

American Imperialism

"The White Man's Burden" by Rudyard Kipling

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	90-120 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	2-3 class periods
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

What is American imperialism? What motivated the United States to acquire countries and islands beyond its continental borders?

Summary

Students will investigate multiple viewpoints from primary source documents of American imperialism. The texts will cover the United States' acquisition of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii.

Snapshot

Engage

Students analyze the poem "The White Man's Burden" by Rudyard Kipling and define the word "imperialism."

Explore

Students read a quote by Alfred T. Mahan and determine what his beliefs were about acquiring new lands, using the SOAPStone strategy.

Explain

Students read and analyze three primary source documents to determine their pro- and anti-imperialism opinions.

Extend

Students analyze an image and participate in a class-wide discussion regarding the acquisition of land over time.

Evaluate

Students respond to the question, "Why would nations be 'anxious to be on friendly terms with Uncle Sam?'" in a Quick Write.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States History (9th through 12th grade))

USH.3.1A: Compare the economic, religious, social,and political rationales for American imperialism including the concept of "white man's burden," the annexation of Hawaii, the impact of Admiral Alfred T. Mahan,and the actions of the Anti-Imperialist League.

Attachments

- Distant Possessions The Parting of the Ways—American Imperialism - Spanish.docx
- Distant Possessions The Parting of the Ways—American Imperialism - Spanish.pdf
- Distant Possessions The Parting of the Ways—American Imperialism.docx
- Distant Possessions The Parting of the Ways—American Imperialism.pdf
- Lesson Slides—American Imperialism.pptx
- Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii—American Imperialism - Spanish.docx
- Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii—American Imperialism - Spanish.pdf
- Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii—American Imperialism.docx
- Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii—American Imperialism.pdf
- SOAPSTone—American Imperialism - Spanish.docx
- SOAPSTone—American Imperialism - Spanish.pdf
- SOAPSTone—American Imperialism.docx
- SOAPSTone—American Imperialism.pdf
- State of the Union Address to the American People—American Imperialism - Spanish.docx
- State of the Union Address to the American People—American Imperialism - Spanish.pdf
- State of the Union Address to the American People—American Imperialism.docx
- State of the Union Address to the American People—American Imperialism.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- "The White Man's Burden," by Rudyard Kipling (attached; one per student)
- "Distant Possessions: The Parting of Ways" by Andrew Carnegie (attached; one per group)
- "Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii" (attached; one per group)
- "State of the Union Address to the American People" (attached; one per group)
- SOAPSTone graphic organizer (attached; one per student)
- Pencil or pen

20 minutes

Engage

Introduce the lesson using the attached **Lesson Slides**. Display **slide 3** to share the essential questions and **slide 4** to go over the lesson's learning objective. Review them with students to the extent you feel necessary.

Display **slide 5** and ask students what they believe the word "imperialism" means. Provide them with time to come up with a definition as a group.

Move to **slide 6** and share some information about Rudyard Kipling, author of "The White Man's Burden."

Show **slide 7** and pass out the attached copy of **Rudyard Kipling's "The White Man's Burden."** Review the questions below with students before they read the poem. Instruct students to circle or underline any answers they come across as they read the poem. The questions are:

1. According to the poem, what "burden" does Kipling want white men to take up?
2. In the poem, how does Kipling describe the people that white men will "save"?
3. What reason does Kipling give for white men to take up this "burden"?

Once students have finished reading the poem, have them pair up with an Elbow Partner to discuss their answers. After a few minutes, allow students to share their answers and have a whole class discussion.

Possible Student Responses

The poem has many phrases that students can use to answer the questions.

1. According to the poem, what "burden" does Kipling want white men to take up? *The "burden" to expand U.S. American influence in the world by conquering other people. He believes expanding U.S. American influence is a good thing.*

2. In the poem, how does Kipling describe the people that white men will "save"? *"Half devil- half child," "new caught, sullen peoples," "captives," etc.*

3. What reason does Kipling give for white men to take up this "burden"? "*To free them from the bondage," "to guard them even though they may hate you," etc.*

After a thorough discussion of the poem, display **slide 8** and discuss the term "imperialism" again. Make sure students understand that the United States was expanding their territories in various parts of the world. Some U.S. Americans believed this was necessary and important to spread democracy and help native populations have a better way of life. Others believed that this was wrong for a variety of reasons.

20 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 9** and share the following quote from Alfred T. Mahan in his book *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (1890):

"Having no foreign establishments (for the US), either colonial or military, the ships of war of the United States will be like land birds, unable to fly far from their own shores. To provide resting places for them (the ships), where they can coal and repair, would be one of the first duties of a government proposing itself the development of the power of a nation at sea."

After students read the quote, ask them to discuss if they believe the author was pro-imperialism (expanding the United States' acquisition of foreign countries and territories) or an anti-imperialism.

Move to **slide 10**. Share the SOAPSTone strategy with students and pass out the attached **SOAPSTone** graphic organizer.

Ask students to look at the organizer and go through the different questions. Read the quote aloud and ask students to analyze the quote using the SOAPSTone graphic organizer. Do this activity together as a class and have students complete the first column.

Teacher's Note: Quote and SOAPSTone

Through Alfred T. Mahan's quote, you should model how to use the SOAPS reading organizer.

You may use the following answers to demonstrate how students can use SOAPSTone:

- Speaker: Alfred T. Mahan (who was a respected U.S. admiral of the navy and a historian)
- Occasion: The quote was shared in Mahan's book *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, which was published in 1890.
- Audience: The U.S. American people
- Purpose: Mahan wrote the book to argue that the United States became a world sea power (like Great Britain) by acquiring land and territories for naval ships to refuel and dock.
- Subject: The general topic is that the United States acquire land (and people) to build up naval sea power by creating naval docks and stations on foreign lands. Mahan is pro-imperialism.
- Tone: Is the tone pro- or anti-imperialist?

45 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 11** and share the Jigsaw strategy with students. Divide students into groups of three and distribute these three attached handouts to each group: **Distant Possessions: The Parting of the Ways**, **Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii** and **State of the Union Address to the American People.** Each student in a group should be assigned to a different text.

Move to **slide 12** and share the Stop and Jot strategy with students. Have them jot down the text's main ideas in the text margins. By the end of the text, they should have at least three main ideas and/or key details. Start the 20-minute timer embedded in the slide.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=bjcwzinQlEE

Display **slide 13**. Have students break their groups of three and form new groups with others who read the same document as they have. Allow them time to share their main ideas and/or key details with their groups.

Move to **slide 14** and have them work with their group to complete the SOAPSTone organizer for their assigned text. Start the 20-minute timer embedded in the slide.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=bjcwzinQlEE

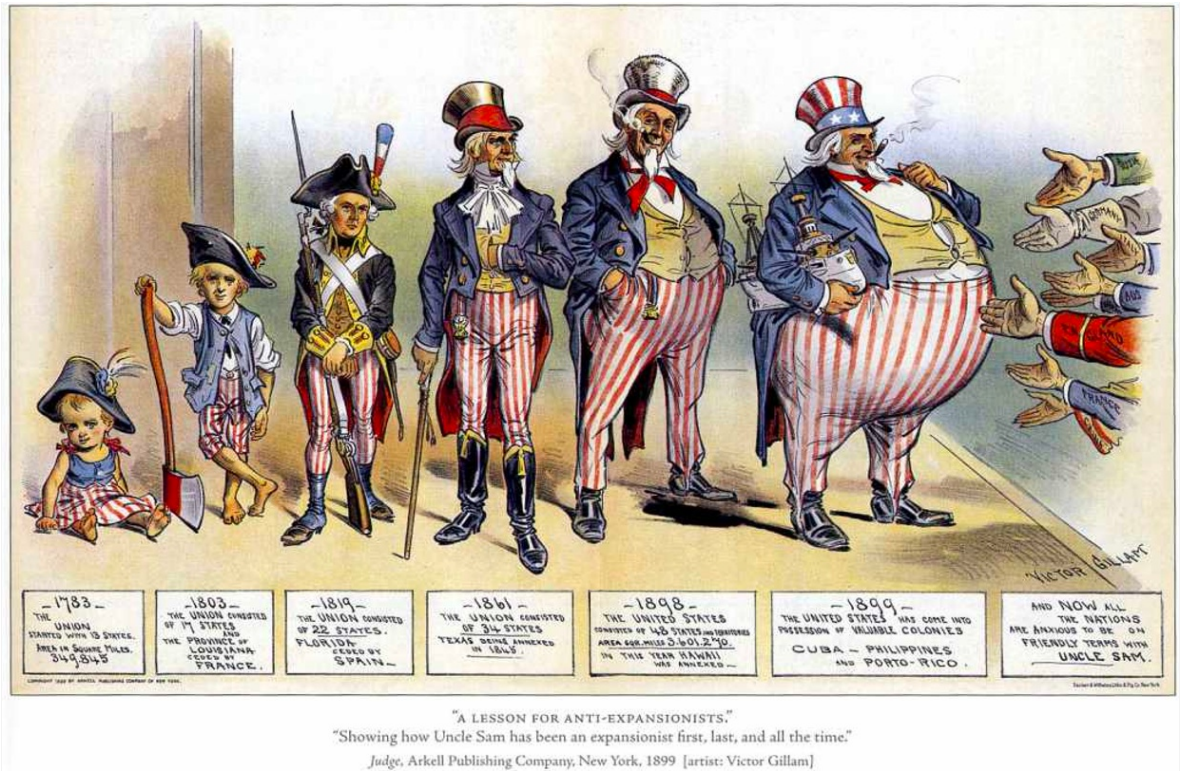
Display **slide 15** and ask students to go back to their original groups of three. Ask them to share what they learned about their assigned text. As students discuss with their group, ask them to answer the SOAPStone questions for all the documents on their organizers.

Have a class discussion and review the documents as one big group. Allow students to share what they included in their organizer. Make sure that students are truly discussing the documents and not merely copying answers from one another.

15 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 16** which shows the following political cartoon:



"A LESSON FOR ANTI-EXPANSIONISTS."
"Showing how Uncle Sam has been an expansionist first, last, and all the time."
Judge, Arkell Publishing Company, New York, 1899 [artist: Victor Gillam]

Allow students time to mull over some questions in a class-wide discussion regarding the acquisition of land over time. Then, display **slide 17** and pose the following discussion questions:

- From a pro-imperialist perspective, what type of mindset "justifies" expansion to other territories or countries?
- What do you think is the cost of Uncle Sam's expansionist ways?
- Do you think other countries are still "anxious to be on friendly terms" with the United States?

15 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 18** and have students answer in a Quick Write: "Why would nations be 'anxious to be on friendly terms with Uncle Sam?'"

Resources

- Gillam, V. (1899). Lesson for Anti-Expansionists [Image]. UHM Library Digital Image Collections. https://digital.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/items/show/31967
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/ccc07ea2d6099763c2dbc9d05b00c4b4
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Jigsaw. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f507c1b8
- K20 Center. (2022, April 6). K20 Center 20-minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjcwzinQlEE&ab_channel=K20Center
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Quick write. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1127
- K20 Center. (n.d.). SOAPSTone. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/889