Hawai‘i at a Crossroads

U.S. expansion and Hawaiian resistance

SS24.US1.15b "Summarize why the United States sought to acquire the Hawaiian Islands and describe native Hawaiians' efforts to resist annexation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline U.S. reasons for seeking Hawai‘i, circle Native Hawaiian acts of resistance, and number three turning points that show how annexation happened.

Who Would Decide Hawai‘i's Future?

1. In the late 1800s, ships crossing the Pacific needed places to refuel and repair. American officials saw Hawai‘i, a kingdom in the central Pacific, as a useful naval stop on routes to Asia. Pearl Harbor offered a sheltered harbor that could help protect American ships and trade. U.S. business leaders also wanted a secure market for sugar grown on Hawaiian plantations, many of which were controlled by Americans. A trade agreement had allowed Hawaiian sugar to enter the United States without a tariff, but a new U.S. tariff law in 1890 weakened that advantage. Annexation seemed to some growers like a way to protect their profits.

2. Those plans collided with Hawaiian self-rule. In 1893, a group of businessmen and residents, including Americans, moved to overthrow Queen Lili‘uokalani. U.S. Marines landed in Honolulu after the American minister requested their presence. The queen gave up power under protest, saying she was yielding to the United States rather than risking bloodshed. She later protested proposals to annex her country. The overthrow did not make Hawai‘i part of the United States immediately. Instead, a new government took power while Hawaiians argued that the kingdom's future should be decided by its own people, not by foreign investors or U.S. officials.

3. Native Hawaiians organized to keep their country independent. In 1897, members of Hui Aloha ‘Āina gathered more than 21,000 signatures on petitions opposing a proposed U.S. annexation treaty. Petitioners carried those signatures to Washington, where the treaty failed to gain enough support in the Senate. Their effort blocked that route to annexation, but it did not end the campaign. During the Spanish-American War in 1898, U.S. leaders argued that Hawai‘i was important for moving ships across the Pacific. Congress then approved annexation through a joint resolution instead of a treaty, despite the organized opposition of many Native Hawaiians.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did some American sugar growers favor annexation after 1890?

2. Summarize the naval reason for seeking Hawai‘i. Why did that reason matter during the 1898 war?

3. Describe two ways Queen Lili‘uokalani resisted the loss of Hawaiian self-rule.

4. How did the 1897 petition effort affect annexation, and why did it not stop annexation altogether?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 90 word museum label titled “Hawai‘i and Annexation.” Explain one economic and one naval reason the United States sought Hawai‘i, describe two Native Hawaiian acts of resistance, and explain why annexation does not mean Native Hawaiians agreed to it.

ANSWER KEY

Hawai‘i at a Crossroads

GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.15b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline U.S. reasons for seeking Hawai‘i, circle Native Hawaiian acts of resistance, and number three turning points that show how annexation happened. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did some American sugar growers favor annexation after 1890?	**The 1890 tariff law weakened Hawaiian sugar's trade advantage. Growers hoped annexation would protect their access to the U.S. market and their profits.**
2	Summarize the naval reason for seeking Hawai‘i. Why did that reason matter during the 1898 war?	**Pearl Harbor could serve ships traveling across the Pacific. During the Spanish-American War, U.S. leaders valued Hawai‘i for moving ships across that ocean.**
3	Describe two ways Queen Lili‘uokalani resisted the loss of Hawaiian self-rule.	**She yielded power under protest in 1893 and later protested proposals to annex Hawai‘i.**
4	How did the 1897 petition effort affect annexation, and why did it not stop annexation altogether?	**The petitions opposed the annexation treaty, which failed to gain enough Senate support. Congress later annexed Hawai‘i through a joint resolution instead.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Hawai‘i and Annexation: U.S. leaders valued Hawai‘i for Pearl Harbor, a naval stop on Pacific routes, while American growers wanted secure sugar profits. Native Hawaiians did not simply accept U.S. control. Queen Lili‘uokalani yielded power under protest and later opposed annexation. In 1897, Hui Aloha ‘Āina collected more than 21,000 signatures against an annexation treaty. Although that treaty stalled, Congress used a joint resolution to annex Hawai‘i in 1898. The final vote shows what Congress decided, not what Native Hawaiians wanted.

Accept references to Pacific trade routes as part of the naval motive. Student labels should distinguish the actions of U.S. leaders and growers from the views and actions of Native Hawaiians.