**Bay of Pigs**  
1. What did the author suggest was the reasoning behind JFK’s decision to launch the Bay of Pigs invasion?

JFK's motivations for starting the Bay of Pigs invasion are still unclear, but he acted because he could not allow a hostile communist state to exist near to Florida. In this case, the author posits that… “it appeared, his first real opportunity to strike a blow at the communist world when to do otherwise would be an admission of defeat having serious long-range consequences” (6). Therefore, JFK launched the invasion to defeat the state against communists.  
2. Who was Richard Bissell, what was his background, what other operations, concerning other countries, did he oversee, what was his position in the CIA, and what role did he play in the Bay of Pigs invasion?

Bissell was a brilliant economist who received his education at Yale.

He also held important government posts and performed duties like those of the War Shipping Administration, which made it possible for him to attend the negotiations in Yalta, Potsdam, and Quebec. According to the author, Bissell… “worked with the Ford Foundation before accepting a CIA position in 1954 as Dulles’s special assistance, where he helped develop the U-2 spy plane” (13-14)    
3. Castro engaged in what activities that caused some to believe Castro was in fact a Communist?

Castro engaged in various activities that caused some people to believe that he was a communist. First, he waged military campaigns to spread the revolution to neighboring Latin American nations and delivered vehement anti-American tirades. Second, the author posits that “Castro had a general Marxist orientation …. to realize that popularity at home lay in denouncing America…” (12). Third, Castro frequently criticized the United States while relying on Soviet security.  
4. What were the two approaches the US considered for regime change in Cuba? What was Richard Nixon’s role? To what was Bissell referring when he proposed a “gangster-type action”?

The US considered assassination and war as the two approaches for regime change in Cuba. Bissell intended to eliminate individuals through the gangster-type action as he instructs the chief to “develop the means for either disabling or getting rid of the target figure” (14) Nixon on the other hand was a ardent supporter.  
5. What were the Eisenhower administration’s views on Castro and Cuba, and how did its plans evolve? What key administration people were involved with the invasion’s planning?

            The main choices to isolate and overthrow the Castro regime and Cuba were made during the Eisenhower administration. As part of the plan the administration “… issued a note supported by Bissell, Dulles, approved in a mid-December recommendation by the head of the agency’s Western Hemisphere Division Colonel Joseph C. king, to consider the elimination of Fidel Castro” (13).  
6. How did the Soviet Union become involved? What were the early actions and comments by   
the Soviet primer Nikita Khrushchev?

In response, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev increased American anxiety while bragging to the world press in Moscow about his new communist comrade and issued an ominous warning to the US. The author posits that “the short and rotund leaders soon made clear that he was capable of overly dramatic if not unbalanced behavior, constantly searching for that chink in the American armor he might exploit in the growing Cold war”. (18).  
   
7. As the planning developed for the projected what were the difficulties and issues that hindered the operation?

 The goal of the bombings was to eliminate the remainder of Castro's air force and provide a doorway for the amphibious daybreak invasion of soldiers. The author asserts that Kennedy effectively ended the invasion when he halted those airstrikes. "Half of Castro's aircraft were still in service." (33)  
8. What were President Kennedy’s concerns about Project Trinidad? Were these concerns military, political (foreign relations), or both?

President John F. Kennedy and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States thought that Fidel Castro would be deposed as a consequence of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

The political nature of President Kennedy's worries regarding Project Trinidad stemmed from his desire to hire the most qualified professionals to help with the aim of combating communism (50). However, the operation that took place over the course of the following five days ended up being one of the worst military blunders in American history.  
9. Why did the military refrain from vigorously criticizing the lack of strong air cover, in particular, and the overall plan in general?

The military refrained from questioning lack of strong air cover because it was the president himself who had cancelled the airstrike. The author posits that the “US President John F Kennedy cancelled at the last minute the US air strikes that would have neutralized Castro's aviation” (51). The president did so because he thought it was impossible that the United States was behind the invasion.  
   
10. Who was responsible for forcing massive changes to the invasion plan which caused the invasion site to be moved, and why?

The assault location had to be shifted as a result of the CIA's substantial revisions that were imposed on the invasion plan. The CIA developed a strategy to enlist Miami-area-based exiles from Cuba. Additionally, it would prepare and arm the exiles to enter Cuba and launch a revolution.

11. What were the three main points that Bissell either did not mention to President Kennedy,  
or else Bissell discounted as being unimportant concerning the movement of the landing site to

Zapata?

Bissell did not mention to the president that he had chosen two men to direct the invasion. In addition, he did not mention to the president the possibility of the mission ending as a total disaster although he had foreseen the outcome. (58) Bissell did not also mention to the president that Dulles was not present during the invasion.     
12. Presidential Advisor Schlesinger warned Kennedy against the invasion. What were his main concerns?

A few hours earlier, presidential advisor Schlesinger cautioned Kennedy against the invasion. The advisor had warned him that the Bay of Pigs assault by the Cuban exile army would fail in the absence of American military support. (67)    
13. Who fired the first shot of the invasion, where, and why? Why was this important?

American planes departed Nicaragua to launch the invasion's first salvo by hitting Cuba airfields. (100) The bombers who followed CIA instructions painted their aircraft to resemble Cuban air force aircraft. The majority of Castro's air force was unharmed, and the bombers failed to hit several of their intended objectives.

14. What did Castro believe was the key to his defense?  The "Yankee imperialists'" use of an    invasion to bolster Castro's position of power in Cuba and further Soviet military assistance were crucial components of his defensive strategy. 102

15. Most of those who participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion blame whom?

Why?

       Even before the first shot was fired, the 1961 invasion of the Bay of Pigs was bound to fail and therefore, the Brigade holds Washington accountable. US President John F. Kennedy abruptly postponed the US airstrikes that would have destroyed Castro's aircraft from the White House.    
Page 123

 16. What were the failures of the CIA according to the author?   
           Coral reefs in the shallow Bay of Pigs seas that slowed down landing craft and rendered two boats inoperable had gone unnoticed by CIA analysts.

In addition, a CIA's frogman's red signal light unintentionally flashed offshore. (126)   
 17. According to the author what were Kennedy’s failings in his handling of the invasion?

Kennedy rejected the notion of direct strikes by U.S. aircraft, even though the CIA and the U.S. Navy begged him to deploy U.S. Air Force fighters to shoot down Castro's planes and open a supply channel for the stranded soldiers. Instead, he gave the go-ahead for six unmarked American Skyhawk fighters from the nearby aircraft carrier U.S.S. Essex to provide cover for an hour. As a result, the aircraft were unable to provide any defense. (127) The president also decided against launching a second wave of airstrikes to eliminate the remainder of Castro's air force and provide a route for the amphibious morning invasion.  
18. What was the Taylor inquiry, and whom did it blame for the failure at the Bay of Pigs?

The Taylor Inquiry was a report from an investigation into the reasons behind the Hillsborough catastrophe, which resulted in many fatalities and was presided over by Lord Justice Taylor. Kennedy said that the Bay of Pigs was to blame for the disaster and accepted full responsibility.  
Page 146   
 19. Disregarding the question of whether the United States should have supported Cuban regime change, who, in your opinion, bares most of the responsibility for the failure of the operation? Support your argument with quotes from the text.

I think that since President Kennedy did not apply the right strategies, the invasion failed. He canceled an airstrike that would have supported the assault, for instance. Additionally, the assault could not be kept a secret by the president, thus Cuba began to prepare for the invasion. For example, the author noted that “the new aggressive direction in American foreign policy became evident to some advisers outside the CIA, for at a Pentagon meeting …” (15) for this reason, the advisors considered the move extremely grave and warned against reckless actions.