

## Topic: International Negotiations – Camp David Accord

**Historical Thinking Skills Assessed: Critical Reading, Contextualizing**

**Grade Level:** High

**National History Standards:**

Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the present)

Standard 1: Recent developments in foreign and domestic politics

**Using the Item:** The question assesses students' abilities to use the skills of critical reading and contextualizing to determine the author's purpose in making edits to a draft statement. In this item, students will need to consider the historic nature of the event and the importance of language to convey meaning. Students would have already learned background information about the Camp David Accords and the years of bloody conflict between the two nations.

**Background:** This source is part of a draft signing statement at the historic Camp David Peace Talks between Israel and Egypt in 1979. After years of war between the two countries, the negotiations that led to the agreement was an unprecedented event, and an extremely sensitive one. Tensions were high in both nations, and there was a sense of mistrust that either side may have a hidden agenda. Therefore, the use of language must be carefully constructed because it could influence how the agreement was judged by the public and in the world community.

## Source

3/20/79

President Jimmy Carter  
Draft Signing Statement

We have won, at least, the first step of peace -- a first step on a long and difficult road. We must not minimize the obstacles that lie ahead. Differences still separate the signatories to this treaty from each other and also from some of their neighbors who fear what they have done. To overcome those differences, to dispel those fears, we must rededicate ourselves to the goal of a broader peace <sup>with justice for</sup> ~~that is just to~~ all who have <sup>lived in</sup> ~~suffered~~ <sup>a state of</sup> ~~from decades of~~ conflict in the Middle East.

We have no illusions -- <sup>we have</sup> hopes, dreams, prayers, yes -- but no illusions.

Source: "The Camp David Accords After Twenty Five Years." *Jimmy Carter Library and Museum*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/campdavid25/cda23.pdf>>

### Question 1:

Why did President Carter likely replace the line "that is just for all" with "with justice for all?"

- A. It is less awkward phrasing. (1)
- B. It is a phrase associated with the *Pledge of Allegiance*. (0)
- C. It is more inclusive wording. (2)
- D. **It is a phrase associated with human and civil rights. (4)** [answer cue]

### *Explanation:*

While one might argue that this might be true, "A" does not take into account the historic nature of the statement and the context in which the event took place. Although this is a phrase from the Pledge of Allegiance, "B" has nothing to do with the nature of the statement and is

irrelevant based on their prior learning about the Camp David Accords. “C” is a more likely possibility, in that the purpose of this change may have been to avoid blame considering the nature of the negotiations and past events. “D” is the best response, in that there was a desire on all sides to stop the decades of conflict, and Carter is making a direct connection here to the notion that this peace is an essential just and human right. **[Contextualization]**

Question 2:

Why did President Carter likely replace the line “suffered from decades of conflict in the Middle East” with “lived in a state of conflict in the Middle East?”

- A. It sounds more optimistic. (2)
- B. It sounds less fearful. (4) [answer cue]**
- C. It sounds more scholarly. (0)
- D. It sounds less confrontational. (1)

*Explanation:*

“A” is certainly a possibility in that it eliminates the word “suffered,” but it does not account for the flow of the statement. Carter clearly outlines the differences and sense of fear and confrontation that has occurred, which makes “B” a better answer. “C” has nothing to do with the statement or the audience for whom the statement is intended. While one may argue that it sounds less confrontational, that is not the best term to describe the likely intent of the sentence. **[Critical Reading]**

*(clean item follows)*

## HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS ASSESSMENT

**Directions:** Read the primary source, and circle the response that best answers the questions below.

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