

Imperialism DBQ

Background

Since the days of George Washington and the Monroe Doctrine, the United States had firmly adhered to a policy of Isolationism – the stance that America would remain isolated from the rest of the world in all political and military matters. Isolation allowed the US to flourish without fear of European interference, and the country grew from a series of sparsely populated states hugging the Atlantic coast to a large, industrial nation spreading from sea to “shining sea.”

Between the Civil War and the First World War, the United States abandoned that long-held isolationist policy and joined the world of international politics and power. The US became an imperialist nation – a collector of colonies and protectorates around the world. The question is,

What were the motives for American imperialism?

In a well-organized essay, **discuss each motive**. Provide examples from the documents and your outside knowledge to illustrate each motive.

Requirements (use the DBQ activity outline to complete this “essay”):

- Answer the questions associated with each document.
 - A thesis statement.
 - Use at least six of the documents in your essay.
 - When you use information from a document, you must cite that document. You can do that in either of these two ways:
 - **As part of the sentence,**

i.e., "As shown in Document 2, the U.S. regarded itself as Cuba's..."
 - **In parentheses after you've used the information,**

i.e., "...President McKinley thought of the Filipinos as ...(Doc. 11)."
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Thesis defined:

The **thesis statement** is a type of assertion—something that you claim is true about your topic. Keep in mind that although the thesis is called a statement, it may consist of more than one grammatical sentence. Most of the time, however, a thesis is a simple declarative sentence with a single main clause.

Since the essays you will write are a combination of the expository, analytical, and argumentative forms, your thesis must address the aspect of these multiple forms. As a result, your thesis statement must encompass the following:

- An assertion of what you are going to explain, analyze, prove, or disprove (make sure this assertion addresses the prompt in full and stays within any parameters established by the prompt such as time, people, and or place.)
- The categories/reasoning you are using to organize/support your explanation/assertion.
- The order in which you will be presenting your categories.
- A simple formula for your thesis is:

What you plan to argue + How you plan to argue it = Thesis

Examples:

Prompt: Compare and contrast the reasons why the North and South fought the Civil War.

- **A bad thesis:** The North and South fought the Civil War for many reasons, some of which were the same and some different.
 - This basically restates the question without providing any additional information. It is important that the reader know where you are heading. "What reasons? How are they the same? How are they different?" Push your comparison toward an interpretation--why did one side think slavery was right and the other think it was wrong?
- **A better thesis:** While both sides fought the Civil War over the issue of slavery, the North fought for moral reasons while the South fought to preserve its own institutions.
- **An even better thesis:** While both Northerners and Southerners believed they fought against tyranny and oppression, Northerners focused on the oppression of slaves while Southerners defended their own rights to property and self-government.

DOCUMENT 1

Inaugural Address of Theodore Roosevelt; March 4, 1905

Much has been given us, and much will rightfully be expected from us. We have duties to others and duties to ourselves; and we can shirk neither. We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with the other nations of the earth, and we must behave as beseems a people with such responsibilities. Toward all other nations, large and small, our attitude must be one of cordial and sincere friendship. We must show not only in our words, but in our deeds, that we are earnestly desirous of securing their good will by acting toward them in a spirit of just and generous recognition of all their rights. But justice and generosity in a nation, as in an individual, count most when shown not by the weak but by the strong. While ever careful to refrain from wrongdoing others, we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves. We wish peace, but we wish the peace of justice, the peace of righteousness. We wish it because we think it is right and not because we are afraid. No weak nation that acts manfully and justly should ever have cause to fear us, and no strong power should ever be able to single us out as a subject for insolent aggression.

1. What are the duties of the United States, according to Roosevelt?
 2. How does his speech reflect Social Darwinism?
 3. How does his speech reflect Nationalism?
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DOCUMENT 2



Description: Man on left's hat reads *Insurgents*. Hat next to him reads *Anarchy*. Woman's hat reads *Cuba Libre* (Free Cuba).

1. Describe Uncle Sam – his expression, his position, etc. What is he doing?
 2. How does the cartoonist represent Cuba?
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DOCUMENT 3

Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty (Panama Canal Treaty); November 18, 1903

The United States of America and the Republic of Panama being desirous to insure the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and the Congress of the United States of America having passed an act approved June 28, 1902...

... the President of the United States is authorized to acquire within a reasonable time the control of the necessary territory of the Republic of Colombia, and the sovereignty of such territory being actually vested in the Republic of Panama, the high contracting parties have resolved for that purpose to conclude a convention.

1. What is the bargain between the U.S. and Panama described in this treaty?
 2. How does this document illustrate a desire to protect American foreign markets?
 3. How does this document illustrate a desire to protect American-held territories?
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DOCUMENT 4



Text on cartoon: "Before the United States intervened in behalf of these oppressed peoples. Philippines-Spanish oppression. Hawaii-Industrial slavery. Porto Rico, Cuba-Spanish yoke. Isthmus of Panama-Quinine.

"After the United States had rescued them from their oppression." Philippines-Philippine Assembly, Education, Business Prosperity. Hawaii-Prosperity. Porto Rico-Prosperity. Cuba-Self gov't, prosperity. Panama Canal Zone-Health."

1. How does the cartoonist represent the terrible conditions before U.S. intervention?
 2. How does the cartoonist represent a change for the better after U.S. intervention?
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DOCUMENT 5

Pres. William McKinley's War Message to Congress; April 11, 1898

The present condition of affairs in Cuba is a constant menace to our peace and entails upon this Government an enormous expense. With such a conflict waged for years in an island so near us and with which our people have such trade and business relations; when the lives and liberty of our citizens are in constant danger and their property destroyed and themselves ruined; where our trading vessels are liable to seizure and are seized at our very door by war ships of a foreign nation...the resulting strained relations, are a constant menace to our peace and compel us to keep on a semi-war footing with a nation with which we are at peace.

1. What are McKinley's reasons for declaring war on Spain?
 2. How does this speech reflect a desire to protect American business?
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DOCUMENT 6



Represented clockwise from bottom left: Italy, Russia, France, Germany & England.

The caption reads: A Fair Field and No Favor

Uncle Sam: "I'm out for commerce, not conquest!"

1. Describe Uncle Sam in this picture. What is he doing?
 2. What is he offering China?
 3. How does the cartoonist illustrate the European nations?
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DOCUMENT 7

"March of the Flag" speech by Albert J. Beveridge; September 16, 1898

Fellow citizens, it is a noble land that God has given us; a land that can feed and clothe the world...It is a mighty people that he has planted on this soil; a people sprung from the most masterful blood of history; a people perpetually revitalized by the virile, man-producing workingfolk of all the earth; a people imperial by virtue of their power, by right of their institutions, by authority of their heaven...It is a glorious history our God has bestowed upon his chosen people; a history whose keynote was struck by Liberty Bell; a history heroic with faith in our mission and our future; a history of statesmen who flung the boundaries of the Republic out into unexplored lands and savage wildernesses; a history of soldiers who carried the flag across the blazing deserts and through the ranks of hostile mountains, even to the gates of sunset; a history of a multiplying people who overran a continent in half a century; a history of prophets who saw the consequences of evils inherited from the past and of martyrs who died to save us from them; a history divinely logical, in the process of whose tremendous reasoning we find ourselves to-day. Think of the thousands of Americans who will pour into Hawaii and Puerto Rico when the republic's laws cover those islands with justice and safety! Think of the tens of thousands of Americans who will invade mine and field and forest in the Philippines when a liberal government, protected and controlled by this republic, if not the government of the republic itself, shall establish order and equity there! Think of the hundreds of thousands of Americans who will build a soap-and-water, common-school civilization of energy and industry in Cuba, when a government of law replaces the double reign of anarchy and tyranny! - think of the prosperous millions that Empress of Islands will support when, obedient to the law of political gravitation, her people ask for the highest honor liberty can bestow, the sacred Order of the Stars and Stripes, the citizenship of the Great Republic!

1. What makes America the greatest nation in the world, according to Beveridge?
 2. Why are Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Cuba so lucky that the Americans stepped in to their affairs?
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DOCUMENT 8



1. What is Uncle Sam doing in this picture?
 2. What techniques does the artist use to illustrate American Nationalism?
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DOCUMENT 9

Speech to Congress by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge; 1895

The great nations of earth are rapidly absorbing all of the unclaimed places in the world. It is a movement that spreads civilizations and advances the human race. As one of the great nations of the world, the United States must also get involved in this race before its too late. The tendency of modern times is toward consolidation .It is apparent in capital and labor alike, and it is also true of nations. Small States are of the past and have no future. The modern movement is all toward the concentration of people and territory into great nations and large dominations. The great nations are rapidly absorbing for their future expansion and their present defense all the waste places of the earth. It is a movement which makes for civilization and the advancement of the race. As one of the great nations of the world, the United States must not fall out of line of march.

1. Why must the United States expand, according to Lodge?
 2. Give an example of Nationalism from this speech:
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DOCUMENT 10

"America's Duty in China", by John Barrett, *North American Review* (Aug. 1900)

...The United States should insist upon the permanent maintenance of the trade principal of the Open Door...The United States, acting with charity and equity, and in no spirit of vengeance, should employ all its moral and material influence in...establishing permanent order and honest progressive administration of government throughout [China]: in safeguarding, both for the present and the future, the lives, rights and holdings of missionaries, merchants and other foreign residents; and finally, in so preparing the way for peace, order and prosperity, to be followed by liberty, justice and freedom under the guiding direction of Christian civilization, that we shall win the lasting gratitude of the countless blameless Chinese and make them forever our disciples in moral and material progress."

1. What is America's most important duty in China, according to Barrett?
 2. How does Barrett also promote the ideas of Social Darwinism?
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DOCUMENT 11

William McKinley, Excerpt from a speech to Methodist church leaders, November 21, 1899

I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you, gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late it came to me this way - I don't know how it was, but it came: That we could not give them back to Spain - that would be cowardly and dishonorable; that we could not turn them over to France and Germany - our commercial rivals in the Orient - that would be bad business and discreditable; that we could not leave them to themselves - they were unfit for self-government - and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was; and that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them...

1. What is McKinley deciding about the Philippines?
2. Give an example of Social Darwinism from this speech: