



8th Grade Social Studies — The Cold War

The Berlin Wall

1961-1989

Berlin Wall—What was it?

- ❖ A wall separating East & West Berlin in Germany after WWII
- ❖ U.S. & Soviets both refused to give up control of Berlin
- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9fQPzZ1-hg> (Ted-Ed)
- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXzODW1TWgk> (Simple History)
- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPWQUOpBcBU> (Simple History—Berlin Wall border troops)

What happened to Germany after WWII?

- ❖ Divided into 4 sectors—US, USSR, France, & Britain
- ❖ Each would be responsible for their sector
 - ❖ USSR—weaker Germany
 - ❖ Others—rebuild & strengthen them
- ❖ Berlin located deep in Soviet sector (arrow pointing)



Why was Berlin important?

- ❖ Heart of Nazi power—symbolic capital of Germany & Nazism
- ❖ Geography—USA / USSR keen for central European military bases
- ❖ Both USA / USSR wanted influence there & wanted to stop the other from getting it
- ❖ Race between US / USSR to get to Berlin first to end WWII



Problems with Berlin

- ❖ Berlin was deep inside the Soviet sector of Germany—divided into 4 parts as well
- ❖ West Berlin was a “window to the West” for those in Soviet sector
- ❖ Possible embarrassment to Stalin & the Russians—why?



Berlin Crisis Begins

- ❖ Stalin wanted to force the Allies out of West Berlin
- ❖ June 1948—Stalin blocks all surface transport links in and out of Berlin (roads, canal routes, railroads, etc...)
- ❖ What should the Allies do?

What should the Allies do?

- ❖ Choice 1—Give into Stalin's demands & hand over control of West Berlin (prevent 2 million people from starving)
- ❖ Choice 2—invade Soviet zone by blasting through the blockade & start an armed conflict
- ❖ Choice 3—Fly food, fuel, and other supplies into West Berlin; would be a huge undertaking and require tons of organization; would also be very expensive
- ❖ Discuss with your neighbors and choose a solution



And the winner is...

- ❖ The BERLIN AIRLIFT
- ❖ Allies will fly in supplies to East Berliners
- ❖ Allies are not giving into Stalin, and are also avoiding war
- ❖ Stalin won't shoot down planes, right?

The Berlin Airlift

- ❖ The U.S. and other allies flew in supplies
- ❖ Western Allies weren't giving in to Stalin & avoiding war
- ❖ Pressure now back on Stalin—couldn't shoot down planes
- ❖ Flew in supplies for 11 months

Berlin Airlift

- ❖ Inhabitants of East Berlin relied upon these flights for everything
- ❖ Winter 1948—lived on dried potatoes, powdered eggs, and canned meat w/ just 4 hours of electricity per day
- ❖ 275,000 carried 1.5 million tons of supplies (peak—one plane landing every 3 minutes)
- ❖ Airlift cost—\$100 million; 79 servicemen died in accidents
- ❖ Stalin calls off blockade in May 1949









Was the Airlift successful?

- ❖ Stalin calls off the blockade in May 1949
- ❖ Highlights divisions between East & West and makes them more permanent (lasted until 1990s!)

Cold War got worse – war had almost broken out.

Results of the airlift

Germany would now be split up into West and East Germany.

NATO and the Warsaw Pact – defensive alliances would be set up.

Arms Race – both sides focused on building conventional and nuclear weapons

After the Blockade...

- ❖ Allies set up NATO in 1949 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization); see the blockade as proof Stalin will take over Europe
 - ❖ Military alliance offering mutual support in case of an attack
- ❖ Warsaw Pact (Soviet response to NATO) set up in 1955
- ❖ May 1949—Allies set up a new nation (West Germany a.k.a. Federal Republic of Germany)
- ❖ October 1949—USSR responds by setting up German Democratic Republic (East Germany)

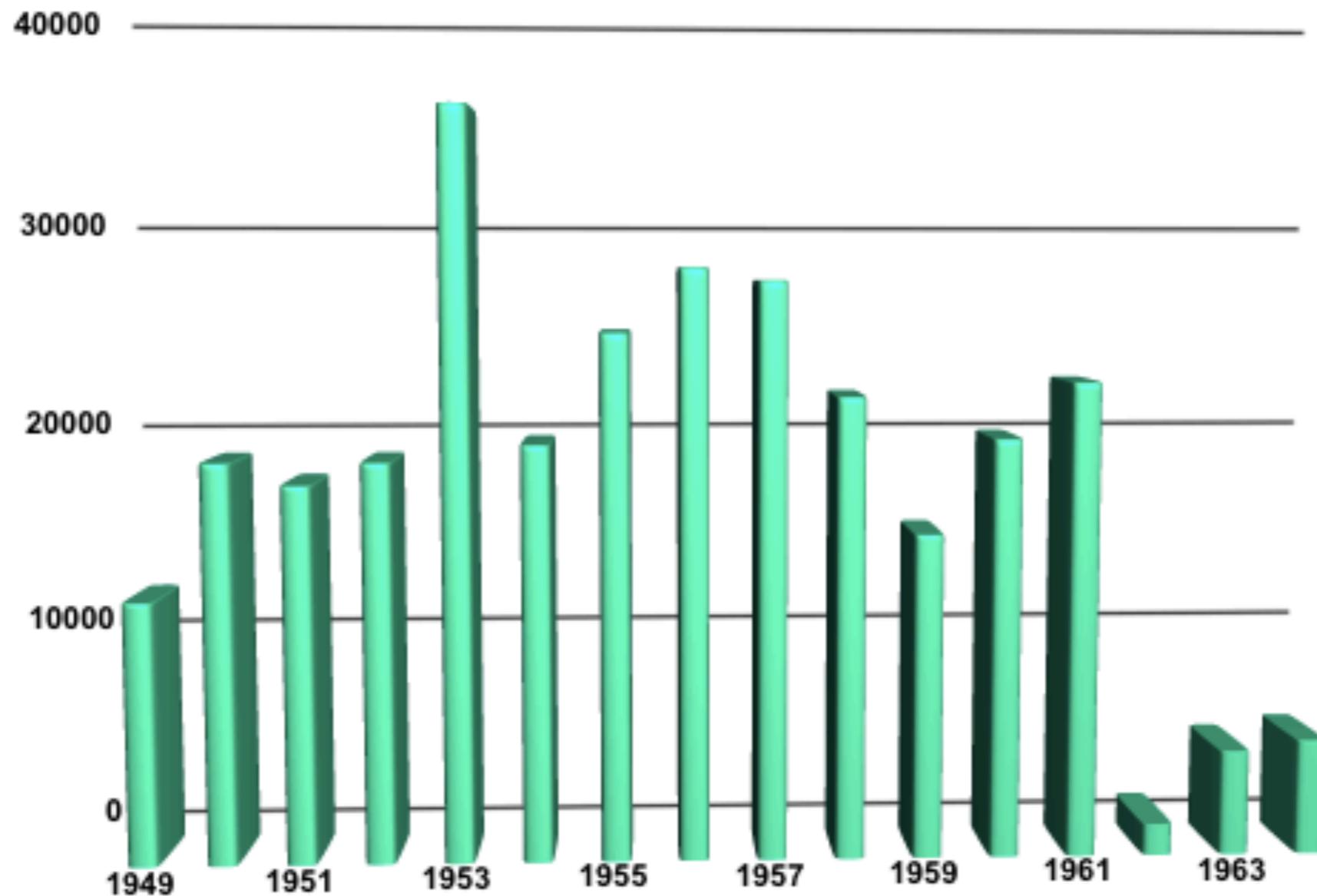
Problems after the Airlift

- ❖ Berlin becomes the escape route for people to go from east to west
 - ❖ 1945-1961—1 / 6 of German population fled to the west
- ❖ August 1961—Berliners woke up to see their city divided in half (new leader—Nikita Khrushchev)
- ❖ East German soldiers guarded the construction zones and shot anyone trying to escape over the wall
- ❖ Why build the wall?

Number of Defectors to the West (pictured below)

What effect did the wall have?

Graph showing the number of defectors to the West.



Final Facts of the Wall

- ❖ 136 people died trying to cross
- ❖ 5,000 people escaped successfully
- ❖ Had 302 observation towers, 259 dog runs, and 20 bunkers
- ❖ 96 miles of wall was eventually built
- ❖ Wall officially falls November 1989, all border controls end July 1990, Germany reunited as one country October 1990

Newscast of the Wall Collapse

