The Spanish American War

Use the online presentation to complete these notes, and enjoy learning about the best example of American imperialism at the turn of the century.

The Context

What was the situation in the Spanish colonies in the late 1800s?

- In the late 1800s, Spain had a tenuous hold on their empire - Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific
- The American expansionist mood was at a fever pitch, with U.S. investments in Cuban sugar and mining industries steadily rising
- José Martí - young Cuban angered the Spanish government with a patriotic poem - Martí was jailed for four months and sent him into exile - Martí continued his political writing - calling for Cuban independence.
- In 1894, Martí organized guerrilla actions, destroying U.S. owned sugarcane plantations, hoping to provoke U.S. intervention in the Cuban plight against Spain.
- Spain sent an army under General Valeriano Weyler to crush the rebellion. José Martí was killed, but the revolution continued
- Frustrated by rebel successes, General Weyler ordered 300,000 Cuban civilians into concentration camps - thousands died, and the revolution looked like it may die as well

The Causes

Why did Spain and the U.S. go to war over Cuba?

- William Randolph Hearst (New York Journal) and Joseph Pulitzer (New York World) sensationalized the news, and were not above creating events when the news wasn't as spicy in order to sell papers
- a Cuban agent stole a letter written by Spain's minister in Washington - the letter called McKinley a "weak man" and stated that he was a "bidder for the admiration of the crowd" - the letter appeared all over the press, including the front page of the New York Journal
- February 15, 1898 -

Some notes on the event …

- a combination of extreme patriotism and the desire to push for war – many politicians developed this feeling, including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, and eventually President William McKinley

- April 11 - McKinley asks Congress for authority to send American troops to Cuba to end the civil war
- April 19 - Congress passes joint resolutions proclaiming Cuba "free and independent", disclaims any intentions in Cuba, demands Spanish withdrawal, and authorizes the President to use as much military force as he thought necessary to help Cuban patriots gain freedom from Spain – or else
- April 24 - Spain breaks off diplomatic relations with the United States, declares war
- April 25- Congress declared that a state of war between the United States and Spain had existed since April 21st
The Event  
What should you know about the war?

The Impact  
What were the short and long term results of the war?

- Over ___________________ (only about 400 battle deaths), and a cost of $________ million
- _____________________ of the U.S. – America acquires ________________, ________________, ________________, and ________________
- Spain had to recognize _______________ independence and leave the island nation
- The __________________ Amendment – Cuba becomes a ___________________ of the US, and US gains a naval base at ____________________ - American-Cuban relations begin (positive and negative)
- _______________ strength and arms become respected – recognized as a global power
- U.S. becomes much more involved in ______________ and ______________
- U.S. ________________ increases
- US becomes a ___________________ nation, and will look for a link to help commercial and military strength
- American ___________________ or anti-imperialism develops

The Response  
Why do some Americans begin to oppose Imperialism?

- Spanish American War wasn’t for __________________________
- Philippines should be “free and __________________________”
- imperialism was __________________________
- __________________________ at home
- no such thing as “________________________”
- too hard to hold and __________________________ the colonies
- undemocratic - not fair that the colonies would be governed but not represented in ______________
- worries about world __________________________
Imperialism and the Spanish American War

What is IMPERIALISM? - Foreign policy of extending the control of one nation over the political and economic life of other areas around the world

Why was the U.S. interested in expanding its power?

- A "new Manifest Destiny" - also, the end of the frontier led people to look outside of the U.S. for resources - Extending the traditional parameters of manifest destiny, imperialists also argued that our destiny as a special people was not limited to the North American continent. Our fate, it was argued, was inextricably tied to the global community.
- A depression in 1893 persuaded businessmen to look for new overseas markets - the depression was caused by a decline in the U.S. gold reserve, leading to failed banks, trouble with railroads, additional unemployment, strikes, and violence
- Increased production due to technology also called for more markets
- Some politicians wanted an aggressive foreign policy - in order to focus attention away from the problems of the decade
- European countries were expanding their global empires - the U.S. didn't want to lose in the global race for power
- America's role increased in world affairs due to increases in transportation, communication, and industry

Some philosophical ideas pushed for imperialism:
- Darwinism - the survival of the fittest, just like in life and in business could also be linked to nations
- Josiah Strong - Congregational clergyman and advocate of missionary work - proclaimed that the Anglo-Saxon "race" was "divinely commissioned" to spread its institutions throughout the world - Americans, because they believed in civil liberty and Christianity, were members of a God-favored race destined to lead the world
- Alfred T. Mahan - captain and later Admiral in the army, wrote books concerning the advocacy of sea power - he argued the industrialization required markets, some overseas - these markets would also need stations throughout the world, leading to a colonial empire - U.S. would grow in wealth and power

Political developments leading to imperialism

- Two Secretaries of State, James G. Blaine and Richard Olney, both pushed for a more assertive foreign policy
- The United States had naval bases in Hawaii and Samoa
- Hawaii was annexed as a territory of the U.S. in 1898 after American settlers overthrew the Queen Liliuokalani
- HAWAII - Beginning in 1819, the U.S. influenced life of natives in Hawaii. Missionaries imposed American life-style, morality, and religion throughout the islands, teaching the Hawaiians that their traditional way of life was sinful. During the first half of the 19th century, foreign whaling ships wintered at Honolulu and Lahaina, bringing additional influences that threatened the indigenous culture.
- Two developments determined the kingdom's fate—the decline of the native population and the increasing importance of sugar as an export crop. The first sustained sugar plantation was begun at Koloa, Kauai, in 1835. Missionaries and their sons acquired large landholdings, founding companies that still dominate the Hawaiian sugar industry. The need for large numbers of field and mill hands led the planters to import Chinese and Japanese workers. In 1898, President William McKinley called for the annexation of Hawaii. Congress agreed, and Hawaii was annexed by the United States on August 12, 1898.
The Spanish American War - "A splendid little war" - John Hay
The best example of American imperialism at the turn of the century

Why did Spain and the U.S. go to war over Cuba?
- to "liberate" Cuba from the Spanish - Americans were sympathetic to the Cuban plight
- Cubans revolted in 1895, demanding independence
- Spain had installed a military government in Cuba - the Spanish used brutal methods of retaliation, confining civilians into concentration camps, leading to deaths from disease and malnutrition - General Valeriano "Butcher" Weyler
- rebels in Cuba were thrown into concentration camps
- In 1897 an attempt to settle the conflict was made by the Spanish prime minister, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta (1827-1930). Partial autonomy was to be granted to the Cubans, and the system of prison camps, which had caused widespread outrage, was to be abolished. The insurgents, however, continued to press their demand for complete independence.

Also, Cuba was a very important source of sugar, and there were many American investments in Cuba

Influential in pressing for war
- **Yellow Journalism** - William Randolph Hearst (New York Journal) and Joseph Pulitzer (New York World) sensationalized the news, and were not above creating events when the news wasn't as spicy. in order to sell papers
- Hearst told artist Frederic Remington "You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war" - Remington had stated that the conditions weren't bad enough to justify a war

- **The de Lome letter** - a Cuban agent stole a letter written by Spain's minister in Washington - the letter called McKinley a "weak man" and stated that he was a "bidder for the admiration of the crowd" - the letter appeared all over the press, including the front page of the Journal

- **The sinking of the Maine** - the biggest incident in causing the war
- February 15, 1898 - the U.S. battleship Maine sank in Havana Harbor as the result of an explosion - 266 American sailors died - the cause of the explosion was not undeniably determined at the time - the Spanish felt that the heavily loaded magazine of the ship suffered an accidental explosion - or could it have been Cubans trying to draw the U.S. into their revolt - the U.S. said that a mine destroyed the ship - the least likely case was the Spanish mine, since they were trying to stay out of war with the U.S. - but.....

Used as a rallying cry - REMEMBER THE MAINE!! TO HELL WITH SPAIN!! - published in the papers

Many politicians supported the idea of going to war with Spain
- **Henry Cabot Lodge** - Senator from Massachusetts
- **Theodore Roosevelt** - assistant Secretary of the Navy – “I should welcome almost any war, for I think this country needs one!”
- eventually, **William McKinley** - McKinley detested war an attempted to avoid war with Spain: The night before he took the oath of office he commented: "If I can only go out of office...with the knowledge that I have done what lay in my power to avert this terrible calamity, I shall be the happiest man in the world."
- initially against the idea of war or active imperialism, he was persuaded by politicians and a swing in public opinion
- Senator Redfield Proctor (1831-1908) of Vermont then made a speech in the Senate in March 1898, in which he described the inhumane conditions he had observed in Cuba.
- On April 11, McKinley rejected a Spanish offer of concession and requested that Congress pass a resolution granting him power to intervene in Cuba.
On April 20 President McKinley approved a congressional resolution that called for immediate Spanish withdrawal from Cuba, and on April 24 war was declared by the Spanish government. On April 25 the U.S. Congress declared that hostilities had officially begun on April 21. Congressional resolutions affirmed Cuban independence and stated that the United States was not acting to secure an empire - the U.S. appropriated $50 million for military preparation.

The War
only lasted a few months - declared in April, over in August
fought in the Caribbean and in the Pacific
U.S. was not very prepared for war - unorganized, scarce medical supplies
Roosevelt - "Against a stronger foe, we would have been lost"

- **George Dewey** - navy's first five-star admiral - Hero of the Philippines - destroyed Spain's very weak fleet in the Philippines while losing only one sailor (to heat stroke)
- **William Sampson** - destroyed the Spanish fleet in Santiago Harbor
- **The Rough Riders** - The official name of the regiment was the First United States Volunteer Cavalry. About 1,000 men enlisted in the unit - all, Roosevelt said, "born adventurers." The press named them the "Rough Riders" during their training in San Antonio. Leonard Wood commanded the Rough Riders when the regiment was first formed. Later, Roosevelt became colonel in command. Volunteers - one of the leaders was Teddy Roosevelt - brings him to national prominence - People from all walks of life volunteered to fight, caught up in war fever - the Rough Riders are most known for their charge up San Juan Hill - "In the period of about four and a half months they were together, 37 percent of those who got to Cuba were casualties. Better than one out of every three were killed, wounded, or stricken by disease. It was the highest casualty rate of any American unit that took part in the Spanish-American War campaign."

One of the most significant yet little remembered chapters of popular participation in the Spanish-American War concerns the role played by African Americans. Some African Americans were eager to go to war in order to demonstrate their valor and patriotism, and to improve the view of them held by whites. However, other African Americans condemned what they saw as collaboration in establishing U.S. overseas dominance over non-white populations, and feared that one result of the conflict would be an increase in racial discrimination against blacks in the United States. African Americans served in every major land and sea campaign. There were black sailors on the Maine and the other major battleships of the U.S. fleets. The regular troops of the 24th and 25th Infantry, and the 9th and 10th Cavalry ("Buffalo Soldiers"), under the command of white officers, were at the forefront in the fight in Cuba and had distinguished war records. In addition, several all-black voluntary regiments performed important occupation tasks in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, where they developed strong ties with the local populations.

Spain pushed for a peace treaty after realizing that they could not compete against American navy and guns

Results of the Spanish American War
- **Over 5,000 casualties** (only about 400 battle deaths), and a **cost of $250 million**
- **Expansion of the U.S.** - The U.S acquired Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Guam, and Wake Island - Spain received some cash ($420 million)
- **Spain had to recognize Cuban independence** and leave the island nation - the U.S. will somewhat rule Cuba in the future
- the U.S. is **thrust onto the world stage**, where it will stay
- **American strength and American arms** became respected
- U.S. becomes much **more involved in Asia and Latin America**
- U.S. **nationalism** increases

Problems would arise in controlling the possessions - anti-imperialists felt the U.S. should give the countries independence
A bloody insurrection in the Philippines followed in 1899 - By the terms of the Treaty of Paris (December 10, 1898), Spain ceded the entire archipelago of the Philippines to the United States in return for $20 million, and on December 21 the U.S. proclaimed the establishment of U.S. military rule. Aguinaldo and his associates refused to acknowledge U.S. domination. A provisional Filipino government was established at Malolos, in central Luzon, on January 23, 1899. Tension increased, and on February 4 hostilities began at Manila, when a Filipino patrol provoked the fire of a U.S. sentry. The insurgents were driven back almost at once by U.S. troops, and in November 1899, the Filipinos resorted to guerrilla warfare. Aguinaldo was captured on March 23, 1901, and he swore an oath of allegiance to the United States in April, but sporadic warfare continued for still another year.

Opponents of Imperialism began to develop
Big names opposing imperialism
Mark Twain
Andrew Carnegie - "You seem to have about finished your work of civilizing the Filipinos. About eight thousand of them have been completely civilized and sent to heaven. I hope you like it."

Reasons for Anti-Imperialism
• Span-Am War wasn’t for conquest
• Philippines should be “free and independent”
• imperialism was expensive
• problems at home
• no such thing as “The White Man’s Burden”
• too hard to hold and govern the colonies
• not fair that the colonies would be governed but not represented in Congress