Knowledge Organiser Focus: The Cold War

Enquiry question: How did new ideas in the 20th century lead to conflict?

Focus questions:

- What new ideas emerged in the 20th century and how did they lead to tension?
- What is a 'Cold War'?
- What were the most significant causes of 20th century conflict?

Key Words

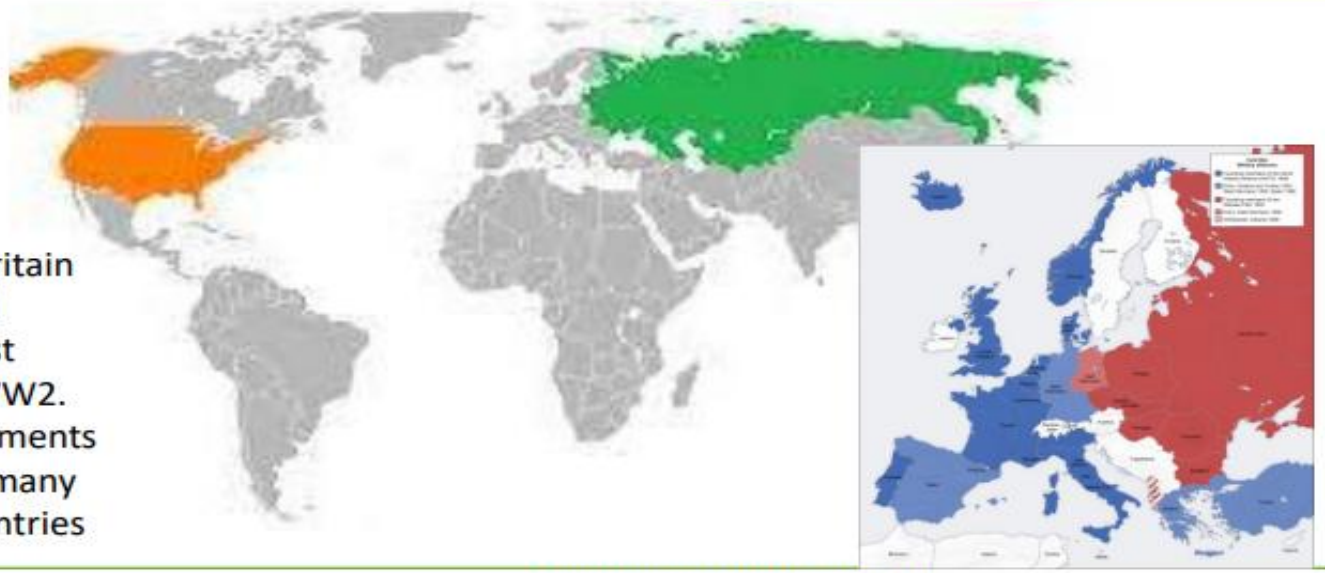
Allies	America, Russia and Britain were friends in WW2
Atomic bomb	A very powerful type of explosive weapon, deployed in 1945 against Japan, ending WW2
Capitalism	An economic system where the government has no (or little) control over the economy. Private business is encouraged.
Communism	A system where the government has complete, central control of the economy. There is no (or very little) private property or business.
Détente	An easing of hostility between enemies. This meant accepting the Cold War status quo in the 1970s
Doomsday clock	A symbol scientists use to show how close mankind is to its own self-destruction. It has been used since 1947
Hydrogen bomb	An extremely powerful type of nuclear weapon. Capable of wiping out an entire city and its surrounding areas for around 50 miles.
MAD (mutually assured destruction)	The belief that, because America and the Soviet Union could wipe each other out, neither side would actually use their nuclear weapons.
Napalm	A very flammable jelly-like substance, made infamous in the American war against Vietnam
Non-alignment	When a country deliberately didn't side with America or the Soviet Union







Knowledge Organiser Focus: How did World War Become Cold War?



America and Britain wanted to hold elections in East Europe after WW2. These disagreements would see Germany split into 2 countries

Russia had been Communist since 1917 and became the Soviet Union in 1922.
After WW2, the Soviet Union had control over East Europe. It made sure that these countries put their own communist leaders in charge

Summarise your learning	
The post-war world	Former allies became bitter enemies once their common enemy (Nazi Germany) was defeated. Capitalist Britain and America wanted to hold elections in East Europe. The Soviet Union wanted to protect its borders and hold onto its territorial gains in East Europe.
The Nuclear age	The threat of nuclear annihilation lasted through the entire Cold War. Governments worried that their enemies might attack first; the people worried that their governments would attack first.
What is a 'Cold War'?	Because America and the Soviet Union were so powerful, they both understood that a direct World War Three would be too destructive. They instead fought for influence across other countries, such as Cuba, Vietnam and Afghanistan.
A culture war	The Soviet Union believed that humanity was destined to become communist. America believed that it could show that capitalism was the best way to organize society, by making itself and its friends more wealthy. However, as both sides feared the other, they tried to speed up these destinies.
A long game	As the aftermath of WW2 made America and the Soviet Union the 2 superpowers on the planet, grand plans emerged on both sides for how to wage a war without fighting each other. This would involve years, if not decades, waiting for smaller countries to swap sides, their rival to make mistakes, and using spies to uncover the other's secrets.