

**Teaching American History Grant: Learning Experience 2008-2009**  
**Christina Tantillo – Highland Middle School**

**Topic Title:** American Imperialism in the late 1800s    **DATE:** April 23, 2009

**Grade Level:** 8

**Overview of the Learning Experience:**

- This lesson could be integrated as part of the chapter on American imperialism in the late 1800s.
  
- **Standard 1: The History of New York State and the United States:** The skills of historical analysis include the ability to explain the significance of historical evidence and understand the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments. Students will be able to compare and contrast different interpretations of key issues in United States' history and explain reasons for these different accounts

**Essential Question:**

Is imperialism a positive or negative policy?

**Topical Question:**

Was the US Policy of imperialism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries a good or a bad policy for the United States and the rest of the World?

**Time Allotment:** 1-2 Days, plus homework time

**Vocabulary:** annex, cede, imperialism, capitalism, pamphlet, and propaganda

**Materials/Resources:**

DBQ Packet

Textbook

Blank Paper

Art Supplies (markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue, etc)

**Procedure:**

- **5 minutes:** Distribute DBQ Packet and read historical context and task with students (only briefly describe the pamphlet – there will be time for specifics later)
- **5 minutes:** define key vocabulary on the white board

- **40-50 minutes:** Using a document camera (if possible) go through documents with students. Explain that questions that say THINK next to them cannot be answered by using the document packet alone, students must bring outside knowledge to these critical thinking questions.
- **20-30 minutes:** Explain what the pamphlet portion of the project will be. Have students create a T-Chart (shown below) and categorize the documents onto either side (either pro- or anti-imperialism). Student should then decide which side of the issue they believe would like to argue in their pamphlet. The pamphlet must include *at least three* reasons that they would have supported/opposed US imperialism if they lived in the late 1800s

**Homework:** Work on pamphlet. Students will probably need about a week to complete the assignment.

**Assessment:** See rubric.

**ANSWER KEY:** (Based upon the documents) Student answers may differ, as long as they can justify their answers

Pro-imperialism	Anti-imperialism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document 1: The United States wanted to have a place to use for refueling stations between the US and Asia</li> <li>• Document 2: The United States helped these countries become industrialized, they also formed new governments in these countries... “the white man’s burden”</li> <li>• Document 3: The United States believed it was its duty to free Cuba from Spanish control.</li> <li>• <i>OPTION:</i> Document 6: The United States needed markets and people to buy more American products. This would help American industries grow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document 4: The infrastructure that was built by the United States’ Government created new problems for subjugated peoples: they were faced with mortgages, taxes and prisons. This was different than their traditional lifestyles</li> <li>• Document 5: Imperialism violates the American doctrine that “All Men are Created Equal”</li> <li>• <i>OPTION:</i> Document 6: The United States was expanding its economic system by expanding and the US did not care that it was hurting native peoples’ in the process.</li> </ul>

## DOCUMENT-BASED PROPAGANDA PROJECT

**This question is based on the accompanying documents. It is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of the documents have been edited for the purposes of the question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.**

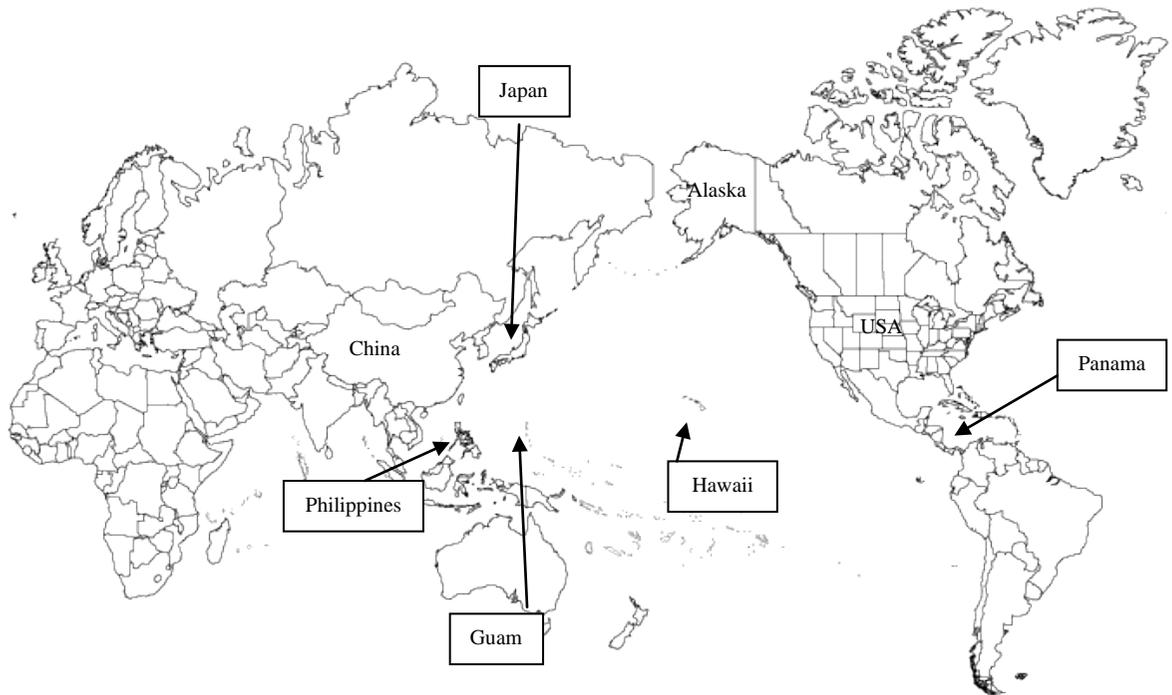
**Historical Context:** In 1776 the United States of America officially declared independence from the imperial control of Great Britain. Since that time, United States' history has been one of expansion. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the US began to look overseas for more land. Although imperialism brought many positive changes to the world and the country, it also created many problems. On both sides of the issue, groups emerged to encourage or discourage the American governments' imperialist policies under several presidents including President McKinley.

**Task:** Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of social studies, answer the questions that follow each document in Part A. Your answers to the questions will help you complete the Part B propaganda project.

### ***Helpful Hints...***

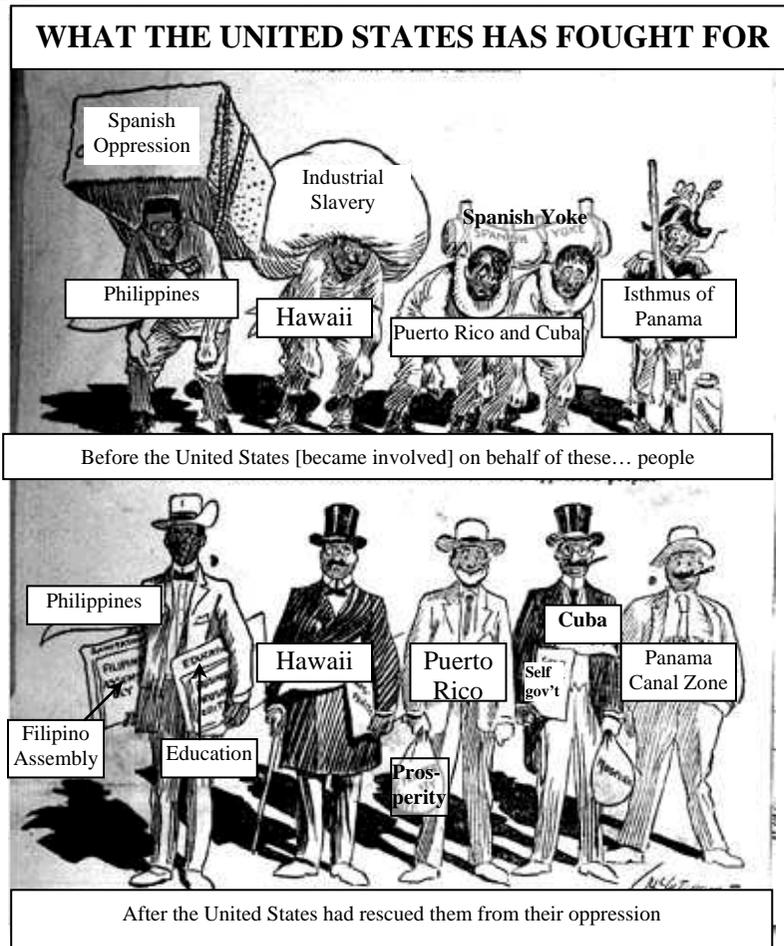
- *If a question begins with the word THINK, the answer will not be found directly in the document*
- *After you read all of the documents, create a T-Chart that lists reasons for and against American Imperialism*
- *You will only have to use the documents from one side of the issue. Be sure to use your textbook and class notes to get more details.*
- *You are not required to find outside information, but if you do it will improve your grade*

**DOCUMENT 1:**



1. The United States wanted to expand trade with China. What islands were located between the United States and China?
2. **THINK:** For what purpose might the United States want to control these islands?
3. **THINK:** How did American businesses on the East Coast of the USA benefit when the United States built a canal in Panama?
4. **THINK:** If the United States becomes imperialistic, it will build an empire. This means that the United States will own or have access to territories all around the world. How can imperialism lead to a stronger economy in the United States?

**DOCUMENT 2:**



**SOURCE:** "What the United States has Fought For" c. 1914  
(<http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/photos/html/1084.html>)

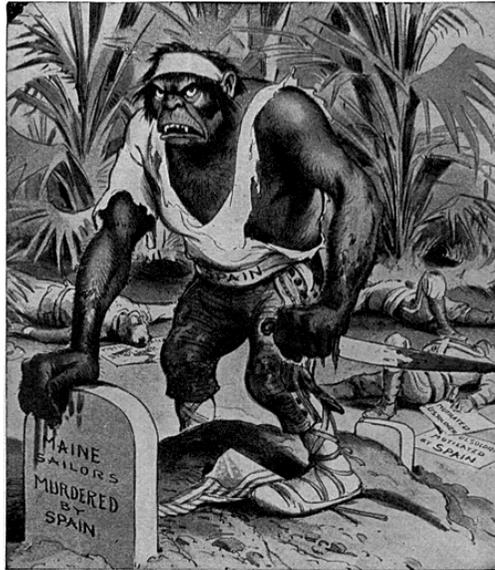
*The people in the top row represent native people in their home countries before the United States became involved with their country.*

*The bottom row represents the same native people after the United States entered their countries.*

*-continued-*

1. What problems affected people in their native countries before the United States became involved (the top row)?
2. According to the cartoonist, what was life like for native peoples after United States exposed them to our way of life?
3. **THINK:** What did the United States do that caused these countries to change?

**DOCUMENT 3:**



**THE SPANISH BRUTE—ADDS MUTILATION TO MURDER.**

*By Hamilton in "Judge."*

1. According to this cartoonist, how were the Cuban people treated under Spanish rule?
2. **THINK:** What European nation once ruled over the 13 Colonies in the United States?
3. **THINK:** Why might the citizens of the United States want to help a small colony like Cuba free itself from a European power like Spain?
4. **THINK:** Why did many Americans look at this cartoon as a reason that America *SHOULD BE* imperialistic?

**DOCUMENT 4:**

**The Real “White Man’s Burden”**

...Take up the White Man’s Burden  
And teach the Philippines  
What interest and taxes are  
And what a mortgage means.  
Give them electrocution chairs,  
And prisons, too, galore,  
And if they seem included to kick  
Then spill their heathen gore [guts]...

Source: Crosby, Ernest H., Cleveland Gazette 16, no. 37 (04/15/1899): 02  
<http://dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/page1.cfm?ItemID=19095>

1. Many Americans thought the United States was “helping” foreign countries by invading them and building indoor bathrooms, electric lines and factories. According to Ernest H. Crosby, why did many native peoples dislike imperialism?

## DOCUMENT 5:

As a nation we began by declaring that "all men are created equal." We now practically read it "all men are created equal, except negroes." Soon it will read "all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and catholics." When it comes to this, I should prefer emigrating [moving] to some country where they make no pretense [don't pretend] of loving liberty...

SOURCE: Abraham Lincoln, August 24, 1855

1. According to Abraham Lincoln, is the United States' policy of imperialism true to the statement "all men are created equal?"
2. If not, which groups are not being treated equally in the United States?
3. **THINK:** Based upon the way that outsiders are treated **in** the United States, why might some people feel that the United States should **NOT** be imperialistic?

## DOCUMENT 6:

The enormous growth of industry... is one of the most characteristic features of capitalism.... [Capitalist countries often practice imperialism in order to expand their industry]... [Capitalist] countries have divided the world among themselves...

**SOURCE:** Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, 1917

1. According to Vladimir Lenin, why did the United States want to gain more colonies?
2. **THINK:** Does this document present a reason that the United States should take over other countries or not? **WHY?**

## **Part B**

### Propaganda Project

*Directions:* Create a T-Chart. On one side of the chart list all of the documents that support the idea that the United States should be imperialistic on the other side of the chart list all of the reasons to oppose imperialism. Then decide if you would support the United States' policy of imperialism in the late 1800s. Create a pamphlet to convince the public of your point of view:

CHOOSE ONE (1) OF THE ASSIGNMENTS BELOW:

**If you believe that United States was right to become imperialist:**

You work for the President McKinley. Use the information from *at least three (3)* documents, your textbook and your understanding of American History to create a propaganda pamphlet that can be distributed to the public to convince them that the United States should continue its policy of imperialism.

**If you believe that United States imperialism was devastating:**

You work for the anti-imperialism league. Use the information from *at least three (3)* documents, your textbook and your understanding of American History to create a propaganda pamphlet that can be distributed to the public to convince them that the United States should not continue its policy of imperialism.

**YOUR PAMPHLET WILL BE A TRI-FOLD AND YOU MAY WISH TO FOLLOW THE FORMAT LISTED ON THE NEXT PAGE FOR YOUR PAMPHLET. OR YOU MAY SET IT UP IN ANOTHER FORMAT, IF APPROVED BY YOUR TEACHER.**

***BE SURE TO USE COLOR AND CREATIVITY!***

<b>COVER</b>	<b>CENTER BACK</b>	<b>INSIDE FLAP</b>
<p data-bbox="314 269 412 297"><b>TITLE</b></p> <p data-bbox="200 306 525 556">Your title should tell the public which side of the issue you support, it should also be interesting and encourage the reader to continue reading the pamphlet</p> <p data-bbox="288 602 435 630"><b>PICTURE</b></p> <p data-bbox="190 639 535 851">Find a drawing, photograph, chart, map, or political cartoon that represents your point of. You may wish to draw a picture of your own.</p>	<p data-bbox="601 343 896 408">You may wish to put a picture here</p> <p data-bbox="564 787 933 879">Please list your name and class period at the bottom of this page</p>	<p data-bbox="972 343 1319 519">Either put some catchy phrase OR a photograph to grab the reader's attention before they open the pamphlet</p>

<b>INSIDE LEFT RIGHT</b>	<b>INSIDE MIDDLE</b>	<b>INSIDE</b>
<p data-bbox="186 1042 479 1143"><b>ONE REASON TO SUPPORT/OPOSE IMPERIALISM</b></p> <p data-bbox="186 1153 535 1550">You will explain each reason or idea with a paragraph that convinces the reader to support your point of view. Be sure to use all available space. For at least one reason you must also include some type of visual image that represents one of these reasons.</p>	<p data-bbox="564 1042 933 1143"><b>A SECOND REASON TO SUPPORT/OPOSE IMPERIALISM</b></p>	<p data-bbox="981 1042 1282 1143"><b>THIRD REASON TO SUPPORT/OPOSE IMPERIALISM</b></p>

Category	20	18	15	10
Content & Accuracy	All facts in the pamphlet are accurate	Most of the facts in the pamphlet are accurate	Some of the facts in the pamphlet are accurate	Few/None of the facts in the pamphlet are accurate
Analysis of Data	Pamphlet richly supports the theme with details and examples	Pamphlet supports the theme with details and examples	Pamphlet attempts to support some part of the theme with details and examples	Pamphlet makes no attempt to support the theme
Writing-Organization	Each section in the pamphlet has a clear beginning, middle, and end and virtually no grammatical errors	Almost all sections of the pamphlet have a clear beginning, middle and end with minor grammatical errors.	Most sections of the pamphlet have a clear beginning, middle and end with some grammatical errors.	Less than half of the sections of the pamphlet have a clear beginning, middle and end with many grammatical errors
Graphics/Pictures	Graphics go well with the text and there is a good mix of text and graphics.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are too few and the pamphlet seems “text-heavy”	Graphics go well with the text, but there are so many that they distract from the text OR there are few graphics and little text.	Graphics do not go with the accompanying text or appear to be randomly chosen or simply chosen to take up space OR there are no graphics at all.
Attractiveness & Organization	The pamphlet has exceptionally attractive formatting and well-organized information	The pamphlet has attractive formatting and well-organized information	The pamphlet has well-organized information	The pamphlet’s formatting and organization of material are confusing to the reader