Chapter 29
The Vietnam War Years

ANSWER KEY..............REVIEW

Ch. 29 sec. 1
French Indochina: French ruled colony made up of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.
Ho Chi Minh: revolutionary founder of the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP)
Domino theory: belief that if a country fell to communism, nearby countries would follow
Ngo Dinh Diem: Leader of South Vietnam
Bay of Pigs: failed U.S. coup attempt in 1961 to overthrow Cuba’s Communist government
Cuban Missile Crisis: 1962 confrontation between the U.S. and Soviet Union caused by Soviet Nuclear Missiles in Cuba.
Viet Cong: South Vietnamese who fought to overthrow the Diem government and reunite the country under Communist rule.
Ho Chi Minh Trail: Secret route used by North Vietnamese to send troops and supplies to the Viet Cong in the south.
John F. Kennedy (JFK): President from 1961-1963

3. What were Ho Chi Minh’s goals for Vietnam?
   Vietnam would be independent and controlled by local peasants and workers.

4. How did the Cold War affect American decisions regarding Vietnam?
   Fears of communist aggression and expansion supported the idea of a strong U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

5. Why did the Vietnamese reject French rule?
   Peasants lost their land and became poor; the people of Vietnam wanted their independence from foreign rule.

6. How did U.S. support of the Diem government involve a conflict of values?
   Diem refused free elections, gave land back to the landlords and used violent methods against independence.

Ch. 29 sec. 2
Guerrilla warfare: surprise attacks by small bands of fighters
Gulf of Tonkin Resolution: 1964 legislation that gave President Johnson the power to use military force in Vietnam.
Escalation: policy of increasing military involvement in Vietnam
Tet Offensive: surprise attack on U.S. and South Vietnamese forces in 1968; further weakened American support for the war.
Napalm: jellied gasoline that burns violently; U.S. used this to destroy vegetation and as a weapon.
Agent Orange: chemical that kills plants; U.S. used this in Vietnam to expose Viet Cong hideouts.
Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ): President from 1963-1968

3. What made fighting the war so frustrating for American soldiers?
The U.S. had to fight in Vietnam’s unfamiliar jungles. Additionally, the U.S. military would not commit all resources to the war because doing so would likely provoke China into the war.

4. Why did the Tet offensive make Americans doubt they could win the war?
They thought victory was close, but the Tet offensive showed the strength and resiliency of the Vietnamese.

5. Were the Viet Cong right to see the Americans “merely as successors to the French”? Why or why not?
Although the U.S. did not try to exploit Vietnam as much as the French, they still tried to occupy the country and control their government.

Ch. 29 sec. 3
Counterculture: movement of mostly young Americans who had become disillusioned with the Vietnam War and injustices in society.
Doves: U.S. citizens that opposed the Vietnam War.
Hawks: U.S. citizens that supported the Vietnam War.
Vietnamization: strategy for withdrawing U.S. troops and turning the ground fighting over to the South Vietnamese.
Cambodia:
Richard Nixon: President from 1969-1974

3. What were the reasons that young people in particular opposed the war?
Young people were subject to the draft and thus forced to fight and see peers wounded and killed.

4. Why did Lyndon Johnson decide not to run for president in 1968?
President Johnson’s approach to the Vietnam War was not working, and he did not have support from Congress or voters.

5. Why did less privileged people feel that they carried a larger burden of the Vietnam War than wealthier citizens?
Less privileged people were drafted more and ended up with disproportionately more casualties.

Chapters 29 sec. 4
26th Amendment: Constitutional amendment passed in 1971 that lowered the voting age from 21 to 18.
War Powers Act: legislation passed in 1973 to limit the president’s war-making powers.

1. How did the Vietnam War end?

2. What are the major ways in which the war affected Southeast Asia and the U.S.?
* Millions were killed (3 million of mostly Vietnamese civilians)
* U.S. bombing (napalm and Agent Orange) destroyed much of the land in Vietnam.
* Vietnam became a united country with a communist government
* Thousands fled the country
* U.S. lowered the voting age to 18 and limited the ability of presidents to make war.
* ended the draft
* became more cautious about being involved in foreign wars
* distrust of government and a generation gap