

1960s/Vietnam War/JFK

Summary

The 1960s was a big decade! There was a lot of change going on in America. The civil rights movement was one of those things. Another was that there were a lot of teenagers! After World War 2, many people wanted to have children and enjoy their life with their family. This was called the baby boom because people were having babies to start their families. In the 1960s, all those babies had grown up to be teenagers. The teenagers had lots of ideas and wanted their own freedoms. They liked their own kind of clothes and music—kind of like teenagers do today. During the 1960s another war was happening—the Vietnam War. It had been going on for awhile and will probably sound very familiar to you. Vietnam was divided into 2 parts—North Vietnam and South Vietnam. North Vietnam was supported by China and the Soviet Union and so, guess what kind of government it wanted—communism. South Vietnam did not want communism. And since the US was very worried about communism spreading around the world, we did whatever we could to stop it—which meant helping South Vietnam. Many people in America did not want to get into a war in Vietnam, but President Johnson and others thought it was important to help fight against the North. This caused a lot of arguing in America. The US troops (soldiers fighting) in Vietnam had a very hard time. Some people in America were upset that they were there and treated them badly. The jungles in Vietnam were horrible places to fight in, and the enemy had traps everywhere and were sneaky. Finally, after many years, a new president, President Nixon, got the US troops out of Vietnam and the war ended. Not long after that, South Vietnam surrendered to the North, and all of Vietnam became communist. All of that fighting didn't really do anything.

Another sad thing happened during the 1960s. We had a new president—John F. Kennedy, also called JFK—who was assassinated (killed) while riding in his car. Many people in America liked JFK and his wife (called the first lady) and family, and so this was a very sad time for America.

But there were some exciting things happening in the 1960s that we've already talked about or will talk about later. For now, here are some things that we have from the 1960s: bubble wrap—who doesn't love that?! The emergency phone number 9-1-1 was first used in 1968. That's important! The first heart transplant was done in 1967—incredible! And people invented Sharpies and lava lamps and...icees!

Discuss

JFK was a president who was shot and killed. Do you remember another president that happened to?

(Abraham Lincoln)

Zip codes were also created in the 1960s. Do you know your address and zip code?

Do you know anyone who has fought in a war? If so, say thank you for helping to protect our country and freedoms!

Additional Books

What Was the Vietnam War? by Jim O'Connor

Eyewitness Vietnam War: Discover the People, Places, Battles, and Weapons by DK

Who Was John F. Kennedy? by Yona Zeldis McDonough

Time For Kids: John F. Kennedy: The Making of a Leader (Time For Kids Biographies)

A Picture Book of John F. Kennedy (Picture Book Biography) by David Adler

John F. Kennedy the Brave (I Can Read Level 2) by Sheila Keenan

Areas to Study

John F. Kennedy

Inventions of the 1960s

Vietnam culture and history