



DOCUMENT OF THE MONTH

Remarks on East-West Relations at the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin

June 12, 1987

In June, 1987, in the middle of his arms negotiations with General Secretary Gorbachev, President Ronald Reagan visited Berlin, the city at the center of the East-West divide at the time. The wall which was erected by the communist government of East Berlin in the post World War II period not only symbolized but clearly and tangibly revealed the differences between Eastern and Western Europe.

These differences were highlighted in President Ronald Reagan's speech.



ENGAGE

EXCITE

EDUCATE

Document excerpt:

"For we believe freedom and security go together- that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace. There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable. That would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace.

General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace- if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe- If you seek liberation: Come here, to this gate:

Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate.

Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.

I understand the fear of war and the pain of division that afflict this continent- and I pledge to you my country's efforts to help overcome these burdens. To be sure, we in the west must resist Soviet expansion. So we must maintain defenses of unassailable strength. Yet we seek peace. So we must strive to reduce arms on both sides."

-Document courtesy of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Archives

Questions:

1. Do you believe "freedom and security go together?"
 - Can you be free if you are not secure?
 - Can you be secure without freedom?
2. Where was the Brandenburg gate located?
3. When was the Berlin Wall put up?
4. When was the Berlin Wall put down?
5. What had the Berlin Wall come to symbolize by 1987?
6. Does the Berlin Wall still exist today?
7. Can you think of a wall that exists today which divides people? Where is it?
8. What other tangible and intangible things divide people? Explain.
9. Underline what you think is the most important sentence in this excerpt.
10. Why, do you think, that sentence you underlined is the most important?
11. Circle the sentences which refer to the Reagan Administration idea of "Peace Through Strength."
12. What do you think "Peace Through Strength" means?

Connections to California Standards

- 10.9- Students analyze the international developments in the post-World War II world.
- 11.9- Students analyze U.S. foreign policy since World War II.; 11.9.4- Analyze the role of the Reagan administration and other factors in the victory of the West in the Cold War.
- 12.4- Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution.