

Why the U.S. Acted

Trace how interests and security concerns shaped U.S. actions in Southwest Asia.

SS7H2.d "Explain U.S. presence and interest in Southwest Asia, including the Persian Gulf conflict and invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each U.S. interest or reason for action, circle each military action, and number the three conflicts in time order. These marks will help you connect causes to U.S. decisions.

U.S. Interests and Actions

- ① For decades, the United States has paid close attention to Southwest Asia. The region contains major oil reserves, and oil moves through the Persian Gulf and the nearby Strait of Hormuz. This water route is important to economies around the world. The United States also has sought stable governments, security for its allies, and protection of shipping. These interests led U.S. leaders to respond when wars, invasions, or armed groups threatened the region directly and disrupted trade.
- ② In 1990, Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, invaded neighboring Kuwait. Iraq then threatened Saudi Arabia, a U.S. partner and major oil producer. President George H. W. Bush built an international coalition that included Arab states. In early 1991, coalition forces drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in the Persian Gulf conflict, often called the Gulf War. The United States did not remove Hussein from power, but it kept military forces in the region and enforced some limits on Iraq.
- ③ After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the United States demanded that Afghanistan's Taliban government hand over al-Qaeda leaders. The Taliban refused, and U.S. and allied forces invaded Afghanistan in October 2001. Their goals included disrupting al-Qaeda and removing the Taliban from power. In 2003, the United States invaded Iraq, arguing that Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and posed a threat. No such weapons stockpiles were found. Both wars lasted far longer than the initial invasions and had major human and political costs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are two U.S. interests in Southwest Asia named in the passage?

2 How did Iraq's invasion of Kuwait lead to U.S. action in the Persian Gulf conflict?

3 Why did the United States invade Afghanistan in 2001, and what were two goals of the invasion?

4 What reason did U.S. leaders give for invading Iraq in 2003, and what did later evidence show?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence paragraph explaining how U.S. interests and security concerns shaped its actions in Southwest Asia. Use at least two conflicts from the passage, and connect a cause, a U.S. action, and a consequence for each conflict.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each U.S. interest or reason for action, circle each military action, and number the three conflicts in time order. These marks will help you connect causes to U.S. decisions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are two U.S. interests in Southwest Asia named in the passage?	Any two: access to oil, safe shipping through the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz, stable governments, security for allies, or protection of trade.
2	How did Iraq's invasion of Kuwait lead to U.S. action in the Persian Gulf conflict?	Iraq invaded Kuwait and threatened Saudi Arabia. The United States built an international coalition that drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.
3	Why did the United States invade Afghanistan in 2001, and what were two goals of the invasion?	After the September 11 attacks, the Taliban refused to hand over al-Qaeda leaders. The goals were to disrupt al-Qaeda and remove the Taliban from power.
4	What reason did U.S. leaders give for invading Iraq in 2003, and what did later evidence show?	U.S. leaders said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and posed a threat. No weapons stockpiles were found.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

U.S. interests in oil routes, allies, and security shaped its actions in Southwest Asia. When Iraq invaded Kuwait and threatened Saudi Arabia, the United States joined a coalition that drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. After the September 11 attacks, the Taliban refused to hand over al-Qaeda leaders, so U.S. and allied forces invaded Afghanistan, beginning a long war. In Iraq, U.S. leaders invaded because they said Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, but no stockpiles were found. These actions show that U.S. leaders responded when they believed regional events could affect security, trade, or allies.

Accept equivalent cause-and-effect explanations supported by the passage. For the open response, look for at least two conflicts, with a clear connection among a U.S. concern, an action, and a result for each.