

Conflict and Independence

The 20th Century since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes (1945–Present)



India and South Asia

China and Southeast Asia

The Middle East

Africa

Latin America

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Religion and thought



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will have learned about the struggles for democracy in Latin America and be able to answer these key questions:

- How did Brazil and Argentina change throughout the 20th century?
- How did Mexico grow economically?
- Why did Latin America witness so many attempted revolutions?



Brazil and Argentina



In Latin America, economic problems were widespread in the 20th century, contributing to the rise of dictatorships and a slow movement toward democracy. Press the buttons to find out about the various changes in government in Brazil and Argentina.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Following the Mexican Revolution, the growth of industry in Mexico became a key focus. In 1929, the **Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)** came to power and its one-party system created the stability necessary for economic growth.

As Mexico boomed, it was plagued by many of the problems of industrialization, including inflation, population growth, rapid urbanization, pollution, crime and corruption.



However, the PRI's management of the economy led to several economic crises, including a huge one in 1994. The PRI's power waned over time until it lost the 2000 election.



In Latin America, political independence had been obtained in the 19th century. However, economic domination by the U.S. and Western powers continued well into the 20th century.



In 1951, **Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán** was elected president in Guatemala. He confronted foreign economic interests, including the largest landowner in the country, the U.S. firm United Fruit Company.

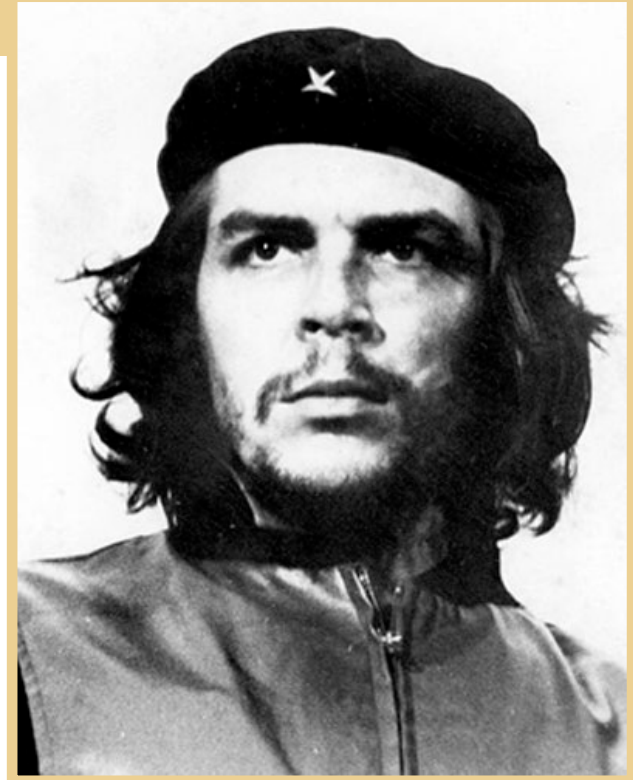
Árbenz's attempts to institute land reform led to a **CIA-** supported military **coup** in 1954. This created a dictatorship that limited rights and ignored the needs of many people.

Are there any parallels with the Cuban Revolution?



Democracy did not always come easily in Latin America. Dictatorships and military governments were common and widespread inequality, poverty and repression meant that revolution attempts were frequent.

Che Guevara was a rebel communist leader from Argentina. He witnessed the overthrow of the Árbenz regime in Guatemala and aided **Fidel Castro** in the **Cuban Revolution**. He tried to spread revolution around the world before his capture and execution while leading a revolt in Bolivia in 1967.



Why was Latin America prone to revolutions?



Several key individuals made important contributions to government and democracy in Latin America.
Can you match each leader to his portrait and description?

Press **start** to begin.

start





The road to independence



Over the second half of the 20th century, many countries have struggled for independence or democracy.



The end of colonialism and many hard-fought conflicts have helped to spread independence and freedom around the world. However, peace and stability are difficult to maintain and wars continue in many places. As a political system, democracy requires certain conditions in order to be successful. Without these conditions, it can be hard to maintain stability.

What conditions are required for democracy to work?



Test your knowledge of decolonization and independence after World War II with this quiz.

Choose the correct answer to each question to see how much you can remember.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Test your understanding of decolonization and independence after World War II by recapping key terms and important people using this glossary. Press on the tabs and then each term to see a definition.

Press **start** to begin.

start

