

□ Activity 1: The Cuban Missile Crisis

In this activity you will explore the Cuban Missile Crisis more deeply. In Option 1, you will read about some of the options Kennedy was given by various advisers and make your own decision about what you think was the right course of action. In Option 2, you will read a speech given by President Kennedy during the crisis. Talk to a parent about which option you would like to complete.

Option 1: What Would You Do?

This website from The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library allows you to learn about the options presented to President Kennedy and make your own decision about what you might have done in that situation. Read the information on the Day 3 page and then click the link at the bottom that says "Read Text of Theodore Sorensen's memorandum." As you read and reflect on the memorandum, complete the "Decision Making in the Cuban Missile Crisis" page. Optionally, explore other days on the website when you are done.

13 Days in October

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/2751/

Read the information on the Day 3 page and then click the link at the bottom that says "Read Text of Theodore Sorensen's memorandum."

Option 2: Speech Analysis

Use the following web link to read the transcript of the radio and television speech that President Kennedy gave to the American people about the Cuban Missile Crisis on October 22, 1962. Then answer the questions on the "Analysis of Kennedy's Speech" page.

Radio and Television Report to the American People

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/3913/

Note that you can click a link near the top of the page to listen to an audio recording of the speech.

Video of Kennedy's Speech

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/9855/

If you prefer, you can watch a video of the speech.

Decision Making in the Cuban Missile Crisis

Instructions: As you read the Theodore Sorensen memo, think about the various factors that affect decision making in this situation. Use the guided questions to help record your thoughts.

What are the two questions that must currently be addressed?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each decision?



Which option did you choose? Explain your rationale for choosing it.

Analysis of Kennedy's Speech



Instructions: Read the transcript of President Kennedy's October 22, 1962 speech about the Cuban Missile Crisis and then answer the following questions.

- 1) List 3 facts that JFK provided to demonstrate that the Soviet weapons required an immediate response.

- 2) How did JFK use the past to justify his decisions?

- 3) Of the steps that JFK listed, which one seems most effective to you? Why?

- 4) Which of the steps seems most controversial to you? Why?

- 5) Why do you think JFK made a point of speaking to the Cuban people?

Activities**Activity 1: The Cuban Missile Crisis**

In this activity, your child will explore the Cuban Missile Crisis in greater depth. In Option 1, he will use an online resource to read advice given to President Kennedy and make his own decision about the best course of action, and then reflect on those choices on an activity page. In Option 2, he will read a speech that President Kennedy gave during the crisis and answer questions about it. Option 2 requires more reading and analysis and may be the more challenging option.

Optional Extension:

If your child might benefit from some additional work with geography, you could have him plot the locations of ships on a map, or use a mapping tool like Scribble Maps to do so.

Scribble Maps

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/4126/

The site's basic version is free and will allow your child to create a custom map.

Option 1: What Would You Do?

In this option, your child will read information from a website from The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library to learn about the options presented to President Kennedy. He will then use an activity page to reflect on the options and make his own decision about what he might have done in that situation.

Answer Key:

- What are the two questions that must currently be addressed? (what military action to use, if any, and whether political action should come before military action)
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each decision? (answers will vary; various options are presented, and different advisors support or oppose each one)
- Which option did you choose? Explain your rationale for choosing it. (answers will vary, but your child should be able to explain his reasoning)

Option 2: Speech Analysis

In this activity, your child will read a transcript of a radio and television address that President Kennedy gave to the American people about the Cuban Missile Crisis. If he prefers, he can listen to an audio file of the speech or view a video of the address. He will then answer questions to analyze the speech.

Answer Key:

1. List 3 facts that JFK provided to demonstrate that the Soviet weapons required an immediate response. (Answers could include that the medium range missiles were capable of hitting sites in the Southeastern US, Central America, and the Caribbean; the missiles threatened the "peace and security" of people through the Americas; the threat to the Americas was in defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947 and the UN Charter; the Soviets lied about the weapons being defensive in nature; or the buildup of weapons was rapid.)
2. How did JFK use the past to justify his decisions? (He said that the 1930s [WWII] taught us that "aggressive conduct, if allowed to go unchecked and unchallenged ultimately leads to war.")
3. Of the steps that JFK listed, which one seems most effective to you? Why? (Answers will vary, but your child should provide an explanation for which of the seven steps seemed most effective.)
4. Which of the steps seems most controversial to you? Why? (Answers will vary.)

5. Why do you think JFK made a point of speaking to the Cuban people? (Answers may include that it could help Americans identify with the situation of the Cuban people, and the president seems to be encouraging Cubans to overthrow the government.)