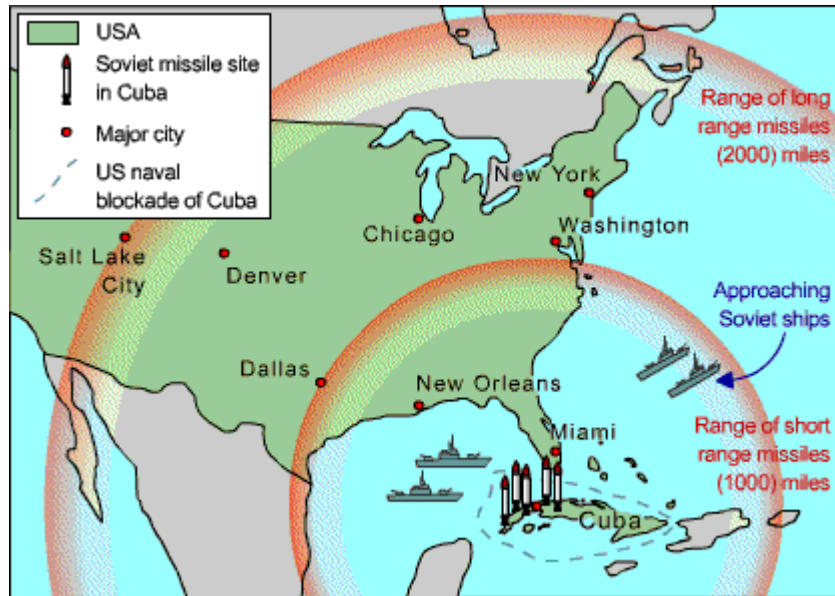


## THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS – SOURCEWORK EXERCISE

### Introduction

In 1959, a revolution in Cuba brought Fidel Castro to power. The American government soon decided that he was acting like a communist, and in 1961 they backed a disastrous attempt to overthrow him – the Bay of Pigs disaster. The USA's hostility encouraged Castro to turn to Khrushchev's USSR for help. In 1962, a secret agreement was made to station Soviet nuclear weapons in Cuba. However, the USA found out and a crisis developed: the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962.

**Source A:** A diagram illustrating the crisis, courtesy of the BBC.



### Source B:

Our purpose has been and is to help Cuba, and no one can challenge the humanity of our motives aimed at allowing Cuba to live peacefully and develop as its people desire. You say that that Cuba worries you because it lies at a distance of ninety miles across the sea from the shores of the United States. However, Turkey lies next to us...Do you believe that you have the right to demand security for your country and the removal of such weapons that you qualify as offensive, while not recognizing this right for us?

*Khrushchev to Kennedy, October 26<sup>th</sup> 1962*

### Source C:

I make this proposal: We agree to remove those weapons from Cuba which you regard as offensive weapons. We agree to do this and to state this commitment in the United Nations. Your representatives will make a statement to effect that the United States, on its part, bearing in mind the anxiety and concern of the Soviet state, will evacuate its analogous weapons from Turkey. Let us reach an understanding on what time you and we need to put this into effect.

*Khrushchev to Kennedy, October 26<sup>th</sup> 1962*

### Source D:

I have read your letter of October 26th with great care and welcome the statement of your desire to seek a prompt solution to the problem...as I read your letter, the key elements of your proposals - which seem generally acceptable as I understand them - are as follows:

1. You would agree to remove these weapons systems from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems in to Cuba.

2. We on our part, would agree...

(a) to remove promptly the quarantine measures now in effect and

(b) to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba.

*Reply to Chairman Khrushchev's first letter of October 26*

**Source E:** A cartoon of 1962 shows Kennedy and Khrushchev.



**Source F:**

I found myself in the difficult position of having to decide on a course of action which would answer the American threat but which would also avoid war. Any fool can start a war, and once he's done so, even the wisest of men are helpless to stop it - especially if it's a nuclear war.

*Nikita Khrushchev's published memoirs, 1970*

**Questions:**

**1. Study Source A.**

7

Use Source A and your own knowledge to explain why President Kennedy opposed the setting up of missile bases on Cuba by the USSR.

**2. Study Source B.**

8

To what extent does this source explain Khrushchev's reasons for putting missiles on Cuba?

**3. Study Sources C & D.**

8

How far does Kennedy in source D accurately interpret the demands made by Khrushchev in Source C? Explain your answer.

**4. Use all the sources and your own knowledge.**

12

"The Cuban Missile crisis was never likely to develop into full-scale nuclear war"  
Do you agree with this statement?

40

## Markscheme

### 1. Study Source A.

Use Source A and your own knowledge to explain why President Kennedy opposed the setting up of missile bases on Cuba by the USSR.

L1	Description of surface detail	1-2
L2	Valid inference, unsupported	2-3
L3	Valid inference, supported by general contextual points	4-6
L4	Valid inference, supported by sharp contextual points	7
	<i>For context, accept valid reference to the background information</i>	

### 2. Study Source B.

To what extent does this source explain Khrushchev's reasons for putting missiles on Cuba?

L1	Unsubstantiated judgement.	1-2
L2	Judgement substantiated by reference to the source	2-3
L3	Judgement substantiated by details (quotes) from the source	4-6
L4	As L3, but with contextual knowledge / cross referencing evident	6-8
	<i>For context, accept valid reference to the background information</i>	

### 3. Study Sources C & D.

How far does Kennedy in source D accurately interpret the demands made by Khrushchev in Source C? Explain your answer.

L1	Unsupported judgement.	1-2
L2	One sided judgement, supported with detail from one or both sources	3-5
L3	Balanced answer, supported with detail from one or both sources	5-7
L4	As per L3, but: EITHER Comments on extent of both agreement <u>and</u> disagreement. OR Explains why they agree/disagree by considering the purpose of one or both the sources.	8

### 4. Use all the sources and your own knowledge.

"The Cuban Missile crisis was never likely to develop into full-scale nuclear war"  
Do you agree with this statement?

L1	Unsupported assertions	1-3
L2	Judgement, using contextual knowledge or references to the sources	3-5
L3	One-sided answer, using details from the sources	5-7
L4	Balanced answer, using details from the sources	7-9
L5	L4 plus judgement.	10-12
	<i>Up to two additional marks are available from the quality of evaluation of the sources.</i>	