

GRAND EXPECTATIONS

United States of America 1945 to 1974



CHS American History - Grand Expectations Project

Due: Wednesday, May 29th by 11:59pm

What are you doing?	Grand Expectations Project - The United States of America 1945 to 1974 You will be evaluating the major political, cultural, and economic events in American history from 1945 through the Watergate scandal. From your study of American History, choose three events that represent America's zenith and three events that represent America's nadir.
How much is it worth?	The final product, shared via Google Docs, will be worth 100 points.
Why are you doing it?	This project showcases your summarization, writing, and critical thinking skills.
When is it due?	Date Assigned: May 22nd Final Product: May 29 th
What elements should be contained in my Google Doc?	<p>Create a Google Doc as follows: "Your Initials + Grand Expectations" Share the final product with me rhengsterman@bscsd.org</p> <p>SYNOPSIS OF GRAND EXPECTATIONS, by JAMES PATTERSON In <i>Grand Expectations</i>, James T. Patterson weaves the major political, cultural, and economic events of the period into a superb portrait of America from 1945 through Watergate. Here is an era teeming with memorable events--from the bloody campaigns in Korea and the bitterness surrounding McCarthyism to the assassinations of the Kennedys and Martin Luther King, to the Vietnam War, Watergate, and Nixon's resignation. Patterson excels at portraying the amazing growth after World War II--the great building boom epitomized by Levittown (the largest such development in history) and the baby boom (which exploded literally nine months after V-J Day)--as well as the resultant buoyancy of spirit reflected in everything from streamlined toasters, to big, flashy cars, to the soaring, butterfly roof of TWA's airline terminal in New York. And he shows how this upbeat, can-do mood spurred grander and grander expectations as the era progressed.</p> <p>Of course, not all Americans shared in this economic growth, and an important thread running through the book is an informed and gripping depiction of the civil rights movement--from the electrifying <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> decision, to the violent confrontations in Little Rock, Birmingham, and Selma, to the landmark civil rights acts of 1964 and 1965. Patterson also shows how the Vietnam War--which provoked LBJ's growing credibility gap, vast defense spending that dangerously unsettled the economy, and increasingly angry protests--and a growing rights revolution (including demands by women, Hispanics, the poor, Native Americans, and gays) triggered a backlash that widened hidden rifts in our society, rifts that divided along racial, class, and generational lines. And by Nixon's resignation, we find a national mood in stark contrast to the grand expectations of ten years earlier, one in which faith in our leaders and in the attainability of the American dream was becoming shaken.</p> <p>VIDEO: Grand Expectations: The United States 1945 -1974 (39 minutes)</p>
When in the final product due.	Your final product should be shared via Google Drive by Wednesday May 29th 2019 by 11:59 pm



Grand Expectations Project

The United States of America 1945 to 1974

PART I - The "most powerful and vital nation in the world."

Based on your advanced study of United States History, choose THREE events from 1945 to 1975 that can be used to support or illustrate the United States role the most powerful and vital nation in the world.

For EACH event you choose please provide the following

- #1 An image that represents the event
- #2 Brief historical context of the event
- #3 Why you feel the event depicts the US as the "most powerful and vital nation in the world."

Event	Historical Context	Explanation/Justification

PART II - "A collapsing sense of global superiority."

Based on your advanced study of United States History, choose THREE events from 1945 to 1975 that can be used to demonstrate the United States collapsing sense of "global superiority"

- #1 An image that represents the event
- #2 Brief historical context of the event
- #3 Why you feel the event depicts the US as the "most powerful and vital nation in the world."

Event	Historical Context	Explanation/Justification

RESOURCES FOR GRAND EXPECTATIONS PROJECT

[Presidential Highlights](#)

(jog your memory with this list of events)

[The Presidential Timeline](#)

(Refresh your memory with additional readings
and information on the list of events)

STUDENT SAMPLE #1 The Marshall Plan



Historical Context: The Marshall Plan, officially known as the European Recovery Program, was an American aid program to give monetary support to post World War II Europe in an effort to prevent the spread of Soviet communism. Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed the same aid to the Soviet Union and its allies when they met in Paris in July 1947. Predictably, the Soviet Union walked out, denouncing the “Marshall Plan” as a capitalist trick and realizing that accepting money would mean accepting certain outside controls. The Marshall Plan provided for the spending of \$12.5 billion over the next 4 years. Though at first wary of the massive expense, Congress quickly approved the plan in 1948 after a Soviet-sponsored coup in Czechoslovakia.

Explanation/Justification: The Marshall Plan showed that the United States was powerful enough to single-handedly halt the spread of Communism, just with their economic resources. The United States proved to be powerful with a strong economy, which not many nations after World War II were able to boast. The Marshall Plan was a victory for democracy, since Communism was sufficiently halted, and it seemed that perhaps the United States would win the Cold War after all. Not only was the American economy good enough for the United States to be able to dish out money to other countries in need, but it was good enough that its own citizens prospered, as the other countries in the world no doubt knew. The United States, through all lenses, looked to be a good place to live, with Levittown housing giving even the lower middle class a place to live, and jobs available all across the country, The GI Bill of Rights, passed in 1944, was just the beginning of measures taken to increase the number of jobs available. The Marshall Plan was really the epitome of a powerful and prosperous United States, who had so much wealth and power; they were willing to give billions of it to fight Communism.



STUDENT SAMPLE #2 Interstate Highway Act

Historical Context: The Interstate Highway Act was passed by President Dwight D Eisenhower in 1956. This was the largest public works project in history. Over 41,000 miles of new highways were constructed costing roughly \$32 billion. The interstate highway system stimulated the growth of suburbia, America's use of the car and roadside businesses. Over 13 million new homes were built after this act was passed. There was a huge increase in the number of suburban towns outside cities such as Levittown. Americans could now live in comfortable homes and commute to work in the cities rather than live in the cities. This gave Americans a greater sense of freedom and pride that they could own their own home, one or two cars and even sometimes a pool in the backyard. However, this is known as the "white flight" from the cities because most African American's opportunities were limited in suburbia; therefore, they stayed in the cities. In addition, Fast food restaurants, shopping malls and other roadside businesses were developed as a result of the highway system.

Explanation/Justification: This act definitely shows the importance and vitality of America during this time period. Americans gained a new sense of freedom. Not only did they own cars but they now owned their own homes and could go on vacations to destinations such as Disney Land. The highway system enabled Americans to strongly believe in the freedom and independence that characterizes America.