Ronald Reagan

1981 - 1989
Pre-Presidency

- Prior to becoming president, Reagan attended Eureka College and majored in sociology and economics.
- In 1937, he enlisted in the army and was soon promoted to 2nd Lieutenant.
- Reagan was promoted to Captain on July 22, 1940, and was discharged from the army on December 9, 1945.
- Between 1945 and 1965, Reagan starred in 53 movies.
- His political career began with "A Time for Choosing," a nationally television speech for Arizona's senator Barry Goldwater.
- In 1966, Reagan defeated governor Edmund Brown and became the governor of California. He was re-elected in 1970.
- Reagan announced his candidacy for President in 1979, and was sworn into office on November 4, 1980.
Chief Legislator

- Reagan vetoed a total of 78 bills during his two terms in office, and only 8 vetoes were overturned.
- Tax Reform Act of 1986 - Top tax rate lowered from 50% to 28%, bottom rate was raised 11% to 15%.

As Chief Legislator, Reagan deserves an A-. Most of the bills he passed were generally beneficial to the American people.
Guardian of the Economy

- During Reagan's presidency, unemployment in the U.S. decreased from 7.1% to 5.5%.
- Used Reaganomics to reduce government spending, reduce income tax rates, reduce government regulation, and control money supply to reduce inflation.
- Sustained growth of the economy.

As Guardian of the Economy, Reagan deserves a solid A. His work to lower income tax and work with Reaganomics helped improve the performance of the U.S. economy during his time in office. Reagan also maintained a high approval rating throughout his presidency.
Reagan's foreign policy was "peace through strength". He organized meetings with foreign leaders in the U.S.S.R. and China to resolve potential nuclear conflicts. He signed the Intermediate-Ranged Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987 with the U.S.S.R which required that all missiles with ranges between 300 and 35,000 be eliminated by June 1, 1991. A total of 2,692 missiles were eliminated. On June 1987, Reagan made a famous speech challenging Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall.

As Chief Diplomat, Reagan deserves an A. His method of handling the rising tension between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. was non-violent. He used tactics such as negotiations and speeches as opposed to violence and war.
Commander-in-Chief

• During Reagan's presidency, the U.S. funded anti-Communist insurgents in an attempt to bring down Communism. This was known as the Reagan Doctrine.

• The Reagan administration sponsored the anti-Sandinista movement known as the Contras against the socialist Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

• In 1983, Reagan proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative "Star Wars."

As Commander-in-Chief, Reagan deserves a B+. Although he did defeat Communism, the tactics he used included supporting rebelling non-communist groups. Many viewed this as funding terrorism. Nevertheless, Reagan protected the American people as best he could.
Head of State

- Reagan's most famous appearance was in Berlin where he declared, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"
- Another famous speech of Reagan was his 40th Anniversary D-Day speech.
- On January 28, 1986, the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after takeoff. Reagan commemorated the seven astronauts killed on board in his famous speech "The Challenger Explosion."

As Head of State, Reagan deserves an A. His speeches brought America together in times of despair, and his mastery of the English language allowed a peaceful settlement between the U.S. and U.S.S.R.
Chief of Party

- The greatest indicator that Reagan fulfilled his role as the Chief of Party successfully is the fact that he was elected to a second term in office. He won the electoral vote in 49 of the 50 states.
- After his two terms as president, his vice president, George H. W. Bush was elected president.
- Reagan helped many republicans get into office.

As Chief of Party, Reagan deserves an A. He stayed true to the Republic party, and helped Republicans get into office.
Chief Executive

- During Reagan's 8 years as president, the government mostly functioned well.
- At the distaste of his conservative supporters, he appointed Sandra Day O'Conner to the Supreme Court.
- One of the Chief Executive's jobs is to enforce federal laws. Reagan fired 11,359 federal air traffic controllers due to their involvement in an illegal strike. He felt that they had to be fired because they were endangering public safety.

As Chief Executive, Reagan deserves an A-. He fulfilled his role as he saw fit, although not everyone agreed with the firing of the air traffic controllers. He appointed supreme court judges, and designed a budget that led to the growth of the economy.
Reagan's Overall Grade

Overall, Reagan deserves a solid A. He peacefully defeated Communism, though in controversial ways. He fulfilled all of his duties as president to the best of his ability, and maintained a high approval rating. The economy grew due to a revised budget and a decrease in taxes, and the unemployment rate decreased during his presidency. His speeches were motivational and portrayed America in a good light. The legislation that he passed benefited almost all Americans. Reagan always worked in the best interest of the American people, and for this, he should receive a grade of no lower than an A.
Sources


Sources cont.

