

## ROLE-PLAY NUCLEAR CRISIS.

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a military confrontation during the Cold War involving the United States, the Soviet Union and Cuba. It was the point at which the Cold War came

closest to escalating into nuclear war. How would you have dealt with the situation if you were in the shoes of the American, Soviet or Cuban leaders?

### STEPS

- 1 **Write a script:** Read the timeline below and come up with a script for a role-play. You might like to do some further reading to increase your understanding.
- 2 **Allocate roles:** Who's going to feature in your role-play? Think about who the key players were in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Note: they might not have been in the public eye.
- 3 **Rehearse:** Practise your role play several times. See if you can modify it to make it even better. Be sure that you're conveying things clearly.
- 4 **Perform to an audience:** Perform the role-play in front of your class. Encourage them to discuss the issues with you afterwards. Break a leg!

### VARIATION

#### 1 Role-play other major events of the nuclear age

The Cuban Missile Crisis isn't the only event of the nuclear age that you could turn into a role-play. Think of some other significant moments and act them out. You might also like to produce a play about the day, some time in the not-too-distant future, when we finally abolish nuclear weapons!



US President John F Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The US President discusses the crisis with his advisers.



## THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

- **19 December 1960:** Cuba officially aligns itself with the Soviet Union and its policies.
- **3 January 1961:** The United States ends diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba as a consequence.
- **12 April 1961:** US President John F. Kennedy pledges not to intervene militarily to overthrow Cuban president Fidel Castro.
- **17 April 1961:** A group of Cuban exiles, backed by the United States, invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in an unsuccessful attempt to trigger a rebellion against President Castro.
- **27 July 1962:** Castro announces that Cuba has taken measures that would make any direct US attack on Cuba the equivalent of a world war.
- **10 August 1962:** CIA director John McCone informs President Kennedy that Soviet medium-range ballistic missiles will soon be deployed in Cuba.
- **11 September 1962:** In a speech to the United Nations, Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko warns that a US attack on Cuba could mean war with his country.
- **14 October 1962:** The United States obtains photographic evidence of missiles stationed in western Cuba.
- **16 October 1962:** Kennedy and his national security advisers meet to discuss possible diplomatic and military courses of action (*See photo above*).
- **18 October 1962:** Gromyko meets with Kennedy and assures him that Soviet weapons were given to Cuba only for the defence of Cuba.
- **20 October 1962:** Kennedy announces in a televised address to the nation the presence of offensive missile sites in Cuba.
- **23 October 1962:** Kennedy orders US ships to take up position 800 miles from Cuba and form a “quarantine line”.
- **24 October 1962:** Soviet ships en route to Cuba either slow down or reverse their course—except for one.
- **25 October 1962:** Kennedy sends a letter to Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev laying the responsibility for the crisis on the Soviet Union.
- **26 October 1962:** Khrushchev sends a letter to Kennedy proposing to remove his missiles on the condition that Kennedy would never invade Cuba.
- **27 October 1962:** Kennedy agrees to Khrushchev’s proposal and the secret condition that the United States would remove missiles stationed in Turkey.
- **28 October 1962:** Khrushchev announces over Radio Moscow that he has agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba.