Biography
The Cold War Begins, 1945-1960

The Origins of the Cold War

Winston Churchill, 1874–1965
Statesman, author, and winner of the 1953 Nobel Prize in Literature, Winston Churchill was one of the most influential and important personalities of his age. Born in Oxfordshire, England, in 1874 to Lord Randolph Churchill and his American wife, Jennie Jerome, Winston had a lonely childhood. A poor student, he finally passed the entrance exams to the Royal Military College on his third attempt. Once there, though, the young Churchill found his niche and performed well. Upon graduation, Churchill saw military service in India and South Africa and also worked as a war correspondent. Hailed as a hero after his return, Churchill won election to the House of Commons in 1900. A skilled politician, he quickly moved up and held several important posts through World War I.

Between World War I and World War II, Churchill moved into and out of a number of government positions while also writing extensively on historical and political topics. Although he was largely ignored, Churchill was one of the first politicians to recognize the threat posed by Adolf Hitler’s successes in Germany. Time proved him right, though, and in 1940, Churchill stepped in as prime minister and headed a coalition government that led Britain successfully through the war. Churchill was a powerful and articulate speaker, and his inspiring speeches and radio addresses during the war strengthened the resolve of the British and the Allies to accept nothing short of victory in their fight against the Germans.

1. For which accomplishment was Churchill awarded a Nobel Prize?

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2. Where did Churchill see military service during World War I?

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