Power Across the Pacific

Weigh the arguments and consequences of American expansion

USH.C.3 "Analyze the expanding role of the United States of America in international affairs as the United States of America was transformed into a world power in the late 19th and early 20th centuries..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two arguments for U.S. control of the Philippines, circle two objections to it, and number two effects of that control. Use your marks to weigh motives against consequences.

Who Would Govern the Philippines?

1. In 1898, Filipino revolutionaries fighting for independence from Spain expected to govern their own country. Meanwhile, the United States went to war with Spain after outrage over Spanish rule in Cuba grew. Sensational newspaper reports, called yellow journalism, helped stoke anger, while the explosion of the USS Maine intensified demands for war. The cause of that explosion was never established. American forces defeated Spain in the Philippines. Under the Treaty of Paris, Spain ceded the islands to the United States for $20 million. Filipino leaders, including Emilio Aguinaldo, had not agreed to this transfer of power.

2. Why keep the islands? Supporters argued that they could serve as a naval base and open access to Asian markets. Some claimed a duty to spread Christianity and American-style government, although many Filipinos were already Christian. Others used Social Darwinism, a false claim that powerful nations were naturally fit to rule supposedly less advanced peoples. American anti-imperialists answered that ruling people without their consent betrayed ideals of self-government. Filipino independence supporters made a more immediate demand: they wanted to run their own state, not simply change the minds of American voters. Both groups challenged the claim that conquest brought freedom.

3. In February 1899, fighting broke out between American troops and Filipino forces seeking independence. The United States defeated the main resistance and declared the war over in 1902, although some fighting continued. The conflict killed thousands of American troops and many more Filipinos, including civilians who died from disease and hunger. The United States established a colonial government rather than recognizing Filipino independence. Control of the islands gave American ships a Pacific foothold and increased U.S. influence in Asia. Yet it also made U.S. claims to support self-government harder to defend and showed other nations that American power now reached far beyond North America.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the naval and trade arguments for keeping the Philippines differ from the argument based on Social Darwinism?

2. What did American anti-imperialists and Filipino independence supporters oppose, and how did their concerns differ?

3. Which two consequences of U.S. control made the claim that conquest brought freedom difficult to defend?

4. How did taking control of the Philippines expand U.S. power while creating a problem for its international reputation?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short newspaper editorial set in 1900 arguing whether the United States should keep governing the Philippines. Use two facts from the passage, address one argument from the other side, include Filipino views, and predict one effect on international relations.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two arguments for U.S. control of the Philippines, circle two objections to it, and number two effects of that control. Use your marks to weigh motives against consequences. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the naval and trade arguments for keeping the Philippines differ from the argument based on Social Darwinism?	**The naval and trade arguments focused on a Pacific base and access to Asian markets. Social Darwinism falsely claimed that powerful nations were naturally fit to rule other peoples.**
2	What did American anti-imperialists and Filipino independence supporters oppose, and how did their concerns differ?	**Both opposed U.S. rule without Filipino consent. American anti-imperialists argued that it betrayed U.S. ideals, while Filipino supporters sought the right to govern their own country.**
3	Which two consequences of U.S. control made the claim that conquest brought freedom difficult to defend?	**Filipino forces fought U.S. troops for independence, and the United States established a colonial government instead of recognizing Filipino independence.**
4	How did taking control of the Philippines expand U.S. power while creating a problem for its international reputation?	**The islands gave U.S. ships a Pacific foothold and increased U.S. influence in Asia, but colonial rule weakened U.S. claims to support self-government.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The United States should not govern the Philippines. Supporters say the islands would give American ships a Pacific base and help trade with Asia. Those gains do not justify ruling people who want independence. Filipino leaders rejected the transfer of their homeland from Spain, and fighting has now begun between Filipino and American forces. If the United States keeps control, other nations may view its promises of self-government with suspicion, even as its naval influence grows.

Accept either position in the editorial if it uses two accurate passage facts, addresses a counterargument and Filipino views, and predicts a plausible international consequence. For the short answers, accept equivalent wording that distinguishes motives, opposition, and consequences.