**Richard Nixon Success or Failure readings**

**Document B Nixon’s flexible Response**

**Source:** Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia. “Richard Nixon: Impact and Legacy.” Accessed April 11, 2016. http://millercenter.org­/president/biography/nixon-impact-and-legacy.

As President, Nixon was only as conservative as he could be and only as liberal as he had to be. He took credit for the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency while privately noting that if he had not taken this liberal step, the Democratic Congress would have forced more liberal environmental legislation on him. This was a President who could philosophically oppose wage and price controls and privately express the conviction that they would not work, while still implementing them for election-year effect. Still his tactical flexibility should not obscure his steadiness of political purpose. He meant to move the country to the right, and he did.

Nixon's most celebrated achievements as President—nuclear arms control agreements with the Soviet Union and the diplomatic opening to China—set the stage for the arms reduction pacts and careful diplomacy that brought about the end of the Cold War. Likewise, the Nixon Doctrine of furnishing aid to allies while expecting them to provide the soldiers to fight in their own defense paved the way for the Reagan Doctrine of supporting proxy armies and the Weinberger Doctrine of sending U.S. armed forces into combat only as a last resort when vital national interests are at stake and objectives clearly defined.

**Document C Nixon and the end of Vietnam**

**Source:** http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/nixon-foreign/

Nixon coupled his policy of Vietnamization with hard-hitting attacks on North Vietnamese bases in Laos and Cambodia, but could not bludgeon Hanoi into an agreement. The official peace talks in Paris stalled repeatedly, and the covert dialogue between Kissinger and North Vietnam dragged on with little progress. At home, antiwar activists filled the streets. Nixon had hoped that improved relations with the Chinese and the Soviets would spur a quick exit from Vietnam. But the summits did little to push the war toward its end.

Following his reelection in 1972, Nixon temporarily abandoned diplomacy. For 12 days in December, the U.S. unleashed a ferocious bombing attack on the North Vietnamese capital of Hanoi. Nixon gave no explanation for the bombing -- he wanted to appear irrational, desperate, willing to do anything to get what he wanted.

The president's "madman" strategy paid off. In January 1973, the United States and North Vietnam negotiated a peace. Sadly, the terms were little better than the ones proposed by North Vietnam in 1969. More than 25,000 American lives had been lost in the interim. Nixon had gained little by delaying withdrawal.

**Document D The Watergate Scandal**

**Source:** http://www.history.com/topics/watergate

Early in the morning of June 17, 1972, several burglars were arrested inside the office of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), located in the Watergate building in Washington, D.C. This was no ordinary robbery: The prowlers were connected to President Richard Nixon’s reelection campaign, and they had been caught while attempting to wiretap phones and steal secret documents. While historians are not sure whether Nixon knew about the Watergate espionage operation before it happened, he took steps to cover it up afterwards, raising “hush money” for the burglars, trying to stop the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from investigating the crime, destroying evidence and firing uncooperative staff members. In August 1974, after his role in the Watergate conspiracy had finally come to light, the president resigned. His successor, Gerald Ford, immediately pardoned Nixon for all the crimes he “committed or may have committed” while in office. Although Nixon was never prosecuted, the Watergate scandal changed American politics forever, leading many Americans to question their leadership and think more critically about the presidency.

**Document E The opening of China and Ping Pong Diplomacy**

**Source:** http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/ping-pong-diplomacy-60307544/?no-ist

The Cold War is entering its 26th year with no end in sight. In Vietnam, war still rages. On April 12, a Pan Am 707 lands in Detroit, Michigan, carrying the People's Republic of China's world champion table tennis team for a series of matches and tours in ten cities around the United States.

The era of Ping-Pong diplomacy had begun 12 months earlier when the American team—in Nagoya, Japan, for the World Table Tennis Championship—got a surprise invitation from their Chinese colleagues to visit the People's Republic. Time magazine called it "The ping heard round the world." And with good reason: no group of Americans had been invited to China since the Communist takeover in 1949.

Why had they been invited? The Chinese felt that by opening a door to the United States, they could put their mostly hostile neighbors on notice about a possible shift in alliances. The United States welcomed the opportunity; President Richard M. Nixon had written: "We simply cannot afford to leave China outside the family of nations."

Soon after the U.S. team's trip, Nixon, not wanting to lose momentum, secretly sent Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Peking to arrange a Presidential visit to China. Nixon's journey seven months later, in February 1972, would become one of the most important events in U.S. postwar history. "Never before in history has a sport been used so effectively as a tool of international diplomacy," said Chinese Premier Chou En-lai. For Nixon, it was "the week that changed the world."