

What is *influence*?



Influence is how a thing or person affects another thing or person. When someone has influence over you, he or she has the power to change the decisions you make. You can think about using influence like picking teams. If someone has influence over you, you might say that you're on their team whether you want to be or not. Nations also influence each other to make certain decisions. When nations allow themselves to be influenced by a more powerful country, it is like they are joining that country's team.

They begin to make decisions the way the more powerful nation wants them to. In foreign affairs we call these teams **spheres of influence**.

Who uses *influence*?

A country usually seeks to influence another country in order to gain an advantage. For example, the more powerful nation might influence a less powerful one to get something it wants. Even so, less powerful countries can gain from the relationship too. A country might also seek to influence other countries in order to become more powerful. The most powerful countries in the world have large spheres of influence, or many countries on their team.

Countries use three main types of influence to affect other countries' decisions...

Economic Influence.

Economic influence is the use of money to affect decision making. For example, someone trying to use economic influence to persuade you might offer you gifts to impact a decision you are making. In foreign affairs, nations might give or take away money, aid, or access to resources to influence decisions made by other countries.



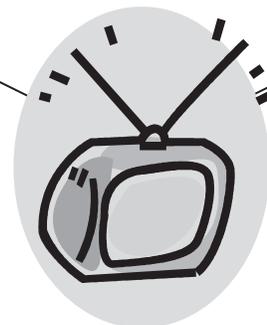
Military Influence.

A threat of attack or a promise of protection is an example of military influence. For example, people can act like bullies or offer to protect you from bullies in order to impact your decisions. In foreign affairs, less powerful countries can be convinced to make certain decisions when they are under the military influence of a more powerful nation.



Cultural Influence.

A nation's decision process can also be affected by cultural forces like television or the internet. For example, when someone seems really "popular" you might be more likely to make decisions the way they want you to. In foreign affairs, countries with a really popular culture can use that to affect the way citizens in another country think.



All this team building can get competitive. Sometimes two countries get stuck in a race to build the biggest and strongest team! We're going to read about an example of this type of race for power.

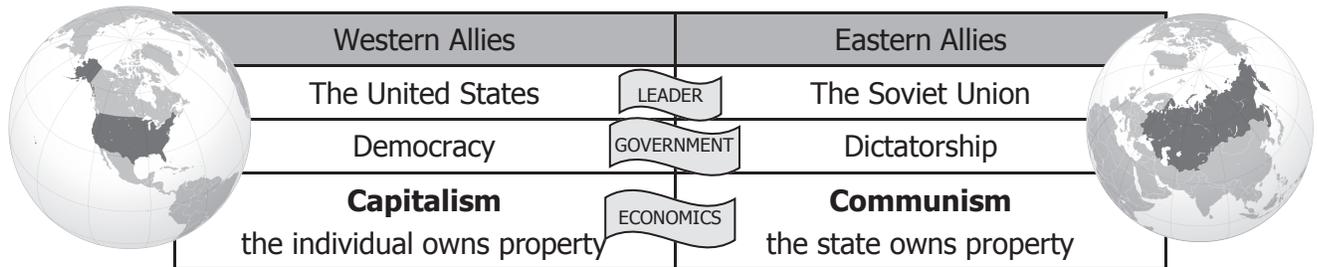
International Influence

Name: _____

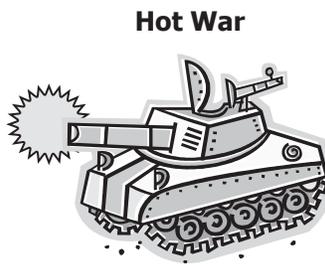
Spheres of Influence and the Cold War

World War II tore apart the continent of Europe. It was won by two groups of countries known as the Western Allies and the Eastern Allies. These groups had worked together to stop Nazi Germany from taking control of Europe. After the war, Europe needed to rebuild. The Western Allies and the Eastern Allies could have worked together for this to happen. As it turns out, there would be very little working together!

As the countries that had been under Nazi control gained back their power, the Allies had the opportunity to influence the way these countries would be run. The Western Allies and Eastern Allies had very different ideas. The Western Allies, headed by the United States, supported **capitalism**. Capitalism means that people own property and can make decisions about what to do with their property. The Eastern Allies, headed by the Soviet Union, supported **communism**. In communism, the government owns property and decides how people can use it.



The Allies began using their influence to convince countries to follow capitalism or communism. A race developed between the United States and the Soviet Union to see who could build the bigger sphere of influence. This race was called the **Cold War**. During this Cold War, the Soviet Union tried to expand its sphere of influence across Europe and Asia. At the same time, the United States used its power to expand its own sphere of influence.



Cold vs. Hot

The wars you hear about on the news today are "hot" wars because they involve fighting. "Cold" wars have little or no fighting. Instead, countries show off their military and political force to intimidate other countries and keep a constant threat.

The United States believed that increasing capitalism could stop the growth of communism. This strategy was called **containment** because it would "contain" communism and keep it from spreading. Countries could only pick one team to join, and the more countries chose capitalism, the less would choose communism.

International Influence

Name: _____

Both the United States and the Soviet Union used the three main forms of influence...

Economic Influence

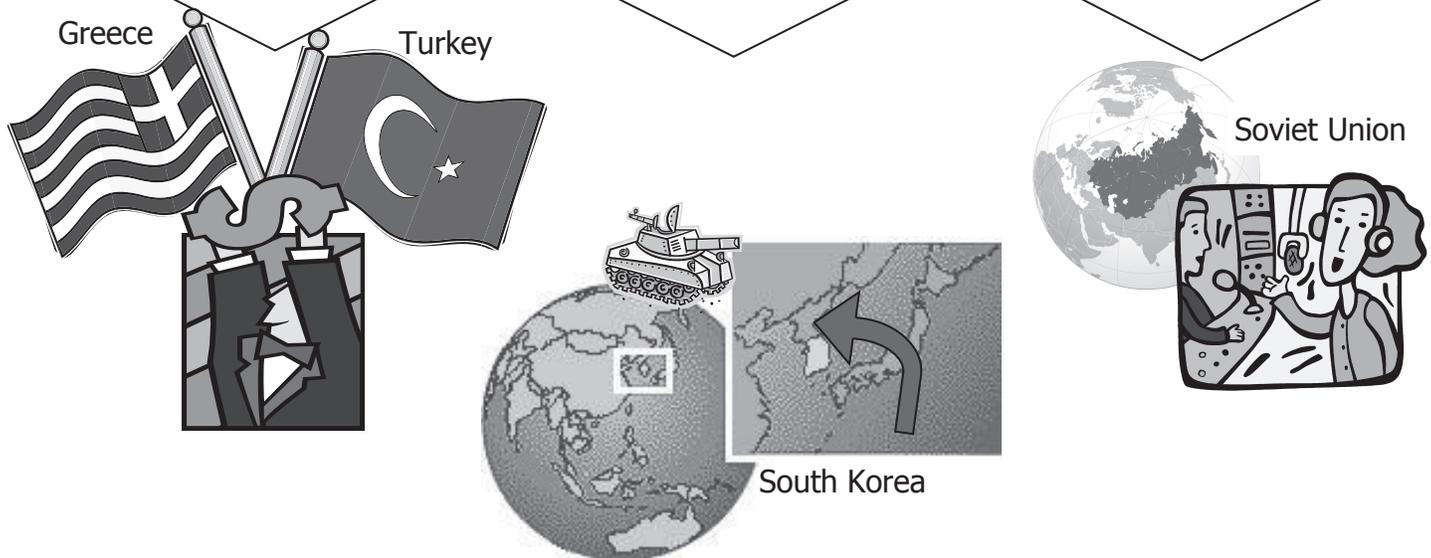
During the Cold War, the Soviet Union tried to get the countries of Greece and Turkey to join the communist team. In response, the U.S. President Truman sent money to Greece and Turkey to help them improve their countries. This helped keep Greece and Turkey out of the Soviet sphere of influence and made them part of the U.S.'s sphere. After this action, they called using aid as influence the "**Truman Doctrine.**"

Military Influence

The Cold War sometimes had flashes of hot war. One example is the Korean War. Communist countries helped northern Korea attack southern Korea. International groups joined together to help southern Korea defend itself. The fighting lasted for more than three years until a ceasefire was reached, and the country was divided into North and South Korea. This war was an attempt to use military influence to expand the communist sphere of influence.

Cultural Influence

Propaganda played a big role during the Cold War. Propaganda is a message designed to persuade the listener to think a certain way. The Western Allies started Radio Free Europe to spread anti-communist propaganda. The Soviet Union tried to block Radio Free Europe from being heard in communist countries. Even so, aspects of culture like rock music broke through the barrier to reach people living in communist nations.



The Cold War continued under different U.S. Presidents and different Soviet leaders. The race to grow spheres of influence kept going – even creating a race to put the first man in space! Eventually, the Soviet Union found itself in an economic crisis. The Soviet Union fell apart in 1991. The country changed its name back to Russia, rejected communism, and lost control over much of its sphere of influence.