

Ronald Reagan | Lesson Plan

How did Ronald Reagan bring an end to the Cold War and help reestablish freedom in Germany?

Students will understand how the 40th President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, brought an end to the Cold War. Students will also understand how Reagan fought to preserve freedom and encourage a strong work ethic and booming economy in the United States.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the negative effects of communism and the difference between East Berlin and West Berlin.
- Explain how Ronald Reagan brought an end to the Cold War.
- Explain the meaning of “Reaganomics.”
- Identify ways Reagan strengthened the United States economy and encouraged work ethic.
- Evaluate how Reagan fought to preserve freedom throughout his presidency.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Communism:** A political system in which individual people own nothing, and instead, the government owns everything. Communist governments are against private property, travel, and even freedom of speech.
- **Economy:** Refers to the system of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services within a society.
- **Reaganomics:** Economic policies promoted by President Ronald Reagan during the 1980s focused on reducing taxes, government regulation, and government spending on social programs, as well as controlling the money supply to reduce inflation. This approach aimed to stimulate economic growth, increase employment, and boost private-sector investment.
- **INF Treaty (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty):** An arms control treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union that aimed to eliminate the use of nuclear bombs.

Educational Standards: CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.SL.4

Academic Subject Areas: Biography, U.S. Presidents, America

What You'll Need

- Video: *Ronald Reagan: The President Who Won the Cold War* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Ronald Reagan: The President Who Won the Cold War* (Click [Here](#))

Scan to watch episode:



Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Warm-Up: (15 minutes)

1. Ask students to share a definition of the word “economy” and how they think the U.S. economy/workforce functions.
2. Transition to a discussion about the students’ futures. Ask them to think of their dream job. Prompt students to brainstorm what steps they would take to attain this job. (e.g. college, training, etc.)
3. Display a copy of the “Ronald Reagan Worksheet” and pass out individual worksheets to students.
4. Instruct students to complete the Warm-Up Activity. Students will plan their “dream job” and write their own definition of the word “economy.”
5. Once completed, invite students to share their work with a partner or explain aloud.
6. Initiate a class discussion on the U.S. workforce and why adults get jobs and work hard to earn money. Encourage students to consider how the dream job they chose will contribute to the whole country’s economy and livelihood.
7. Prompt students to share how they would feel if their teacher took all of their salaries and divided their money amongst the class. Encourage students to consider what effect this may have on their work ethic. Allow students to share their thoughts aloud.
8. Introduce the topic of communism and Ronald Reagan. Invite students to share what they know about President Ronald Reagan—including his background, what he accomplished during his presidency, and how he fought against communism.
9. Read the rest of the worksheet as a class so students understand directions and know what to listen for during the video.
10. Set the stage for the upcoming video by highlighting the theme of freedom and work ethic. Encourage students to look for ways throughout the video of how Ronald Reagan worked hard to preserve freedom and strengthen the economy and work ethic in the U.S.

Watch and Complete: (20 minutes)

1. Watch the video.
2. Assist students with completing the worksheet alongside the video.

Wrap-Up: (10-15 minutes)

1. Allow students 10 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Collect as formative assessment or discuss in class.
3. Ask students to read aloud their responses to the Making Connections section, reflecting on their own work ethic and ways they can work harder to achieve their goals and help others.
4. Conclude with an open-ended prompt referring to question #13—analyzing the significance of Ronald Reagan appointing Sandra Day O’Connor as Supreme Court Justice. Encourage students to strive to be thankful they can achieve their dream jobs or anything they want to, thanks to the freedom Reagan fought to preserve in America.

Don’t have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.