

## Presidential Decision-Making: JFK and the Bay of Pigs

### Presidential Brief: The Cuban Situation

1. Why was Cuba a concern for the United States in the 1950s?
2. Why did Fidel Castro turn to armed struggle against the Batista regime?
3. Why did public opinion turn against Batista?
4. What role did Cuba and the Cold War play in the presidential election of 1960?
5. What important decision must JFK make regarding the situation in Cuba? Why is this decision so important?

### The Plan: Operation Zapata

**Who:** 1400 U.S trained and equipped Cuban exiles  
**What:** Exiles invade Cuban and incite an insurrection to overthrow Fidel Castro  
**Where:** Bay of Pigs, Cuba  
**When:** To Be Determined  
**How:** After landing at the Bay of Pigs, the exiles would march to Havana and overthrow Castro with the help of the Cuban people. Radio propaganda would also be used to encourage Cubans to rise against Castro.  
**Why:** Oppose communism and prevent Castro from aligning with the Soviet Union

### The Task:

What should President Kennedy do about the situation in Cuba? You and your classmates will be helping the President make this decision. Two of your classmates will be representing President Kennedy, while the remainder of the class will assume the role of their advisers. Everyone (including the President himself) will be using primary source documents to help them identify the important factors/consequences the Kennedy must consider in order to make his decision. Follow the instructions on the reverse side of this sheet in order to prepare for an upcoming discussion on the situation in Cuba.