**Key topic 3: The end of the Cold War, 1970–91**

- **Détente**: permanent relaxation in superpower Cold War tensions, symbolised first by arms negotiations. Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT), May 1972, limiting antiballistic missile sites, number of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and Submarine-launched Ballistic Missiles.

- Helsinki agreements on security, cooperation and human rights. SALT 2 limit for missile launchers and strategic bombers.

- Gorbachev’s new thinking, for example glasnost (openness), significance of Soviet economic weakness for his approach to international relations.

- Gorbachev and Reagan’s attitudes, for example as shown in the outcome of summits: abolition of all intermediate-range ballistic missiles – first agreement on arms reduction as opposed to arms control.


- The significance of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Condemnation of the invasion by Carter, withdrawal of SALT 2.

- Carter Doctrine: USA will take all necessary steps to safeguard oil supplies in the area.

- Boycott of 1980 Moscow Olympics by USA and many other Western powers.

- The ‘Second Cold War’ e.g. Reagan’s description of Soviet Union as an ‘evil empire’, US Congress increase in military spending and development of new nuclear weapons.

- Strategic Defence Initiative: so-called ‘Star Wars’ programme to shoot down incoming missiles using laser technology.

- Gorbachev’s indication that communist regimes in Eastern Europe would no longer be propped up by Soviet forces and could go their own way.

- Collapse of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe, for example adoption in Hungary of multi-party system, non-communist government returned in Polish elections, opening of Hungary's borders to East Germans and the West, popular anti-communist revolts, such as the most violent in Romania and ‘Velvet Revolution’ in Czechoslovakia.

- The significance of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Mass demonstrations in East Berlin and agreement to open Berlin Wall.

- Significance of collapse of Soviet bloc and beginning of fragmentation of USSR e.g. meeting of Gorbachev and Bush at Malta Summit to declare end to Cold War.
