

1. AMERICA BECOMES A WORLD POWER

OVERVIEW OF THE VIDEO

While Progressive leaders showed their distrust of power in their dealings with large corporations at home, they still grasped the growing need for national power in world relations at the beginning of the 20th century. The U.S. Navy had built up its muscles in the Far East and the Caribbean. The Spanish-American War set the stage for the United States to become the watchdog for the entire Western Hemisphere. The presidencies of McKinley, T. Roosevelt, Pierce, and Wilson demonstrated different approaches toward involving America in foreign affairs. The United States was on its way to becoming a world power.



NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

(From The National Center for History in the Schools, 1996. Found at: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/nchs/standards/>)

U.S. History—Era 7—Standard 2:

The changing role of the United States in world affairs through World War I

2A—The student understands how the American role in the world changed in the early 20th century.

VOCABULARY

annexation
Big Stick Diplomacy
blockade
Boxer Rebellion
concentration camp

de facto
Dollar Diplomacy
expansion
Great White Fleet
imperialism

isolationist
Moral Diplomacy
Open Door Policy
Ragtime
Roughrider
Yellow Journalism

“To ‘protect the weak’ has always been the excuse of the ruler and tax-gatherer, the chief, the king, the baron; and now, at last, of the white man’.”

—Jane Addams,
Founder of Hull-
House in Chicago
(1899)

BEFORE THE VIDEO

Review the major events in U.S. and world history from 1865 to 1900 before beginning the video. (These events are summarized briefly at the beginning of the episode.) Emphasize:

- ★ America’s growing desire for products from around the world, such as coffee from Brazil, silk from Italy and China, or tin from Malaysia.
- ★ How sectional rivalry over the slavery issue prior to the Civil War had so consumed the U.S. Congress that President Pierce’s efforts to annex Hawaii and buy Cuba, Alaska, and all of Lower California were continually stymied.
- ★ The size of the U.S. Navy during the Spanish-American War, and how U.S. political and naval leaders felt about it.
- ★ The nation’s emerging interest in foreign affairs.

DURING THE VIDEO

There are natural PAUSE POINTS within this episode that separate the content into sections. Pause the video at these times for class discussion, using the following questions as springboards.

1. TIME CODE 06:16—What are the reasons Expansionists gave for wanting America to become a world power, and what was the main reason Anti-Imperialists were opposed to it?

ANSWER: Expansionists felt that it would help the nation’s economy by allowing us to gather more raw materials and markets around the world; that we needed a military strength to defend those markets; and that we had a “God-given duty” to civilize the inferior races of the world by spreading Christianity. Those opposed to creating an American empire saw the expansion agenda as a threat to the American values of self-governance and independence.

2. TIME CODE 10:03—What were the three different methods America used to expand its influence in Japan, Alaska, and Hawaii?

ANSWER: America used the threat of force to open trade with Japan, but it purchased Alaska from the Russians and annexed Hawaii after fomenting a revolution among the settlers that overthrew the queen.

3. TIME CODE 23:47—What role did Spain’s General “Butcher” Weyler play in involving the United States in the situation in Cuba?

ANSWER: When Cuban rebels began agitating for independence, Weyler ordered all Cubans to concentrate themselves in the towns. Thousands died of disease and starvation. The United States was naturally sympathetic to another American revolution, and the yellow press kept all Americans informed of the atrocities.

AFTER THE VIDEO

The episode ends with an on-screen Video Quiz, a series of True/False questions (see page 6). This quiz may be copied for classroom use.

Video Quiz Answer Key

1. *T* 2. *F* 3. *F* 4. *T* 5. *F* 6. *T* 7. *T* 8. *F* 9. *F* 10. *T*

For in-depth discussion:

1. What were the terms of the Monroe Doctrine? How did Grover Cleveland use the spirit if not the intent of the doctrine to his favor in Venezuela? How did Theodore Roosevelt stretch the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine in the Dominican Republic?
2. Could American newspapers today shape public opinion on a foreign policy issue to the extent that a war would result, as happened with the Spanish in Cuba?
3. How does America's behavior in the Philippines after the Spanish-American War compare to Spain's behavior in Cuba?

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Research topics for either group or individual study.

1. **Time, Continuity, and Change.** Create a three-part chart comparing and contrasting Japan of the early 19th century (prior to the influence of Commodore Matthew Perry and the opening of trade with the West) with Japan of the early 20th century and the post-Marshall Plan Japan of the late 20th century. Your chart should address the culture, health, technology, and economy of the nation.
2. **Viewpoints.** Why didn't President Woodrow Wilson recognize Huerta's government of Mexico *de facto*? How might Teddy Roosevelt with his Big Stick Diplomacy or Taft with his Dollar Diplomacy have handled the events in Mexico differently? Would you consider Wilson successful in his dealings with Mexico? Why or why not?
3. **Political Perspectives.** How did President McKinley's Secretary of State, John Hay, use Great Britain to help push through America's Open Door Policy? In what ways did this policy benefit all the countries involved, and in what ways was it a tool to further U.S. political and economic self-interests? Did the U.S. government's response to the Boxer Rebellion fit in with the spirit of the Open Door Policy?
4. **Presidential Focus.** Investigate William Howard Taft's effectiveness as Governor General of the Philippines. What reforms did he put in place? What was his stand on colonizing the Philippine Islands? Compare his effectiveness in the Philippines to his effectiveness as President of the United States and, ultimately, his effectiveness as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

*“The Hawaiian
pear is now
fully ripe, and
this is the gold-
en hour for the
United States to
pluck it.”*

—John L. Stevens,
U.S. Ambassador to
Hawaii (1893)

*“You furnish
the pictures and
I’ll furnish the
war.”*

—William Randolph
Hearst, publisher/
owner of *The New
York Journal*, in a
cable to Fredric
Remington, artist, in
Cuba (1898)

- 5. History and Technology.** On August 15, 1914, the Panama Canal opened. Research the remarkable engineering feat of this waterway. How do canals operate? How many miles are saved in an ocean journey from Florida to California by taking the canal instead of circumnavigating South America? How much does it cost to travel through the canal? Who owns the canal now? When did the United States cede its rights to the waterway? What are some interesting facts and stories associated with the Panama Canal?
- 6. Signs of the Times.** Investigate the “comic wars” between the *New York World* and the *New York Journal* that surrounded the character The Yellow Kid. How did the argument start? Who was the cartoonist? What influence did this first comic strip have on American society?
- 7. Curriculum Connections (Music).** What elements defining Ragtime made it such a departure from traditional styles? Who are some recognized composers of Ragtime music? Find a recording of Ragtime music and listen to the syncopated melody line with the steady, on-the-beat bass line. Try to duplicate the beat by clapping or beating a drum.
- 8. Your Region in History.** Check the archives of a newspaper in your area that was in print at the beginning of the 20th century. What stand, if any, did that newspaper take on the Spanish-American War in its opinions/editorial sections?
- 9. Career exploration (Secretary of State).** John Hay was a very powerful secretary of state, serving under both Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. What are the official duties of this cabinet position? Name some other powerful secretaries of state throughout our nation’s history.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Three remarkable families’ lives become entwined with Henry Ford, Harry Houdini, J.P. Morgan, Theodor Dreiser, Sigmund Freud, and Emiliano Zapata at the turn of the 20th century.

Haley, P. Edward. *Revolution and Intervention: The Diplomacy of Taft and Wilson with Mexico, 1910–1917*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970.

American response to foreign revolution is the theme of this diplomatic history of the attitudes and policies of U.S. Presidents Taft and Wilson toward revolt in Mexico. (Out of print)

Harrington, Peter. *China 1900: The Eyewitnesses Speak: The Experience of Westerners in China*. London: Greenhill Books/Lionel Leventhal, 2000.

Combines eighteen rare first-hand accounts by Western and Japanese soldiers and civilians of the entire course of the Boxer Rebellion—from the opening shots in June and the punitive expeditions to the Allied occupation of 1901.

Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*. New York: Modern Library, 2002.

In this sequel to his Pulitzer Prize-winning biography *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, Morris charts Teddy Roosevelt's accomplishments: the acquisition of the Panama Canal and the Philippines, the creation of national parks and monuments, and more.



Perry, Matthew C. *Narrative of the Expedition to the China Seas and Japan, 1852–1854*. New York: Dover, 2000.

Based on Commodore Perry's journals and supplemented with journal entries from members of his crew and official documents and reports, this account of the opening of Japan is enhanced with more than 200 rare illustrations.

Zimmerman, Warren. *First Great Triumph*. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2002.

The author of this book argues that the “consequences right up to today” of American expansionism between the 1880s and 1910s “owes a great deal to” the five fathers of modern American imperialism: corporate lawyer Elihu Root, naval strategist Alfred T. Mahan, U.S. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Secretary of State John Hay, and politician Theodore Roosevelt.

VIDEO QUIZ: AMERICA BECOMES A WORLD POWER

Name _____

Date _____

Read each of the following statements and circle T if it is true, or F if it is false.

- T F 1. Factors motivating U.S. expansionism were economic interests, desire for military strength, and belief in the “White Man’s Burden.”
- T F 2. After the Civil War, the United States adopted an isolationist policy.
- T F 3. Vietnam was believed to be an ideal location for U.S. ships to refuel.
- T F 4. The queen of Hawaii had to surrender her throne so that the United States could make the land its own territory.
- T F 5. The land of Alaska was given to the United States as a gift from Russia.
- T F 6. Establishing refueling ports in the Atlantic Ocean was key to U.S. expansionist strategy.
- T F 7. The explosion of the USS *Maine* battleship was a large factor in America’s declaration of war against Spain.
- T F 8. The United States wanted to guarantee equal trading rights in an “Open Door Policy” with Cuba.
- T F 9. Members of the Fists of Righteous Harmony, the Boxers, were fighting to maintain foreign influence in China.
- T F 10. President Theodore Roosevelt sent U.S. warships, known as the Great White Fleet, on a world tour to show naval strength.