

Explaining Communism and Capitalism for GCSE Modern World History

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

GCSE Modern World History – Using the National Cold War Exhibition to explain Communism and Capitalism and their effects.

Key terms

- Free Market
- State Control

Museum task

Read the information on the display boards by the entrance to the National Cold War Exhibition on the 'Origins of the Cold War'.

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

The Americans (USA) believed in Capitalism. This meant people had their own wealth and businesses, owned a house or a car. The Americans believed everyone had to work hard so they could gain more wealth.



The Russians (USSR) believed in Communism. Everyone was to be treated equally. There would be no rich or poor, all worked for the Government and for the good of everyone.



Both countries fought against Hitler's Germany in WWII and appeared allies and friends in 1945. However, the differences between the two systems turned them from allies to enemies by 1949.

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

Starter task:

A Communist country is one where..... A good example would be.....

A Capitalist country is one where..... A good example would be.....

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

Stay on the upper level of the National Cold War Exhibition. Find the display on NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Make a list of those countries friendly or allied to Capitalist America (USA).

What do you notice about Germany?

Make a list of countries controlled by the Communist Russians (USSR).

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

The American's also wanted a lasting peace, but they believed the best way to achieve this was to have democracy, freedom of speech and fair elections.

The American's feared the Russian's would try to expand Communist ideas even further into Europe. They offered financial help to rebuild Europe, but to the Russian's this looked like bribery.

Nazi Germany attacked Russia (USSR) in 1941. Russia had to fight to survive. Over 25 million Russians died in WWII.

At the end of the War the Russian's had not only defeated Hitler they now controlled many of the countries in Eastern Europe.

The Russian's were determined to make themselves safe for the future. They continued to control the countries they had conquered, forcing Communist ideas onto them.

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

Go to the lower level of the National Cold War Exhibition and find the 'Post WWII Economic Reconstruction' display (the one with three cars!)



Tasks

1. Describe the car you think was made under a Communist system?
2. Describe the car you think was made under a Capitalist system?
3. Explain which car you think is better and why?
4. Looking at the Communist car – what do you think you would need to do to own a car like this?
5. What would you need to do to own either of the two Capitalist cars?

What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?

6. The Communist car is created under a system called 'state control'. Look at the display boards and explain in your own words what 'state control' is?
7. The two Capitalist cars are created under a system called the 'free market'. Explain what this term means?
8. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a Communist country with 'state control'?
9. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a Capitalist country and the free Market?

Plenary task

Which system would you rather live under - Communism or Capitalism? Explain your answer.