**Aim:**

**Topic: End of the Vietnam War and Nixon’s Foreign Policies (1968-1975)**

**Document #1 – End of the Vietnam War**

**Read the document below and watch the video on the end of the Vietnam War…then answer the following questions**

When Nixon came into office, he promised a **“peace with honor”** in Vietnam. He realized how unpopular the war was back home, and needed a way to get out. Nixon came up with a plan known as **The Nixon Doctrine** or **Vietnamization**- America would slowly withdraw from South Vietnam while at the same time preparing the South Vietnamese to defend themselves. At the same time, Nixon launched massive bombing raids into the North and secretly into neighboring Cambodia (which was helping the North) to help the South. The bombing operations killed millions in North Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, and met with lots of protests back home. This information was leaked to the New York Times (in addition to a 30-year secret history of **classified** documents which became known as **The Pentagon Papers)**. When Nixon found out he tried to force the New York Times to stop printing the papers, but in the case of ***Nixon v. New York Times***, the Supreme Court said that the New York Times printing them was protected under the first amendment. In 1973, Nixon ended the draft, and made the army a **volunteer-only army.** Maybe not so coincidently, as the draft ended, so too, did many of the protests. By 1975, all of the American forces had left Vietnam, and once we did, the North began a massive invasion of the South, and Saigon (the Southern Capitol), despite hard fighting, fell to the North. After 10 years of war, North and South were one Communist country. When the Communists forces took over, they executed thousands of Southerners. To escape the genocide that was taking place, thousands of South Vietnamese fled to America. The neighboring countries of Cambodia and Laos soon also fell to Communist forces and are Communist dictatorships. As the war was ending, Congress passed **The War Powers Act (1973)**. Congress believed that President Johnson and Nixon over-used their authority as commander in chief in sending soldiers in an **undeclared war**, and this new act limited the amount of time (30 days) a President can send soldiers without the permission of Congress. However, every president since Nixon has treated the War Powers Act as unconstitutional because it limits the Constitutional power of the President as Commander in Chief and has not fully followed the act.

1. **Do you think Nixon achieved peace with honor? Explain, citing at least two of his policies.**
2. **What were the Constitutional controversies of *Nixon v. New York Times* and the War Powers Act? Why are they controversial? Which side do you agree with in each controversy?**
3. **Over the ten years of the Vietnam War, should America have done something differently? If so, what?**

**Task:**

**1) Read Richard Nixon’s two other main foreign policies and his other domestic policies.**

**For each:**

**a) Summarize each foreign policy in your own words.**

**b) Do you agree or disagree with the policy?**

**Foreign Policy #2 – Détente with Russia**

Nixon also wanted to reduce Cold War tensions with Russia, America’s main enemy. In 1972, he and the first lady visited Russia and met with Russian Premier Leonid Brezhnev. The two Presidents agreed on a policy of **détente (cooperation and lessening of nuclear weapons and tensions).** They signed the **S.A.L.T. I Treaty** which limited the development of nuclear weapons.

**Foreign Policy #3 – Resuming talks with China**

When China turned Communist, America and China broke off **diplomatic relations (political talks and negotiations).** However, Nixon saw that China and Russia were having bad disagreements, and he took an opportunity to enter into talks with China and build better relations with them. Television camera crews captured the entire visit, from Nixon talking with China’s leader, Chairman Mao Zedong and Nixon’s wife, Pat Nixon, touring Beijing and visiting their schools. This was also accompanied by “**Ping Pong Diplomacy**,” when the American table tennis team was allowed to enter China to play the Chinese table tennis team.

**Document #4:**

**Nixon’s Domestic Policies**

Richard Nixon’s domestic policies (known as **“New Federalism”)** were aimed at continuing the work of his predecessors (people who came before him). In 1969, America landed on the Moon fulfilling President Kennedy’s initiatives. Nixon also enforced Civil Rights legislation and court orders including busing African American students into white schools (although he personally disagreed with this, as the executor of laws, he enforced the decision of the courts), the **Equal Pay Act** which prohibited wage and job discrimination and even supported an **Equal Rights Amendment** (although it failed to be ratified). Nixon also pushed for health care and Medicare reform to make the programs work better and to make them more affordable and accessible to Americans. In addition, Nixon also believed in **conservationism** (the preserving of nature and the environment). Similar to Theodore Roosevelt, he passed laws and created administrations to protect nature including the **Environmental Protection Agency**, **National Environmental Policy Act**, **Clean Air Act** and the first **Earth Day was in 1970**.

1. **Do you agree with Nixon’s New Federalism Domestic Policies? Why/why not?**

**Exit Ticket:**  **Based on all of Nixon’s foreign and domestic policies, how should he be judged as a President?**