Participation in a series of global conflicts propelled the United States into a position of international power while renewing domestic debates over the nation’s proper role in the world.

I. Territorial Acquisitions
   A. Alaska
      i. “Seward’s Folly” in 1867 was to purchase Alaska from Russia.
      ii. The acquisition of Alaska reduced foreign possession in North America and allowed Americans to benefit from the abundance of natural resources there.
   B. Hawaii
      i. In 1886, the U.S. obtained by treaty with Hawaii the Pearl Harbor Naval Base.
      ii. U.S. business interests led to an American effort to depose Hawaii’s monarchy.
      iii. In 1891, Hawaiian Queen Liliuokalani resisted American attempts to promote a protectorate over Hawaii.
      iv. By 1893, pro-American sugar planters overthrew the native Hawaiian government and established a new government friendly to the United States. Hawaii was annexed in 1898.

II. Foreign Affairs: Europe and Latin America
   A. The French in Mexico
      i. Napoleon III of France took advantage of the American Civil War by sending French troops to occupy Mexico.
      ii. As soon as the Civil War ended in 1865, Secretary of State William Seward invoked the Monroe Doctrine and threatened U.S. military action unless the French withdrew.
      iii. Napoleon III backed down and the French troops left Mexico.
   B. Pan-Americanism
      i. In 1881, Secretary of State James G. Blaine advocated the creation of an International Bureau of American Republics to promote a customs union of trade and political stability for the Western Hemisphere.
      ii. The assassination of President Garfield temporarily kept Blaine from forming this organization until 1889.
      iii. The Bureau subsequently evolved into the Pan American Union in 1910 and then the Organization of American States in 1948.
   C. Venezuela
      i. In 1895, the dispute over the border of Britain’s colony of Guiana threatened war with Venezuela, especially after gold was discovered in the area.
      ii. Although initially at odds with Britain, the U.S. eventually came to support British claims against Venezuela when Britain agreed to recognize the Monroe Doctrine in Latin America.
      iii. Britain also sought U.S. cooperation in its dispute with Germany in South Africa, which in time led to the Boer War.
      iv. The realignment of the United States and Britain would play a significant role during World War I.
III. “New Imperialism”
A. International Darwinism
   i. Politicians
      a. Expansionists followed the example of European imperialism in Africa.
      b. With industrialism achieved, business and political interests sought new sources of raw materials, additional markets for surplus goods, and places to invest surplus capital.
      c. Imperialists cited economic opportunities, racial theories, competition with European empires, and the perception in the 1890s that the Western frontier was “closed” to argue that Americans were destined to expand their culture and institutions to peoples around the globe.
   ii. Missionaries
      a. Unlike Manifest Destiny, imperialism included the idea of moral improvement by bringing the blessings of civilization to less technologically advanced people.
      b. Thousands of missionaries introduced Christianity and American customs to people around the world, particularly China.
      c. Some of the missionaries also brought with the racist concepts of white supremacy. They felt they were undertaking the “White Man’s Burden” by advancing the less developed nations.
   iii. Naval Power
      a. Written by Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (1890) argued that control of the sea was the key to world dominance. The book was very influential in promoting the growth of U.S. naval power during the late nineteenth century.
      b. In 1883, Congress authorized the construction of new steel ships that would take the U.S. Navy in a twenty-year period from 12th to 3rd in world naval ranking.
      c. The New Navy policy was promoted by Alfred Thayer Mahan and Theodore Roosevelt.
   iv. Media
      a. Newspaper and magazine editors found that they could increase circulation by printing adventure stories about distant and exotic places. Yellow journalism involved the publishing of sensational stories.
      b. Stories in the popular press increased public interest and stimulated demands for a larger U.S. role in world affairs.

B. Anti-Imperialism
   i. Anti-imperialists cited principles of self-determination and invoked both racial theories and the U.S. foreign policy tradition of isolationism to argue that the U.S. should not extend its overseas territories.

IV. The Spanish-American War
A. Causes of War
   i. Cuban Revolt
      a. The Cuban revolt against Spain, beginning in 1895, cost American business over $100 million per year.
   ii. Sinking of the Maine
      a. The battleship *Maine* was sunk mysteriously in Havana harbor.
   iii. De Lome Letter
      a. The De Lome letter was written by a Spanish minister in Washington, whereby he personally criticized President McKinley in insulting terms.
iv. **Yellow Press**
   a. A circulation battle between the yellow journalism newspapers of Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst aroused public support for a war to liberate Cuba from Spanish control and avenge the sinking of the *Maine*.

v. **Teller Amendment**
   a. At the outset of the Spanish-American War, this note claimed that the U.S. had no intention of taking political control of Cuba.
   b. Once peace was restored, Cuba would be free to run itself.

B. **Fighting the War**
   i. **The Philippines**
      a. The U.S. achieved a quick and decisive victory.
      b. George Dewey destroyed the Spanish Pacific fleet at Manila Bay and captured the city.
   ii. **Invasion of Cuba**
      a. In the Caribbean, the U.S. destroyed the Spanish fleet at Santiago and captured the city after the Rough Riders stormed San Juan Hill.

C. **Controversy Over the Treaty of Peace**
   i. **Territorial Acquisitions**
      a. As a result of the Spanish-American War, Spain relinquished control of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States.
      b. The American victory in the Spanish-American War led to the U.S. acquisition of island territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific, an increase in involvement in Asia, and the suppression of a nationalist movement in the Philippines.
   ii. **The Philippine Question**
      a. The U.S. resolved to seek a naval base in the Pacific to protect its interests. The opportunity to annex the Philippines after the war with Spain was in part motivated by the desire to protect America’s trade and future potential in Asia.
      b. Filipino nationalists under Emilio Aguinaldo rebelled against the United States in 1899 after learning that the Philippines would not be given independence.
      c. The Anti-Imperialism League opposed annexation, arguing that it violated America’s long-established commitment to the principles of self-determination and anti-colonialism.
      d. Supporters of annexation argued that America had a moral responsibility to civilize the islands. They also pointed out that the Philippines could become a valuable trading partner.
   iii. **Cuba and the Platt Amendment**
      a. Cuba was not to enter into any agreements with foreign powers that would endanger its independence.
      b. The U.S. could intervene in Cuban affairs if necessary to maintain and efficient, independent government.
      c. Cuba was required to lease Guantanamo Bay to the U.S. as a naval and coaling station.
      d. By establishing a protectorate over Cuba, the United States began implementing an imperialist foreign policy.

D. **Other Results of the War**
   i. **Insular Cases**
      a. One question concerned the constitutional rights of the Filipino people—did the provisions of the U.S. Constitution apply to whatever territories fell under U.S. control?
b. William Jennings Bryan and anti-imperialists argued in the affirmative, while leading imperialists argued in the negative.
c. A series of court cases known as the insular (island) cases established that constitutional rights were not automatically extended to the territorial possessions of the United States.

ii. **Election of 1900**
   a. William Jennings Bryan was nominated by the Democrats, again arguing for free silver and vigorously attacking the growth of American imperialism.
   b. With growing national prosperity, the voters gave Republican William McKinley an even larger margin of victory than he had in 1896.

V. **China**
   
   A. **Open Door Policy**
      i. Japan’s easy victory over China in 1895 signaled to the U.S. and other nations trading in Asia that China’s weakness might result in its colonization by industrial powers and then subsequently the closing of the China market.
      
      ii. In the late 1890s, Russia, Japan, Great Britain, France, and Germany had all established “spheres of influence” in China, meaning that they could dominate trade and investment within their sphere and shut out competitors.
      
      iii. Secretary of State John Hay proposed a concept of an “open door,” by which all nations would have equal trading privileges in China. Although he knew he could not force the Europeans to leave China, Secretary of State John Hay was determined to protect American missionaries and commercial interests.
      
      iv. The Open Door policy underscored America’s commitment to free trade and opposition to obstacles that thwarted international commerce.
      
      v. Its primary intention was to protect American commercial interests in China.

   B. **Boxer Rebellion**
      i. By 1900, nationalism and xenophobia were on the rise in China.
      
      ii. A secret society of Chinese nationalists known as Boxers attacked foreign settlements and murdered dozens of Christian missionaries.
      
      iii. To protect American lives and property, U.S. troops participated in an international force that quickly crushed the rebellion, further weakening the Chinese government.

VI. **Theodore Roosevelt’s Big Stick Policy**
   
   A. **Panama Canal**
      i. Great Britain and France had previously failed in their efforts to build a canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The U.S. considered European interest in building a canal in Panama to be a violation of the Monroe Doctrine.
      
      ii. The Senate failed to ratify a treaty with Colombia whereby the U.S. would pay Colombia a sum of $10 million then pay annual rent as well.
      
      iii. Roosevelt encouraged Panama’s independence from Colombia so the U.S. could negotiate a better deal with Panama.
      
      iv. All parties negotiated a treaty to build the Panama Canal.
B. The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine
   i. President Theodore Roosevelt worried that the Dominican Republic and other Latin American nations would default on debts owed to European banks. These defaults could then provoke European military intervention.
   ii. Roosevelt issued the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine to forestall European intervention.
   iii. The Roosevelt Corollary expanded America’s role in Central America and the Caribbean.
   iv. The Roosevelt Corollary claimed America’s right to assume the role of an “international police power,” brandishing the “big stick” when necessary. Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson enforced the Roosevelt Corollary by sending American troops to Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Haiti.

C. East Asia
   i. Russo-Japanese War
      a. Roosevelt negotiated a secret treaty with Japan and Russia to end the Russo-Japanese War, a war which Japan was winning.
      b. Although both Japan and Russia agreed to the Treaty of Portsmouth, Japanese nationalists blamed the United States for not giving their country all that they believed they deserved from Russia.
   ii. “Gentlemen’s Agreement”
      a. A major cause of friction between Japan and the United States concerned the laws of California, which discriminated against Japanese Americans.
      b. In 1908, President Roosevelt arranged a compromise by means of an informal understanding, or “gentlemen’s agreement.” The Japanese government secretly agreed to restrict the emigration of Japanese workers to the United States in return for Roosevelt persuading California to repeal its discriminatory laws, such as requirements that Japanese children attend segregated schools.
   iii. Great White Fleet
      a. Roosevelt sent the “Great White Fleet” around the world, especially Japan, to showcase America’s naval might.
   iv. Root-Takahira Agreement
      a. The U.S. and Japan pledged mutual respect for each nation’s Pacific possessions and support for the Open Door policy in China.

VII. William Taft and Dollar Diplomacy
A. Dollar Diplomacy in East Asia and Latin America
   i. President Taft believed he could use economic investments to bolster American foreign policy and lead to greater stability in the region.
   ii. Taft used Dollar Diplomacy when refinancing the foreign debt of Nicaragua.
   iii. Taft’s attempt to use Dollar Diplomacy in Asia and Latin America achieved very little success.

VIII. Woodrow Wilson and Foreign Affairs
A. Wilson’s Moral Diplomacy
   i. Wilson denounced imperialism and Dollar Diplomacy, advocating the advancement of democratic capitalist governments throughout the world.
B. Military Intervention Under Wilson

i. Tampico Incident and Vera Cruz Occupation
   a. A Mexican Revolution occurred in 1910, and then that government was overthrown in 1913. President Taft placed 10,000 U.S. soldiers on the border to ensure American safety.
   b. Woodrow Wilson urged the military leader to hold a democratic election, but he refused.
   c. In 1914, nine U.S. sailors were confronted in Tampico and led to a Mexican base at gunpoint. Wilson invaded Mexico with troops at Vera Cruz where they occupied the port city for 6 months. A second invasion occurred in 1916 and probably would have amounted to a full-scale war had WWI not intervened.

ii. Pancho Villa and the U.S. Expeditionary Force
   a. Mexican rebel leader Pancho Villa, hoping to destabilize the government, led raids across the U.S.-Mexican border and murdered several people in Texas and New Mexico.
   b. In 1916 President Wilson ordered an “expeditionary force” under General John Pershing to pursue Villa into Northern Mexico, but failed to capture him.
   c. The Mexican President protested the American presence in Mexico, but the growing possibility of U.S. entry into World War I ultimately caused Wilson to withdraw the remaining troops.