



**Literacy Design
Collaborative**

America's Burden? US Imperialism (1890-1909)

★ TASK ★ LADDER

by Stephanie Schneider and Rachel McCormick

Students use primary documents that include Senate speeches, newspaper opinion pieces, and Presidential speeches, students explore to American Imperialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

This module is designed for a deep dive into key primary texts from a major debate in U.S. History. It is organized to take roughly nine classroom hours or eleven fifty-minute periods.

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GRADES

11 - 12

DISCIPLINE

 **Social
Studies**

COURSE

 **US
History or
AP US
History**

PACING

 **N/A**

Section 1: What Task?

Teaching Task

Task Template 11 - Informational or Explanatory

After researching the Beveridge-Hoar debate and other primary and secondary sources on American Imperialism during the late 19th and early 20th century, write an essay in which you define imperialism and explain the impact of American Imperialism on the politics and economy of the United States during this time period. Support your discussion with evidence from your research. What implications can you draw?

Standards

College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards

D2.Civ.14.9-12

Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

D2.Eco.15.9-12

Explain how current globalization trends and policies affect economic growth, labor markets, rights of citizens, the environment, and resource and income distribution in different nations.

D2.Geo.5.9-12

Evaluate how political and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.

D2.Geo.7.9-12

Analyze the reciprocal nature of how historical events and the spatial diffusion of ideas, technologies, and cultural practices have influenced migration patterns and the distribution of human population.

D2.His.1.9-12

Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.

D2.His.4.9-12

Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

D2.His.16.9-12

Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

Focus

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

RH.11-12.1

Focus

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

RH.11-12.3

Focus

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RH.11-12.4

Focus

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

WHST.11-12.2

Focus

Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

WHST.11-12.9

Focus

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WHST.11-12.2.a

Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

WHST.11-12.2.b

Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

WHST.11-12.2.e

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

WHST.11-12.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

WHST.11-12.8

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and over-reliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

Custom Standards

ACT Course Standards US History

1E - Analyze and evaluate historical sources and interpretations (e.g., credibility, perspective, bias, and authenticity; verifiable or unverifiable; fact or interpretation)

Texts

🔗 Senator Albert J Beveridge, “In Support of an American Empire.” Record, 56 Cong., I Sess., pp. 704-712

🔗 Senator George Hoar, “The Lust for Empire.” Record, 55 Cong., 3 Sess., pp. 493-503

🔗 A Comprehensive Summary of the Press Throughout the World on All Important Current Topics, Volume 14. Page 488: New York Commercial Advertiser, February 18, 1893, “In dealing with a partly barbarous country...”

🔗 A Comprehensive Summary of the Press Throughout the World on All Important Current Topics, Volume 14 Page 415: Washington Post, February 1, 1893, “The Hawaiian question is a National question....”

🔗 A Comprehensive Summary of the Press Throughout the World on All Important Current Topics, Volume 14 Page 416: Denver News, January 29, 1893, “There can be little doubt of the great importance which the acquisition....”

🔗 A Comprehensive Summary of the Press Throughout the World on All Important Current Topics, Volume 14 Page 466: Boston Traveller, February 13, 1893, “Is Hawaii worth annexing...”

🔗 The Roosevelt Corollary and the Platt Amendment, available at www.ourdocuments.gov

🔗 John Hay to Andrew D. White First Open Door Note September 6 1899

🔗 Teaching With Documents: The 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii, historical background piece and images of original documents

📖 Habits of Empire

Walter Nugent, Habits of Empire. Knopf, 2008. Pages 254-256 on Samoa and Pages 274-275 on Guam

Student Work Rubric - Informational or Explanatory Task - Grades 9-12

	Emerging	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Advanced
	1	2	3	4
Controlling Idea	Presents a general or unclear controlling idea.	Presents a clear controlling idea that addresses the prompt , with an uneven focus .	Presents and maintains a clear, specific controlling idea that addresses all aspects of the prompt and takes into account the complexity of the topic .	Presents and maintains a precise, substantive controlling idea that addresses all aspects of the prompt, takes into account the complexity of the topic and, where appropriate, acknowledges gaps in evidence or information .
Selection & Citation of Evidence	Includes minimal details from sources. Sources are used without citation.	Includes details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that are relevant to the controlling idea . Inconsistently cites sources.	Includes details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that support the controlling and supporting ideas . Consistently cites sources with minor formatting errors .	Includes well-chosen details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that fully support the controlling and supporting ideas. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format .
Development / Explanation of Sources	Explanation of ideas and source material is irrelevant, incomplete, or inaccurate.	Explains ideas and source material to support the controlling idea , with some incomplete reasoning or explanations .	Accurately explains ideas and source material and how they support the controlling idea.	Thoroughly and accurately explains ideas and source material to support and develop the controlling idea.
Organization	Lacks an evident structure. Makes unclear connections among ideas, concepts, and information.	Groups ideas and uses transitions to develop the controlling idea, with some lapses in coherence or organization .	Groups and sequences ideas to develop a cohesive explanation . Uses transitions to clarify the relationships among complex ideas, concepts, and information .	Groups and sequences ideas in a logical progression in which ideas build to create a unified whole . Uses varied transitions to clarify the precise relationships among complex ideas, concepts, and information.
Conventions	Major errors in standard English conventions interfere with the clarity of the writing. Language or tone is inappropriate.	Errors in standard English conventions sometimes interfere with the clarity of the writing. Uses language and tone that are sometimes inappropriate for the audience and purpose.	Consistently applies standard English conventions; minor errors , while noticeable, do not interfere with the clarity of the writing. Uses language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose .	Consistently applies standard English conventions, with few errors . Demonstrates varied syntax and precise word choice . Consistently uses language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose.
Content Understanding (Generic)	Attempts to include disciplinary content in explanation or argument but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.	Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.	Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.	Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

Background for Students

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the United States transitions from a second world to a first world power. Political leaders at the time struggled with the conflict between the economic benefits offered by imperialism and applying the constitutional principles and ideas of the American political system to American foreign policy. Socially, politically, and economically, imperialism significantly impacted the United States at this time.

Extension

Not provided

Section 2: What Skills?

Preparing for the Task

TASK ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns

TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.

Reading Process

CITING EVIDENCE: Ability to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to understanding of the text as a whole.

UNDERSTANDING WORDS AND PHRASES: Ability to determine meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.

ANALYZING SOURCES: Ability to integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

CITING, QUOTING, AND PARAPHRASING: Ability to integrate information selectively to maintain flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard citation format.

Transition to Writing

CONNECTING IDEAS: Ability to begin linking what has been learned in reading to what will be shared in writing.

Writing Process

ORGANIZATION: Ability to organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions/

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH: Ability to introduce a topic.

BODY PARAGRAPHS: Ability to develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH: Ability to provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented

REVISION: Ability to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Section 3: What Instruction?

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
Preparing for the Task				
20 mins	TASK ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns	SHORT RESPONSE WITH BULLETS In a quick write, write your first reaction to the task prompt. Add some notes of things you know about this issue.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link this task to earlier class content. Discuss student responses. Clarify timetable and support plans for the task.
20 mins	TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.	BULLETS In your own words, what are the important features of a good response to this prompt?	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share examples of type of text students will produce (either from past students or from professional writers). Identify or invite students to identify key features of examples. Pair students to share and improve their individual bullets. Create a classroom list: Choose one student to share a few ideas on the board, and ask others to add to it.
Reading Process				
2 hrs and 10 mins	CITING EVIDENCE: Ability to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to understanding of the text as a whole.	ANNOTATED TEXT For each text, annotate as you read, underlining the main idea, circling unknown words, and noting your questions in the margins	Work meets expectations if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotations demonstrate significant interaction with the text to process the information provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that students will do this mini-task and the next two (short answers, reflective entries) with each assigned text. As each class period approaches an end, have a class discussion of the texts studied that day. After the discussion, allow them to add to their entries.
Not provided	CITING EVIDENCE: Ability to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to understanding of the text as a whole.	SHORT ANSWERS TO CLOSE READING QUESTIONS For each text, answer the assigned questions (attached)	Work meets expectations if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answers questions with credible response. Provides appropriate evidence to support response 	Not Provided
Additional Attachments:				

	 American Imperialism Close Reading Questions.docx			
Not provided	CITING EVIDENCE: Ability to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to understanding of the text as a whole.	SHORT REFLECTIVE ENTRIES ABOUT EACH TEXT What is the author trying to accomplish or show regarding American Imperialism? Which parts of the text show you that?	Work meets expectations if each paragraph: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes an author's main idea regarding American Imperialism 	Not Provided
50 mins	UNDERSTANDING WORDS AND PHRASES: Ability to determine meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.	VOCABULARY LIST In your notebook, list words and phrases essential to the texts. Add definitions, and notes on connotation in this context.	Work meets expectations if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists appropriate phrases. Provides accurate definitions. 	After students have developed their definitions, invite discussion on the words they saw as most challenging or puzzling.
1 hr and 40 mins	ANALYZING SOURCES: Ability to integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.	NOTES From each text, make a list of the elements that look most important for answering the prompt on imperialism. Do what you need to do to avoid plagiarism.	Work meets expectations if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies relevant elements. Includes information to support accurate citation (for example, page numbers for a long text, clear indication when quoting directly). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach a sample format for note taking. Check that early student work is in the assigned format (or in another format that gathers the needed information effectively).
50 mins	CITING, QUOTING, AND PARAPHRASING: Ability to integrate information selectively to maintain flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard citation format.	NOTES For each text, list the needed bibliographic information. Organize it in MLA format.	Work meets expectations if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies author, title, publisher, date, and any other needed information (for example, the volume for a periodical or the editor for an anthology). Includes reasonable evidence that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide MLA citation guide and discuss why each element of citation is needed. Provide access to research sources for students to assess the texts.

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			work is credible and/or useful in addressing the Imperialism task.	
Transition to Writing				
20 mins	CONNECTING IDEAS: Ability to begin linking what has been learned in reading to what will be shared in writing.	BULLETS In a quick write, write about what you know now that you've read about the impact of American Imperialism on the US in the late 19th/early 20th centuries.	No Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion-based strategies, such as seminar. • Small group discussion using question.
Writing Process				
50 mins	ORGANIZATION: Ability to organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions/	OUTLINE Make a list of three to five major issues that would make good paragraph topics. Number them.	Work meets expectations if paragraph topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect to teaching task. • Relate to the evidence students have studied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to compare their lists in small groups/ • Assure students that they can change their topics if they have an Aha! As they talk with classmates.
Not provided	ORGANIZATION: Ability to organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions/	ANNOTATED NOTES Hunt through your notes, finding the three to five best pieces of evidence for each of your paragraphs.	Work meets expectations if annotations identify support for each paragraph.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As needed, invite individual students to change paragraph ideas if they find that a first idea lacks evidence. Let the whole class hear you congratulate the first student who switches on spotting the problem and then share the solution.
20 mins	INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH: Ability to introduce a topic.	OPENING PARAGRAPH Write an opening paragraph that includes a controlling idea and sequences the key points you plan to make in your composition	Work meets expectations if it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides direct answer to main prompt requirements. • Establishes a controlling idea. • Identifies key points that will shape be developed later in the piece. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In pairs, students share their opening paragraphs and discuss ways to improve.
30 mins	BODY PARAGRAPHS: Ability to develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended	BODY PARAGRAPHS Working from your notes, create a paragraph in which you have one topic sentence that shares your main point and multiple	Work meets expectations if each paragraph: Reflects the student's plan for topics. Includes	Not Provided

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	definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.	other sentences that use evidence from your notes.	information from students' notes.	
Not provided	CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH: Ability to provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented	CONCLUSION Write a final paragraph that sums up your essay.	Work meets expectations if conclusion provides a fresh, short summary of the main thinking of the piece.	Not Provided
50 mins	REVISION: Ability to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	FEEDBACK FOR A CLASSMATE Read a classmate's essay, noting five strong points and three ways you think could be stronger. Be helpful!	Work meets expectations if feedback is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly stated Helpfully stated. 	Before students begin their reviews, have some discussion about what kinds of feedback is most helpful to the person who receives it.
Not provided	REVISION: Ability to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	FINAL DRAFT After considering the feedback, revise your essay	Score with LDC Rubric.	Not Provided

Instructional Resources

No resources specified

Section 4: What Results?

Student Work Samples

No resources specified

Teacher Reflection

Not provided