A Dynasty Under Pressure

Trace the pressures that weakened Qing rule.

MWH.C.5.3.E "Describe major developments contributing to the decline of the Qing dynasty, including Western influence, internal unrest, and the Boxer Rebellion."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about Western pressure, circle details about internal unrest, and number the actions and results of the Boxer Rebellion in order. Use your marks to trace how Qing power declined.

How Qing Power Weakened

1. In the mid-1800s, Qing officials tried to restrict foreign trade, but Britain demanded wider access to Chinese markets. After the Opium Wars, British and other Western powers forced China to sign unequal treaties. These agreements opened ports to foreign trade, gave foreigners special legal privileges, and required large payments. Qing leaders lost control over parts of their economy and authority over foreigners living in China. Many Chinese people blamed the government for failing to defend the country. Western pressure did not end Qing rule at once, but it exposed the dynasty's military weakness and damaged its claim to protect China.

2. At the same time, the Qing faced rebellion within China. The Taiping Rebellion, which lasted from 1850 to 1864, began under Hong Xiuquan, who claimed a religious mission and sought to replace the Qing. Its armies captured Nanjing and made it their capital. Years of fighting devastated farms and towns, and millions died. To defeat the rebels, Qing officials depended heavily on regional armies led by powerful local commanders. The dynasty survived, but the war drained money and lives while strengthening leaders outside the central government. Internal unrest thus made it harder for the Qing to answer foreign demands or govern effectively.

3. By the late 1890s, anger at foreign influence helped fuel the Boxer Rebellion. The Boxers attacked missionaries and Chinese Christians, then joined a siege of foreign legations in Beijing in 1900. Some Qing leaders supported them, hoping to drive foreigners out. An international force defeated the Boxers and Qing troops. In 1901, the Qing government accepted the Boxer Protocol, which imposed a huge payment and allowed foreign troops in Beijing. Instead of restoring independence, the uprising brought deeper foreign interference and further weakened confidence in Qing rule. The dynasty fell after a revolution in 1911, and the last emperor abdicated in 1912.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the treaties imposed after the Opium Wars weaken Qing authority?

2. Why did defeating the Taiping Rebellion leave the Qing government weaker?

3. How did Qing support for the Boxers lead to more foreign influence rather than less?

4. How did foreign pressure and unrest within China reinforce each other during the Qing decline?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a visitor asks why a dynasty that survived a major civil war still fell. Write a 75 to 95 word exhibit label that connects Western pressure, the Taiping Rebellion, and the Boxer Rebellion into one explanation of declining Qing power. End with a judgment about why survival in 1864 did not mean recovery.

ANSWER KEY

A Dynasty Under Pressure

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.5.3.E

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details about Western pressure, circle details about internal unrest, and number the actions and results of the Boxer Rebellion in order. Use your marks to trace how Qing power declined. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the treaties imposed after the Opium Wars weaken Qing authority?	**They forced China to open ports, grant foreigners legal privileges, and make large payments, limiting Qing control and exposing its weakness.**
2	Why did defeating the Taiping Rebellion leave the Qing government weaker?	**The war cost money and lives, while the regional armies needed to defeat the rebels strengthened commanders outside the central government.**
3	How did Qing support for the Boxers lead to more foreign influence rather than less?	**After an international force defeated the Boxers and Qing troops, the Qing accepted a huge payment and foreign troops in Beijing.**
4	How did foreign pressure and unrest within China reinforce each other during the Qing decline?	**Foreign pressure damaged confidence in Qing rule and helped fuel the Boxer Rebellion. Internal fighting drained resources, making it harder for the Qing to resist foreign demands.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Qing survived the Taiping Rebellion, but survival came at a cost. Years of war emptied government funds and increased the power of regional commanders. Meanwhile, unequal treaties after the Opium Wars gave foreign states privileges in China and made the court seem unable to defend its people. Anger over that influence fueled the Boxer Rebellion. Qing support for the Boxers ended in defeat, a huge payment, and foreign troops in Beijing. The dynasty could win a civil war without regaining the money, authority, or public trust needed to rule.

Accept explanations that accurately connect each development to lost resources, reduced authority, or declining confidence in Qing rule. Students need not claim that any single event caused the dynasty's fall.