
The Presidents of the 1960s



Dwight D. Eisenhower 1953–1961

1. In World War II he was Supreme Commander of Allied Forces.
2. During his campaign for President, Eisenhower swore to end the Korean War. He did so in 1953.
3. He appointed Earl Warren, a moderate, as the new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
4. On November 6, 1956, Eisenhower scored a landslide victory over Democratic opponent Adlai E. Stevenson and was reelected President.
5. He continued the struggle to integrate America's schools.
6. He sent five thousand marines to Beirut, Lebanon, to help preserve that country's government.
7. During his presidency, construction was begun on the nation's interstate highway system.

John F. Kennedy 1961–1963

1. During World War II he became a hero when a Japanese destroyer cut his PT boat in two, and he saved his crew from drowning.
2. In 1946 he was elected as a congressman from Massachusetts.
3. In 1952 he ran for the Senate and won by an overwhelming margin.
4. During his first Senate term, he wrote a book, *Profiles in Courage*, for which he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize.
5. The space program was one of his top priorities, and he promised that America would put a man on the moon by the end of the 1960s.
6. His New Frontier program was to help the elderly, the young, and those being deprived of their civil rights.
7. He created the Peace Corps in order that America might aid impoverished countries.



Discussion Questions

1. Why did the presidency of John F. Kennedy bring so much hope to America?
2. How did Eisenhower and Kennedy differ in their hopes for America?
3. Kennedy was young (forty-three) when he became President. Eisenhower was sixty-two. Does age make a difference? What is the minimum age a person should be? Should there be an age limit?
4. Several of our Presidents were in the military before becoming President. Do you think military experience is important in order to be a good President?
5. Most of our Presidents have been career politicians. Does a politician make a good President?
6. What three jobs should be on a person's resume before he/she can be considered for the presidency?

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Lyndon Baines Johnson 1963–1969

1. At the age of twenty-nine, he won election to Congress. He represented Texas.
2. He was elected to the Senate in 1948.
3. In 1955 he became Senate Majority Leader. He was a politician who could “get things done.”
4. Under his administration there was more civil rights legislation passed than ever before, including the Civil Rights Act in 1964.
5. He created both Head Start and Job Corps.
6. The Voting Rights Act he engineered outlawed literacy tests that kept African Americans from voting.
7. He guided Congress into passing Medicare, a federal health bill for the elderly.
8. In his inaugural address he declared a “War on Poverty.”
9. He was powerful and shrewd and was able to get Democrats and Republicans to cooperate.

Richard M. Nixon 1969–1974

1. He served in the Navy during World War II.
2. Before he was elected as a congressman from California, he was a lawyer.
3. In 1950 he was elected to the Senate.
4. He became Vice President in 1952 and was reelected in 1956.
5. He was elected President in 1968.
6. As President, he ended United States military participation in the Vietnam War in 1973.
7. He eased the tension that had existed for years between the United States and both the Soviet Union and China.
8. He helped create a U.S./Soviet agreement to limit nuclear weapons.
9. He ended the military draft and created an all-volunteer system for our armed forces.
10. As President he was respected for how he handled foreign policy.



Discussion Questions

1. The Vietnam War forced Lyndon Johnson not to seek reelection. Richard Nixon was forced to resign because of Watergate. What did each man accomplish while President? What was the greatest strength of each? Was it the man or was it the times that created problems for each of these elected men?
2. Both Johnson and Nixon were congressmen, senators, and Vice Presidents before becoming President. Is experience necessary? What three qualities should any President have?
3. Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon were our four Presidents during the 1960s. Rank them from best to least effective.
4. Johnson and Nixon were Vice Presidents before becoming President. Does being Vice President make a person a better President?