Ideas Across Oceans

Trace how self-rule ideas took new forms in revolutionary movements.

MWH.C.4.2 "Explain how the intellectual thoughts of the American and French Revolutions regarding self-rule inspired revolutionary movements globally, such as democratic revolutions in Haiti, Mexico, and South America."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the American and French claims about who should rule, then circle an action in each of Haiti, Mexico, and South America that applied or extended those ideas.

Who Has the Right to Rule?

1. In 1776, American revolutionaries argued that governments gained authority from the consent of the governed, not a distant king. Their Declaration of Independence claimed that people could replace a government that violated their rights. In 1789, French revolutionaries declared that sovereignty rested with the nation and that citizens were equal before the law. These arguments crossed oceans in newspapers, letters, and conversations. Yet neither revolution made its promises universal. Enslaved people remained in the United States, and women lacked full political rights in both countries. Elsewhere, people adapted the ideas of self-rule to confront their own rulers and inequalities.

2. In the French colony of Saint-Domingue, enslaved people launched a revolt in 1791. French claims about liberty and equality sharpened a question: Why should those rights stop at the colony's shores? Rebels fought slavery as well as colonial rule, demands that went further than the American Revolution's promises in practice. French authorities abolished slavery in the colony in 1793, and the French government extended abolition to its colonies in 1794. After Napoleon sent troops to regain control, Haitian forces won independence in 1804. Haiti's new leaders claimed the right to govern themselves and permanently ended slavery there.

3. In Mexico, Miguel Hidalgo's 1810 call for revolt challenged Spanish colonial rule and drew many Indigenous and mixed-race supporters. Years of conflict ended with independence in 1821; Mexico later became a republic. In South America, Simón Bolívar argued that Spanish American peoples should govern themselves rather than answer to Spain. His campaigns helped secure independence for several regions, including Venezuela and New Granada. Leaders in both regions adapted American and French arguments about rights and sovereignty, but local conflicts shaped their goals. Independence did not guarantee equal political power: wealthy elites often kept influence while women, Indigenous communities, and formerly enslaved people faced barriers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the revolt in Saint-Domingue apply French revolutionary ideas and push beyond what the American Revolution achieved?

2. How did the revolt Hidalgo called for reflect the American claim about government authority? What form of government did Mexico later adopt?

3. How did Bolívar's argument and campaigns put the idea of self-rule into practice?

4. Why did independence in Mexico and South America not fully deliver the revolutionary promise of equal political power?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a newspaper editor in a newly independent country in 1825. Write a five-sentence statement that links one American or French self-rule claim to a specific action in Haiti, Mexico, or South America, identifies one limit to equality after independence, and proposes a way to make self-rule more inclusive.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the American and French claims about who should rule, then circle an action in each of Haiti, Mexico, and South America that applied or extended those ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the revolt in Saint-Domingue apply French revolutionary ideas and push beyond what the American Revolution achieved?	**Rebels demanded liberty and equality for enslaved people. They fought colonial rule and slavery, while slavery remained in the United States.**
2	How did the revolt Hidalgo called for reflect the American claim about government authority? What form of government did Mexico later adopt?	**The revolt challenged rule by Spain, reflecting the claim that authority should come from the governed rather than a distant ruler. Mexico later became a republic.**
3	How did Bolívar's argument and campaigns put the idea of self-rule into practice?	**He argued that Spanish American peoples should govern themselves, and his campaigns helped several regions win independence from Spain.**
4	Why did independence in Mexico and South America not fully deliver the revolutionary promise of equal political power?	**Wealthy elites often kept influence, while women, Indigenous communities, and formerly enslaved people faced barriers.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our republic in Mexico cannot call itself free if only the wealthy steer its government. American revolutionaries argued that rulers need the consent of the governed, not the approval of a distant king. Hidalgo's 1810 call for revolt put that claim into action against Spanish rule. Yet independence alone has not erased barriers faced by Indigenous communities and women. Let us widen political participation so self-rule belongs to more of the people who live here.

Accept other passage-supported links between a self-rule claim and an action in Haiti, Mexico, or South America. For the final statement, look for five sentences that include a specific action, a limit to equality, and a proposal.