

What successes and failures culminated in U.S. and Chinese rapprochement during the Nixon Administration?



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. You and your small group of 4 are part of an acting troupe (it could also be a comedy troupe) who has been asked by the Nixon Library to perform a skit at the library on the topic of the U.S. and Chinese rapprochement. They asked that you focus on successes and failures that culminated in U.S. and Chinese rapprochement during the Nixon Administration. Since you will be in Nixon's library, you need to make sure you base your skit on primary documents and facts. You also have to consider your audience and figure out what perspective you might present (hmm, what type of audience might attend a Nixon Library function?).
2. Read and or examine each document and answer the questions that follow the documents to gain a deeper understanding of the topic.
3. Discuss with your group the successes and failures, and come to a conclusion.
4. Categorize the documents into three categories that will help you prove your conclusion.
5. Organize your skit like you would an essay, using the three categories you created above. Each category of conversation should provide three pieces of evidence (such as a document). Use your characters to present the evidence through dialogue.
6. Create your skit based on the scene portrayed in the image on **Document 7**. Each of you will portray one of the characters (except for the secretary/interpreter) seated in the room: Zhou Enlai, Mao Tsetung, Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger.
7. Your skit must hold a discussion that might have played out in the room. Though you can interpret the meeting as you like, it must
 - a. focus on answering the DBQ question,
 - b. be organized into 3 categories of conversation & each category should provide 3 pieces of evidence
 - c. Your conversation must use or refer to at least 6 of the documents.
 - d. You can be clever & humorous
8. You will take turns presenting your skits to the class and the class will vote on the skits based on
 - a. Best use of documents
 - b. Best argument
 - c. Best interpretation of the event
 - d. Best actor

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RUBRIC

	Total Points Possible	Group's points
Students have organized their argument and skit into 3 categories	5	
Argument is stated and is clear at the beginning of the skit – we know where their argument is going. Dialogue in the skit focuses on answering the DBQ question.	5	
Each category (topic of conversation) provides 3 pieces of evidence (these can be documents, outside information, vocabulary, etc.).	9	
Evidence is used effectively to back up the group's argument	5	
The setting of the skit takes place in the room in the image on Document 7.	1	
Each student attempts to portray his or her own character accurately (saying things the character did say, or might have said, using accents & mannerisms, showing personality...remember you are acting).	Individual points awarded here 10	Individual points awarded here
Students refer to or use at least 6 of the documents.	10	
Total Points	45	

DOCUMENT 1: KISSINGER TO NIXON: ATTEMPTS CONTACT WITH THE CHINESE

Vocabulary:

- Consulate General – official representative of the government, diplomat, his name is Osborn
- Liberalization – easing up on
- Sino-U.S. – Chinese – United States
- Commercial – trade and business

Document Note: Memorandum from Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, September 20, 1970. This memo was written as a response to a report on Communist Chinese activity. The U.S. had been attempting to communicate with China, but had been unsuccessful so far. This memo confirms that it would be useful to establish contact with the Chinese at this time. The brief explores how to communicate through back channels (secret channels) with China. Some of the back channels the U.S. was pursuing were the French, the Pakistanis and the Dutch. It is important to note that the U.S. observes here that China seems to be changing or loosening up some of its restrictions on trade and travel which might be a signal that China would be receptive to communicate with the U.S.

-- Communist China: Our Consulate General at Hong Kong reports some new mobility in Peking's conduct of foreign relations which may present opportunities for improving relations. Signs of this include payment to the International Committee of The Red Cross (Geneva), of back dues, and an approach to a U.S. businessman regarding possible business travel to China. Consul General Osborn notes that it is premature to reach conclusions concerning Chinese intentions on the basis of this report, but it is possible some Chinese officials are thinking in terms of eventual trade with U.S. firms. Osborn observes that if this is so, a further liberalization of U.S. travel regulations might serve to encourage Sino-U.S. contacts at commercial levels. (The remaining U.S. restrictions on travel to China expire September 15 unless renewed.)

Source: Kissinger, Henry to President Nixon, September 20, 1970. Top Secret/Sensitive/Exclusively Eyes Only.

Kissinger, Henry. *Kissinger Memorandum to President Nixon*. Digital image. *National Security Archive*

George Washington University. George Washington University. Web. 15 Feb. 2011.

<<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv>>

QUESTIONS:

1. What is meant by the word “mobility” in the phrase “reports some new mobility in Peking’s conduct of foreign relations?”
2. What evidence is there that Chinese conduct of foreign policy has changed?
3. What changes were observed in regard to travel and trade?
4. What does the memo speculate about trade with U.S. firms?
5. In what ways does this memo suggest that the U.S. should respond to China’s actions?
6. What is Kissinger’s purpose in writing this memo?

DOCUMENT 2A: WRITER EDGAR SNOW INVITED TO NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION

Document Note: Edgar Snow, a writer, *Red Star Over China*, and friend of Mao's from the Chinese Civil War, was invited by Mao to attend the National Day celebration on October 1, 1970. This was held at Tiananmen Square. This was considered a signal to the U.S. that China was willing to improve relations with the U.S. At this meeting, Mao asked Snow to pass a message to President Nixon that he would be welcome to come to Beijing for talks.



Source: Snow, Edgar and Mao Zedong, October 1, 1970 at the National Day celebration in Tiananmen Square

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, Web. 15 Feb. 2011.

<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/premade/28067/sino-us2.htm>

DOCUMENT 2B: EDGAR SNOW AND MAO IN 1936



<http://stolpkin.net/spip.php?article699>

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is Edgar Snow?
2. Who is Mao Zedong?
3. What is Edgar and Mao's past relationship? What were the circumstances of their friendship?
4. Mao's Cultural Revolution was going on in China during this time period. Any person displaying capitalist, or western influenced thought would be publicly shamed and set away to "the countryside" to be re-educated in the Marxist ideology. With the climate of the Cultural Revolution in mind, why would inviting Snow be more acceptable to the Chinese citizens than an American government official at this time?
5. Why might Mao's invitation of Snow to visit China's National Day celebration be considered a signal that China was ready to improve relations with the U.S.?

DOCUMENT 3: BACKDOOR CHANNELS NIXON AND PAKISTANI PRESIDENT YAHYA

Vocabulary

- Condominium – government operating under joint rule
- Robert Murphy and Thomas Dewey were high level envoys (State Department)
- Warsaw - Warsaw talks between U.S. and China resumed on January 20. It is the first time a U.S. spokesperson refers to the "People's Republic of China" by its official name.

Document Note: The U.S. and China had not previously been successful in their efforts to make contact. In September of 1970, Nixon directed Kissinger to renew his attempts. Because of the U.S. relationship with Pakistan and Pakistan's relationship with China, the U.S. attempted to use Pakistan as an go-between with China with some success. Pakistan had previously been a secret channel for earlier Chinese American links in 1969. This document is a Memorandum of Conversation between President Yahya and President Nixon on October 25, 1970 in the Oval Office in the White House. This memo is a report on what was said in the conversation between the two presidents.

The President (Nixon) said, "I understand you are going to Peking..." The President said, "It is essential that we open negotiations with China. Whatever our relations with the USSR or what announcements are made, I want you to know the following: (1) we will make no condominium against China and we want them to know if whatever may be put out; (2) we will be glad to send Murphy or Dewey to Peking and to establish links secretly."

Yahya said he had once been told to establish secret links and had communicated it to the Chinese who had replied whether this meant that the United States was thinking of a hot line to Peking similar to the one that existed to Moscow. The President said, no, that wasn't what he meant; he was willing to send ambassadors.

...When we talked about secret links we meant a form of communication less visible than Warsaw. One more susceptible to enabling the parties to say what was really on their minds and yet have absolute discretion. If we could find some mutually convenient capital, such as, for example Rawalpindi or conceivably Paris, the President might consider sending a senior person. The President said he would be prepared to send me (Kissinger), or since I was too busy, he might send somebody else, but at any rate he was prepared to establish a high level contact.

Yahya said he would explain this to the Chinese.

Source: October 25, 1970, White House Memorandum of Conversation between President Nixon, Henry Kissinger and Pakistani President Yahya.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is President Yahya?
2. Describe Yahya's relationship with the U.S. and China.
3. In the first paragraph, what does Nixon state as the purpose of his conversation with Yahya?
4. What type of "links" is Nixon talking about creating?
5. Why might both the U.S. and China wish to keep their conversations secret at this point?
6. What role do each of these actors play in bringing the U.S. and Chinese closer to rapprochement?

DOCUMENT 4: NIXON'S ARTICLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 1967

Vocabulary:

Document Note: While Nixon was running for the Republican nomination for president, he published an article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1967. This is an excerpt of the article.

Any American policy toward Asia must come urgently to grips with the reality of China.... Taking the long view, we simply cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbors. There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation.... The world cannot be safe until China changes. Thus, our aim, to the extent we can influence events, should be to induce change.

Source: "Asia after Vietnam." *Foreign Affairs*, October 1967
<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/23927/richard-m-nixon/asia-after-viet-nam> (accessed February 18, 2011)

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the origin of this document?
2. What is the purpose of this document?
3. What message does the article convey?
4. What does Nixon mean when he states, "The world cannot be safe until China changes?" How might China be a threat and to whom?
5. Domestically and politically, how risky might a statement like this be during this time period? Consider the presidential election as well as communist fears of the time period.
6. This article was written almost 5 years before Nixon visited China. How might it be argued that this was an early indication that Nixon was determined to form a relationship with China?

DOCUMENT 5: PING PONG DIPLOMACY

Document Note: Prior to April 4, 1971, China and the U.S. had come to an impasse. Rapprochement seemed stuck and neither nation knew how to proceed to break the ice. This break came at the World Table Tennis Championships in Nagoya, Japan. China, in the middle of its Cultural Revolution, sent players for the first time in years (in the “spirit of friendship”) to play in the world championship ping pong tournament. Glen Cowan, a Californian, boarded the wrong bus by mistake: the Chinese bus. Cowan was ignored at first by the Chinese players, who were fearful of Mao’s orders not to talk to the Americans, and also fearful of the climate of the Cultural Revolution. It was the lead Chinese player, Zhuang Zedong who stepped up and offered Cowan a gift of silk tapestry.



Zhuang Zedong “At that time we were still in the Cultural Revolution. Any exchange with Westerners would be [attacked] with vicious labels, such as ‘treason’ or ‘spy.’ So when this American guy got on the bus, nobody dared talk to him...I was thinking, China has been well-known as a country of hospitality for more than 5,000 years,” he says. “If everyone ignores that American athlete, it would be ironic. Then I looked at him and thought, He’s not involved in issuing policy. He’s just an athlete, an ordinary person.”

Source: Boggan, Tim. *History of U.S. Table Tennis*. 1999. <http://www.usatt.org/articles/ppoddity05.shtml> (accessed February 18, 2011). <http://www.usatt.org/articles/ppoddity05.shtml>

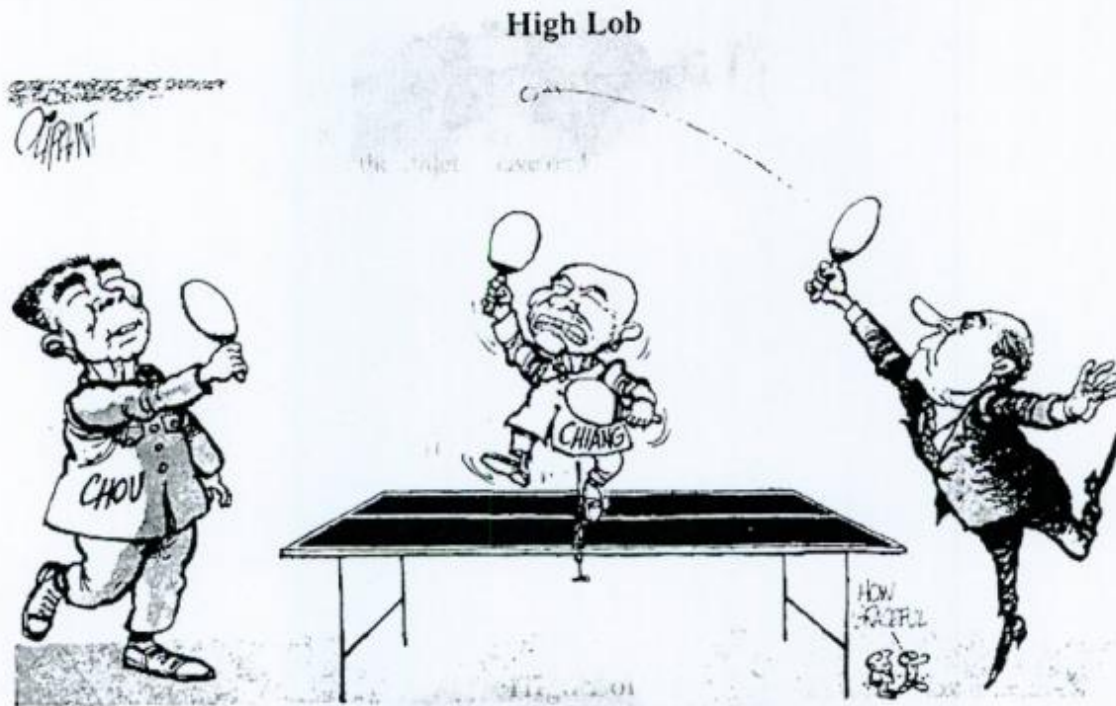
QUESTIONS:

1. What is the origin of this image?
2. Why was Zhuang and his teammates afraid to talk to Cowan?
3. What is the significance of both China and the U.S. ping pong teams participating in the tournament?
4. In what way might the participation in the ping pong tournament have been a signal of a change in Chinese foreign policy?
5. What effect did this link between the athletes have on U.S. Chinese relations?

DOCUMENT 6: THE TAIWAN QUESTION

Vocabulary:

- Lob – ping pong term, meaning up in the air.
- Chou – is also called Zhou Enlai
- Chiang kai-Shek – Kuomintang leader, Leader of Taiwan



Source: Oliphant, Pat, February 1972. <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/oliphant/>

QUESTIONS:

1. Who are the characters in the image and what is their role in U.S. and Chinese politics?
2. What is the significance of the game of ping pong in terms of U.S. Chinese relations?
3. What is significant about the positions being played in the ping pong game in the image?
4. How does Chiang's role in the image relate to world politics at this time?
5. What is the message being conveyed in the image?

DOCUMENT 7: NIXON VISITS CHINA

Document note: Nixon visited China on February 21, 1972. He was met at the airport by Premier Zhou Enlai and also met with Chairman Mao. On the topic of Taiwan, the U.S. affirmed the “One China Principle,” and reaffirmed its interest in solving the Taiwan question peacefully.



Source: Zhou Enlai, Mao's secretary, Chairman Mao, President Nixon, Henry Kissinger meet during Nixon's 1972 visit to China.

Atkins, Oliver. *Oliver Atkins Collection*, George Mason University Archives. 2011.
http://sca.gmu.edu/exhibit/atkins_2.htm (accessed February 18, 2011).

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the origin of this image? Who is are the people in the image?
2. What was the purpose of Nixon's visit?

3. How did these men get to this day? What process have they gone through in order to be able to meet together and have this conversation?
4. What was the result of this meeting?
5. Predict what happened to the U.S. and Chinese relations after both men left office (due to scandal and death)?

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Document Note: Hsing-Hsing came to the Washington Zoo with his mate Ling-Ling following President Nixon's historic trip to China in 1972. The pandas symbolized better relations between the two countries; so-called "**panda diplomacy**." Ling-Ling died in 1992 at the age of 23.

The panda pair were an instant hit at the zoo with more than 20,000 people visiting them on their first day, and millions more visiting them in the following years.

<http://www.chizeng.com/nixon/immediate.html>

QUESTIONS:

1. Zhou presented to the United States a pair of pandas, Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing after Nixon's visit to China. What did the gift symbolize?
2. How might the American people have interpreted the generous gift?
3. How might the pandas symbolize a successful rapprochement between the U.S. and China?



Televised speech by Nixon explaining the invasion of Cambodia - June 1969

Tonight American and South Vietnam units will attack the headquarters of the entire communist military operation in South Vietnam. This is not an invasion of Cambodia. We take this action not for the purpose of expanding the war into Cambodia but for the purpose of ending the war in Vietnam...

Document Note:

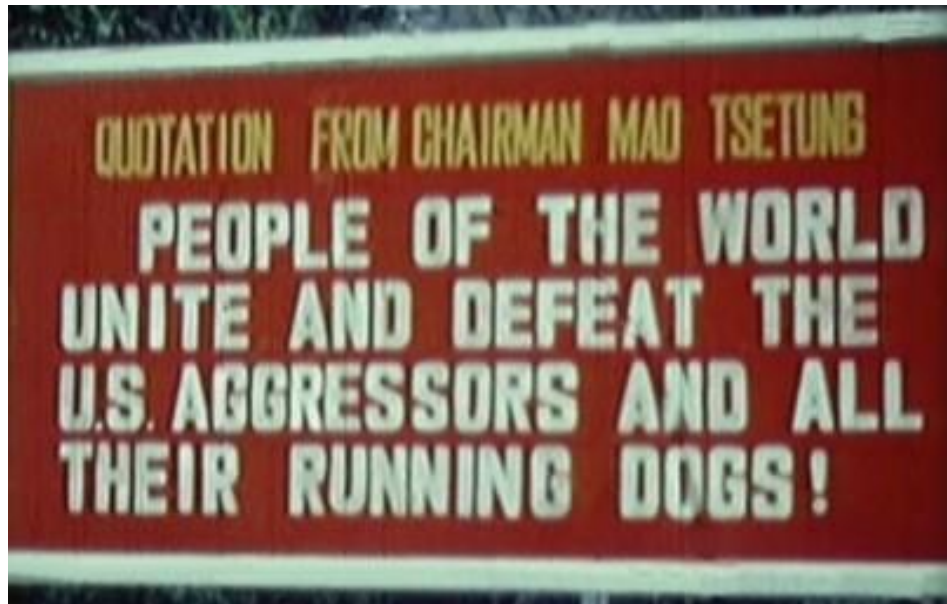
During this time period, Nixon was withdrawing American troops through Vietnamization. Simultaneously, Nixon intensified the conflict by bombing, Chinese ally, Cambodia to fight the North Vietnamese-supported Khmer Rouge guerillas. The Chinese were publicly outraged and privately cancelled the next round of talks with the U.S. regarding rapprochement.

<http://sierramadreeagle.com/2009/03/17/election-special--the-ghost-of-richard-nixon.aspx>

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Nixon bomb Cambodia?

2. Why did China care that the U.S. bombed Cambodia?
3. What effect did the bombing of Cambodia have on U.S. Chinese rapprochement?



<http://www.allabouttabletennis.com/history-of-table-tennis-ping-pong-diplomacy.html>

QUESTIONS:

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1. Who is the author of the quote?
2. What message is conveyed by the quote?
3. Who is the poster's intended audience? What was Mao's purpose in displaying the quote?
4. Why might Mao choose to display this poster when the American ping pong team came to visit China in 1971?