

Explain pick-up

Why did the US lose the War?

This revision activity works best if you do it with a friend, and talk about it as you do it.

Cut up the cards, shuffle them and place them face down. Choose a 'side' – either 'The Americans lost the war' or 'The Vietnamese won the war'. In turn, each player takes a card from the pile.

If the fact on the card supports their 'side', the player states: 'This suggests the Americans lost (or the Vietnamese won) the war because ...' and then explains how or why this shows that the Americans lost (or the Vietnamese won) the war. If the player is able to explain to the satisfaction of the other players how/why it shows that the Americans lost (or the Vietnamese won) the war, then they keep the card.

If the card does not support the player's 'side', or if the player is unable to explain to the satisfaction of the other players how/why it shows that the Americans lost (or the Vietnamese won) the war, then the card must be returned to the bottom of the pile, face down.

The winner is the player with most cards at the end of the game.

America was 8000 miles away	American high-tech tactics
The Tet Offensive of 1968 undermined American confidence that they could win the war	American troops were inexperienced, nineteen-year-old 'cherries'
Atrocities such as the My Lai Massacre undermined US claims to the 'moral right'	Horror at the soldiers being returned home in body bags
Increased draft dodging in the USA	Martin Luther King's opposition

South Vietnamese peasants supported and helped the VC	Student opposition to the war in America
The Americans' cruelty and atrocities failed to 'win hearts and minds'	The media 'credibility gap' at home undermined US morale
The South Vietnamese government was weak, brutal, corrupt and hated	The VC had been at war since 1945
The VC were fanatically dedicated fighters, surviving horrific conditions in the tunnels	The VC were supplied by China and Russia down the Ho Chi Minh Trail
The Vietnamese were fighting a patriotic war of liberation	US soldiers 'fragging' their officers
US soldiers going AWOL	US soldiers taking drugs
US soldiers 'working it out'	VC guerrilla tactics