

Creating a Historical Context for United States' Emergence as a World Power

Subjects: American History, World Cultures

Suggested Grade Levels: 9–12

Time Frame: Variable

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Overview

Students will work in small groups to gather background information (through print and online sources) related to United States' expansionism as it occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in a specific country or region. Paying close attention to what happened in Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, and Central America will be particularly productive. As each group develops its research, they should utilize World Heritage sites where possible, such as <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/502> which describes the 16th century Spanish city of Vigan in the Philippines, or <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/790> which documents the city of Panama Viejo in Panama. Such World Heritage sites provide critical context for later American expansionism, giving students a basis for asking and answering questions about the impact of the succession of expansionist efforts, especially on the native populations. There are many additional sites that students will find, using this link: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/> Each group will use its information to create an infographic that summarizes United States' expansionism in that particular area, addresses multicultural perspectives and indigenous peoples' responses, as well as the historical context for US activities. Groups may also address key questions related to expansionism and imperialism and the differences between both characterizations.

Connection to Philadelphia World Heritage Tool Kit's Goal

Transnational expansionism has occurred for centuries across the globe. It is possible to study and see the evidence of those events and understand the impact that United States expansionism has had on the culture of indigenous people.

Core Curriculum Standards

Students should be able to analyze a variety of documents and artifacts about historical events and determine relationships among peoples. Students should be able to communicate their findings within a variety of products.

- 5.4.12.D: US interaction with other nations in world events.
- 6.4.12.G(1): Traits and distribution of extractive industries.
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- 7.3.12.E(3): The effects of political conflicts
- 8.1.12.C(5): Historical Interpretations: Causes and Results
- 8.3.12.D(5): US since 1890: military conflicts
- 8.3.12.A(1): US since 1890: Contributions of political leaders
- 8.4.12.C(3): Historical continuity and change since 1450: Asia

Objectives

Students will be able to identify and analyze the different perspectives associated with American and European expansionism in specific locations. These locations include but are not limited to Alaska, China, Cuba, Guam, Hawaii, Mexico, Panama, Philippines, Puerto Rico.

Essential Question

Paying special attention to multicultural perspectives and indigenous peoples, what were the effects of United States' and European expansionism?

Materials Needed

Textbook: *United States History: Modern America*

Additional print and online sources covering geographic regions where the United States conducted expansionism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; Animoto, iMovie, Paperslide Video Instruction Sheets

Procedure

Introduction: One way to begin this lesson is to focus on the creation of the colony of Pennsylvania, particularly William Penn's charter arrangements, to see the political dimensions, and his relationship with the Lenape, to see aspects of the settlement process. Benjamin West's 1771 painting "*William Penn's Treaty with the Indians*" of when Penn founded the Province of Pennsylvania in North America, included in this lesson is held at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, in Philadelphia. Students may review the textbook pages covering the settling of Pennsylvania in the 1680's. Small groups may address the painting's various features, and develop questions about it, especially considering what the possible points of view the people in the painting might have had. Such work can then lead to the fuller focus of the lesson, which is to better understand United States' expansionism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries across the globe.

Activity: In small groups students will research and collect information relating to United States' expansionism in a specific country or region. There will be 2 research class periods and 2 creation class periods. Using a graphic organizer they will create a script/storyboard for an infomercial about expansionism in their assigned region/country. Infomercials should address the economic, political, and cultural motivations for expansionism, and the impact on native populations. Students will present infomercials and fill in graphic organizers for each area.

Outcome/Assessment:

Each student will select several of the group presentations to use as a foundation to write a document-based essay answering the essential question. Each group's infomercial will be considered a single document. There can also be a rubric for evaluation of the infomercial.

Additional Resources

Imperialism Political Cartoons: Search links on Teacher Webpage
Teacher created Graphic Organizer for information gathering
Storyboard Graphic Organizer
Animoto, iMovie, and Paperslide Video Instruction Sheets