

# Fidel Castro

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidel\\_Castro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidel_Castro)



Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz (August 13, 1926 – November 25, 2016) was a Cuban politician and revolutionary who ruled Cuba for 47 years, first as Prime Minister (1959 to 1976) and then as President (1976 to 2006). His brother Raul took over in 2008.

Under his rule Cuba became a one-party Socialist state in which all industries were nationalised and private companies banned.

According to The Guardian of 27<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Castro was:

“with Che Guevara, his one-time comrade-in-arms,... the man who made revolutions sexy. With his wild beard, olive-green military fatigues, darkly petulant good looks and trademark cigars, El Comandante became the anachronistically glamorous face of left-wing totalitarianism. He was Marxism-Leninism’s poster boy, a revolutionary enfant terrible and, in a cold war firmament of red stars, the most brilliant, shining – and long-lived – exemplar of recklessly unrepentant revolutionary zeal.”

Castro was born in Birán, Oriente> He was the son of a sugarcane farm owner originally from Galicia, Spain. He studied law at the University of Havana but became involved in political activities in the early 1950s. He was an opponent of the then Cuban President Fulgencio Batista and tried to overthrow him in 1953. He was arrested and sent to prison for one year. Then he travelled to Mexico where he met Che Guevara, the Mexican revolutionary leader. Castro then returned to Cuba where he led the campaign against the military dictatorship of Batista. Batista had tortured and imprisoned his opponents but was supported by the United States of America.

After a civil war, Castro and the Communist Party overthrew Batista in 1959. Castro became Prime Minister and Cuba became the first Communist country in the West. He said he wanted to abolish illiteracy and cut corruption. The United States supported attempts by exiled Cubans to overthrow the Castro government and the CIA tried to stop the Communist revolution in Cuba by assassination attempts. The USA imposed an economic blockade and backed an attempted invasion in 1961 (The Bay of Pigs invasion). When Castro allowed Russia to place nuclear weapons in Cuba in 1962 this nearly led to a third world war. America refused to trade with Cuba and Castro became dependent on other South American states and Russia. After the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe from 1989 to 1991 Cuba became increasingly poor and began to go backwards economically with frequent shortages of food, petrol and electricity. Many people began to leave for America.

The situation began to improve with the election of Barack Obama. America started to trade with Cuba again and foreign tourists were allowed to visit the country. The Cuban economy is improving and life is not so hard for ordinary people. People are now allowed to have second jobs working for themselves such as repairing cars.

## Activity A – Vocabulary

Use your dictionary to find the meaning of the following words:

- revolutionary
- fatigues
- petulant
- anachronistically
- totalitarianism
- firmament
- unrepentant
- blockade

## Activity B – Reading Comprehension

1. Where and when was Fidel Castro born?

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2. Where was he educated?

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3. Why did he become a revolutionary?

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4. When did he become Prime Minister of Cuba?

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5. What were his political beliefs?

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6. How did the United States try to remove Castro from power?

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7. What happened in 1961?

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8. What event nearly led to war in 1962?

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9. What events in Europe made Cuba poorer?

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10. Which other revolutionary leader was Castro associated with?

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## Activity C – Create a timeline

Use the Internet (especially Wikipedia) to create a timeline for Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution.

Use the following as an example:

1926	Fidel Castro born
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## Activity D – Writing or Discussion

Read the text on Fidel Castro and then answer the following:

- Why did Fidel Castro turn to revolutionary politics?
- What do you think life might have been like for ordinary Cubans?

### Functional Skills L1-L2 English mapping

Coverage and range statements provide an indication of the type of content candidates are expected to apply in functional contexts. Relevant content can also be drawn from equivalent (school) National Curriculum levels and the Adult Literacy standards.

✓ indicates the main coverage and range skills that are (or can be) covered in this resource. However, these will vary with the student group and how the resource is used by the teacher. **Reference:** Ofqual (2009), *Functional Skills criteria for English: Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, level 1 and level 2*. <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

**Level 1 Reading** **Skill standard (SS):** Read and understand a range of straightforward texts

#### Coverage and range statements

- a) Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts ✓
- b) Read and understand texts in detail ✓
- c) Utilise information contained in texts ✓
- d) Identify suitable responses to texts

**Level 1 Writing** **(SS):** Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions, using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience

- a) Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail ✓
- b) Present information in a logical sequence ✓
- c) Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience
- d) Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense
- e) Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation / spelling and that meaning is clear

**Level 1 Speaking, Listening and Communication** **(SS):** Take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects

- a) Make relevant and extended contributions to discussions, allowing for and responding to others' input
- b) Prepare for and contribute to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions ✓
- c) Make different kinds of contributions to discussions
- f) Present information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language

**Level 2 Reading** **(SS):** Select, read, understand and compare texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions

- a) Select and use different types of texts to obtain and utilise relevant information ✓
- b) Read and summarise, succinctly, information/ideas from different sources ✓
- c) Identify the purposes of texts and comment on how meaning is conveyed
- d) Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias
- e) Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses

**Level 2 Writing** **(SS):** Write a range of texts, including extended written documents, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively

- a) Present information on complex subjects clearly and concisely ✓
- b) Present information/ideas concisely, logically, and persuasively
- c) Use a range of writing styles for different purposes
- d) Use a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences, and paragraphs to organise written communication effectively
- e) Punctuate written text using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately
- f) Ensure written work is fit for purpose and audience, with accurate spelling and grammar that supports clear meaning

**Level 2 Speaking, Listening and Communication** **(SS):** Make a range of contributions to discussions in a range of contexts, including those that are unfamiliar, and make effective presentations

- a) Consider complex information and give a relevant, cogent response in appropriate language ✓
- b) Present information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others
- c) Adapt contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation
- d) Make significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward

\* This resource also covers many adult literacy curriculum <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/content/etf1286> elements.