

Although all branches of government play a role in United States foreign policy decisions, the president as the head of the executive branch often makes decisions that have a profound impact on the United States and the rest of the world. Presidents make these decisions based on historical information and the situation that the country is in. These decisions such as the decision to send troops to Vietnam made by Lyndon B. Johnson, and the decision to drop an atomic bomb on Japan made by Harry Truman have greatly impacted United States history and policy as well as the Vietnamese and Japanese.

Lyndon Johnson inherited a trainwreck when he became president in terms of Vietnam. Kennedy had promised that the United States would not let Vietnam fall to communism. Johnson didn't want to send American troops to Vietnam but he would have to uphold Kennedy's promise. In addition Johnson's advisors told him it was necessary to contain communism otherwise it would spread, this was known as the domino theory. This "domino theory" had been used by President Dwight Eisenhower in the 1950s to explain his support for South Vietnam. The United States had also learned from World War II that appeasement does not work to stop a gressor nations. All of these factors and popular

public support for the war contributed to Johnson's decision to send troops over to Vietnam to aid the South Vietnamese in their struggle against the Vietcong.

This decision had numerous impacts on the United States in terms of international policy and social feelings. Many Americans felt that Johnson had misled them by saying that the war in Vietnam could be won in only a few years. Johnson continued to tell the public the war was going well even when he and the public knew it was not. This led to a credibility gap and a general distrust in national politics. Johnson's decision also led to the War Powers Act which limited the amount of power the president had in deploying troops into combat situations. In addition Johnson's decision helped to sway the political mood in America from liberalism to conservatism which was shown with the election of Richard Nixon.

Sending troops in to Vietnam also affected the Vietnamese. Much of the infrastructure in Vietnam was destroyed by US bombs or burned down by US ground forces. It would take years for Vietnam to overcome this damage.

Another important US decision made by a president was the decision to drop the Atomic Bomb on Japan. Truman made this decision because he thought that it would cost thousands of lives to invade Japan. The United States

was tired of fighting after WWII in Europe so the Atomic bomb seemed like a way out of further fighting.

This decision saved thousands of American lives but cost many Japanese lives. In addition it made the United States the most powerful country in the world due to its new weapon. Eventually the atomic bomb would lead to a nuclear arms race with Russia and be one cause of the Cold War.

Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb had profound impacts on the Japanese as well. Two of their cities were destroyed and nuclear fallout killed many more people. This forced Japan into submission thus ending WWII. Although the atomic bombs dropped on Japan killed many people in the end it probably saved lives because many more would have been killed in an invasion.

US presidents often make decisions that greatly impact the course of history such as the decision to go to war in Vietnam and the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan.

### Anchor Level 3-B

**The response:**

- Develops all aspects of the task in little depth
- Is more descriptive than analytical (*Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam*: this “domino theory” had been used by President Dwight Eisenhower in the 1950s to explain his support for South Vietnam; the United States had also learned from World War II that appeasement does not work to stop aggressor nations; in addition, Johnson’s decision helped to sway the political mood in America from liberalism to conservatism which was shown with the election of Richard Nixon; much of the infrastructure in Vietnam was destroyed by United States bombs or burned down by United States ground forces; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: Truman made this decision because he knew that it would cost thousands of lives to invade Japan; in addition, it made the United States the most powerful nation in the world due to its new weapon; this forced Japan into submission, thus ending World War II)
- Includes some relevant facts, examples, and details (*Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam*: Kennedy’s promise; contain communism; domino theory; aid the South Vietnamese; Vietcong; credibility gap; War Powers Act; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: after World War II in Europe; nuclear arms race; Russia; Cold War; two of Japan’s cities were destroyed; nuclear fallout)
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction that recognizes that all branches of government play a role in foreign policy decisions but that presidential decisions carry the most weight, and a brief conclusion

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 3. The discussion of the historical circumstances surrounding Johnson’s decision to send combat troops to Vietnam and its impact on the United States is substantial, but the discussion of Truman’s decision is repetitive and fails to expand on several key details.

Throughout the History of the United States, Presidents have made Foreign Policy decisions. These decisions were made to deal with global Problems ranging from isolationism to peace in the middle east. The decisions made have impacted other countries abroad and at home in the United States: socially, politically, and economically. Two Foreign policy decisions that have made an impact are:

Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb and George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq. In 1945, after the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman became president. During this time the U.S. was in World War II fighting Hitler and mainly Emperor Hirohito of Japan. Roosevelt had begun the Manhattan Project early in the war. The battles in the Pacific had been bloody, as the U.S. took island after island from the Japanese. The atomic bomb, a device that could and would ~~soon~~ <sup>win</sup> the war, was finished just as the U.S. was planning on invading Japan itself. After scientist finished the bomb, Truman decided to test its strength against Japan and picked two cities: Hiroshima and Nagasaki, one of which was located on the main island of Honshu. In the summer of

1945, both cities were each hit by an atomic bomb, engulfing both cities in a sea of flames. The use of the bomb affected Japan harshly: many lives were lost, the economy was destroyed by financial burden, and the totalitarian military leadership under the Emperor was ~~overthrown~~ <sup>overthrown</sup>. Japan was also forced after losing the war to the U.S. to sign a constitution which tightly limits their military power. However, the bomb use affected the U.S. in a far more better way: The U.S. won the War and developed a new Weapon. Truman was praised as a hero for deciding to take action, though, the economy remained steady.

In 2001 George W. Bush - son to former president George H.W. Bush - declared a war on terror, after terrorist attacked the World Trade Center in New York City, NY, the Pentagon in Washington D.C. and a failed terrorist attempt in Pennsylvania on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. His first attempt to find the leader of the attacks Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan failed, so in order to try and "save face" he turned his attention to Saddam Hussein's dictatorship in Iraq. Bush Jr's father while president attempted to overthrow Hussein's regime in the 1990's, but he failed.

Bush Jr. however sought to finish his father's legacy and accused ~~Hussein's~~ <sup>Hussein's</sup> regime harbored weapons of mass destruction. Congress then voted to support President Bush's decisions to send thousands of troops to the country. Although the U.S. was successful in overthrowing the regime and executing Saddam Hussein in 2006, no weapons of mass destruction were found. The U.S. economy was drained by the cost of the war, and many people lost faith and were angered by the president and the republican party. This factor led to the election of the nation's first African-American president Barack Obama. The war on Iraq also to this day has not ended. The actions effect on Iraq however is both negative and ~~post~~ positive: The negative effects were a civil war between different groups of the country and more people in the middle east despise America. The positive effect a democracy was established and the ~~people~~ <sup>people</sup> of Iraq are now free from a dictatorship. In conclusion, although President's have made foreign policy decisions that have affected both other countries and the U.S., it has advanced us forward and paved the way for future leaders to learn from the policies passed and strengthen the government.

### Anchor Level 3-C

**The response:**

- Develops some aspects of the task in some depth
- Is more descriptive than analytical (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: in the summer of 1945, both cities were each hit by an atomic bomb, engulfing both cities in a sea of flames; Japan was also forced after losing the war to the United States to sign a constitution which tightly limits their military power; *George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq*: Bush Jr. sought to finish his father's legacy and accused Hussein's regime of harboring weapons of mass destruction; the United States economy was drained by the cost of the war, and many people lost faith and were angered by the president and the Republican Party; the negative effects were a civil war between different groups of the country and more people of the Middle East despise America); includes faulty and weak analysis (*George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq*: Bush Jr.'s father, while president, attempted to overthrow Hussein's regime in the 1990s, but he failed)
- Includes some relevant facts, examples, and details (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: after the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt; World War II; Hitler; Emperor Hirohito; Hiroshima; Nagasaki; *George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq*: War on Terror; terrorist; World Trade Center; Pentagon; failed terrorist attempt in Pennsylvania; September 11, 2001; Osama bin Laden; Afghanistan; Congress; executing Saddam Hussein in 2006; African American president, Barack Obama)
- Demonstrates a satisfactory plan of organization; includes an introduction and a weak conclusion

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 3. The discussions of the historical circumstances for both Truman and Bush are stronger than those of the impacts, which are uneven and not well developed.

United States presidents often make Foreign policy decisions in an attempt to deal with international problems. These decisions have had an impact on both the United States and on other countries. Two important decisions include John F. Kennedy guaranteeing Cuba and Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam.

In 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis emerged. Communist Russia planted several missiles and nuclear weapons on Cuba that were ~~pointed at~~ <sup>aimed at</sup> the United States. To avoid a war and total destruction, president at the time, John F. Kennedy, completely guaranteed Cuba. This put the United States at a period of complete fear and confusion. We were preparing for a nuclear war! After days of negotiation, Russia agreed to remove their weapons from Cuba so long as the United States removes their weapons from Turkey. The panic had ended but ~~in~~ the United States no longer trades with Cuba, leaving Cuba a poor, third world country.

From 1965 to 1968, Lyndon B. Johnson ~~begin~~ sent combat troops to Vietnam. The United States wanted to stop the spread of communism from North Vietnam and make the world safe for democracy.

The war in Vietnam was a battle between communist North Vietnam and non-communist South Vietnam. Of course, the United States was fighting on the side of South Vietnam. Combat troops were trained to perform combat fighting in a certain manner. However, when the troops arrived in Vietnam, they began fighting in ways that they were not prepared for. Because this war was the first broadcasted war, Americans could view it at home. After witnessing all the destruction, Americans began to wonder why there were troops in Vietnam. Americans also began to dislike and lose trust in the government. After the war was over ~~Vietnam~~ all of Vietnam fell to communism and so did its neighbor Cambodia. Vietnam was destroyed, the war completely changed the landscape of Vietnam.

In conclusion, whether it be a crisis in Cuba or a war in Vietnam, foreign policy decisions will have an impact on the United States and the other country or countries that are involved. The ~~guarantining of Cuba~~ <sup>crisis</sup> ~~that led to the Vietnam War~~ ~~and the Vietnam War~~ created fear in America and combat troops in Vietnam created hatred and

distrust in America. Presidents make foreign policy decisions to deal with international problems, but according to the <sup>policies</sup> ~~decisions~~ discussed, the decisions may not have been so rewarding.

Anchor Level 2-A

**The response:**

- Minimally develops all aspects of the task
- Is primarily descriptive (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: communist Russia planted several missiles and nuclear weapons on Cuba that were aimed at the United States; the United States no longer trades with Cuba, leaving Cuba a poor third world country; *Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam*: the United States wanted to stop the spread of communism from North Vietnam and make the world safe for democracy; Americans also began to dislike and lose trust in the government; after the war was over, all of Vietnam fell to communism and so did its neighbor Cambodia)
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: Cuban missile crisis; quarantined; preparing for a nuclear war; United States removes their weapons from Turkey; *Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam*: non-communist South Vietnam; broadcasted war; destruction; changed the landscape)
- Demonstrates a clear plan of organization; includes an introduction that restates the theme and a conclusion that observes that these presidential decisions created fear and distrust in the United States

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 2. The response describes two presidential decisions and their impacts. However, overgeneralizations and few details weaken the response.

United States presidents have made many decisions relating to foreign policy in order to ensure the well-being of America. In order to fulfill his duty as president <sup>to protect America</sup>, the past presidents such as James K. Polk and Harry Truman have had to make many different decisions. Although these decisions have resulted in death, the presidents acted as they felt they should have in order to protect the country.

James K. Polk was president during the 1840s. There were many disputes between America and Mexico concerning the border line of the Rio Grand. This river was a natural border, and as a result was not always a definite border. Different parts of the river were different widths, and in times of drought the river dried in spots, leaving no <sup>visible</sup> border. Many were accused of crossing the border, and the arguments became so tense that in 1846, Polk sent the American army to fight the Mexicans in order to settle the dispute. The Americans won the fight and gained control of some Mexican land. This land later became a section of the transcontinental railroad. Polk decided to fight Mexico to protect Americans from disputes concerning the border.

Although he may have sent troops to gain more land, it was in the interest of the American citizens to build the transcontinental railroad there for easy transportation of goods and people. The decision to send troops was a large impact on America because the disputes ended and the railroad was built so people could easily travel to the west. This decision, however, had a negative effect on Mexico because they lost land, money, and the lives of many soldiers. This caused Mexico to become angry with America and led to poor relations between the two countries.

A second influential decision was the one of Harry Truman to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the major cities in Japan, to end World War II. Harry Truman knew that his decision would impact the ~~the~~ whole world as this new technology was released to the world. He also knew that many innocent people would die because of the bomb. However, Japan was not giving up and many people were dying fighting. The war seemed to never end, and dropping the atomic bomb would end it. When ~~the~~ the Manhattan Project, the secret mission to build the atomic bomb,

Completed the most destructive weapon known to mankind at the time and approached President Truman, those who knew about the bomb knew of the destruction it would cause. When ~~the~~ the two bombs were dropped, Americans celebrated. All knew the war was over, and that peace could finally be preserved. Americans also had the most advanced weapon of the time, which gave a confidence that made Americans feel invincible. At the same time Americans celebrated, the Japanese suffered. Millions died due to the impact and radiation later on. It is the cause of cancer in many places in Japan. Families were destroyed, homes, businesses, and the daily lives of millions of people were shattered as two cities were destroyed. The effect on America was great; the effect on Japan was terrible. American presidents make decisions every day of their term or terms in office. Some of these decisions relate to national security and foreign affairs. Although some decisions were based more on greed than others, America has been impacted greatly by these decisions and, many times, impact others just as greatly.

## Anchor Level 2-B

### The response:

- Minimally develops most aspects of the task
- Is primarily descriptive (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: there were many disputes between America and Mexico concerning the borderline of the Rio Grande; the Americans won the fight and gained control of some Mexican land; this caused Mexico to become angry with America and led to poor relations between the two countries; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: Japan was not giving up and many people were dying fighting; Americans also had the most advanced weapon of the time, which gave a confidence that made Americans feel invincible); includes faulty analysis and isolated application (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: this river was a natural border, and as a result was not always a definite border; different parts of the river were different widths, and in time of drought, the river dried in spots leaving no visible border)
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: lost land, money, and the lives of many soldiers; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: Hiroshima and Nagasaki; World War II; new technology; innocent people; Manhattan Project; two bombs were dropped; war was over; cancer; families were destroyed); includes an inaccuracy (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: millions died due to the impact and radiation later on)
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; includes an introduction that states that the president makes decisions for the well-being of America and a conclusion that notes that some presidential decisions were based on greed

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 2. The response demonstrates some understanding of the historical circumstances and impact of using the atomic bomb. However, the discussion of the Mexican War is diminished by a lack of understanding of the border dispute over the Rio Grande, a failure to include the issues related to Texas, and a confused connection between the Mexican Cession and the transcontinental railroad.

In a world where nation leaders often need to make decisions about foreign policies, one nation stands apart. The United States President often has to make such decisions in times where international problems arise. These decisions also have a profound effect on both the U.S., and ~~the~~ other nations, who are either directly or indirectly involved.

One example of a decision made by the President is the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan. This decision was made by Harry Truman, and was made while World War II was being fought. There were two bombs dropped, Fat Man and Little Boy, and were dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. ~~The~~ The effect this had on those in the US was that ~~the~~ the war would soon be over. Truman's argument for the droppings was that it would save American lives, and that it did. However, the effects it had on those in Japan argue the morality of it. Those who were at the site of the bomb droppings were killed instantly,

vaporized in fact. They were the "lucky" ones. Those not killed in the explosion had to suffer a worse fate. They received radiation poisoning. This often led to, but wasn't limited to, cancer, abnormalities, and often led to death anyway. One has to wonder if it was worth all of their suffering to "save American lives."

Another example of a foreign policy decision ~~was~~ was during the Red Scare, and the attempt at containment of Communism. This was the quarantining of Cuba. Cuba, as one could assume, was a Communist nation, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ The president who made this decision was JFK. Because of this, embargoes were placed between the two. ~~Under~~ ~~the~~ ~~embargo~~ That was an effect on both nations. The way it effect those in the US was that some maybe had family there, which could also have them be questioned. ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~embargo~~ There was also more to it than communism. Those in America also had to worry about the possibility of atomic bombs.

Russia, who had received the secrets for the atomic bomb, had relations with Cuba. Tension had already been between Russia and the US, due to communism, and now there was fear. ~~So~~ The way this effected Cuba was that there were some who didn't want to be there, but couldn't come to America due to these policies. This often led to the smuggling of them into the country. Many times they would be sent back, and severely punished.

Foreign policies are always there, whether a president makes it or not. They just aren't declared. When these decisions are made, one should always stop to think about how this may effect others. Especially when they involve war or conflict. Violence isn't always the answer, and all possible options should be explored before a decision is made. That one decision could change the world.

## Anchor Level 2-C

### **The response:**

- Minimally develops most aspects of the task
- Is primarily descriptive (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: the effect this had on those in the United States was that the war would soon be over; Truman's arguments for the droppings was that it would save American lives, and that it did; those who were at the site of the bomb droppings were killed instantly, vaporized in fact; *John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: another example of a foreign policy decision was the attempt at containment of communism; those in America also had to worry about the possibility of atomic bombs); includes isolated application (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: the way it effected those in the United States was that some maybe had family there, which could also have them be questioned; the way this effected Cuba was that there were some who did not want to be there, but could not come to America due to these policies; this also led to the smuggling of them into the country; many times they would be sent back and severely punished); includes faulty analysis (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: during the Red Scare; because of this, embargoes were placed between the two)
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: World War II; two bombs dropped; Fat Man and Little Boy; Hiroshima; Nagasaki; radiation; cancer; *John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: Russia; tension; fear)
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; includes a weak introduction and a conclusion that indicates that all possible options should be explored before a foreign policy is made

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 2. The response shows some understanding of the issues related to the use of the atomic bomb but fails to demonstrate comprehension of President Kennedy's use of the quarantine.

United States Presidents often make foreign policy decisions in an attempt to deal with International problems. These decisions have had an impact on both the U.S. and on other countries. Two examples on foreign policy include George W. Bush sending troops to Kuwait (1990-1991) and George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq (2003) Both of these policies have received mixed responses on the actual need for involvement.

The Gulf war or war in Kuwait was based upon a major reason, Oil. Saddam Hussein and his army marched into Kuwait and took over the oil fields. The U.S. did not like this and sent troops in, not to help Kuwait but to preserve the oil imports from Kuwait. The U.S. sent troops only to protect its own economic interests and the upset citizens in the U.S. Arguments supporting this policy state that if George H. W. Bush sent troops into Kuwait and beat Saddam back to Iraq then went into Iraq and defeated him then his son would not have had to send troops in 12 years later. George W. Bush did not have valid points for entering Iraq and

## Anchor Level 1-A

### **The response:**

- Minimally develops three aspects of the task by stating a historical circumstance surrounding George H. W. Bush sending troops to Kuwait and stating an impact of the decision on Kuwait and on the United States
- Is descriptive (*George H. W. Bush sending troops to Kuwait*: the Gulf War or war in Kuwait was based upon a major reason, oil; if George H. W. Bush sent troops into Kuwait and beat Saddam back to Iraq then went into Iraq and defeated him then, his son would not have had to send troops in 12 years later)
- Includes no additional relevant facts, examples, or details
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; includes an introduction that is little more than a restatement of the theme and lacks a conclusion

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 1. The response attempts to discuss two presidential decisions with limited facts and details for George H. W. Bush and speculative historical circumstances for George W. Bush's entry into the 2003 War on Iraq.

United States presidents are always facing problems around the world. The presidents are suppose to do what they believe is best for their country. Deciding whether or not going to war or to sign something or not is big things they have to do.

In 2003 George W. Bush was faced with a lot of decisions. After being bombed by Iraq ~~and America~~ George W. Bush had to decide what to do. George W. Bush retaliated and sent troops to Iraq and Iran. The fighting is still continuing today for six years now. This is still a problem today because we can't end this war. ~~and~~

In 1962 things occurred for John F. Kennedy to. One day the U.S. was flying around in spy planes and saw that Cuba had missiles pointing directly at us and they weren't far away at all. Kennedy had to think quick and decide what to do. Kennedy decided to set up a blockade on Cuba and told them that this blockade on Cuba would

not be over until they destroyed their  
missiles. Cuba decided to just destroy them  
and the blockade <sup>was over.</sup> This was all called the  
Cuban missile crisis ~~and~~ Bay of Pigs invasion.  
only one of the recent presidents  
was that he put us in is still occurring. The  
Cuban missile crisis came shortly to the end  
but George Bush's war is still going on for  
Six years now.

Anchor Level 1-B

**The response:**

- Develops one aspect of the task in some depth by describing the historical circumstances surrounding John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba
- Is descriptive (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: one day the United States was flying around in spy planes and saw that Cuba had missiles pointing directly at us and they were not far away at all)
- Includes an additional detail (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: Cuban missile crisis); includes inaccuracies (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: Bay of Pigs invasion; Cuba decided to just destroy them and the blockade was over; *George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq*: after being bombed by Iraq, George W. Bush had to decide what to do; George W. Bush retaliated and sent troops to Iraq and Iran)
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; lacks focus; includes an introduction that notes that presidents face problems around the world and are supposed to do their best for the American people and a conclusion that points to the length of the Iraq war

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 1. The response correctly addresses only one aspect of the task.

Every national leader comes across a situation that forces them to make decisions concerning foreign policy. These decisions reflect the national ideology at the time. Whether in a period of isolation or a period of expansion and influence, United States presidents affect the U.S. and the other nations in the world by asserting its stance on certain international issues.

The election of James K. Polk represented the confirmation of American expansion across the continent. Many U.S. citizens believed in the ideology of Manifest Destiny, that God destined the nation to expand from ocean to ocean. President Polk was eyeing the southwest. He wanted to acquire the lands in the California region, New Mexico, and Texas. Texas had gained independence from Mexico in 1836, but the U.S. was hesitant to annex it then because it feared provoking war with Mexico or sectionalism over the expansion of slavery. Polk finally annexed Texas in 1845 following his election. The U.S. recognized the border at the Rio Grande, but Mexico believed it was at the ~~river~~ <sup>Nueces</sup> River, a little farther up north. The border dispute ~~was~~ <sup>engaged</sup>, and Polk made the decision to send troops into the disputed area to protect what they thought was their own land. Polk

said that we were being provoked on our own land, and a skirmish occurred. This began the Mexican American War. Because Mexico was still a relatively young nation after gaining independence from Spain in 1821, the government was unstable and the nation lacked the resources to fight a war. In the end, the U.S. came out of the war victorious. Mexico was forced to cede what is now the southwestern part of the U.S. to the Americans in exchange for a mere \$15 million. Mexico lost about half its size only in a few years. Because of the war with Mexico, the United States fulfilled its Manifest Destiny, gaining the land to the Pacific Ocean.

Another presidential decision was made by Harry Truman when he decided to use the atomic bomb in Japan. World War II had dragged on for a long time. Victory had already been achieved in Europe with the fall of Hitler in Germany. The war in the Pacific front turned out to be even more costly. There were much more deaths and injuries. The Japanese were unwilling to surrender. The United States had recently come up with a new kind of weapon: The

atomic bomb. Truman decided to use it because it would end the war quickly and prevent even greater American deaths from happening. Also, by using this exclusive technology, he would show the Soviet Union the strength of the U.S. So, in August, two atomic bombs were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The Japanese finally surrendered. Japan was in ruins because of the destruction. Japan eventually climbed up to become a technologically advanced nation with a booming economy. After Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the U.S. continued to build up its atomic weapons and increase military spending to compete with the U.S.S.R. The U.S.S.R. also sought to catch up with the U.S. resulting in an expensive arms race that dominated the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Presidents are faced with decisions that affect the people at home and people abroad. These decisions may be for the better, but they also could be for the worse.

In the United States ~~the~~ history presidents often have to make foreign policy decisions. The foreign policies are usually ~~to~~ created to deal with international problems. The decisions the presidents have made have a ~~signifia~~ significant impact on both the United States and other countries.

Two out of many presidents who have foreign policies, one, Lyndon B Johnson when he sent troops to Vietnam, <sup>(1965-1968)</sup> and ~~George W Bush~~ <sup>Harry Truman</sup> when he decided to use the atomic bomb ~~sent troops to Iraq (2002)~~ (1945).

In the mid 60's when South Vietnam reached out their hand for support The United States came to their side to help. The Vietnam war was the North Vietnamese government was trying to take over the south to spread communism. The United States entered not only to help South Vietnam, but to also contain communism. The government had a fear of communism becoming too powerful and taking over the democracy the United States had set up, this fear was called the Red Scare. When Lyndon B Johnson made it ~~in~~ public that The United States would help the Vietnamese to stop communism the

United States separated. The time that Vietnam was happening was also the hippie movement when people would say, "Make peace not war." Many citizens felt we should stay out of it, it's not affecting us, but other people had the red scare and wanted the U.S. to join. Soon after sending troops to Vietnam a draft started because they needed more soldiers. Young men who could be drafted would flee to Canada or find loopholes to stay out of the war. In Vietnam the North had many men and weapons supplied to them from other communist nations. The men from the States were walking through unfamiliar land not knowing if a Charlie is sitting in the bush right next to them. The South's army wasn't very strong which later caused ~~people~~ problems making troops ~~to~~ retreat because they were getting swarmed with the enemy. Shortly after Johnson's term ended President Richard Nixon brought the troops back home enemy had crossed the line and were controlling the South's government with ~~in~~ minutes of the last U.S.

being air lifted from there.

1945 The year Harry Truman was the president and the United States was at war with Japan. During this war a German scientist left Germany and came to America with immense intelligence, this German scientist was Albert Einstein. In the United States naval defense it was very common for the Navy to have naval bases on islands of the coast. One of the United States naval bases was located on Hawaii perfect area to protect the Pacific coast from attacks from foreign invaders. The Naval base was Pearl Harbor and that base is what led to President Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb. The Japanese sneak attacked ~~the~~ Pearl Harbor ~~taken~~ while they had their backs turned destroying planes + ships, killing millions ~~to~~ who were trapped in the ships lower levels. Hospitals became over ~~run~~ run with injured soldiers, and civilians. This unknown attack made ~~President~~ President Harry Truman work with ~~the~~ Albert Einstein to create

The atomic bomb. The United States extremely upset with the attack on the Harbor pushed them over the edge. Then even with warning President Truman ordered that two atomic bombs be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The atomic bomb killed millions of people not only from the blast, but from the radiation left behind many ~~peo~~ Japanese citizens later developed cancer from the aftermath of the bomb.

In the ~~unites~~ United States history Presidents have ~~had~~ had to deal with international ~~prop~~ problems, which lead to them making foreign policies to ensure the safety of the United States. The decisions many presidents have made impact not only the citizens in the United States, but the countries that are involved.

The president of the United States has numerous responsibilities both domestic and foreign. In both cases the president works to do what's right for our country, but not always right for the rest of the world. Two presidential foreign policies that had far reaching effects both in the U.S. and in other countries involved were James K. Polk's decision to send troops to the Rio Grande in 1846 and Harry Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb in 1945.

Polk was a man with a mission, his mission because of the time period in which he was elected, was Manifest Destiny, to expand the U.S. from east to west coast and settle all those areas with U.S. citizens. The majority of the people and politicians felt the expansion was America's God given right. However Mexico which controlled California and areas in the southwest (of what is currently the U.S.) did not believe in the Manifest Destiny of America. They wanted to maintain their land in North America, having already lost Texas to revolt and later U.S. annexation. Mexico refused to accept the loss of Texas and disagreed on the border that Texas and the U.S. claimed. Polk in order to gain these territories sent troops to the border of the Mexican territories. His purpose in sending these troops was to engineer a war with Mexico and that is exactly what occurred. Mexican troops began fighting Polk's troops and the situation escalated into war. In the end Mexico's army was forced to surrender and sign the peace treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which granted the United States CA, NM, AZ and other southwest territory. The effect of this extension of the U.S., as a result of Polk's decision to provoke war, was not only more settlers moving west and more wealth for the U.S. when gold was discovered in California, it also meant the slavery issue that had been lying

under the surface came back into focus. With new territory which would soon be new states coming into the U.S. the issue of slave states v. S. free states was reawakened. This conflict was because slave states and free states were currently balanced 15:15 but with the admission of new states that balance could be disrupted. This expansion increased sectionalism and tension between the North and South and is one of the causes that lead to the Civil War. Mexico on the other hand as a result of Polk's decision lost land and prestige and felt bitterness and discontent towards the U.S. This bitterness almost had disastrous results when Germany tried to take advantage of it in WWI and turn Mexico against the U.S. with the promise of them regaining their land. Mexican resentment was strengthened because U.S. troops had been sent into Mexico to search for border raiders. Luckily Mexico never acted on the proposal, Zimmerman Telegram, or the U.S.'s ability to concentrate troops in France could have been compromised.

Harry Truman became president because FDR had died, at this time the country was nearing the end of WWII. By May 1945 the Allies had won the European front of the war, at this point the focus shifted to the Pacific front and Japan. Throughout the war a technique called island-hopping had been utilized to take out certain weaker Japanese-held islands in order to cut the more fortified ones off from supplies. Although we had mainly been fighting the weaker island the casualties we suffered were still huge. Military planning for the invasion of Japan estimated there could be hundreds of thousands of Americans killed or wounded. So when Truman was faced with the decision to use the atomic bomb, our newest military technology from the Manhattan Project, he gave the go-ahead, hoping to

cut down American casualties. Realistically, no American president would ever risk an invasion that was bound to kill huge numbers of Americans and probably millions of Japanese instead of using a new weapon that might end the war. In early August 2 atomic bombs were dropped and by mid-August Japan surrendered and the war was over. This decision saved countless American and Allied lives and showed just how powerful and tough the U.S. was. On the other hand it devastated two Japanese cities killing hundreds of thousands quickly and countless others who died as a result of the radiation which continues to have effects on people who were near when the bomb fell and their offspring who may not even have been born yet. The horrible effects of nuclear war left a lasting impression on Japan. Its new constitution renounces war and the use of force to settle disputes between nations. In addition, the dropping of this bomb showed that we had such technology and so during the Cold War, the U.S.S.R. began competing with us for more powerful technology, this resulting in a dangerous arms build up. Neither the Soviets or the U.S. wanted to fall behind in the arms race and then fall victim to the other's power.

Both Polk and Truman got some results they wanted, land for Polk and peace for Truman, but they also got other results they didn't want. Polk's war with Mexico created an uproar over whether slavery could expand into the new territories, an issue that caused years of tension between the North and South and helped bring on the Civil War. Truman's decision may have ended the war sooner but it probably helped guarantee an arms race with the Soviets. Even successful presidents can't see all the results that their decisions will have.

After various U.S. Presidents have made foreign policy decisions in an attempt to deal with international problems. The decisions of the president have impacted not only the United States but also the countries involving the issues. The quarantining of Cuba by President Kennedy in 1962 and the sending of troops to Iraq by George W. Bush in 2003 have been attempts by the President to deal with international affairs through foreign policy.

Throughout the mid 1900s the Cold War began to escalate between the United States and the Soviet Union. There was a constant struggle between the two superpowers in order to see which nation was superior. One of the struggles between the two was the arms race. Both the United States and Soviet Union wanted to develop the best nuclear weapons programs in the world in order to protect themselves against the other. During the Cold War there was a constant fear that an actual war would break out in which this new style of warfare would be used. The two superpowers came very close to war during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the 1960s. The Soviet Union placed nuclear weapons inside of Cuba that had a range of most cities in the U.S. The Diplomatic relations between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. seemed to fail and the Soviets wouldn't remove the missiles. ~~The~~ In order to deal with the Cuban Missile Crisis, President John F. Kennedy issued a quarantine of Cuba in 1963 in order to make the Soviets remove the missiles. The quarantining of Cuba eventually led to the removal of the nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union.

which lessened the tensions between the two nations. Although the fear of nuclear war lessened in the United States, the Soviet Union felt as though it had suffered a defeat after they were forced to remove their missiles. President Kennedy's decision to quarantine Cuba in 1963 brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. In the months after this close call, some efforts were made to lessen the tension of the Cold War between the U.S. and Soviet Union. The countries agreed to install a hotline to improve communications and help avoid future crisis.

Furthermore, the sending of troops to Iraq in 2003 by President George W. Bush was an attempt by presidential foreign policy to deal with international affairs. When the 9/11 attacks took place in 2001, the United States began involving themselves militarily in the Middle East by first sending troops to Afghanistan in search of Osama bin Laden. While the United States was over in the Middle East they began to keep a keen eye on the country of Iraq. Under the regime of Saddam Hussein, the people of Iraq were suffering economically and physically in order to survive. In 2003, President George W. Bush ordered for U.S. Armed ~~forces~~ Forces to be sent to Iraq in order to take down the regime of Saddam Hussein and implement a new government in Iraq. When the troops were sent in they quickly made their way into Baghdad and within about 2 years had

seized Saddam Hussein and eliminated his regime. With Hussein out of Iraq, the U.S. began to implement a democratic government in the country with free elections to represent the major groups more fairly. Although Iraq began to see great change for the better, the effects felt by the U.S. were different. The economy of the United States began to decrease into a recession partly because of the huge amount of money spent on the war. The war effort lost a great deal of support as the death toll rose and many soldiers returned with serious injuries. The decision of President George W. Bush to implement his foreign policy in Iraq had drastic effects on both Iraq and the U.S.

The foreign policy decisions of U.S. Presidents Kennedy and Bush to interfere in international affairs were attempts to help deal with world problems. The quarantining of Cuba in 1963 and the sending of troops into Iraq in 2003 both help to solve international problems but at the same time create more. The decisions of U.S. Presidents have greatly impacted the world for better or for worse.

Presidential decisions regarding foreign policy ~~are~~ almost always affect the United States and the countries involved. Some examples of this ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> Harry Truman deciding to use the atom bomb, (1945) and George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq, (2003)

In Harry Truman's case the bombing of Japan affected both the U.S.A. and Japan. The bombings in Japan killed thousands of innocent Japanese citizens. The ~~an~~ effect on the United States was they demonstrated that they weren't afraid to use the atom bomb

George Bush affected the U.S. by starting a war that still goes on today. George W. Bush affected Iraq by making them hate the U.S.A. more or less.

All in all Presidential decisions regarding foreign policy can affect both countries and most likely do.

## Practice Paper A—Score Level 4

### The response:

- Develops all aspects of the task for James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande and Harry Truman using the atomic bomb but does so somewhat unevenly by discussing the impact of the Mexican War on Mexico and the impact of the atomic bomb on Japan less thoroughly than the other aspects of the task
- Is both analytical and descriptive (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: the election of James K. Polk represented the confirmation of American expansion across the continent; because of the war with Mexico, the United States fulfilled its Manifest Destiny gaining the land to the Pacific Ocean; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: Truman decided to use it because it would end the war quickly and prevent even greater American deaths from happening; Japan eventually climbed up to become a technologically advanced nation; after Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the United States continued to build up its atomic weapons and increase military spending to compete with the USSR)
- Supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: ocean to ocean; Southwest; California; New Mexico; independence from Mexico in 1836; sectionalism; expansion of slavery; Nueces River; border dispute; independence from Spain in 1821; government was unstable; \$15 million; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: World War II; fall of Hitler in Germany; Pacific front; Japan unwilling to surrender; show the Soviet Union); includes a minor inaccuracy (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: Polk finally annexed it)
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction that points out that presidential decisions reflect the nation's ideology and a conclusion that restates the theme

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 4. The response shows a good understanding of the historical circumstances surrounding each decision. However, it fails to adequately develop the impact of the Mexican War on Mexico and the impact of the atomic bomb on Japan.

## Practice Paper B—Score Level 2

### The response:

- Develops some aspects of the task in little depth and does so somewhat unevenly
- Is primarily descriptive (*Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam*: the United States entered not only to help South Vietnam, but to also contain communism; young men who could be drafted would flee to Canada; the enemy had crossed the line and were controlling the South’s government; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: the United States was at war with Japan; the atomic bomb killed people not only from the blast, but from the radiation left behind as many Japanese citizens later developed cancer from the aftermath of the bomb; in the United States naval defense it was very common for the navy to have naval bases on islands off the coast); includes faulty, weak, and isolated analysis (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: during this war, a German scientist left Germany and came to America with immense intelligence, this German scientist was Albert Einstein; the naval base was Pearl Harbor and that base is what led to President Truman’s decision to drop the atomic bomb; this unknown attack made President Harry Truman work with Albert Einstein to create the atomic bomb; the United States, extremely upset with the attack on the harbor, pushed them over the edge)
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details (*Lyndon B. Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam*: fear of communism; hippie movement; “make peace, not war”; unfamiliar land; South’s army was not very strong; President Richard Nixon; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: Hawaii; sneak attack; Hiroshima and Nagasaki)
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; includes an introduction and conclusion that generally restate the theme

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 2. The response shows some understanding of the Vietnam War and a very limited understanding of the dropping of the atomic bombs. Accuracies and inaccuracies are blended throughout the response, weakening it.

## Practice Paper C—Score Level 5

### **The response:**

- Thoroughly develops all aspects of the task evenly and in depth by describing the historical circumstances surrounding James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande and Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb, and discussing an impact of each decision on the United States and another country
- Is more analytical than descriptive (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: his purpose in sending these troops was to engineer a war with Mexico and that is exactly what occurred; it also meant that the slavery issue that had been lying under the surface came back into focus; this bitterness almost had disastrous results when Germany tried to take advantage of it in World War I and turn Mexico against the United States with the promise of them regaining their land; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: when Truman was faced with the decision to invade Japan itself which would risk hundreds of thousands of American lives, he chose to use an atomic bomb, our newest military technology from the Manhattan Project; the horrible effects of nuclear war have left a lasting impression on Japan, and its new constitution renounces war and the use of force; the tensions of the Cold War would result in America's massive defense spending to keep ahead of the Soviets in the arms race, with neither wanting to fall victim to the other's power)
- Richly supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details (*James K. Polk sending troops to the Rio Grande*: Manifest Destiny; God-given right; California; Southwest; lost Texas; annexation; Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; New Mexico; Arizona; settlers moving west; slave states versus free states; balanced 15:15; sectionalism; North and South; Civil War; lost land and prestige; border raiders; Zimmermann telegram; *Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb*: FDR had died; Allies had won the European front; Pacific front; island hopping; two atomic bombs; devastated two Japanese cities; killing hundreds of thousands; radiation; Soviets)
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction that states that the president works to do what is right for the United States but not always right for the rest of the world; includes a conclusion that the results of the president's decision can be both desired and unanticipated

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 5. The response demonstrates an understanding of two important presidential decisions and some of their long-term impacts both at home and abroad.

## Practice Paper D—Score Level 3

### **The response:**

- Develops some aspects of the task in some depth
- Is more descriptive than analytical (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: during the Cold War, there was a constant fear that an actual war would break out in which this new style of warfare could be used; Soviet Union placed nuclear weapons inside of Cuba that had a range of most cities in the United States; *George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq*: in 2003, President George W. Bush ordered United States armed forces to be sent to Iraq in order to take down the regime of Saddam Hussein and implement a new government in Iraq; with Hussein out of Iraq, the United States began to implement a democratic government in the country with free elections to represent the major groups more fairly; the war effort lost a great deal of support as the death toll rose and many soldiers returned home with serious injuries)
- Includes some relevant facts, examples, and details (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: two superpowers; arms race; Cuban missile crisis; removal of weapons; hot line; *George W. Bush sending troops to Iraq*: 9/11 attacks; Middle East; Afghanistan; in search of Osama bin Laden; Baghdad; recession; huge amount of money spent); includes a minor inaccuracy (*John F. Kennedy quarantining Cuba*: issued a quarantine of Cuba in 1963)
- Demonstrates a satisfactory plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that generally restate the theme

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 3. The response adequately develops the historical circumstances surrounding both presidential decisions, but the impacts of the Iraq war and the impacts of the quarantining of Cuba need further development.

## Practice Paper E—Score Level 1

### **The response:**

- Minimally addresses only one aspect of the task by stating an impact of Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb on Japan
- Is descriptive (*Harry Truman deciding to use the atomic bomb: the bombings in Japan killed thousands of innocent Japanese citizens*)
- Includes no additional relevant facts, examples, or details
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; includes a brief introduction and conclusion that restate the theme

**Conclusion:** Overall, the response fits the criteria for Level 1. The response attempts to address the task by suggesting several key ideas but fails to expand on or develop them.

# United States History and Government Specifications June 2012

## Part I Multiple-Choice Questions by Standard

Standard	Question Numbers
1—United States and New York History	3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 24, 25, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46, 47
2—World History	22, 29, 31, 33, 39
3—Geography	1, 11, 43, 50
4—Economics	14, 17, 18, 19, 27, 28, 42, 48
5—Civics, Citizenship, and Government	2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 23, 26, 35, 37, 49

## Parts II and III by Theme and Standard

	Theme	STANDARDS
Thematic Essay	Foreign Policy: Presidential Decisions and Actions; Places and Regions	Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5: United States and New York History; World History; Geography; Economics; Civics, Citizenship, and Government
Document-based Essay	Reform Movements; Economic Systems; Constitutional Principles; Civic Values	Standards 1, 3, 4, and 5: United States and New York History; Geography; Economics; Civics, Citizenship, and Government

### *Notes:*

Part I and Part II scoring information is found in Volume 1 of the Rating Guide.

Part III scoring information is found in Volume 2 of the Rating Guide.

**The *Chart for Determining the Final Examination Score for the June 2012 Regents Examination in United States History and Government* will be posted on the Department's web site at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/> on the day of the examination. Conversion charts provided for the previous administrations of the United States History and Government examination must NOT be used to determine students' final scores for this administration.**

### **Submitting Teacher Evaluations of the Test to the Department**

Suggestions and feedback from teachers provide an important contribution to the test development process. The Department provides an online evaluation form for State assessments. It contains spaces for teachers to respond to several specific questions and to make suggestions. Instructions for completing the evaluation form are as follows:

1. Go to <http://www.forms2.nysed.gov/emsc/osa/exameval/reexameval.cfm>.
2. Select the test title.
3. Complete the required demographic fields.
4. Complete each evaluation question and provide comments in the space provided.
5. Click the SUBMIT button at the bottom of the page to submit the completed form.