

Name:

Date:

John F. Kennedy: A New Generation

John F. Kennedy was the 35th president of the United States. He was born in 1917 in Massachusetts and grew up in a large, wealthy family. As a young man, Kennedy served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. After the war, he entered politics and served in the House of Representatives and the Senate. In 1960, he won a close presidential election against Richard Nixon and became the youngest person elected president at that time.

Kennedy became president during a tense period of the Cold War, when the United States and the Soviet Union competed for power and influence. One of the most dangerous moments of his presidency was the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles in Cuba, very close to the United States. Kennedy and his advisers worked carefully to avoid war. After several tense days, the Soviet Union agreed to remove the missiles.

Kennedy also supported the space program. In 1961, he challenged the nation to land a person on the Moon before the end of the decade. That goal was reached in 1969. He also spoke in support of civil rights and encouraged Americans to serve their communities. His famous call to ask what people could do for



their country inspired many citizens.

Kennedy's presidency ended suddenly when he was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963. Although he served less than three years, he remains one of the most remembered presidents in American history.

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Multiple Choice

1. John F. Kennedy was the ____ president of the United States.
 - A. 32nd
 - B. 33rd
 - C. 35th
 - D. 37th
2. What branch of the military did Kennedy serve in during World War II?
 - A. Army
 - B. Navy
 - C. Air Force
 - D. Marines
3. Which event brought the United States and Soviet Union close to nuclear war?
 - A. The Boston Tea Party
 - B. The Cuban Missile Crisis
 - C. The Louisiana Purchase
 - D. The Great Depression
4. What major goal did Kennedy set for the United States?
 - A. Build a railroad across the country
 - B. Land a person on the Moon
 - C. End all taxes
 - D. Move the capital city
5. In what year was Kennedy assassinated?
 - A. 1960
 - B. 1961
 - C. 1963
 - D. 1969

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Comprehension Questions

6. Why was the Cuban Missile Crisis a dangerous event?

7. What did Kennedy ask the country to accomplish in space?

8. How did Kennedy encourage Americans to help their communities and country?

9. Name two important roles Kennedy held before becoming president.

10. Why do you think John F. Kennedy is still remembered today? Use one detail from the passage.

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ANSWER KEY

Comprehension Questions

6. Why was the Cuban Missile Crisis a dangerous event?

The crisis was dangerous because Soviet nuclear missiles were placed in Cuba near the United States, raising the risk of nuclear war.

7. What did Kennedy ask the country to accomplish in space?

He challenged the nation to land a person on the Moon before the end of the 1960s.

8. How did Kennedy encourage Americans to help their communities and country?

He encouraged Americans to serve their communities and think about what they could do for their country.

9. Name two important roles Kennedy held before becoming president.

Acceptable answers include: U.S. Navy officer, member of the House of Representatives, or U.S. senator. Any two are correct.

10. Why do you think John F. Kennedy is still remembered today? Use one detail from the passage.

Answers will vary. Students should mention a detail such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Moon goal, civil rights support, public service, or his assassination.