

# FINAL PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT

HIST 214 - Five-slide turning point presentation

## Assignment Scenario

Create a five-slide presentation answering the question: Why was the Cuban Missile Crisis a major turning point in the Cold War? Your audience is a general college history class. The presentation should make one clear argument, explain essential context, and distinguish verified evidence from interpretation.

## Required Slide Structure

| Slide | Purpose          | Required content                                                                 |
|-------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Title and thesis | A specific claim about why the crisis changed the Cold War.                      |
| 2     | Context          | Cuba, U.S.-Soviet rivalry, nuclear weapons, and the discovery of missiles.       |
| 3     | Thirteen days    | A short sequence of the blockade, negotiation, and major decision points.        |
| 4     | Why it mattered  | Effects on nuclear risk, communication, strategy, or later diplomacy.            |
| 5     | Conclusion       | Restate the claim, include one counterargument, and identify one broader lesson. |

## Content Rules

- Use concise phrases rather than paragraphs.
- Use at least three verified sources and place abbreviated citations on the relevant slide.
- Do not invent statistics, quotations, or declassified documents.
- Include at least one map, timeline, or diagram that clarifies the sequence of events.
- Explain uncertainty when historians disagree about motives or risk.

## Suggested Research Questions

1. Why did the Soviet Union place missiles in Cuba?
2. Why did the United States choose a naval quarantine rather than an immediate air strike?
3. How close did the crisis come to nuclear war?
4. What compromises helped end the crisis?
5. What changed in U.S.-Soviet relations afterward?

## Rubric

| Criterion                | Points | What strong work does                                                 |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Historical argument      | 30     | Makes a specific, defensible claim and supports it consistently.      |
| Evidence and attribution | 25     | Uses verified evidence and gives clear source credit.                 |
| Organization             | 15     | Builds a logical five-slide sequence with smooth transitions.         |
| Visual communication     | 15     | Uses readable design and visuals that clarify rather than decorate.   |
| Accuracy and reflection  | 15     | Avoids invented facts and explains one limitation or counterargument. |

## Permitted AI Use

AI may be used to generate a first-pass slide outline, suggest visual organization, or identify unclear wording. The student remains responsible for verifying every historical claim, replacing placeholders with real citations, and rewriting the final presentation in their own voice. The final submission must include a short note explaining how AI was used.

### Gamma demo prompt

Create a five-slide academic presentation from this assignment. Keep text concise, use a clean history-class design, and leave explicit placeholders for verified citations. Do not invent statistics, quotations, or sources.