of the time are also be included. A short description of each guest is included below.

- 1. Harriet Rimmel**—Harriet was a young mother living in the St. Louis area at the time of the crisis. In addition to hearing her story, images, videos, and student questions are also included in the segment. **(04:10 to 15:32)**

Images and Videos in this segment:

Picture of Harriet and her family at the time

Map showing distances from Cuba to major U.S. cities

Declassified CIA images of Soviet ships transporting nuclear missile parts and launching systems

Newsreel footage of Adlai Stevenson speaking to the United Nations

Segment from “Duck and Cover” civil defense film

Audience questions in this segment:

Do you think people in 1962 were more worried about nuclear bombs than we are today?

Do you think Kennedy was invoking aspects of the Monroe Doctrine when he established the quarantine of Cuba?

Did she believe President Kennedy’s actions were the most appropriate at the time?

Did your kids ever ask any questions about what was happening?

- 1. Dave Miller and Walt Pagoulis**—Dave was serving in the United States Navy off the coast of Cuba at the time of the crisis. Walt was a student at Parks College in the St. Louis area and part of the USAF ROTC program there. In addition to hearing their stories, images, videos, and student questions are also included in the segment. **(15:33 to 32:32)**

Images and Videos in this segment:

Additional segment from “Duck and Cover” civil defense film

Pictures of Walt at the time in his ROTC uniform and at a summer ROTC camp

Pictures of spy planes used by the United States to obtain images in Cuba

Declassified CIA images showing locations in Cuba both before and after the missile shipment and missile site development began

Picture of President Kennedy signing the quarantine order

Picture of President Kennedy with military advisors

Map of invasion plan of Cuba

Audience questions in this segment:

What was the tension level on Navy ships?

Do you think if we knew where every missile was we would have raided Cuba?

Were you really worried about the crisis? What was going through your mind at the time?

1. **Mary Hall Ries**—A child at the time of the crisis, her family had immigrated to the United States from Cuba in the 1950's. Her family still had friends and relatives in Cuba at the time of the crisis. In addition to hearing her story, images, videos, and student questions are also included in the segment. **(32:33 to 46:34)**

Images and Videos in this segment:

Newsreel footage of model homes complete with their own fallout shelter

Newsreel footage of how to build your own fallout shelter

Pictures of her family at the time

Pictures of Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev

Newsreel footage from inside Cuba during the crisis

Audience questions in this segment:

What was it like to know that at the push of a button your family could be eliminated?

Do you remember runs at the grocery store or other stores for staples or other items?

Is Russia still a threat to the U.S. today?

How was the tension in everyday households at the time?

Did you believe your teachers that it would help if you got under your desk during a nuclear attack?

1. **Jack Newman and Bob Wilcox**—Bob was a graduate student in New York City at the time of the crisis. Jack was a 31 year-old small business owner living in St. Louis with his wife and kids. In addition to hearing their stories, images, videos, and student questions are also included in the segment. **(46:35 to 56:06)**

Images and Videos in this segment:

Newsreel footage giving examples of how to respond and survive in a nuclear attack

Picture of Mr. Wilcox at the time of the crisis

Audience questions in this segment:

What was it like living with the idea that tomorrow you could be dead?

3. **Closing Segment**—Closing comments and credits **(56:07 to 56:57)**

Program-Related Activity Suggestions:

1. Utilize the excellent resources provided at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum's website to give your students the chance to explore individually, in small groups, or as a class, the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The web address is <http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/Cuban-Missile-Crisis.aspx/>. Perhaps different students explore different days of the crisis and then come together to share with each other what they have learned. Have students gain a sense of the facts of the thirteen days.
2. After gaining a sense of the facts of the crisis through the activity above, have students begin to think about what it must have been like to be a "regular person" living as those events played out? What would have been their worries? What would they have wanted to know that the media wasn't telling them? What would they have done to prepare themselves in case of war? What would they want to know from people who did experience those events?
3. Have students compare their previous understanding of what they thought it would mean to live at the time of the Missile Crisis with their view of that situation after participating in the program. What surprised them the most? What reinforced what they already believed? What new insights did they gain into the military and wartime experience? Have students share their thoughts in class discussion, journal entries, or written reports.
4. Have students write a news story, give a speech, create a Powerpoint presentation, etc. to tell the story of one of the individuals they heard from with during the program. Have students weave in the personal insights of the guests with the factual events of the Crisis to create an interesting story that provides a new audience the chance to understand what it was like to live during those days in October. Have students share these stories, speeches and presentations with students or adults who were not part of the program audience and utilize this authentic audience to test their ability to tell an insightful and important story.
5. Have the entire class or interested students as an enrichment activity explore more about Civil Defense in America and what it was like to live under the threat of nuclear war in the 1950's and early 1960's by utilizing web resources included in the Supplement Resources section of this document. Select the resources you believe would be best for your class to view and have students respond to what they learn both from the perspective of how those resources would have been utilized and responded to by people of the time as well as how they look at those resources now living in the world they do. Have students create a news story, presentation, poster, or speech, etc. detailing their insights as a result of this activity.
6. Have students find members of your own community who were living during the Cuban Missile Crisis and interview them about what they remember. As a result of their interviews, have students create individual or group presentations, display boards, videos, essays, articles, etc. Share the students' work with your school and community via the web or through displays in the school.

Supplemental Resources:

Resources on Events of the Crisis

<http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/Cuban-Missile-Crisis.aspx/> This website of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum provides a compelling account of the crisis and gives students the opportunity to see and hear important artifacts of the event.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=2115587n> CBS excerpt of President Kennedy's announcement to the nation

<http://www.usafaclasses.org/1959/where.html> First person accounts of 1959 Air Force Academy graduates on where they were during the crisis

Civil Defense Resources of the 1950's and 1960's on the Threat of Nuclear War and How to Respond:

<http://archive.org/details/gov.ntis.ava11109vnb1> Duck and Cover Civil Defense film

http://archive.org/details/rural_civil_defense_tv_spots_1965 Rural Civil Defense film

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2ddfKzUrVI> Civil Defense TV spot about use of CONELRAD on radio in times of emergency

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsHUIxt1iMw> Survival Under Atomic Attack, 1951 American Civil Defense film

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rk2be2EI2Is> US Civil Defense in Action, film from 1953

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wA8z94MXo9M> declassified nuclear defense film, includes defense sirens going off, explosions, responses, etc.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyM813lihnc> Film/slide show on family action in an atomic emergency

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nA8bfcCWLDU> Fallout shelters in Denver homes

Featured National Standards (History):

Grades 5-12:

Historical Thinking Standards

2. Historical Comprehension

B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.

C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.

F. Appreciate historical perspectives--(a) describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded--the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding "present-mindedness," judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

4. Historical Research Capabilities

A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.

5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making

A. Identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.