International politics

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each advanced term with its definition.

1 multipolarity ____	**a** a global system with several roughly comparable centres of power, rather than one or two dominant states
2 hegemonic stability ____	**b** the theory that a single dominant power can provide stability by enforcing international order
3 security dilemma ____	**c** a dynamic where one state's defensive measures make others feel less secure, prompting an arms race
4 liberal internationalism ____	**d** a foreign policy approach favouring cooperation, institutions and shared rules among democracies
5 great power competition ____	**e** sustained rivalry between major world powers for global or regional influence
6 strategic ambiguity ____	**f** the deliberate avoidance of a clear public commitment, to preserve flexibility or deter adversaries
7 rules-based order ____	**g** an international system in which state behaviour is expected to follow agreed norms and institutions
8 revisionist power ____	**h** a state seeking to change the existing international order rather than accept it
9 containment ____	**i** a strategy of preventing a rival power's expansion without direct confrontation
10 spillover effect ____	**j** an unintended consequence of a policy or conflict extending beyond its original context

2 Choose the most precise term for each context.

1 A world with several comparable power centres is multipolarity / a single superpower.

2 The theory that one dominant power provides stability is hegemonic stability / chaotic disorder.

3 A dynamic where defence measures reduce others' sense of security is the security dilemma / mutual trust.

4 A policy favouring cooperation and shared institutions is liberal internationalism / isolationism.

5 Sustained rivalry between major powers is great power competition / minor diplomatic friction.

6 Deliberately avoiding a clear public commitment is strategic ambiguity / explicit clarity.

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7 A state seeking to change the existing order is a revisionist power / a status quo power.

8 An unintended consequence extending beyond its original context is a spillover effect / a contained outcome.

3 Match the verbs with the noun phrases to form academic collocations.

1 destabilise ____	**a** the rules-based order
2 uphold ____	**b** a strategic vulnerability
3 contest ____	**c** foreign policy priorities
4 mitigate ____	**d** a security dilemma
5 exploit ____	**e** regional stability
6 recalibrate ____	**f** great power intervention
7 legitimise ____	**g** the prevailing order
8 escalate ____	**h** a proxy conflict

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4 Complete the analysis with terms from the box.

containment | great power competition | hegemonic stability | liberal internationalism | multipolarity | revisionist power | rules-based order | security dilemma | spillover effect | strategic ambiguity

International relations scholars increasingly debate whether the emerging era of 1 _____, characterised by several roughly comparable centres of power, will prove more or less stable than earlier periods dominated by a single power, a question closely tied to theories of 2 _____. Renewed 3 _____ has revived concern about the classic 4 _____, whereby military build-up intended purely defensively is perceived by rivals as threatening, prompting reciprocal escalation. Proponents of 5 _____ continue to defend the value of a 6 _____ built on shared institutions and agreed norms, even as a 7 _____ challenges specific elements of that arrangement. Some governments deliberately maintain 8 _____ regarding contested issues, preserving flexibility while avoiding outright confrontation. Historical strategies of 9 _____, once central to Cold War thinking, remain influential in contemporary policy debates, even as regional conflicts increasingly generate significant 10 _____ that complicate efforts to contain disputes within their original borders.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Order and disorder in a multipolar world

Scholars debating the stability of an emerging multipolar order draw on competing theoretical traditions with sharply different predictions. Hegemonic stability theory suggests that a single dominant power, willing and able to enforce rules, tends to produce a more predictable international system, implying that multipolarity may introduce greater instability as competing powers contest the existing rules-based order. Critics of this view counter that concentrated power in a single hegemon carries its own risks, including the temptation towards unilateral action unconstrained by genuine accountability. Proponents of a more distributed, multipolar system argue that multiple centres of power can provide mutual checks, provided sufficient institutional mechanisms exist to manage the resulting security dilemmas and prevent isolated disputes from escalating into broader great power competition.

1 What do scholars debating multipolar stability draw on? _____

2 What does hegemonic stability theory suggest? _____

3 What might multipolarity introduce, according to this theory? _____

4 What risk do critics say concentrated power in a single hegemon carries? _____

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5 What do proponents of a multipolar system argue? _____

6 What is required for this to work, according to proponents? _____

6 Replace the words in bold with a precise term or collocation.

1 The world now has several roughly comparable centres of power. _____

2 The country deliberately avoided a clear public commitment on the issue. _____

3 The state sought to change the existing international order. _____

4 The regional conflict produced effects that extended beyond its original borders. _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 160-190 word critical commentary on how a multipolar world affects international stability, distinguishing observation from inference and evaluating competing theories.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Include four academic collocations. [ ] Maintain a precise, balanced register.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Advanced terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Precise terms

1 multipolarity 2 hegemonic stability 3 the security dilemma 4 liberal internationalism 5 great power competition 6 strategic ambiguity 7 a revisionist power 8 a spillover effect

3 Academic collocations

1 e destabilise regional stability... note adjust 2 g uphold the prevailing order 3 a contest the rules-based order 4 d mitigate a security dilemma
5 b exploit a strategic vulnerability 6 c recalibrate foreign policy priorities 7 f legitimise great power intervention 8 h escalate a proxy conflict

4 Analysis

1 multipolarity 2 hegemonic stability 3 great power competition 4 security dilemma
5 liberal internationalism 6 rules-based order 7 revisionist power 8 strategic ambiguity
9 containment 10 spillover effect

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 Competing theoretical traditions with sharply different predictions.
2 That a single dominant power, willing and able to enforce rules, tends to produce a more predictable international system.
3 Greater instability, as competing powers contest the existing rules-based order.
4 The temptation towards unilateral action unconstrained by genuine accountability.
5 That multiple centres of power can provide mutual checks.
6 Sufficient institutional mechanisms to manage security dilemmas and prevent isolated disputes from escalating.

6 Precise terms and collocations

1 multipolarity 2 strategic ambiguity 3 a revisionist power 4 a spillover effect

Over to you

Answers will vary. Look for conceptual precision, evidence-aware reasoning and balanced evaluation.