

Questions Galore!

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STUDY GUIDE: 1990s (1990-1994)

1990 WORLD EVENTS:

THE GULF WAR began on August 2, 1990, after Iraq invaded Kuwait. At first, the operation was known as Operation Desert Shield and was intended to protect neighboring countries. The main goal at this time was to convince Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. However, Hussein did not withdraw, thus causing the start of Operation Desert Storm.

Ethnic cleansing began in Croatia. UN peacekeepers tried to intervene.

Nelson Mandela was released from prison and spoke to his people against apartheid at Cape Town in South Africa.

Margaret Thatcher stepped down as the British Prime Minister, after serving longer than any other prime minister.

Mikhail Gorbachev won the Nobel Prize for Peace for his innovations "perestroika" and "glasnost."

McDonald's opened its first restaurant in the Russia.

1990 U.S. EVENTS:

The Keating Five Hearings by the Senate Ethics Committee began to investigate the involvement of five senators with a corrupt savings and loan scandal, involving Charles Keating. Alan Cranston was found guilty, while the other four were given small fines.

Dr. Kevorkian and the Right to Die were controversial topics in the news.

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Judge David H. Souter was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace the retiring William Brennan.

Science:

"Sue," an almost perfectly intact dinosaur skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex was discovered in South Dakota. (This skeleton is now displayed at the Museum of Natural History in Chicago, Illinois.)

The Hubble telescope went up into space.

Consumer Events:

The Ford Explorer (an SUV) was introduced on the market and sold twice as many models as the Jeep Cherokee.

Television:

Seinfeld began its prime time run on NBC. Three years later, after moving to Thursday nights, it became extremely popular, winning many Emmy awards, as well as People's Choice Awards and a Peabody Award over the course of its nine seasons and 178 episodes. It starred Julia Louis-Dreyfus as Elaine, Michael Richards as Kramer, and Jason Alexander as George, as well as Jerry Seinfeld as himself.

Movies:

The NC-17 rating came into use. This rating was attached to movies that were not acceptable for children under the age of 17.

Dances With Wolves, directed by Kevin Costner, was a success, winning 7 Academy Awards, including one for Costner as Best Director.

Driving Miss Daisy won four Oscars.

Other important films of 1990 include, Pretty Woman, starring Richard Gere and Julia Roberts, Home Alone, starring Macaulay Culkin and Joe Pesci, and Total Recall, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sharon Stone.

Sports:

At the Super Bowl, the San Francisco 49ers, led by Joe Montana, beat the Denver Broncos.

The Cincinnati Reds beat the Oakland A's in the World Series.

The International Olympic Committee announced that the 1996 Summer Olympic Games would be held in Atlanta, Georgia.

Notable Obituaries:

Sammy Davis, Jr. -- a singer, dancer, actor, musician, and mime who died from throat cancer.

Greta Garbo--an early twentieth century movie star known for her beauty and portrayal of moody characters, and for her starring role in Grand Hotel.

Roald Dahl--a popular children's author whose works include **James and the Giant Peach**, and Matilda.

Leonard Bernstein--a famous American composer and conductor of the twentieth century known for his music in West Side Story.

Pearl Bailey--a popular U.S. nightclub singer who starred in the first all-African-American version of Hello Dolly.

B.F. Skinner--an American psychologist who devised a box (Skinner Box) in which an animal learned to press a lever in order to get food or water.

1991 WORLD EVENTS:

Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania obtained their independence from the Soviet Union.

Operation Desert Storm began on January 17, 1991. The United States engaged in air strikes as well as ground forces, led by General Norman Schwarzkopf. On February 28, 1991, U.S. forces liberated Kuwait. Notably, much of this war was telecast on CNN.

1991 U.S. EVENTS:

On July 22, 1991, Jeffrey Dahmer was finally apprehended and arrested for multiple slayings and cannibalism in a series of serial killings.

The minimum wage was raised from \$3.80 to \$4.25 per hour.

President Bush was admitted to the hospital for irregular heart rhythms.

Four Los Angeles police officers were indicted following the March 3rd beating of 25-year-old Rodney King, an African-American motorist.

Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American to ever serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, retired after 24 years of service at the age of 84.

The Clarence Thomas hearings took place, and investigated the accusations of Anita Hill who claimed to have been sexually harassed ten years before by her boss, Clarence Thomas. In the end, Thomas was cleared and nominated for the U.S. Supreme Court.

President Bush refused a loan of \$10 billion to Israel, which was targeted for housing developments in the Occupied Territories.

Movies:

The Silence of the Lambs and Thelma & Louise debuted this year. JFK, directed by Oliver Stone, reinstated public controversy and conspiracy theories on the results of the Warren Commission findings of 1964, which determined that Lee Harvey Oswald was the culprit in the JFK assassination. Other top movies included: Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves, starring Kevin Costner, Morgan Freeman, and Christian Slater, and Terminator 2, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Linda Hamilton.

Sports:

In the Super Bowl, the New York Giants beat the Buffalo Bills.
The Minnesota Twins won the World Series against the Atlanta Braves 4-3.
In tennis, Monica Seles won the U.S., French, and Australian Open Tournaments.
Magic Johnson was diagnosed with HIV.
Carl Lewis set the world record for the 100-meter sprint at the World Track and Field Championships, finishing with a time of 9.86 seconds.

Notable Obituaries:

Frank Capra--a motion picture director for movies like It's a Wonderful Life.
Dr. Seuss--an author of children's books such as The Cat in the Hat, and How the Grinch Stole Christmas.
Martha Graham--an American modern dancer and dance director, who founded the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance in New York City.
Michael Landon--an actor who starred in Bonanza and Little House on the Prairie.
Isaac Bashevis Singer--Nobel-winning novelist who wrote about the heritage of Polish Jews and is best known for Gimpel the Fool and The Magician of Lublin.

1992 WORLD EVENTS:

The president of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, led Bosnian Serbs to attack and take over parts of Bosnia Herzegovina, resulting in the bloodiest conflict in Europe after WWII.

"Ethnic cleansing" continued, checked somewhat by UN sanctions and relief efforts.

Canadians voted 54% against granting Quebec its independence.

Anarchy raged in Somalia, a starving country entrenched in Civil War. Clinton sent troops in, and several Americans were killed before the troops were finally withdrawn.

The "no-fly" zone was imposed in Iraq. UN inspectors determined that nuclear weapons were not an issue there.

Boris Yeltsin maintained power in Russia.

Disney opened the \$4 billion Euro Disney theme park just outside of Paris.

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General Noriega, former leader of Panama, was sentenced to 40 years in prison for drug trafficking.

1992 U.S. EVENTS:

Hurricane Andrew devastated Florida and Louisiana.

An all-white jury acquitted four Los Angeles police officers (also all white) of beating Rodney King, an African-American. Riots began in South Central Los Angeles and continued for three days. Several black men beat up a white truck driver, Reginald Denny. (These men were later convicted.) A curfew was instituted in many towns to prevent the riots from spreading.

Serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer was sentenced to 15 consecutive terms of life in prison with no possibility of parole.

Science:

Nicotine patches were approved as a possible solution to the "stop smoking" problem.

Theater:

Tony Kushner's Angels in America, a two-volume epic play, debuted in England. By 1993, it was also popular on Broadway.

Television:

After 30 years at the Tonight Show host, Johnny Carson resigned, leaving it to Jay Leno.

Movies:

Top movies of the year were Basic Instinct, Wayne's World, and Batman Returns.

Sports:

The Washington Redskins beat the Buffalo Bills in the Super Bowl.
The Toronto Blue Jays beat the Atlanta Braves 4-2 in the World Series.
Al Unser, Jr. won the Indy 500.
Larry Bird retired from basketball and the Boston Celtics.
Former tennis champ Arthur Ashe announced he was HIV-positive.
Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, and Dream Team members celebrated their Olympic victory in Barcelona.

Notable Obituaries:

200. Isaac Asimov--a science-fiction writer who published Pebble in the Sky and Opus

John Cage--an American composer who invented the Prepared piano.

Alex Haley--the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of Roots.

Anthony Perkins--an actor who starred in the original "Psycho" movie series.

Lawrence Welk--a Big Band conductor, composer, and singer who hosted his own weekly television hour of Big Band music.

Sam Walton--the founder and chairman of Wal-Mart who died of cancer at the age of 74.

1993 WORLD EVENTS:

On September 13, 1993, Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel, and Yasir Arafat, chairman of the PLO, shook hands in a ceremony supervised by Bill Clinton on the lawn of the White House.

The Czechoslovakian Republic split into two countries with different languages, governments, and cultures: the Czech and Slovak Republics.

1993 U.S. EVENTS:

Bill Clinton, a Democrat, and his First Lady, Hillary Clinton, took office in January, thus ending twelve years of Republican rule of the Presidency.

Janet Reno became the first female Attorney General.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg became the second woman on the Supreme Court.

The Senate enacted a bill that imposed a five-day waiting period for background checks for anyone making a handgun purchase.

An explosion in the World Trade Center, spearheaded by Muslim fundamentalists living in New Jersey, trapped many employees in the Twin Towers, killed others, and caused extensive damage on February 26.

NAFTA (The North American Free Trade Agreement) was signed and ratified by the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. It phased out trade barriers and tariffs over a 15-year time span.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms attacked the Branch Davidian commune, led by David Koresh, in Waco, Texas on April 19.

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The Mississippi River flooded, causing The Great Flood of 1993 that resulted in \$12 billion in damages.

Culture:

AmeriCorps was created in this year so that students could pay for college by volunteering community service.

The Information Superhighway came into common usage.

Toni Morrison won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk won the Nobel Prize for Peace, for their efforts and contribution in ending apartheid.

Theater:

On Broadway, Andrew Lloyd Weber's creation Sunset Boulevard and Harold Prince's Kiss of the Spider Woman gained acclaim.

Television:

The final episode of Cheers was shown on May 20. This popular show ran for 11 years, won 26 Emmy awards, and was seen in 38 countries.

Movies:

Jurassic Park, directed by Steven Spielberg, was a hit. It won 3 Academy Awards, for best Sound, Sound Effects Editing, and Visual Editing.

Schindler's List, also directed by Steven Spielberg, was awarded 7 Oscars, including Best Director and Best Picture, as were Philadelphia and Sleepless in Seattle, which starred Tom Hanks. Other top movies included: The Fugitive, The Firm, and Aladdin.

Sports:

At the Super Bowl, the Dallas Cowboys defeated the Buffalo Bills.

In the World Series, the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Philadelphia Phillies.

Michael Jordan retired from basketball and switched to playing baseball in the minor leagues, but returned to the Chicago Bulls a little more than a year and a half later.

The Chicago Bulls won their third straight N.B.A. championship after defeating the Phoenix Suns.

Notable Obituaries:

Marian Anderson--the first African-American person to sing with the Metropolitan Opera of New York City.

Arthur Ashe--a tennis champion and human rights activist who was the first African-American athlete to ever win a Grand Slam event, which he accomplished in the first U.S. Open in 1968.

Raymond Burr--the actor known as TV's Perry Mason, who died of cancer at age 76.

Cesar Chavez--the organizer and founder of the United Farm Workers, who organized food harvesters in California, many of which were Mexican-Americans.

Agnes de Mille--a choreographer, dancer, and author, who was best-known for her choreography in the musical play Oklahoma.

Helen Hayes--a stage and screen actress born in 1900, who was married to playwright Charles MacArthur.

William Randolph Hearst--a journalist and newspaper publisher of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who pioneered in the sensational reporting technique called "yellow journalism."

Audrey Hepburn--a famous actress known for her roles in My Fair Lady and Breakfast at Tiffany's.

Thurgood Marshall--the first African-American associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Dizzy Gillespie--a famous trumpeter who helped create bebop and introduced Cuban rhythms into jazz.

1994 WORLD EVENTS:

The 1994 election near Johannesburg, South Africa was the first ever open to all races in that nation. Nelson Mandela was elected president of South Africa.

On September 19, the United States invaded Haiti. The United Nations had approved the invasion to drive out the military government and to restore the president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been exiled, back to the presidency. This was accomplished without firing a shot.

1994 U.S. EVENTS:

The Whitewater scandal emerged, with Special Prosecutor Robert Fiske appointed by Janet Reno to investigate Bill and Hillary Clinton's possible involvement in a savings and loan scandal.

Parts of Los Angeles were devastated by an earthquake centered in Northridge on January 18.

On June 17, O.J. Simpson attempted to evade police in a chase in his white Ford Bronco as television captured the live drama.

Former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis died of lymphatic cancer at the age of 64.

Former President Richard M. Nixon died at the age of 81. He was president during the Viet Nam War and later resigned from the presidency due to the Watergate scandal.

Science:

The Hubble Telescope discovered incontrovertible evidence of the existence of Black Holes.

Culture:

Yasir Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin were awarded Nobel Prizes for Peace.

Theater:

Composer Stephen Sondheim's Passion was onstage as was Anna Deavere Smith's epic drama Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992.

Movies:

Forrest Gump, directed by Robert Zemeckis, Pulp Fiction, directed by Quentin Tarantino, and Quiz Show, directed by Robert Redford were all in theaters. Other popular movies included: Four Weddings and A Funeral and The Lion King.

Sports:

In the Super Bowl, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Buffalo Bills.

The World Series was canceled this year because the players were on strike.

The U.S. hosted the World Cup for the first time. In this competition, Italy was defeated by Brazil.

Houston Rockets defeated New York Knicks to win the NBA championships.

The Olympics were ongoing in Lillehammer.

Tanya Harding had competitor Nancy Kerrigan attacked. However, she was still able to compete, as was Harding, who sued to avoid disqualification. Iksana Baiul, a Ukrainian skater, won the gold, with Kerrigan placing behind her for second.

45-year-old George Foreman beat Michael Moorer to retake the world heavyweight boxing title.

Notable Obituaries:

Cab Calloway--a Big Band leader.

Kurt Cobain--the lead singer for the rock group Nirvana.

Ralph Ellison--an African-American author noted for his book The Invisible Man, a novel about blacks in America.

Kim Il Sung--the President of North Korea

Eugene Ionesco--a Romanian born French playwright who wrote The Bald

Soprano.

Burt Lancaster--a movie star involved in movies like From Here to Eternity.

Richard Nixon--the former President involved in the Watergate scandal.

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis--First Lady, who was previously married to President John F. Kennedy and later married to shipping magnate, Aristotle Onassis.

Roy J. Plunkett--an inventor who appears in the Inventor's Hall of Fame for

Teflon.

Wilma Rudolph--an African-American track and field star who was the first American woman to win three gold medals in the Olympic Games.

Jessica Tandy--a stage and screen actress who won an Oscar for Driving Miss

Daisy.

Telly Savalas--the star of the television show Kojak.