

# Grade 9 Answer

## Explain Importance

8  
Marks

### Question:

Explain the importance of the Berlin Blockade (1948–49) for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union. (8 marks)

### Answer:

The Berlin Blockade (1948–49) was important for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union because it significantly escalated Cold War tensions and solidified the division between East and West Germany. After World War II, Germany was divided into zones controlled by the Allied powers, with Berlin, located within the Soviet zone, similarly split into Allied sectors. In response to Western plans to establish a separate West German state and introduce a new currency, Stalin attempted to force the Western Allies out of Berlin by blocking all rail, road, and canal access to the city. This led the Western Allies, led by the USA, to organize the Berlin Airlift, flying in food, fuel, and supplies to support the citizens of West Berlin. The airlift lasted nearly a year, demonstrating U.S. commitment to opposing Soviet expansion and supporting the people of Berlin. This successful operation humiliated the Soviet Union, as it failed to force Western powers out of Berlin.

The blockade and subsequent airlift also solidified Germany's division and marked a turning point in U.S.-Soviet relations. Following the blockade, the Western Allies established the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in 1949, while the Soviets created the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), formalizing Germany's division. This event directly led to the formation of NATO in 1949, as Western powers sought to create a collective security arrangement to counter any further Soviet aggression. Thus, the Berlin Blockade not only heightened hostilities between the superpowers but also led to the division of Europe into two opposing military and ideological blocs, setting the stage for the prolonged Cold War that followed.

### Feedback:

This answer would get 8/8 marks because the pupil has explained and analysed the importance and included accurate and relevant knowledge.

