Power and Principle

Debates over America's role in the world, 1898 to 1917

SS24.US2.1 "Summarize conflicting viewpoints over the United States' role in the world from the Spanish-American War to its entry into World War I. 1a Explain how yellow journalism, jingoistic sentiments..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline one reason for U.S. action and one objection to it. Circle the event or policy at the center of the disagreement.

When Should the United States Act?

1. In 1898, newspapers printed sensational accounts of Spanish rule in Cuba. After the battleship *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor, some papers blamed Spain without proof. Jingoists demanded war to defend national honor, while investors worried about trade and property in Cuba. Congress declared war after President McKinley asked it to intervene. Critics challenged the rush to fight, arguing that headlines and business interests did not justify sending troops abroad. Cuban rebels had already fought for independence for years.

2. Victory over Spain made the United States a Pacific and Caribbean power. Spain ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines; Cuba became independent, but the Platt Amendment allowed U.S. intervention there. Filipinos fought U.S. rule, exposing a divide: expansionists praised markets and bases, while opponents called empire a betrayal of self-government. Theodore Roosevelt threatened force in the Caribbean under Big Stick Diplomacy. William Howard Taft promoted U.S. investment through Dollar Diplomacy; Woodrow Wilson claimed Moral Diplomacy favored democracy, yet sent troops to Haiti.

3. When World War I began in 1914, President Wilson declared neutrality. Preparedness advocates wanted a stronger military, warning that attacks on American ships could pull the nation into war. Neutrality supporters feared that loans and arms sales to the Allies would entangle the United States. German submarine attacks, including the 1915 sinking of the *Lusitania*, intensified debate. In 1917, Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare; the Zimmermann Telegram offered Mexico an alliance against the United States. Wilson asked Congress for war, citing attacks on American shipping.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did sensational reporting, jingoism, and economic concerns each build support for war with Spain? What was one objection?

2. Why did the results of the war with Spain lead to disagreement about U.S. expansion?

3. Compare Roosevelt's, Taft's, and Wilson's approaches to intervention. What complicates Wilson's stated goal?

4. How did preparedness and neutrality supporters differ, and which two developments in 1917 moved the United States toward war?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence newspaper editorial from 1917 arguing for war or continued neutrality. Use two specific facts from the passage, address the opposing view, and connect your position to the earlier debate over expansion.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 11 · SS24.US2.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline one reason for U.S. action and one objection to it. Circle the event or policy at the center of the disagreement. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did sensational reporting, jingoism, and economic concerns each build support for war with Spain? What was one objection?	**Sensational reports blamed Spain for the *Maine* without proof, jingoists appealed to national honor, and investors worried about Cuban trade and property. Critics argued that headlines and business interests did not justify war.**
2	Why did the results of the war with Spain lead to disagreement about U.S. expansion?	**The United States gained overseas territories and the right to intervene in Cuba. Expansionists valued markets and bases, while opponents saw U.S. rule over Filipinos as a betrayal of self-government.**
3	Compare Roosevelt's, Taft's, and Wilson's approaches to intervention. What complicates Wilson's stated goal?	**Roosevelt threatened force, Taft promoted U.S. investment, and Wilson claimed to favor democracy. Wilson's decision to send troops to Haiti complicates that claim.**
4	How did preparedness and neutrality supporters differ, and which two developments in 1917 moved the United States toward war?	**Preparedness supporters wanted a stronger military in case attacks drew the nation into war; neutrality supporters feared entanglement through loans and arms sales. Germany's renewed unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmermann Telegram moved the United States toward war.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Germany's renewed unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmermann Telegram make war necessary to protect the United States. Neutrality supporters rightly worry that overseas commitments can grow beyond their original purpose. The fight over U.S. rule in the Philippines showed how intervention can undermine self-government. Congress should enter this war but reject any plan to govern other nations after it ends.

Accept either position in the editorial if it uses two accurate passage facts, fairly addresses an opposing view, and connects the argument to the expansion debate. The editorial must contain four sentences.