

## The Korean War Assignment

### Textbook A

Upset by the fast and astonishing growth of the power of the Republic, the American invaders hastened the preparation of an aggressive war in order to destroy it in its infancy....The American imperialists furiously carried out the war project in 1950....The American invaders who had been preparing the war for a long time, alongside their puppets, finally initiated the war on June 25th of the 39th year of the Juche calendar. That dawn, the enemies unexpectedly attacked the North half of the Republic, and the war clouds hung over the once peaceful country, accompanied by the echoing roar of cannons.

Having passed the 38th parallel, the enemies crawled deeper and deeper into the North half of the Republic...the invading forces of the enemies had to be eliminated and the threatened fate of our country and our people had to be saved.

### Textbook B

When the overthrow of the South Korean government through social confusion became too difficult, the North Korean communists switched to a stick-and-carrot strategy: seeming to offer peaceful negotiations, they were instead analyzing the right moment of attack and preparing themselves for it.

The North Korean communists prepared themselves for war. Kim Il-sung secretly visited the Soviet Union and was promised the alliance of the Soviets and China in case of war. Finally, at dawn on June 25th, 1950 the North began their southward aggression along the 38th parallel. Taken by surprise at these unexpected attacks, the army of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) fought courageously to defend the liberty of the country....The armed provocation of the North Korean communists brought the UN Security Council around the table. A decree denounced the North Korean military action as illegal and as a threat to peace, and a decision was made to help the South. The UN army constituted the armies of 16 countries—among them, the United States, Great Britain and France—joined the South Korean forces in the battle against the North.

According to each textbook, how did the Korean War start?	
Textbook A	Textbook B

**Document A**

**May 8, 1951**

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:**

The following is a tabulation of the correspondence – including telegrams, letters, cards, etc. – relative to your action in relieving (firing) General MacArthur of his commands [on April 11, 1951]:

<b>Week ending April 13th</b>		
Telegrams	<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>
Letters, cards, etc.	4,322	8,677
<b>Week ending April 20th</b>		
Telegrams	<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>
Letters, cards, etc.	14,501	18,873
<b>Week ending April 27th</b>		
Telegrams	<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>
Letters, cards, etc.	10,448	10,617
<b>Week ending May 4th</b>		
Telegrams	<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>
Letters, cards etc.	7,524	7,912
<b>Present week through noon May 7th</b>		
Telegrams	<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>
Letters, cards etc.	913	310
<b>Total Correspondence received:</b>		<b>84,097</b>

Document B:

April 11, 1951

The Honorable Harry S. Truman  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

AMVETS (American Veterans) support your painful decision to relieve General Douglas MacArthur of his command on obvious grounds of repeated insubordination in violation of basic American principles governing civil versus military authority.

AMVETS recognize, and believe the overwhelming majority of Americans recognize, that the issue here is not whether General MacArthur is right or wrong or whether administration policies are right or wrong. The issue clearly and simply is whether the ultimate civil authority of the United States can tolerate, no matter what the motives, actions in contempt of constitutional lines of authority. Any lessening of civil power over military power must inevitably lead away from democracy.

AMVETS are keenly aware of General MacArthur's greatness and his immense contributions to his country as a military leader. But constitutional principles are greater than any one individual.

We know your decision demanded coverage because of the many emotional factors involved. We believe you had no other choice.

We hope, however, that you will speedily re-enunciate (re-state) and re-affirm our overall and long-range policies in the Far East to help unify America and to stabilize political opinion throughout the world. We pledge you our continued support as Commander in Chief in the prosecution of the Korean war while praying for the success of your efforts to achieve peace.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Russell  
National Commander

Document C:

April 12, 1951  
The Hon. Harry S. Truman  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Our far-eastern policy must protect either the rights of free nations or Communists interests. Without regard to the preferences of most Americans, you have chosen to support the latter.

You have thrown into the trash-pile all that has been accomplished in Japan in the last five years.

You have sold us out and the Kremlin (Soviet government) should give you a 21- gun salute. They probably will – aimed right at our bewildered forces in Korea. If the letter of a single person will persuade my senators or my representative in Congress to support a motion for your impeachment, that letter is in the mail. Your dismissal of Douglas MacArthur confirms your devotion to Communist Russia. You have kicked out, with insults, the most brilliant, courageous and successful man representing our country abroad.

You have fired a man whose first and whole devotion has been to the best interest of our country. (He didn't think about the Democratic vote in Missouri.)

He has done a top job, but he couldn't be red-taped. So he got fired, and the hell with U.S.A. Harry is top-boy, and he has to prove it. Why stop with Formosa? Let's give them Japan, and Hawaii, and Alaska - and why not the Panama Canal?

Yours sincerely,  
(and don't bother with the form letter reply)

Elizabeth Wood

Source	Does this person support President Truman's decision to fire General MacArthur?	What are TWO reasons this person gives for either supporting or not supporting President Truman?
Document B		
Document C		

1. In the space below, write 3-4 sentences explaining what these two letters tell you about the historical context of the early 1950s in the United States.