

The Vietnam War

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Where is Vietnam?
2. What do you know about the Vietnam War?
3. Do you think powerful countries should be involved in the affairs of less powerful countries?
4. Can you imagine being a soldier?
5. What is a good reason to go to war?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. controversial | a) to work together |
| _____ 2. emulate | b) the end of someone's military service because of bad behaviour |
| _____ 3. overthrow | c) something that has been recorded with a video camera |
| _____ 4. ally | d) to copy |
| _____ 5. troop | e) to occur as a consequence of something |
| _____ 6. dishonourable discharge | f) a person who breaks the law by refusing to join the army |
| _____ 7. footage | g) relating to a topic that people often disagree about |
| _____ 8. affairs | h) the basic organizational structures of a country, like roads and airports |
| _____ 9. result | i) required by law |
| _____ 10. mandatory | j) a group of soldiers |
| _____ 11. draft dodger | k) personal involvement |
| _____ 12. infrastructure | l) to remove from power by using force |

Reading

1. The Vietnam War was one of the most **controversial** events in American history. It was a very long and expensive conflict between North Vietnam and South Vietnam.
2. Before the Vietnam War, Vietnam was one united country that had been occupied by France since the 1880s. When Vietnam finally gained independence, it was divided into two parts: North Vietnam and South Vietnam. The north was communist. Their leader, Ho Chi Minh, was inspired by the communism of Soviet countries, and he wished to **emulate** them.
3. South Vietnam was more interested in maintaining its relationships with the United States and Europe. However, there were some communists who lived in the south too. They became known as "Vietcong." These southern communists attempted to **overthrow** the South Vietnamese government in 1960, with the help of the north.
4. Because the United States was **allied** with South Vietnam, they sent military supplies and advisers there. As the conflict continued, the United States eventually began sending their own **troops** to fight the Vietcong, who mostly fought in small groups in the jungle.
5. The war stretched on for years, becoming more and more expensive. American soldiers and Vietnamese civilians were dying by the thousands. Many American soldiers suffering from mental health problems (now known as *PTSD) received a **dishonourable discharge**.
6. In the United States, ordinary citizens were exposed to graphic **footage** of the war, and many of them began to protest. These protests, which primarily took place on college campuses, divided the country. Many people believed that the Americans had no place getting involved in Vietnam's **affairs**. Some of these protests became violent and even **resulted** in the deaths of students.
7. Many young American men who were against the war found ways to escape the **mandatory** army enrollment. Some of them ran away to Canada or other countries, and some of them claimed to have illnesses that prevented them from fighting. These men became known as "**draft dodgers**."
8. In 1969, Richard Nixon, the US president, began bringing troops home, but at the same time he continued to give orders to increase the bombings. Although a peace agreement was drafted between North Vietnam and South Vietnam in January 1973, the fighting continued.
9. North Vietnam finally won the war in 1975. Many American soldiers who had survived returned to the United States with severe physical and emotional damage. The reunification of Vietnam took place in 1976, but the many years of fighting had completely ruined its **infrastructure** and economy.

Fact

The Vietnam War lasted approximately 20 years and cost the US \$3 billion per month.

*PTSD

PTSD stands for *post traumatic stress disorder* and was not recognized as an official mental disorder during the Vietnam War.

Comprehension

A. True, False, or Not Mentioned?

Read the statements below. Write T if the statement is true.
Write F if the statement is false and correct the information
in your notebook. Write NM if the fact is not mentioned.

- _____ 1. Ho Chi Minh was the leader of North Vietnam.
- _____ 2. The Vietcong were from North Vietnam.
- _____ 3. The American troops fought in small groups in the jungle.
- _____ 4. All Americans were against the war.
- _____ 5. More Vietnamese people were killed than Americans.

B. Timeline

Place the following in chronological order (1–6).
One item is not mentioned in the reading, but is correct.
Place a star beside it and guess where it belongs.

- _____ The Vietcong tried to overthrow the South Vietnamese government.
- _____ North Vietnam won the war.
- _____ Trade between Vietnam and the United States eventually started again.
- _____ Vietnam was occupied by France.
- _____ North Vietnam and South Vietnam drafted a peace treaty.
- _____ Americans began protesting the war.

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.
You may have to change the form.

1. The wedding videographer got great _____ of the bride and groom walking down the aisle!
2. The poker game _____ in a fight because one player accused another of cheating.
3. Is the event tonight _____? I would rather stay home and rest.
4. Ronaldo is trying to _____ Picasso's paintings, but I think he should find his own style.
5. The citizens voted on several _____ issues.
6. My grandfather was a _____. He went to Canada during the war.

B. Choose the Correct Word

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. The rebels planned to <u>overthrow</u> the government, but they were disorganized. | 2. During World War II, the United States was <u>allied with</u> the United Kingdom. | 3. If you want to build a successful nation, you need flawless <u>infrastructure</u> . |
| a) defeat | a) enemies with | a) systems |
| b) ignore | b) friends with | b) military |
| c) restructure | c) terrified of | c) geography |



Vocabulary Review cont.

B. Choose the Correct Word cont.

4. Jessica didn't want to go to the training, but her boss said it was mandatory.
 - a) important
 - b) dangerous
 - c) compulsory
5. I promised Joe I would stay out of his affairs, but it's impossible because we know each other too well.
 - a) personal life
 - b) personal space
 - c) identification details
6. When Arnold was caught harassing another soldier, he was dismissed from the army with a dishonourable discharge.
 - a) inconvenience
 - b) shameful dismissal
 - c) a low salary
7. The president sent more troops to the war zone because he didn't want to lose.
 - a) soldiers
 - b) weapons
 - c) money
8. If I just emulate J.K. Rowling, I'll become a famous author in no time!
 - a) copy
 - b) stalk
 - c) attack
9. The video editor deleted all the footage, so now we have to shoot everything again.
 - a) screenplays
 - b) equipment
 - c) film

Grammar Review

ORDER OF ADJECTIVES

A. Adjective Order

Look back at the reading. Find the phrase "young American men" in paragraph 7. "Young" and "American" are both adjectives, but "young" comes first. How do you know this?

When using multiple adjectives in a sentence, follow this order:

opinion, size, age, shape, colour, origin, material, purpose

- They bought a **shiny, new, European** car. (*opinion, age, origin*)
- Kelly has **curly, red** hair. (*shape, colour*)
- He owns two **ugly, leather** jackets. (*opinion, material*)

Memory Trick

Your sentence will sound funny to native English speakers if you don't use adjectives in the correct order. Try to remember this mnemonic: **OSASCOMP**.

Grammar Review cont.

B. Practice

Following the rule, in which order would you put the following words?

1. I bought the _____ necklace.
a) expensive, Russian, gold
b) Russian, expensive, gold
2. The _____ apartment is for rent.
a) small, old, brick
b) brick, old, small
3. A grape is a _____ fruit.
a) delicious, small, round
b) small, round, delicious
4. I would like a _____ pen for my birthday.
a) fancy, writing, new
b) fancy, new, writing

Discussion

1. What was the last conflict your country was a part of?
2. Do you believe protesting is unpatriotic?
3. Is patriotism important to you? Why or why not?
4. Do you know any war veterans?
Have you asked them about their experience?
Why or why not?
5. What do you know about PTSD?
Who experiences this mental health condition besides veterans?