

Name _____



Proxy War Summaries

Directions: Read the brief descriptions of each Cold War proxy war below. Then, summarize the **cause**, **main combatants**, and **outcome** of each conflict in one or two sentences each. Use your own words to show your understanding of how these wars reflected the larger U.S.-Soviet rivalry.

1. The Korean War (1950-1953): A divided peninsula became the first major Cold War battlefield when North Korea, backed by the Soviet Union and China, invaded the South. The United States led a United Nations coalition to defend South Korea. The war ended in stalemate, with the border near the 38th parallel unchanged.

2. The Vietnam War (1955-1975): What began as a conflict between communist North Vietnam and U.S.-supported South Vietnam grew into a symbol of Cold War struggle. The U.S. aimed to contain communism but withdrew after years of costly fighting. In 1975, North Vietnam captured Saigon, uniting the country under communist rule.

3. The Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989): When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to support its communist government, Afghan resistance fighters-known as the Mujahideen-fought back with U.S. weapons and aid. After years of brutal warfare, the Soviets withdrew, marking one of the USSR's greatest Cold War defeats.
