

VIETNAM COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

GCSE HISTORY COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Teacher Information

Introduction:

These assignments comprise sources, questions and mark schemes which will enable your pupils to fulfil the coursework requirements in history for Edexcel Foundation specifications for first examination in summer 2003. You may use these assignments as they stand. They have been designed to assess the full range of grades targeted by the syllabus (Grades G-A*). Assistance may be given in class to aid the comprehension of the sources.

You may also adapt these assignments if wished by:

- providing additional or replacement sources
- providing additional or replacement questions.

However, if you wish to make changes you should submit these to the Edexcel Foundation for approval to ensure that revised sources or questions give candidates appropriate opportunity to meet the targets specified at the appropriate level.

Management of the assignment:

The assignment has been designed to accommodate some flexibility of classroom practice. The following points should be borne in mind:

- Although all the questions *may* be tackled as part of a single task, this is not necessary. The timing of individual questions within an assignment may be staggered over a period of time and integrated into the programme of study.
- Candidates may use the sources provided in the pack as part of their preparation for Assignment 1 but this is not a requirement.
- Your candidates should draw upon their contextual knowledge when using the sources for Assignment 2. The historical content listed below should be familiar to candidates before they attempt to answer the questions.

Vietnam

This assignment should arise from a teaching programme designed to occupy approximately half a term. Before candidates begin this assignment they should have knowledge of:

- reasons for US involvement in Vietnam
- the nature of the conflict: Operation Rolling Thunder; the Tet offensive
- the impact of the war on the peoples of Vietnam and the USA during the 1960s and 1970s
- reasons for US defeat.

Introduction

Vietnam was part of the French Empire in South East Asia. After the Second World War France was unable to control the area and withdrew in 1954. Vietnam was divided into two parts. The North was communist, the South was not.

The US government had become involved in Vietnam before the French left in 1954, but in the following years US involvement became more and more significant. At first US soldiers were there only as 'advisers', but increasingly they began to take part in the fighting.

Why did the USA become so involved in Vietnam? What effects did the war have upon the USA? Why was the world's most powerful army unable to defeat the Viet Cong? These are some of the issues that you will be considering when you tackle this assignment.

SOURCE A: From a book written by John F Kennedy, a US Senator, in 1956

Vietnam is the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia. If the red tide of communism overflowed into Vietnam, then Burma, Thailand, India, Japan, the Philippines and obviously Laos and Cambodia would be threatened.

The independence of Vietnam is crucial to the Free World. Vietnam's economy is essential to the economy of all Southeast Asia. Vietnam's political liberty is an inspiration in all parts of Asia.

SOURCE B: From a statement made by the US State Department in 1956

The war in Vietnam is not a spontaneous and local rebellion against the established government. In Vietnam a Communist government has set out to conquer a sovereign people in a neighbouring state. North Vietnam's commitment to seize control of the south is no less total than was the commitment of North Korea to take the South in 1950.

SOURCE C: From *A Rumor of War*, written by Philip Caputo in 1977. Caputo volunteered to fight in Vietnam

War is always attractive to young men who know nothing about it. We were persuaded to go into uniform by Kennedy's challenge to "ask what you can do for your country." The USA had never lost a war and it seemed that we were ordained to play cop to the communist robber and spread our political ideas around the world.

The rare occasion when the VC chose to fight a set-piece battle provided the only excitement, but beyond adding a few more corpses to the body count, these encounters achieved nothing.

Our mission was not to win terrain, but simply to kill. The pressure on unit commanders to produce enemy corpses was intense. It is not surprising that some men acquired a contempt for human life.

SOURCE D: From an article in *Newsweek*, a US magazine; this was published in 1967

Television seems to have encouraged a majority of viewers to support the war. 64% said television had made them feel like backing up the boys in Vietnam. 26% felt moved to oppose the war.

SOURCE E: Results of opinion polls in the USA in the 1960s

The USA's mood: The public's view of the most important problem facing the country, according to Gallup Poll results 1961-68	
1961	Prices and inflation
1962	War, peace and international problems
1963	Racial problems
1964	Integration
1965	Vietnam
1966	Vietnam
1967	Vietnam
1968	Vietnam

SOURCE F: From a letter written by a US soldier fighting in Vietnam in 1969

Christmas came and went, marked only by tragedy. I'm tired of going to sleep and listening to rockets and mortars and artillery. I'm sick of facing every day a new bunch of kids ripped to pieces. They're just kids – 18, 19, their whole lives ahead of them, cut off. I'm sick to death of it.

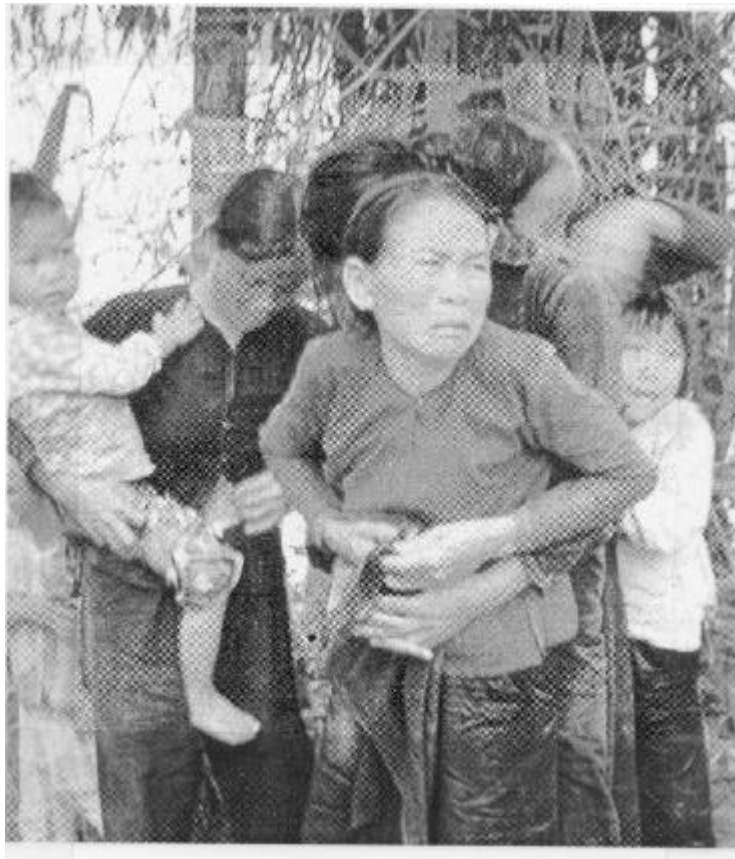
SOURCE G: From an article published in *Time Magazine* in January 1970. This described a massacre of Vietnamese civilians in My Lai in March 1968. It was written by a US army reporter who was present at the time

Troops accosted a group of women, including a teenage girl. A GI grabbed the girl and started stripping her. A photographer jumped in to take a picture of the group. The picture shows the thirteen year old girl trying to hide behind her mother.

Then a soldier asked, “Well what’ll we do with them?” “Kill them,” said another soldier.

I heard a light machine-gun go off and when we turned around, all of them and the kids were dead.

SOURCE H: A photograph taken in My Lai in March 1968. This was taken by a US army photographer.



SOURCE I: From an article about the war in Vietnam published in *The Spectator*, a British magazine, July 1972

What television really wanted was action in which men died cleanly and not too bloodily. When the viewers get a film which shows what a mortar does to a man, really shows the flesh torn and the blood flowing, they get squeamish. They want it to be like the cinema.

Assignment One: Objective 1

1. Why did the USA become involved in Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s? **(15)**

2. Describe the military tactics used by both the USA and the Vietcong forces in Vietnam in the 1960s. **(15)**

3. Explain why there were such different reactions in the USA to the country's involvement in the conflict in Vietnam in the 1960s. **(20)**

(Total: 50 marks)

Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

1. Study Sources A
What can you learn from Source A about the reasons for US involvement in South Vietnam? (6)
2. Study Sources A, B and C
Do Sources B and C support the evidence of Source A about the reasons for US involvement in South Vietnam? (8)
3. Study Sources D and E
How useful are these sources as evidence of the public reaction in the USA to the Vietnam war in the mid 1960s? (10)
4. Study Sources E, F, G and H
Use the evidence of these sources, and your own knowledge, to explain why public opinion about the war in the USA changed between 1967 and 1970. (12)
5. Study all the Sources
The writer of Source I believed that television played an important part in changing people's attitudes to the Vietnam War.

Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain whether you agree with this view. (14)

(Total: 50 marks)

Coursework Assignments Mark Scheme

Vietnam

Assignment One

1. (a) *Why did the USA become involved in Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s?* (15)
- Target:** Causation/recall of knowledge
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. French withdrawal, fear of communism, division of North and South etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. the USA was supporting France financially before withdrawal, the example of Korea, fear of communism, spreading to other countries in south east Asia, the Domino theory etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by appropriately selected knowledge, which sets Vietnam in the wider context of the Cold War and considers the reasons for the stages of involvement from the early 1950s to the late 1960s, e.g. financial, advisory, military etc. (11-15)
2. *Describe the military tactics used by both the USA and the Viet Cong forces in Vietnam in the 1960s?* (15)
- Target:** Key features/recall of knowledge
- NB answers should cover both sides in equal depth, coverage of only one side will gain half marks and no more.**
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. guerrilla tactics, sniping, mines; bombing, defoliation etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, which show understanding of the contrast between two sides, e.g. control of the countryside, use of forests, winning the peasantry, surprise attacks, against military force, terror, heaving bombing of the north, examples of major offensives etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed explanations supported by appropriately selected knowledge, which show understanding of the changes in tactics from the early 60s to the early 70s, e.g. VC becoming better armed and more adventurous, the TET offensive, Da Nang, the USA relying more and more on heaving bombing and terror tactics etc. (11-15)

3. *Explain why there were such different reactions in the USA to the country's involvement in the conflict in Vietnam in the 1960s.* (20)

Target: Key features/recall of knowledge

Level 1: Simple statements giving some reactions supported by some knowledge,
e.g. some in US were in favour because they feared Communism, they thought it would be easy etc; others opposed because they did not want to fight, they did not want the USA to be involved etc. (1-5)

Level 2: Developed statements giving reactions supported by relevant knowledge,
e.g. many young people opposed the war, it was an internal problem and the USA had no right to interfere etc; they were encouraged by Kennedy and Johnson to believe that they were fighting for democracy, it was seen as a test of US will and military might etc. (6-10)

Level 3: Developed explanation supported by appropriately selected knowledge showing understanding of the range of reactions and the different reasons for them, **OR** the changes in opinion that took place in the 1960s and the 1970s, e.g. many Americans were heavily influenced by the media which presented communism as evil and portrayed South Vietnam in a deliberately unrealistic light, this changed by 1970 (My Lai); many young people opposed the war because the draft compulsory and when the details of the nature of the fighting and its results began to become known; they were influenced by pop music and flower power etc. (11-15)

Level 4: Sustained argument supported by precisely selected knowledge, showing understanding of the nature, extent and range of reactions and setting these in the wider context, **AND** the reasons for the changes in opinion that took place, e.g. the late 1960s was a time of widespread social upheaval, especially amongst the young and reactions to the war were part of this, many in USA, however, supported the war for patriotic reasons, but were horrified when it was revealed that the details of My Lai had been concealed etc. (16-20)

Coursework Assignments Mark Scheme

Vietnam

Assignment Two

Objectives 2 and 3

1. *Study Source A. What can you learn from Source A about the reasons for US involvement in the South Vietnam?* (6)

Target: Comprehension and inference from a source

Level 1: Simple statements using the source as information,
e.g. defence against communism, protection of South Vietnam etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources, the USA was clearly concerned about the Domino effect and communist control of south-east Asia, the comments about Vietnam are waffle etc. (4-6)

2. *Study Sources A, B and C. Do Sources B and C support the evidence of Source A about the reasons for US involvement in South Vietnam?* (8)

Target: Comparison and evaluation of sources in context of causation

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information,
e.g. there was a Communist revolt, it would be like Korea, they believed that they were right etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making links between the sources,
e.g. the war was presented as a form of crusade and an adventure in the spirit of the American West, Kennedy played on the aspirations of US citizens; the government deliberately made comparisons with Korea etc. (4-6)

Level 3: Developed comparison using the sources as evidence,
e.g. Source B shows the attitude of the US government and Source C shows how the message was understood by the young; candidates may cross-refer between Sources A, B and C to show that Kennedy's ideas were very similar to the State Department's in the mid-1950s etc. (7-8)

3. **Study Sources D and E.** *How useful are these sources as evidence of the public reaction to the Vietnam war in the mid 1960s?* (10)

Target: Analysis of sources / assessment of utility

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information, e.g. TV made people back the war, Vietnam was a very important issue, people's attitudes changed after My Lai etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements evaluating reliability of the sources, e.g. the Media obviously wanted to present a favourable image of Vietnam to the public, therefore the picture may be unrealistic, the Gallup Poll suggest that Vietnam became a dominant issue in the USA as it eclipsed all over issues, including civil rights, race relations and the Cold War etc. (4-6)

Level 3: Developed evaluation of utility of the sources as evidence, e.g. the article in Newsweek was clearly designed to influence public opinion rather than reflect it, the delay in publishing the details of My Lai suggests that it was appreciated that this would have an adverse effect on the public, the nature of the Gallup Poll gives clear evidence of the sustained nature of importance of the war in the USA etc. (7-10)

4. **Study Sources E, F, G and H.** *Use the evidence of these sources, and your own knowledge, to explain why public opinion about the war in the USA changed between 1967 and 1970* (12)

Target: Analysis of sources/recall of knowledge/causation

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information OR some knowledge, e.g. the violence, young people being killed, the futility etc (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources supported by relevant own knowledge, e.g. by 1970 the true impact and nature of the war was becoming known, as Sources F and G show, the numbers of casualties were rising as the cost of the war etc. (4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the sources as evidence supported by selected knowledge, e.g. the letter (Source F) shows that details of the war were reaching home, ideas about the war were reaching a wider and wider audience, the delay in publishing the details of My Lai shows that the authorities were concerned about the impact on public opinion etc. (7-10)

Level 4: Sustained argument using the sources as evidence supported by

precisely selected knowledge and setting both in the wider context of the 1960s, e.g. showing understanding of the value of the range of evidence available, the significance of the Gallup Poll (E) and its relationship to the changes taking place in, and the nature of, US society in the late 1960s etc.

(11-12)

5. *Study all the sources. The writer of Source I believed that television played an important part in changing people's attitudes to the Vietnam War. Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain whether you agree with this view.*

(14)

Target: Analysis of sources and recall of knowledge to evaluate an Interpretation

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as evidence OR some knowledge, e.g. yes it did, it showed people what it was really like etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources supported by relevant own knowledge, e.g. this was the first war where television was able to show exact details of the fighting, therefore it had a direct impact, as Source D shows etc.

(4-6)

Level 3: Developed statements using the nature of the sources supported by appropriately selected knowledge, e.g. yes, television played an important part in changing attitudes to the war, in the past wars had been fought 'far away', both in terms of distance and in terms of 'time', television made the war immediate as it showed the details described in Source F and publicising photographs such as Source H, but there were other important factors, such as the influence of popular music and youth culture etc.

(7-11)

Level 4: Sustained argument using the sources as evidence supported by precisely selected knowledge, which critically assesses the role of television in changing public opinion in the USA, it was not just the descriptive role of television news, but also the investigative role of reporting in general which forced the authorities to reveal details of the war which they wanted to keep secret; the media also publicised protest songs by singers such as Joan Baez, The Byrds, Bob Dylan etc.

(12-14)