

What is the Presidency?



Seal of the President of the United States

Supporting Questions

- SQ 1: How does the Presidency work?
- SQ 2: What are the challenges a nation must face?
- SQ 3: Who was the first modern President?
- SQ 4: How has the Office of the President of the United States changed?

11th Grade United States History Inquiry

Compelling Question?	
Standards and Content	12.G1c Limited government is achieved through the separation of powers between three different branches. The system of checks and balances is part of this limited government structure at all levels of government.
Staging the Compelling Question	Have students talk amongst themselves to try and identify five key issues they believe a prevalent within the world, the country, or their local community. Students will then select a student who they believe offers the best solutions to addressing these problems. Students then have the chance to come to the realization that the process they have just fulfilled is similar to the election of out presidents. After identifying and voicing this similarity, the teacher will then introduce the compelling question, "What is the Presidency?".

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
How does the presidency work?	What are the challenges a nation must face?	Who was the first modern President?	How has the Office of the President of the United States changed?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Students will utilize secondary sources to identify key pieces of information: (1) The role and duties of the president in the US, (2) Methods to become president, (3) How they fulfill their duties. To show their understanding of these three concepts students must construct an outline of how they would run for the office of president and what they would do once they achieved this goal.	Students will be utilizing online resources to examine five key issues prevalent within the United State. These issues are racial tensions, poverty, challenges within the labor force, conservation of the environment, and the US role in the global world. Students should be able to use the sources provided to create their own definition for each issue, provide a brief explanation of its cause and effects, and how they believe these issues need to be addressed. Additionally, students must describe how they would attempt to address these issues if they were the president, and what challenges they believe they would face when doing so.	Students will utilize primary and secondary sources to examine the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, who is using the resources, students must: (1) Describe TR's rise to the presidency and how it differs from the methods covered in Task 1; (2) Compare and contrast the issues of the past and the issues covered in Task 2; (3) Analyze and explain the actions Teddy Roosevelt took to address these issues and how his actions differ from the actions they believe they would have taken as president; (5) Utilize evidence from the sources to determine whether or not TR fulfilled the duties and responsibilities of the presidency that were covered in Task 1.	Students will be given access to primary and secondary sources in order to examine the presidencies of George Washington, Teddy Roosevelt, and one modern president of their choice [ranging from Carter to Biden]. Students will use their findings to determine how the role of the presidency has changed. Students will create a description of the three presidencies which and exhibits their understanding of how they acted as presidents and how their roles, responsibilities, and policies differed between each other.

C3 TEACHERS

Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<p>Source A: Article II, Sections 1-4 of the US Constitution</p> <p>Source B: Executive Branch webpage from the White House website</p> <p>Source C: How To Become President Of The United States Poster (US Gov Publishing Office)</p>	<p>Source A: Center on Budget and policy Priorities article “The Nation Has Made Progress Against Poverty But Policy Advances Are Needed to Reduce Still-High Hardship”</p> <p>Source B: US Chamber of Commerce article “Understanding America’s Labor Shortage”</p> <p>Source C: Earth.org article “Top 6 Environmental Issues the US Is Facing in 2024”</p> <p>Source D: Wikipedia webpage “2020s in United States political history”</p>	<p>Source A: Theodore Roosevelt webpage of the White House website</p> <p>Source B: Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site theater room presentation</p> <p>Source C: Library of Congress article “Cities During the Progressive Era”</p> <p>Source D: Photograph “Baxter Street Alley in Mulberry Bend” (1888/89)</p> <p>Source E: Photograph “Street Arabs in ‘sleeping quarters’” (1888)</p> <p>Source F: Photograph “Necktie workshop in a Division Street tenement” (1889)</p> <p>Source G: Photograph “Family in poverty gap, N.Y.C. tenement room” (1889)</p> <p>Source H: Library of Congress Article “Conservation in the Progressive Era”</p> <p>Source I: National Park Service webpage “Theodore Roosevelt and Conservation”</p> <p>Source J: Kahn Academy, “Labor battles in the Gilded Age”</p> <p>Source K: Teddy Roosevelt Center Article “Theodore Roosevelt and Labor Reform”</p> <p>Source L: Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Thomas J. Dolan (1907)</p> <p>Source M: Article in which Theodore Roosevelt discusses the Monroe Doctrine and its application in South America (1914)</p> <p>Source N: Webpage - Roosevelt’s “Big Stick” Foreign Policy</p> <p>Source O: Theodore Roosevelt speech, “Lincoln</p>	<p>Source A: George Washington webpage of the White House website</p> <p>Source B: UVA Miller Center article, “George Washington: Domestic Affairs”</p> <p>Source C: UVA Miller Center article, “George Washington: Foreign Affairs”</p> <p>Source D: George Washington’s Farewell Address (1796)</p>

C3 TEACHERS

		and the Race Problem” – Excerpt Source P: Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Albion W. Tourgee (1901)	
--	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Summative Performance Task	<p>ARGUMENT: Students must construct an argumentative essay in which they define and explain in their own terms the role of the position of the President of the United State and argue what responsibilities and powers are held within the office of the presidency. They must use evidence acquired throughout the Formative Performance Tasks to support their claim and to answer the question “What is the Presidency?”.</p> <p>EXTENSION: Students must plan out their own presidential campaign. This includes the issues they will aim to address, their desired policies, along with a plan and rationale of achieving them. They must display their understanding of the presidency and present their campaign plan through a presentation lasting a minimum of 5-minute. This could a speech, PowerPoint Presentation, poster presentation, and/or video advertisement.</p>
Taking Informed Action	<p>UNDERSTAND: Take a look at current events and analyze the actions and policies of a current or former president of the United States</p> <p>ASSESS: Determine in what ways that President succeeded and/or failed to meet the criteria you established for what role and responsibilities are to be fulfilled within the presidency</p> <p>ACT: Write a letter to the president in which you explain how you believe they are or aren’t fulfilling their duties as Commander and Chief and what actions you believe can/should be taken, along with evidence to support your claim. Letters can be scanned and displayed within classroom, school, or submitted to the Teddy Roosevelt Inaugural Site.</p>

**Featured sources are suggested and links are provided. It may be that these links are broken and we apologize in advance for the inconvenience.*

Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of the workings, responsibilities, and various developments of the Executive Branch of the United States, focusing on the role and responsibilities of the Presidency of the United States and key examples of it over the course of US History.

This inquiry highlights the following additional standards:

- 12.G5a Each level of government has its own process of shaping, implementing, amending, and enforcing public policy. Customarily the executive branch will outline its plan and agenda in an executive address to the legislative body.
- 12.G5b On various issues, certain governmental branches and agencies are responsible for determining policy. Those who create public policies attempt to balance regional and national needs, existing political positions and loyalties, and sources of political power

It is important to note that this inquiry requires prerequisite knowledge of early foundations of the US Government, enlightenment ideals that formed the basis of US Government, and a basic understanding of US History during the post-revolution time period, Progress Era, and the modern day.

Note: This inquiry is expected to take six to or fifteen 50-minute class periods, ranging from one to three days for each Formative Task and two to three days for the Summative Performance Task at the end of the inquiry. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (e.g., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, featured sources, writing). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiry to meet the needs and interests of their students. This inquiry lends itself to differentiation and modeling of historical thinking skills while assisting students in reading the variety of sources.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question, students will be utilizing a mixture of primary and secondary sources to further their understanding of the basic functions and requirements associated with the Executive Branch of the US government. This will require students to examine and interpret the challenges that those who hold the office of the presidency must face in addition to how presidents have attempted to address the challenges in a variety of different methods. By doing this, students will achieve a new level of understanding of the presidency and how the overall interpretation and role of the president has developed over the course of US history.

Staging the Compelling Question

In staging the compelling question, students will engage in an activity which will have them participate in a process which holds similarities with the steps taken to determine the next president of the United States.

For the first part of the activity, task each student to think of at least five issues that they believe need to be addressed within their community, the county, or the world as a whole. Have them then talk amongst each other to discuss these issues and see if there are any common/repeating ones. After the discussion, students must each write a brief synopsis on these issues as well as create a proposal for what they would do to solve the problem, how they would go about it, and the challenges they might face. Students will then share their proposals with the class, which will then select one student whose proposal they deemed the more appealing/plausible. After this, the teacher will list what has just happened: Issues are present in a community, multiple people show their own ideas on what to do, the people select who has the best ideas. Students will be asked “What did we just do?”. Answers may vary but the overall theme of the answers should approximate to election/selecting a leader. If the word ‘president’ is not used, ask the students “What do we call this leader?”. Afterwards, ask the question “What is the president?”

Afterwards, students should be given the ‘What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet’, which will be utilized in each Formative Task as students take notes and answer questions over the course of this inquiry.

Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question - How does the presidency work?

The formative task involves students will utilizing secondary sources to identify key pieces of information: (1) The role and duties of the president in the US, (2) Methods to become president, (3) How they fulfill their duties. Students will record this information onto the first part of the What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet. Students must then exhibit an understanding of these three concepts through the construction of an outline of how they would run for the office of president and what they would do once they achieved this goal.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures:

- Contextualizing and Close Reading Strategies
- Utilization of Background Knowledge
- Silent Reading Strategies
- Collaboration with one or more students
- Note Taking and Information Recording Strategies
- Image Analysis Strategies

The scaffolds and other materials may be used to support students as they work with sources:

- Annotated Text
- Inquiry Packet

The following sources were selected to provide students with information covering the duties of the president as detailed by the US Constitution, an in depth look at the structure and role of the Executive Branch, and the required steps to become president of the United States.

- **Featured Source A:** Article II, Sections 1-4 of the US Constitution
- **Featured Source B:** Executive Branch webpage from the White House website
- **Featured Source C:** How To Become President Of The United States Poster (US Gov Publishing Office)

SQ1: Featured Source A

Constitution of the United States – Article II: Sections 1-4**Section 1**

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section 2

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

Section 3

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Section 4

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

"The 2nd Article of the U.S. Constitution." National Constitution Center – [constitutioncenter.org](https://constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution/articles/article-ii).
<https://constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution/articles/article-ii>.

SQ1: Featured Source B

[The Executive Branch: From the President, to the Vice President, to the Cabinet](#)

The power of the Executive Branch is vested in the President of the United States, who also acts as head of state and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The President is responsible for implementing and enforcing the laws written by Congress and, to that end, appoints the heads of the federal agencies, including the Cabinet. The Vice President is also part of the Executive Branch, ready to assume the Presidency should the need arise.

The Cabinet and independent federal agencies are responsible for the day-to-day enforcement and administration of federal laws. These departments and agencies have missions and responsibilities as widely divergent as those of the Department of Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency, the Social Security Administration and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Including members of the armed forces, the Executive Branch employs more than 4 million Americans.

The President

The President is both the head of state and head of government of the United States of America, and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Under Article II of the Constitution, the President is responsible for the execution and enforcement of the laws created by Congress. Fifteen executive departments — each led by an appointed member of the President’s Cabinet — carry out the day-to-day administration of the federal government. They are joined in this by other executive agencies such as the CIA and Environmental Protection Agency, the heads of which are not part of the Cabinet, but who are under the full authority of the President. The President also appoints the heads of more than 50 independent federal commissions, such as the Federal Reserve Board or the Securities and Exchange Commission, as well as federal judges, ambassadors, and other federal offices. The Executive Office of the President (EOP) consists of the immediate staff to the President, along with entities such as the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

The President has the power either to sign legislation into law or to veto bills enacted by Congress, although Congress may override a veto with a two-thirds vote of both houses. The Executive Branch conducts diplomacy with other nations and the President has the power to negotiate and sign treaties, which the Senate ratifies. The President can issue executive orders, which direct executive officers or clarify and further existing laws. The President also has the power to extend pardons and clemencies for federal crimes.

With these powers come several responsibilities, among them a constitutional requirement to “from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” Although the President may fulfill this requirement in any way he or she chooses, Presidents have traditionally given a State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress each January (except in inaugural years) outlining their agenda for the coming year.

The Constitution lists only three qualifications for the Presidency — the President must be at least 35 years of age, be a natural born citizen, and must have lived in the United States for at least 14 years. And though millions of Americans vote in a presidential election every four years, the President is not, in fact, directly elected by the people. Instead, on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of every fourth year, the people elect the members of the Electoral College. Apportioned by population to the 50 states — one for each member of their congressional delegation (with the District of Columbia receiving 3 votes) — these Electors then cast the votes for President. There are currently 538 electors in the Electoral College.

President Joseph R. Biden is the 46th President of the United States. He is, however, only the 45th person ever to serve as President; President Grover Cleveland served two nonconsecutive terms, and thus is recognized as both the 22nd and the 24th President. Today, the President is limited to two four-year terms, but until the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1951, a President could serve an unlimited number of terms. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected President four times, serving from 1932 until his death in 1945; he is the only President ever to have served more than two terms.

By tradition, the President and the First Family live in the White House in Washington, D.C., also the location of the President's Oval Office and the offices of his or her senior staff. When the President travels by plane, his or her aircraft is designated Air Force One; the President may also use a Marine Corps helicopter, known as Marine One while the President is on board. For ground travel, the President uses an armored presidential limousine.

The Vice President

The primary responsibility of the Vice President of the United States is to be ready at a moment's notice to assume the Presidency if the President is unable to perform his or her duties. This can be because of the President's death, resignation, or temporary incapacitation, or if the Vice President and a majority of the Cabinet judge that the President is no longer able to discharge the duties of the presidency.

The Vice President is elected along with the President by the Electoral College. Each elector casts one vote for President and another for Vice President. Before the ratification of the 12th Amendment in 1804, electors only voted for President, and the person who received the second greatest number of votes became Vice President.

The Vice President also serves as the President of the United States Senate, where he or she casts the deciding vote in the case of a tie. Except in the case of tie-breaking votes, the Vice President rarely actually presides over the Senate. Instead, the Senate selects one of their own members, usually junior members of the majority party, to preside over the Senate each day.

Kamala D. Harris is the 49th Vice President of the United States. She is the first woman and first woman of color to be elected to this position. The duties of the Vice President, outside of those enumerated in the Constitution, are at the discretion of the current President. Each Vice President approaches the role differently — some take on a specific policy portfolio, others serve simply as a top adviser to the President. Of the 48 previous Vice Presidents, nine have succeeded to the Presidency, and five have been elected to the Presidency in their own right.

The Vice President has an office in the West Wing of the White House, as well as in the nearby Eisenhower Executive Office Building. Like the President, he or she also maintains an official residence, at the United States Naval Observatory in Northwest Washington, D.C. This peaceful mansion has been the official home of the Vice President since 1974 — previously, Vice Presidents had lived in their own private residences. The Vice President also has his or her own limousine, operated by the United States Secret Service, and flies on the same aircraft the President uses — but when the Vice President is aboard, the craft are referred to as Air Force Two and Marine Two.

Executive Office of the President

Every day, the President of the United States is faced with scores of decisions, each with important consequences for America’s future. To provide the President with the support that he or she needs to govern effectively, the Executive Office of the President (EOP) was created in 1939 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The EOP has responsibility for tasks ranging from communicating the President’s message to the American people to promoting our trade interests abroad.

The EOP, overseen by the White House Chief of Staff, has traditionally been home to many of the President’s closest advisers. While Senate confirmation is required for some advisers, such as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, most are appointed with full Presidential discretion. The individual offices that these advisers oversee have grown in size and number since the EOP was created. Some were formed by Congress, others as the President has needed them — they are constantly shifting as each President identifies his or her needs and priorities. Perhaps the most visible parts of the EOP are the White House Communications Office and Press Secretary’s Office. The Press Secretary provides daily briefings for the media on the President’s activities and agenda. Less visible to most Americans is the National Security Council, which advises the President on foreign policy, intelligence, and national security.

There are also a number of offices responsible for the practicalities of maintaining the White House and providing logistical support for the President. These include the White House Military Office, which is responsible for services ranging from Air Force One to the dining facilities, and the Office of Presidential Advance, which prepares sites remote from the White House for the President’s arrival.

Many senior advisers in the EOP work near the President in the West Wing of the White House. However, the majority of the staff is housed in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, just a few steps away and part of the White House compound.

The Cabinet

The Cabinet is an advisory body made up of the heads of the 15 executive departments. Appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, the members of the Cabinet are often the President’s closest confidants. In addition to running major federal agencies, they play an important role in the Presidential line of succession — after the Vice President, Speaker of the House, and Senate President pro tempore, the line of succession continues with the Cabinet offices in the order in which the departments were created. All the members of the Cabinet take the title Secretary, excepting the head of the Justice Department, who is styled Attorney General.

“The Executive Branch.” The White House, December 14, 2023. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/our-government/the-executive-branch/>.

SQ1: Featured Source C

How to Become President of the United States

HOW TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

U.S. CONSTITUTION'S REQUIREMENTS FOR A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

- NATURAL BORN CITIZEN
- MINIMUM AGE 35 YEARS
- U.S. RESIDENT 14 YEARS

STEP 1 PRIMARIES AND CAUCUSES

There are many people who want to be President, each with their own ideas about how government should work. People with similar ideas belong to the same political party, this is where primaries and caucuses come in.

Candidates from each political party campaign through the country to win the favor of their party members.

STEP 2 NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

At each convention, the presidential candidate chooses a running mate (Vice Presidential candidate). Each party holds a national convention to select a final presidential nominee.

The presidential candidates campaign throughout the country to win the support of the general population.

IN A PRIMARY
Party members vote for the best candidate that will represent them in the general election.

IN A CAUCUS
Party members select the best candidate through a series of discussions and votes.

STEP 3 GENERAL ELECTION

People in every state across the country vote for one President and Vice President. When people cast their vote, they are actually voting for a group of people called **electors**.

... And I approve this message.

STEP 4 ELECTORAL COLLEGE

In the electoral college system, each state gets a certain number of electors based on its representation in Congress. Each elector casts one vote following the general election, and the candidate who gets more than half (270) wins.

The newly elected President and Vice President are inaugurated in January.

DEFINITIONS

Caucus: A meeting of the local members of a political party to select delegates to the national party convention. A caucus is a substitute for a primary election.

Delegate: A person authorized to represent others as an elected representative to a political party conference.

Electors: A member of the electoral college.

Electoral College: The voters of each state, and the District of Columbia, vote for electors to be the authorized constitutional members in a presidential election.

Natural Born Citizen: Someone born with U.S. citizenship includes any child born "in" the United States, the children of United States citizens born abroad, and those born abroad of one citizen parent.

Primary: An election where voters select candidates for an upcoming general election. Winning candidates will have delegates sent to the national party convention as their party's U.S. presidential nominee.

DESIGNED BY:
Ifran Syed

Based on 2010 Census

Revised: April 2016

How to become president of the United States poster <https://pueblo.gpo.gov/Publications/pdfs/6099.pdf>.

Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question— What are the challenges a nation must face?

The formative task requires students to utilize online resources to examine five key issues currently prevalent within the United State. The issues students will examine are poverty, challenges within the labor force, conservation of the environment, racial tensions, and the US role in the global world. Students should be able to use the sources provided to create their own definition for each issue, provide a brief explanation of its cause and effects, and how they believe these issues need to be addressed. They will record their answers onto the second portion of the What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet. For the final portion of this task, students must describe how they would attempt to address these issues if they were the president, and what challenges they believe they would face when doing so. They must record their answers for this question onto the Inquiry Packet as well.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures:

- Contextualizing and Close Reading Strategies
- Utilization of Background Knowledge
- Silent Reading Strategies
- Collaboration with one or more students
- Note Taking and Information Recording Strategies
- Personalized Responses

The scaffolds and other materials may be used to support students as they work with sources:

- Annotated Text
- Inquiry Packet

The following sources were selected to provide students with the opportunity to examine key social, political, and economic issues that are currently prevalent to the United States which warrant involvement of the nation’s leaders, including those within the presidency. By doing so, they will have a better understanding of what role the presidency can have in influencing the lives of US Citizens.

- **Featured Source A:** Center on Budget and policy Priorities article “The Nation Has Made Progress Against Poverty But Policy Advances Are Needed to Reduce Still-High Hardship”
- **Featured Source B:** US Chamber of Commerce article “Understanding America’s Labor Shortage”
- **Featured Source C:** Earth.org article “Top 6 Environmental Issues the US Is Facing in 2024”
- **Featured Source D:** Wikipedia webpage “2020s in United States political history”

SQ2: Featured Source A

[The Nation Has Made Progress Against Poverty But Policy Advances Are Needed to Reduce Still-High Hardship](#)

Chairman Himes, Ranking Member Steil, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am Sharon Parrott, President of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonpartisan research and policy institute in Washington, D.C.

This testimony will make three main points. First, the nation’s economic security programs have made tremendous progress over the past 50 years in reducing poverty and advancing equity, but significant gaps in our policies remain, keeping poverty and hardship far higher than they should be. Second, policymakers shored up economic security policies during the pandemic, achieving historic gains against poverty and lowering hardship despite the twin economic and health crises caused by the pandemic. Third, by building on the experiences of the last two recessions and the strong research base for a number of policies, policymakers should make the investments needed to address economic and health insecurity and glaring disparities in hardship and opportunity across lines of race and ethnicity.

I. Summary

This nation’s economic and health security programs are far stronger than they were 50 years ago and do much more to reduce poverty. After accounting for the impact of government benefits and taxes, poverty fell by more than one-third between 1970 and 2017. The progress is due to policy advances. In 1970, economic security programs reduced the number of people in poverty by just 9 percent; by 2017 that figure had jumped to 47 percent. (See Figure 1.)

Government’s increasingly effective role in reducing poverty reflects the creation of programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the elderly and disabled (in 1974), the national food stamp program now known as SNAP (made nationwide in 1974), tax credits like the Earned Income Tax Credit or EITC (in 1975) and Child Tax Credit (in 1997), as well the strengthening of older policies such as rental assistance and Social Security. Social Security lifts more people out of poverty than any other program overall, and its impact has grown as the population has aged and more people have retired. But progress in fighting child poverty has been substantial. Among children, the government role went from not reducing poverty at all in 1970 to cutting poverty by 46 percent in 2017; the tax code — because of the EITC and Child Tax Credit — lifts more children above the poverty line than any other individual program.

These stronger policies have reduced poverty for all racial and ethnic groups while also reducing the nation’s still-large racial differences in poverty. For example, government assistance cuts poverty by about half among Black children and among white children, but it lifts a much larger share of Black

children out of poverty than of white children because poverty is more widespread among Black children.

Nevertheless, U.S. anti-poverty policies have large gaps that leave U.S. children more exposed to poverty than children in other wealthy nations. For example, the U.S. has a much higher share of children living in families with incomes below half of the national median (a common way of measuring poverty internationally) than any of the world's 18 other similarly wealthy nations. This is largely due to weaker government aid in the U.S., since many countries have child poverty rates similar to our own before counting government assistance.

In addition, an estimated 12.5 million Americans have “deep poverty” incomes, that is incomes (including government assistance) below half of the poverty line, or below just \$14,200 a year for a typical family of four, after corrections for underreporting of government assistance. They include nearly 2 million children under age 18, who are particularly vulnerable to serious hardships that have long-lasting negative impacts, as well as nearly 2 million parents and other adult family members of children.

Although many families know the stresses of struggling to meet basic needs, the widespread nature of this insecurity is not always well understood, because data on such hardships seldom span more than a year of a family's life. Many more families face hardship over multiple years than in a single year. More than 1 in 4 households, including more than 1 in 3 households with children, experienced a major form of hardship — specifically, an inability to afford adequate food, shelter, or utilities — in one or more of the years 2014, 2015, and 2016, CBPP analysis of Census data finds. Among Black and Latino households with children, roughly 1 in 2 reported one of these hardships, as did more than 1 in 4 white households with children. Even many households who are currently in the middle of the income scale may encounter hardship over time; among the middle third of households with children (ranked by their current annual income), nearly 1 in 3 reported one of these hardships over that three-year span — for example, because their incomes had fallen.

Gaps in economic security programs contribute to these problems. For example, the Child Tax Credit suffers from an “upside-down” design, providing the least help to the children who need it the most. The current design denies the credit entirely to children whose families have less than \$2,500 in earnings in a single year and provides less than the full credit to low- and moderate-income families (such as a single parent with two children earning \$20,000 working as a home health aide) even as married couples making up to \$400,000 can receive the full credit. Some 27 million children receive a partial credit, or none at all, because their families' incomes are too low.

Similarly, most unemployed workers do not qualify for unemployment insurance because program rules have not kept up with changes in the workforce since the system was established in the 1930s; many low-paid workers, people of color, women, and contract workers in particular, are wholly ineligible for jobless benefits when they lose their jobs. Programs like rental assistance and child care assistance help only a small share of eligible families because funding is inadequate. And the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides cash assistance to only a very small share of families with

incomes below the poverty line, due to restrictive program rules and programmatic choices that make it hard for families to access assistance.

This nation’s long history of racism and discrimination in jobs, housing, education, and other areas also contributes significantly to poverty — and to the large differences in poverty rates among groups. As of 2017, poverty rates were more than twice as high among Black (20.9 percent) and Latino (20.1 percent) people than among white people (9.8 percent). Child poverty reflected the same dynamic, with Black and Latino child poverty rates at 21.3 and 20.3 percent, respectively, compared to 8.3 percent among white children.

Immigrants and their family members also have unique economic and health security challenges. Given the lack of progress on immigration reform, many immigrants who have been living and working in U.S. communities for decades are blocked from obtaining a lawful immigration status or accessing a pathway to citizenship and, as a result, are often subject to unfair labor practices and wage theft. Moreover, immigrants face systemic barriers to receiving help from economic security programs when they need it. Immigrants without a documented status are barred from receiving most forms of assistance; some immigrants with a documented status are also ineligible. Moreover, some immigrants or their family members are eligible for help through programs like SNAP or Medicaid but face barriers to accessing that help, including the fear that it would hurt their ability to remain in the country.

Poverty is harmful both now and over the long term. The good news is that strong research shows that reducing poverty and economic insecurity not only reduces near-term hardship but also generates lasting benefits. For example, studies have found that when programs provide additional cash assistance, participating low-income young children do better in school and earn more as adults. When elementary and middle school students received access to free school lunches, their academic performance likewise improved. When the food stamp program (now called SNAP) first expanded across the country in stages in the 1960s and 1970s, newly eligible children had better health outcomes, both as newborns and later as adults, and grew up to be more economically self-sufficient.

Another area where public investments can have both short- and long-term benefits is health coverage. Numerous studies have shown that health coverage increases access to care, improves health outcomes, and saves lives. Expanding Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), for example, prevented an estimated 19,200 deaths among near-elderly adults just in its first four years, studies found. Health insurance also improves economic security: people with health coverage are less likely to have medical debt, less likely to be evicted, and less likely to face bankruptcy, studies show.

Expansions of public programs over recent decades have greatly improved access to health coverage. Most recently, the ACA expanded Medicaid eligibility for adults and created a system of premium tax credits to help people with low and moderate incomes afford private coverage. While significant progress has been made in expanding coverage, nearly 30 million people were uninsured shortly before the pandemic. They included the 2.2 million people in the Medicaid “coverage gap;” that is, people whose

incomes are too low to qualify for premium tax credits but who are ineligible for Medicaid because their states have refused to adopt the Medicaid expansion. Sixty percent of people in the coverage gap are people of color.

In response to the pandemic, policymakers approved a robust relief effort to shore up the nation's economic security policies. Relief measures included both broad-based policies, like Economic Impact Payments, and policies that targeted those with the greatest needs, like expansions in SNAP benefits, help for those at risk of eviction, and expansions in the EITC and Child Tax Credit.

These measures largely prevented a spike in annual poverty and hardship rates and even reduced poverty significantly. The number of people in poverty fell by 10 million in 2020, the most in more than 50 years, using the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) — the more comprehensive of the government's two annual poverty measures, which counts both cash and cash-like assistance.[1] Without the COVID relief measures, the number of people with incomes below the poverty line would have risen by 8 million. The pandemic relief measures also increased access to health coverage, helped more unemployed workers weather the storm, prevented evictions, shored up the child care system, prevented many child care programs from going out of business, and ensured that state, local, territory, and tribal governments had sufficient funding to stave off deep budget cuts that could have further slowed the economy and harmed people and communities.

Some of these policies have proven effective at combatting problems that long predated the pandemic and point the way to policy advances the nation should adopt on an ongoing basis. The most notable examples are policies to better support children in low-income families: an expanded Child Tax Credit that provides the full credit to the lowest-income children, increased support for child care, and summer food benefits to prevent an increase in food insecurity when school is out.

Building on the strong research base for what is effective in reducing poverty and hardship, supporting healthy child development, and broadening opportunity, policymakers should make the investments needed to address economic and health insecurity and glaring disparities in hardship and opportunity across lines of race and ethnicity. These investments would both help families meet everyday challenges and have long-term payoffs. They would also put in place a policy infrastructure to meet the needs of families and the economy in the next recession or economic crisis. These policy advances can be financed responsibly, by raising revenues on high-income households. Such policies could include, for example:

- Helping parents make ends meet through the expanded Child Tax Credit. Policymakers should expand the Child Tax Credit and, most importantly, make the full credit available to children in families with the lowest incomes.
- Helping more households afford housing. Policymakers should make significant new investments to make housing more affordable, including expanding the number of Housing Choice Vouchers to help people with low incomes rent housing of their choice in the private market.
- Increasing health coverage and making it more affordable. Policymakers should deliver on the

C3 TEACHERS

promise of the ACA by expanding affordable coverage to millions more people, by closing the Medicaid coverage gap and extending the expansion in premium tax credits that makes marketplace coverage more affordable.

- Improving the unemployment insurance (UI) system. Policymakers should expand the coverage, duration, and adequacy of unemployment benefits to address the shortcomings of the regular federal-state UI system.
- Strengthening pre-K and child care. Policymakers should increase the accessibility and affordability of high-quality child care and pre-K programs.
- Boosting the income of low-paid workers. Policymakers should permanently boost the EITC for working adults not raising children.
- Addressing structural barriers to supports and work for immigrants. Policymakers should address barriers to economic supports and health coverage for immigrants and their families.
- Creating a national paid leave program. Policymakers should establish a permanent paid family and medical leave program so workers can take paid time off to care for a new child, their own health issue, or a family member's health condition while remaining connected to their jobs.
- Strengthening and better targeting TANF. Federal policymakers should reverse the long-term decline in the value of federal TANF funding. They also should set stronger national standards to guard against extremely restrictive state eligibility policies that leave many of the families with the greatest needs — including, disproportionately, Black families — with neither employment nor cash assistance
- Addressing food insecurity among children. Policymakers should strengthen proven child nutrition programs to help address a long-standing problem: many children, disproportionately those who are Black or Latino, face periods of food hardship, especially during the summer when they aren't getting school meals.
- Improving skills and broadening access to higher education. Policymakers should invest in skill building, both through the workforce development system and by making higher education more affordable to students — for those attending right out of high school or as adults later in their careers.

Parrott, Sharon. "The Nation Has Made Progress Against Poverty But Policy Advances Are Needed to Reduce Still-High Hardship." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, July 28, 2022. [https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/the-nation-has-made-progress-against-poverty-but-policy-advances#:~:text=Government's%20increasingly%20effective%20role%20in,Credit%20or%20EITC%20\(in%201975\).](https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/the-nation-has-made-progress-against-poverty-but-policy-advances#:~:text=Government's%20increasingly%20effective%20role%20in,Credit%20or%20EITC%20(in%201975).)

SQ2: Featured Source B

Understanding America's Labor Shortage

We hear every day from our member companies—of every size and industry, across nearly every state—they're facing unprecedented challenges trying to find enough workers to fill open jobs. Right now, the latest data shows that we have 9.5 million job openings in the U.S., but only 6.5 million unemployed workers.

We have a lot of jobs, but not enough workers to fill them. If every unemployed person in the country found a job, we would still have nearly 3 million open jobs.

The U.S. Chamber is capturing the trends on job openings, labor force participation, quit rates, and more, for a quick understanding of the state of the workforce in our America Works Data Center. Read on for an analysis of the state of the workforce on the national level.

Why are we in a worker shortage?

At the height of the pandemic, more than 120,000 businesses temporarily closed, and more than 30 million U.S. workers were unemployed. Since then, job openings have steadily increased, while unemployment has slowly declined.

In 2022, employers ended up adding an unprecedented 4.5 million jobs. A strong jobs market is good news, but many of those job openings are going unfilled because the U.S. does not have enough workers to fill them. Even though we have more Americans participating in the workforce today than before the pandemic, the overall share of the population participating in the labor force has dropped. If our labor force participation rate today was the same as it was in February of 2020, we would have 2.1 million more Americans in our workforce to help fill those open jobs.

In fact, the decline of Americans' labor force participation is nothing new – fewer and fewer Americans have been participating in the labor force for decades, resulting in a smaller workforce that is expected to continue shrinking for years to come.

Understanding the Gap

Right now, the labor force participation rate is 62.5%, down from 63.3% in February 2020 and 67.2% in January 2001. There's not just one reason that workers are sitting out, but several factors have come together to cause the ongoing shortage. The factors detailed in the next section have all contributed to a labor shortage.

Additionally, in May 2022 the U.S. Chamber surveyed unemployed workers who lost their jobs during the pandemic to gain more insight on what is keeping them from returning to work. Here are a few of the key

findings.

- Two thirds (66%) of Americans who lost their full-time job during the pandemic say they are only somewhat active or not very active at all in searching for a new job.
- About half (49%) are not willing to take jobs that do not offer the opportunity for remote work.
- More than a quarter (26%) say it will never again be essential for them to return to work.
- Nearly one in five have altered their livelihood, 17% have retired, 19% have transitioned to homemaker, and 14% are now working part time.
- Almost a quarter (24%) say government aid packages during the pandemic have incentivized them to not actively look for work.
- Younger respondents, aged 25-34, are prioritizing personal growth over searching for a job right now; 36% say they're more focused on acquiring new skills, education or training before re-entering the job market.

Factors Contributing to the Labor Shortage

Early retirements and an aging workforce

As of October 2021, the pandemic drove more than 3 million adults into early retirement. In all, the number of adults 55 and older being detached from the labor force due to retirement grew from 48.1% in Q3 of 2019 to 50.3% in Q3 2021.

Additionally, the share of older individuals within the U.S. population is steadily increasing and it's likely this trend will continue. This shift is partly attributable to the fact that younger generations are having fewer children compared to their predecessors, resulting in a progressively older, and diminishing population.

Net International Migration to the U.S. is at its lowest levels in decades

U.S. Census Bureau data shows that net international migration to the U.S. only contributed to a 247,000 person increase to the U.S. population between 2020 and 2021. Compared to the prior decade's high of a 1,049,000 increase in our population between 2015 and 2016 due to immigration, the impact that immigration has had on U.S. population growth dropped by 76%.

Lack of access to childcare

Even before the pandemic, a lack of access to high quality, affordable childcare was an issue. Research from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation found that due to breakdowns in the childcare system, the states surveyed (Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, Missouri, and Texas) missed an estimated average of \$2.7 billion annually for their economies.

A report from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and The Education Trust shows that the pandemic created a vicious cycle for the industry; to return to work, workers need reliable childcare, but

providers are facing immense challenges themselves. The pandemic forced many childcare providers to close or scale down: between February and April 2020, the industry lost 370,600 jobs — 95% of which were held by women. Unfortunately, the recovery has not been swift; as late as September 2021, childcare industry employment remained 10 percent lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Additionally, women are participating in the labor force at the lowest rates since entering the labor force in meaningful numbers in the 1970s. In the spring of 2020, 3.5 million mothers left their job, driving the labor force participation rate for working moms from around 70% to 55%.

Even though there are more women working now than in February 2020, women's labor force participation rate has not yet fully recovered to its pre-pandemic rate or to when it was at an all-time high of 60.2% in early 2001.

In the Chamber's survey of unemployed workers who lost their job during the pandemic, 27% indicated that the need to be home and care for children or other family members has made the return to work difficult or impossible.

New business starts

In the spirit of entrepreneurship, some employees either left work or stayed unemployed to open their own businesses. In 2023 5.5 million new business were started, continuing a trend of record-high numbers of new business applications being filed over the last several years.

Workers of all ages, but primarily younger generations, have also tapped into a new source of income in large numbers – digital commerce. In 2020, 2 million individuals made six-figures or more on social media. The cultural shift spurred by digital age is spreading into the labor market, introducing a new challenges to attracting employees that employers must now navigate.

An increase in savings

Enhanced unemployment benefits, stimulus checks, and not being able to go out and spend money during the COVID-19 pandemic all contributed to Americans collectively adding \$4 trillion to their savings accounts since early 2020. The extra few hundred dollars a week from enhanced unemployment benefits (which ended in Sept. 2021), specifically, led to 68% of claimants earning more on unemployment than they did while working.

In the Chamber's survey, 23% of women cited others in the family making enough money that working full-time is not as critical as the reason they have not re-entered the workforce. Higher income and savings bolstered people's economic stability—allowing them to continue sitting out of the labor force. However, high inflation is driving down savings accounts, necessitating the need for many to return to the workforce.

The Great Reshuffle

C3 TEACHERS

The Great Resignation worked its way into our vocabulary as the shift of our labor force started to become apparent—and the hashtag #quittok even went viral as social media users posted about quitting their jobs in search for more free time or better opportunities.

However, the story is more complex than individuals leaving their job. In fact, a more appropriate moniker for the high quit rates over the past few years is the "Great Reshuffle." More than 34 million Americans quit their jobs in 2023 and 3.7 million quit in September 2023 alone. However, the hiring rate has outpaced the quit rate since November 2020. This means Americans are seeking – and finding – better opportunities with new employers and in new occupations and industries.

These reasons above help illuminate the current labor shortage landscape, but the examples are non-exhaustive.

Understanding why workers are missing from unfilled jobs is only half of the equation. The next step in addressing the labor shortage is to implement solutions to attract and retain new workers is underway.

Learn about how the U.S. Chamber is driving solutions through the America Works Initiative. For more information on the America Works Initiative contact Stephanie Ferguson at sferguson@uschamber.com.

Ferguson, Stephanie. "Understanding America's Labor Shortage." U.S. Chamber of Commerce, July 22, 2022. <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-americas-labor-shortage>.

SQ2: Featured Source C

[Top 6 Environmental Issues the US Is Facing in 2024](#)**1. Air Pollution**

As the world's second-largest emitter of carbon dioxide, preceded only by China, it comes as no surprise that air pollution is one of the biggest environmental issues in the US. In 2021 alone, about 67 million tons of pollution were emitted into the atmosphere in the country, mainly coming from the transportation and electric power sectors. According to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), in the same year, the country's electric power sector emissions from coal increased for the first time since 2014.

The latest assessment on air pollution conducted by the American Lung Association found that 4 in 10 individuals – accounting for about 135 million people – are currently living in areas with unhealthy and polluted air. While the main cause is the burning of fossil fuels, climate change-related events such as wildfires and prolonged pollen seasons further exacerbate the quality of air in the country.

Adopted in 1970, the Clean Air Act (CAA) is a comprehensive US federal law that led to the specific standards of emissions of hazardous pollutants that cause smog, acid rain, and other health hazards by setting specific limits on the atmospheric concentration of these pollutants. However, this alone will not solve air pollution in the country and the government's best solution is drastically cut emissions.

A promising step forward was made in August 2022, as the Biden Administration passed the long-awaited Inflation Reduction Act, the largest climate investment in the country's history. Through investments in renewable energy and electric vehicles, the landmark bill is expected to help cut greenhouse gas emissions in the US by around 40% below 2005 levels by the end of the decade and bring the country one step closer to reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. In the long run, this will significantly reduce air pollution.

2. Water Pollution

According to a survey conducted by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), approximately half of the country's rivers and streams – amounting to more than 700,000 miles of waterways – and more than one-third of its lakes are polluted and unfit for swimming, fishing, and drinking.

In the US, agricultural pollution is the top source of contamination in rivers and streams, the second-biggest source in wetlands, and the third main source in lakes as well as a major contributor of contamination to estuaries and groundwater. This type of pollution includes how we grow, raise, transport, process, and even store food and nonfood crops as well as other agricultural products.

A report released in August 2022 by California's State Water Resources Control Board found that in the

Western state alone, nearly one million people face possible long-term health conditions from drinking water containing unsafe levels of contaminants such as arsenic and nitrate. The audit found that 371 of California's water systems contained high levels of toxic chemicals that can result in long-term, negative health risks including liver and kidney problems as well as cancer.

The report comes as California, along with several other western states, battles one of the worst and longest droughts in nearly 1,200 years, which has forced the state to increase its reliance on groundwater. The auditor noted that the risks of toxic pollutants contaminating drinking water are higher in drought conditions: as groundwater levels sink, hazardous farm chemicals seep deeper into the soil, tainting underground drinking water supplies.

Tainted water has extremely detrimental effects on human health as well as the environment, with repercussions on biodiversity. According to a study published in *The Lancet*, water pollution alone killed more than 500,000 people in 2019 and makes about 1 billion people sick every year, especially among low-income communities. Even swimming can pose a risk. Every year, approximately 3.5 million Americans contract health issues such as skin rashes, pinkeye, respiratory infections, and hepatitis from sewage-laden coastal waters, according to EPA estimates.

In the US, the Clean Water Act of 1972 established the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters and regulating quality standards for surface waters. As for water destined for humans, the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is the main federal law that ensures the quality of drinking water across the nation by protecting aquifers, the main source of drinking water. Groundwater can become contaminated by human activity through the illegal or accidental dumping of chemicals.

3. Water Shortages

The consequences of climate change are felt across the entire country, with some states experiencing worst effects than others. Historically, droughts in the US have had catastrophic impacts on agriculture and water reserves: the country has been experiencing continuous droughts over the last 20 years and each of them has caused billions of dollars in economic loss.

Among the worst-hit states are California – with currently 88% of the population estimated to live in drought, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Droughts bring with them a whole host of problems for the environment and the larger human population. With diminishing precipitation and rainfall, soils and crops dry out easily and die. In July 2022, nearly 230 million acres of crops were found to be undergoing drought conditions. Moreover, when these events occur over prolonged periods, they severely impact water levels in lakes and reservoirs, resulting in water shortages in nearby communities and cities.

Water scarcity has been and will continue to be a salient environmental issue for the US as drought seasons become more prolonged and severe. At Lake Mead, a reservoir formed by the Hoover Dam on the

Colorado River in the southwestern US that some 40 million Americans depend on, water levels have crawled down progressively and at a dangerous speed. Here, the first-ever Tier 1 Water Shortage declaration for the reservoir has been in effect since early 2022.

As the climate crisis worsens, the task of solving or at least tackling the consequences of droughts in the US becomes increasingly challenging. One thing is for sure: to reduce water shortage in cities and urban environments, water conservation and efficiency are key. Ageing infrastructure and deteriorating water delivery systems including pipes and mains cost the US an estimated 2.1 trillion gallons of lost drinkable water each year. Adopting widespread energy-efficient technologies and appliances could significantly reduce water wastage. Other methods worth expanding and considering include water recycling infrastructures and stormwater capture technologies.

As for the agriculture sector, adding more resources in crop rotation, no-till farming – a method for growing crops with minimal soil disturbance – and the use of cover crops could help build up soil health, enabling it to absorb and retain more water.

4. Wildfires

In the US, a typical fire season that used to last for four months on average is now lasting nearly double that time because of climate change. In 2020, the country experienced one of the largest wildfires in history, which lasted for the entire year, tearing through parts of California, Oregon, and Washington state.

A 2017 report found that careless human activities were behind about 84% of all wildfires in the US and accounted for 44% of the total area burned. This includes abandoned cigarettes, campfires, and barbecues that were not put out properly, as well as so-called “gender reveal parties” – particularly popular in the country where expectant parents use pyrotechnic devices to reveal a baby’s gender. One notable example is the El Dorado fire, where a smoke bomb led to a fire that lasted more than two months and covered over 22,000 acres of southern California. Another study showed that human-sparked fires typically spread about 1.83 kilometres per day, more than twice as fast as lightning-induced fires.

Smoke from large-scale wildfires causes significant air pollution in the affected area and is a threat to public health. In 2022, for example, 7 out of 15 most polluted cities in the US were located in California, a state that was most affected by severe fires that season. Smoke is made up of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles, which can penetrate deep into the lungs and aggravate chronic heart and lung diseases. Smoke and poor air quality inhalation can lead to minor issues such as burning eyes and allergies or in a worst-case scenario, premature death. The 2021 wildfires that plagued much of the southwest US were visible from the east coast, and near-surface smoke from it contributed to hazy and even smog conditions.

To establish healthy and resilient forests and communities that can adapt themselves to these fires, the state set up the California Wildfire and Forest Management Task Force, in charge of developing a

comprehensive plan to expedite efforts to reduce wildfire risk for vulnerable communities, improve the health of forests and wildlands, and accelerate action to combat climate change. This would include prescribing controlled burning to thin forest overgrowth – which acts as tinder for wildlife – and increase sustainable timber harvest programmes.

While these mitigation measures could lower the intensity of California wildfires, researchers suggest it might soon be not enough. “The trends that are driving this increase in fire risk, fire size, fire severity over time are continuing – that’s climate change,” Professor LeRoy Westerling of the University of California Merced, who studies how the climate crisis affects wildfires, warned.

5. Food Waste

Food waste in America has skyrocketed in recent years, tripling in just five decades and it is now estimated to be 30-40% of its entire food supply, valued between US\$161 and \$218 billion. Today, the US counts as the second highest country in the world for food waste per capita, behind only Australia. Sadly, Americans throw away more food than the citizens of the UK, Germany, France, Italy, and Sweden combined, equivalent to nearly 206 billion pounds (103 million tons). On a daily basis, that’s about 0.5 kilograms (one pound) of food discarded by one American.

As the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) reports, about 6-8% of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced if we stopped wasting food. In the US alone, the production of lost or wasted food generates the equivalent of 37 million cars’ worth of greenhouse gas emissions.

Food production is one of the most water-intensive practices as growing crops requires extensive amounts of water. In the US, agriculture alone is responsible for 80% of all water consumed, and it is estimated that between 21% and 33% of it is wasted every year.

Ironically, while almost 40% of food in the US is wasted, 37 million Americans and 11 million children are considered to be food insecure, a number that is expected to further rise in the coming years.

But there is some good news. Fortunately, the US is home to some of the world’s most successful food waste startups that are changing the game and helping tackle one of the most pressing environmental issues of our times. Moreover, in 2015, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the 2030 Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal alongside a series of programmes and initiatives aimed at reducing climate and environmental impacts associated with food loss and waste while improving food security and saving money for families and businesses. Led by EPA, USDA, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the federal government is “seeking to work with communities, organisations and businesses along with our partners in state, tribal and local government to achieve this goal.”

These initiatives alone, however, will not completely eliminate food insecurity or solve the issue of food waste. In order to achieve this, it is necessary that individuals do their part as well, learning first and

foremost how to reduce food waste in their households and communities.

6. Plastic Pollution

Last but not least on our list of the most pressing environmental issues in the US in 2022 is plastic pollution.

A congressionally mandated report released in late 2021 described the US as the leading country for plastic waste generation. The analysis found that the country produces more plastic waste than any other nation, equivalent to about 42 million metric tons every year, which amounts to 287 pounds (130 kilogram) per person. In total, the country produces almost twice as much as China, and more than all the countries in the EU combined.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 82.2 million tons of containers and packaging were discarded in the US in 2018. The situation has further deteriorated since China imposed a plastic ban in the same year.

Researchers note that recycling infrastructure in the US has been unable to keep up with the growth of plastic production, and they estimate that 1.13-2.24 million metric tons of waste are leaked into the environment and oceans each year. This includes everything from plastic bottles and straws to packaging, most of which are made from fossil fuels and can take hundreds of years to decompose.

Plastic production in the US is also currently responsible for 232 million metric tons of greenhouse gases every year, the equivalent of 116.5 gigawatts of coal plants. But, according to the report, the production is set to outpace coal plants in the country by 2030.

Implementing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies has been increasingly more popular in several US states as a solution for plastic pollution. An EPR legislates that the responsibility and costs of disposing of packaging materials and waste lie with the producers and manufacturers that made them, as opposed to consumers. While a number of European countries and Canadian provinces already have EPR in practice, the state of Maine became the first in the US to implement it in July 2021. Several others are now hopping on the bandwagon, including New York and California, aiming to implement it in the next year or two.

The latter has also recently introduced strict rules on single-use plastic packaging, requiring a 25% cut in production as well as 65% of all single-use plastic packaging to be recycled within the next decade. Companies that fail to comply with the new regulations could face fines of up to \$50,000 a day.

In August 2014, California also became the first state to enact legislation imposing a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags at large retail stores. Other states such as Hawaii and New York followed suit, mandating plastic bag bans on grocery stores and other retailers in 2015 and 2019 respectively

Igini, Martina. "Top 6 Environmental Issues the US Is Facing in 2024." Earth.Org, January 12, 2023. <https://earth.org/top-environmental-issues-us/>.

SQ2: Featured Source D

2020s in United States Political History

Note: Student should be provided the link to the webpage in order to have access to all of the information, but key topics of note will be shown within the excerpts below.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was confirmed to have reached the United States in January 2020. The first confirmed case of local transmission was recorded in January, while the first known deaths happened in February. By the end of March, cases had occurred in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and all inhabited U.S. territories except American Samoa. As of May 27, 2020, the U.S. had the most confirmed active cases and deaths in the world. As of June 5, 2020, its death rate was 330 per million people, the ninth-highest rate globally.

The Trump administration declared a public health emergency on January 31, then on February 2 began to prevent the entry of most foreign nationals who had recently traveled to China, but did not ban entry of U.S. residents who had been there, and no virus testing was implemented to screen those seeking to enter the country. The initial U.S. response to the pandemic was otherwise slow, in terms of preparing the healthcare system, stopping other travel, or testing for the virus. A lack of mass testing obscured the true extent of the outbreak. For much of February, manufacturing defects rendered many government-developed test kits unusable, commercial tests were disallowed by regulations, and strict testing requirements were in place. The U.S. tested fewer than 10,000 people by March 10. Meanwhile, President Donald Trump was optimistic and "cheer-leading the country", downplaying the threat posed by the coronavirus and claiming that the outbreak was under control.

On February 25, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warned the American public for the first time to prepare for a local outbreak.[20] A national emergency was declared by President Trump on March 13. In early March, the Food and Drug Administration began allowing public health agencies and private companies to develop and administer tests, and loosened restrictions so that anyone with a doctor's order could be tested. By the end of the month, over 1 million people had been tested (1 per 320 inhabitants). The Trump administration largely waited until mid-March to start purchasing large quantities of medical equipment. In late March, the administration started to use the Defense Production Act to direct industries to produce medical equipment. Federal health inspectors who surveyed hospitals in late March found shortages of test supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE), and other resources due to extended patient stays while awaiting test results. By early May, the U.S. had processed around 6.5 million tests (about 1 per 50 inhabitants), and was conducting around 250,000 tests per day, but experts said this level of testing was still not enough to contain the outbreak.

The CDC warned that widespread disease transmission may force large numbers of people to seek

healthcare, which could overload healthcare systems and lead to otherwise preventable deaths. On March 16, the White House advised against any gatherings of more than ten people. Since March 19, 2020, the U.S. Department of State has advised U.S. citizens to avoid all international travel. Travel restrictions on most foreign nationals who had recently traveled to Iran or 28 European countries were implemented in March. By April 11, the federal government approved disaster declarations for all states and inhabited territories except American Samoa. State and local responses to the outbreak have included prohibitions and cancellation of large-scale gatherings (including cultural events, exhibitions, and sporting events), restrictions on commerce and movement, and the closure of schools and other educational institutions. Disproportionate numbers of cases have been observed among Black and Latino populations, and there were reported incidents of xenophobia and racism against Asian Americans. Clusters of infections and deaths have occurred in nursing homes, long-term care facilities, prisons and other detention centers, meatpacking plants, houses of worship, and urban areas; large gatherings that occurred before widespread shutdowns and social distancing (Mardi Gras in New Orleans, a conference in Boston sponsored by Biogen, and a funeral in Albany, Georgia) accelerated transmission.

George Floyd Protests

The George Floyd protests are an ongoing series of protests, riots, and demonstrations against police brutality and racism in policing. The protests began in the United States in Minneapolis on May 26, 2020, following the murder of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, by Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, who knelt on Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes during an arrest the previous day. The unrest began as local protests in the Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area of Minnesota before quickly spreading across the entire nation as well as George Floyd protests outside the United States in support of Black Lives Matter. While the majority of protests have been peaceful, demonstrations in some cities descended into riots and widespread looting, with more being marked by street skirmishes and significant police brutality, notably against peaceful protesters and reporters. At least 200 cities imposed curfews by 3 June, while at least 27 states and Washington, D.C, activated over 74,000 National Guard personnel due to the mass unrest. From the beginning of the protests to June 3, at least 11,000 people had been arrested, including all four police officers involved in the arrest during which Floyd was murdered.

First impeachment of President Trump

Three House committees began their impeachment inquiry on September 24, 2019, and in December the House Judiciary Committee heard hearings leading to Trump's impeachment on two counts on December 18, 2019. The impeachment trial of Donald Trump took up most of the month of January and early February 2020. On February 5, 2020, the Senate voted to acquit Trump of all charges. All 45 Democrats and the two independents voted for conviction; all 52 Republican Senators voted for acquittal, except for Mitt Romney (R-UT) who voted for conviction on the charge of abuse of power.

Foreign policy

Middle East and Central Asia

Tensions between the United States and Iran heated up in January 2020 when Iranian General Qasem Soleimani was killed in a drone attack. Iran retaliated with a strike on U.S. military bases in Iraq. Tensions let up somewhat after it is revealed that Iran accidentally shot down a civilian plane that departed Tehran for Kyiv. The U.S.-Irani relationship remained tense throughout 2020, with the U.S. sending B52s over the Persian Gulf twice in December.

In late February 2020, the United States and the Taliban signed an agreement that could lead to the end of the war in Afghanistan.

Venezuela

Ivan Duque, president of Colombia, revealed in March 2020 that his country and the United States had a three-prong policy to bring about change in Venezuela: support for the opposition, diplomatic isolation, and economic pressures including a blockade against petroleum exports and against financial support. He said the effort was paying off as social discontent increases, oil exports reach only 500,000 barrels/day, and Venezuela could not pay for industrial parts, food, or medicine.

On March 26, 2020, the United States accused Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro of narcoterrorism and offered a \$15 million reward for information leading to his arrest.

“2020s in United States Political History.” Wikipedia, August 2022.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020s_in_United_States_political_history.

Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question - Who was the first modern President?

The formative task will have students engage with a variety of primary and secondary sources to examine the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, who is using the resources. This formative task is divided into three sections. For part one, students will utilize Featured Source A to identify Theodore Roosevelt's rise to the presidency and how it differs from the methods examined in Formative Task 1. The second portion of the formative task will have students engage with primary and secondary sources that provide insight into the issues that were prevalent in the United States when Theodore Roosevelt entered the office of the presidency. Students must compare these issues of the past (Urban Poverty, Environmental Conservation, Question of Labor, US Role in the Global World, and Discrimination) to the issues analyzed in Formative Task 2. Students must then Analyze and explain the actions Teddy Roosevelt took to address these issues and how his actions differ from the actions they believe they would have taken as president. The third and final part of this formative task will has students utilize the gathered evidence from the sources provided to determine whether or not Theodore Roosevelt fulfilled the duties and responsibilities of the presidency that were covered in Formative Task 1. All answers and activity notes will be recorded within the What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures:

- Sourcing the documents so students identify the creator and purpose of the document/source
- Contextualizing and Close Reading Strategies
- Source Evaluation
- Image Analysis Strategies
- Utilization of Background Knowledge
- Silent Reading Strategies
- Collaboration with one or more students
- Note Taking and Information Recording Strategies

The scaffolds and other materials may be used to support students as they work with sources:

- Annotated text
- What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet

The following sources were selected to provide students with information regarding the political, social, and economic issues facing the United States when Theodore Roosevelt became president. The Resources allow students to take a closer look into how Theodore Roosevelt addressed these issues and initiated trends within the perceived roles and responsibilities of the presidency that persist to modern day; thus making him considered as the first modern president.

- **Featured Source A:** Theodore Roosevelt webpage of the White House website
- **Featured Source B:** Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site theater room presentation
- **Featured Source C:** Library of Congress article "Cities During the Progressive Era"
- **Feature Source D:** Photograph "Baxter Street Alley in Mulberry Bend" (1888/89)
- **Featured Source E:** Photograph "Street Arabs in 'sleeping quarters'" (1888)

C3 TEACHERS

- **Featured Source F:** Photograph “Necktie workshop in a Division Street tenement” (1889)
- **Featured Source G:** Photograph “Family in poverty gap, N.Y.C. tenement room” (1889)
- **Featured Source H:** Library of Congress Article “Conservation in the Progressive Era”
- **Featured Source I:** National Park Service webpage “Theodore Roosevelt and Conservation”
- **Featured Source J:** Kahn Academy, “Labor battles in the Gilded Age”
- **Featured Source K:** Teddy Roosevelt Center Article “Theodore Roosevelt and Labor Reform”
- **Featured Source L:** Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Thomas J. Dolan (1907)
- **Featured Source M:** Article in which Theodore Roosevelt discusses the Monroe Doctrine and its application in South America (1914)
- **Featured Source N:** Webpage - Roosevelt’s “Big Stick” Foreign Policy
- **Featured Source O:** Theodore Roosevelt speech, “Lincoln and the Race Problem” – Excerpt
- **Featured Source P:** Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Albion W. Tourgee (1901)

SQ3: Featured Source A

The White House: Theodore Roosevelt

With the assassination of President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, not quite 43, became the youngest President in the Nation’s history. He brought new excitement and power to the Presidency, as he vigorously led Congress and the American public toward progressive reforms and a strong foreign policy.

He took the view that the President as a “steward of the people” should take whatever action necessary for the public good unless expressly forbidden by law or the Constitution.” I did not usurp power,” he wrote, “but I did greatly broaden the use of executive power.”

Roosevelt’s youth differed sharply from that of the log cabin Presidents. He was born in New York City in 1858 into a wealthy family, but he too struggled—against ill health—and in his triumph became an advocate of the strenuous life.

In 1884 his first wife, Alice Lee Roosevelt, and his mother died on the same day. Roosevelt spent much of the next two years on his ranch in the Badlands of Dakota Territory. There he mastered his sorrow as he lived in the saddle, driving cattle, hunting big game—he even captured an outlaw. On a visit to London, he married Edith Carow in December 1886.

During the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt was lieutenant colonel of the Rough Rider Regiment, which he led on a charge at the battle of San Juan. He was one of the most conspicuous heroes of the war.

Boss Tom Platt, needing a hero to draw attention away from scandals in New York State, accepted Roosevelt as the Republican candidate for Governor in 1898. Roosevelt won and served with distinction.

As President, Roosevelt held the ideal that the Government should be the great arbiter of the conflicting economic forces in the Nation, especially between capital and labor, guaranteeing justice to each and dispensing favors to none.

Roosevelt emerged spectacularly as a “trust buster” by forcing the dissolution of a great railroad combination in the Northwest. Other antitrust suits under the Sherman Act followed.

Roosevelt steered the United States more actively into world politics. He liked to quote a favorite proverb, “Speak softly and carry a big stick. . . .”

Aware of the strategic need for a shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific, Roosevelt ensured the construction of the Panama Canal. His corollary to the Monroe Doctrine prevented the establishment of foreign bases in the Caribbean and arrogated the sole right of intervention in Latin America to the United States.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize for mediating the Russo-Japanese War, reached a Gentleman's Agreement on immigration with Japan, and sent the Great White Fleet on a goodwill tour of the world.

Some of Theodore Roosevelt's most effective achievements were in conservation. He added enormously to the national forests in the West, reserved lands for public use, and fostered great irrigation projects.

He crusaded endlessly on matters big and small, exciting audiences with his high-pitched voice, jutting jaw, and pounding fist. "The life of strenuous endeavor" was a must for those around him, as he romped with his five younger children and led ambassadors on hikes through Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C.

Leaving the Presidency in 1909, Roosevelt went on an African safari, then jumped back into politics. In 1912 he ran for President on a Progressive ticket. To reporters he once remarked that he felt as fit as a bull moose, the name of his new party.

While campaigning in Milwaukee, he was shot in the chest by a fanatic. Roosevelt soon recovered, but his words at that time would have been applicable at the time of his death in 1919: "No man has had a happier life than I have led; a happier life in every way."

"Theodore Roosevelt." The White House, December 23, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/theodore-roosevelt/>.

SQ3: Featured Source B

Theater For the Issues of 1901

Note: For this portion of the Formative Task, students should have access to the videos available on the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site. They may watch the videos individually or as a whole class, depending on the preference of the teacher. The text below is part of the transcript of the audio presentation available on the tour of the site, the primary speaker plays the role of Theodore Roosevelt.

It is a dreadful thing to come into the Presidency this way. But it would be a far worse thing to be morbid about it. Here is the task, and I have got to do it to the best of my ability.

I am truly grateful that our economy is a mighty one. For that, all honor must be paid to the architects of our material prosperity, to the great captains of industry. Andrew Carnegie—he of the golden touch—has said: “Wealth, passing through the hands of the few, can be made a much more potent force for the elevation of our race than if it had been distributed in small sums to the people themselves.” But often, those sums are indeed miserably small. John Mitchell, who leads the mine workers’ union, is eloquent about that fact.

John Mitchell: “In Pennsylvania mines, wages were so low that parents were compelled to take their boys from school, sometimes when they were less than ten years of age, and put them to work in the breakers and the mines”

A man who visited a “breaker” wrote that: “the dust penetrates the utmost recesses of the boys’ lungs. A kind of slave-driver stands over the boys, prodding or kicking them into obedience.” I must work to curb the might of the giant industrial and financial trusts. While they do enormous good, they have much power over the lives and spirits of hard working Americans.

Jane Addams: The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.

Jane Addams, a great reformer, knows that there are districts where hardly anyone is above the level of poverty. Where poverty means misery it must be met by organization and the endless labor of those who live in the midst of it, like Miss Addams. When I was Police Commissioner in New York, I used to walk the poorest neighborhoods with the photographer Jacob Riis. I will never forget what we saw together. And what of the poor immigrants—hundreds of thousands each year? Francis Walker is President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. And he thinks immigration should be restricted. He said: The entrance of vast masses of peasantry, degraded below our utmost conceptions, is a matter which no intelligent patriot can look upon without apprehension and alarm. I welcome every honest immigrant, no matter from what country he comes, provided only that he leaves off his former nationality, and becomes an American, desirous of fulfilling in good faith the duties of American citizenship.

Even here, in our own country, race is such a vexing problem. I fought beside the colored Ninth Cavalry at San Juan Hill. And I hold that if a man is good enough to be put up and shot at then he is good enough for me to do what I can to get him a square deal. Among the men of this race, I much admire Dr. Booker T. Washington—President of Tuskegee Institute. We shall never have harmony between the races until the views of men such as Senator Ben Tillman are transformed. After all, he said: “We of the South have never recognized the Negro to be the equal of the white man, and we will not submit to his gratifying his lust on our wives and daughters without lynching him.”

Booker T Washington: One man cannot hold another man down in the ditch without remaining down in the ditch with him. I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has had to overcome.

The only wise and honorable and Christian thing to do is to treat each black man and each white man strictly on his merits as a man. Soon ... this very day, in fact ... I shall invite Dr. Washington to the White House.

John Muir: God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand tempests and floods. But he cannot save them from fools.

John Muir may be our foremost naturalist, but he does not speak the whole truth. We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources. But what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils have still further impoverished and washed into the streams? Like all Americans, I like big things; big prairies, big forests and mountains. We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received. We can continue to preserve them in but one possible way, by making the proper use of them.

If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world. Our whole national history has been one of expansion. We won the recent war against Spain in a very short time. And Secretary Elihu Root, to whom President McKinley entrusted the War Department, has already shown himself as good a man as ever held the portfolio. A prominent Democrat said recently:

“Governments derive their just powers not from superior force, but from the consent of the governed.” But I say it is only the warlike power of a civilized people that can give peace to the world. And so we are now guardians over Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Above all, let us shrink from no strife within or without the nation, provided we are certain that the strife is justified; for it is only through strife that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness.

So, what do I believe? Simply this: It is vital that every man who is in politics should strive steadily for reform; that he should have the highest ideals. And now I must return ... to take the oath. I am going to be President, and I am going to do my utmost to give the country a good President.

“Explore the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site in 3D.” mpembed.

<https://mpembed.com/show/?m=csmA1NwSmKz&mpu=43&mpv=1>.

SQ3: Featured Source C

Cities During the Progressive Era

In the early 1900s, the United States entered a period of peace, prosperity, and progress. In the nation's growing cities, factory output grew, small businesses flourished, and incomes rose. As the promise of jobs and higher wages attracted more and more people into the cities, the U.S. began to shift to a nation of city dwellers. By 1900, 30 million people, or 30 percent of the total population, lived in cities.

The mass migration of people into the cities enriched some people but caused severe problems for others. For the emerging middle class, benefiting from growing incomes and increases in leisure time, the expanding city offered many advantages. Department stores, chain stores, and shopping centers emerged to meet the growing demand for material goods. Parks, amusement parks, and baseball stadiums were built to meet aesthetic and recreational needs. Transportation systems improved, as did the general infrastructure, better meeting the increased needs of the middle and upper class city dwellers.

Thousands of poor people also lived in the cities. Lured by the promise of prosperity, many rural families and immigrants from throughout the world arrived in the cities to work in the factories. It is estimated that by 1904 one in three people living in the cities was close to starving to death. For many of the urban poor, living in the city resulted in a decreased quality of life. With few city services to rely upon, the working class lived daily with overcrowding, inadequate water facilities, unpaved streets, and disease. Lagging far behind the middle class, working class wages provided little more than subsistence living and few, if any, opportunities for movement out of the city slums.

“Cities During the Progressive Era.” The Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/progressive-era-to-new-era-1900-1929/cities-during-progressive-era/>.

SQ3: Featured Source D

[Baxter Street Alley in Mulberry Bend](#)



Riis, Jacob A, photographer. Baxter Street Alley in Mulberry Bend. , ca. 1888. [or 1889] Photograph.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2002710255/>.

SQ3: Featured Source E

[Street Arabs in "Sleeping Quarters"](#)



Riis, Jacob A, photographer. Street Arabs in "sleeping quarters". New York, ca. 1888. [Printed Later] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002710294/>.

SQ3: Featured Source F

[Necktie Workshop In a Division Street Tenement](#)



Riis, Jacob A, photographer. Necktie workshop in a Division Street tenement. New York, ca. 1889. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002710291/>.

SQ3: Featured Source G

[Family In Poverty Gap, N.Y.C. Tenement Room](#)



Riis, Jacob A, photographer. Family in poverty gap, N.Y.C. tenement room. , ca. 1889. Photograph.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2002710281/>.

SQ3: Featured Source H

Conservation in the Progressive Era

In the mid to late 19th century, natural resources were heavily exploited, especially in the West. Land speculators and developers took over large tracts of forests and grazing land. Acreage important to waterpower was seized by private concerns. Mining companies practiced improper and wasteful mining practices. Assuming a seemingly inexhaustible supply of natural resources, Americans developed a "tradition of waste."

Alarmed by the public's attitude toward natural resources as well as the exploitation of natural resources for private gain, conservationists called for federal supervision of the nation's resources and the preservation of those resources for future generations. In President Theodore Roosevelt, the conservationists found a sympathetic ear and man of action. Conservation of the nation's resources, putting an end to wasteful uses of raw materials, and the reclamation of large areas of neglected land have been identified as some of the major achievements of the Roosevelt era.

President Roosevelt's concern for the environment was influenced by American naturalists, such as John Muir, and by his own political appointees, including Gifford Pinchot, Chief of Forestry. Working in concert with many individuals and organizations, the Roosevelt administration was responsible for the following: the Newlands Act of 1902, which funded irrigation projects from the proceeds of the sale of federal lands in the West; the appointment of the Inland Waterways Commission in 1907 to study the relation of rivers, soil, forest, waterpower development, and water transportation; and the National Conservation Commission of 1909, which was charged with drawing up long-range plans for preserving national resources. Along with a vocal group of conservationists, the Roosevelt administration created an environmental conservation movement whose words and actions continue to be heard and felt throughout the nation today.

"Conservation in the Progressive Era: Progressive Era to New Era, 1900-1929." The Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/progressive-era-to-new-era-1900-1929/conservation-in-progressive-era/>.

SQ3: Featured Source I

Theodore Roosevelt and Conservation

Theodore Roosevelt is often considered the "conservationist president." Here in the North Dakota Badlands, where many of his personal concerns first gave rise to his later environmental efforts, Roosevelt is remembered with a national park that bears his name and honors the memory of this great conservationist.

Theodore Roosevelt first came to the Badlands in September 1883. A sportsman-hunter all his life, Roosevelt sought a chance to hunt the big game of North America before they disappeared. Although his writings depict numerous hunting trips and successful kills, they are laced with lament for the loss of species and habitat.

The decimation of bison, and the eradication of elk, bighorn sheep, deer and other game species was a loss which Roosevelt felt indicative of society's perception of our natural resources. He saw the effects of overgrazing, and suffered the loss of his ranches because of it. While many still considered natural resources inexhaustible, Roosevelt would write:

We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils have still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields and obstructing navigation.

Conservation increasingly became one of Roosevelt's main concerns. After becoming president in 1901, Roosevelt used his authority to protect wildlife and public lands by creating the United States Forest Service (USFS) and establishing 150 national forests, 51 federal bird reserves, 4 national game preserves, 5 national parks, and 18 national monuments by enabling the 1906 American Antiquities Act. During his presidency, Theodore Roosevelt protected approximately 230 million acres of public land.

Today, the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt is found across the country. There are six national park sites dedicated, in part or whole, to our conservationist president. You can find more information about these places under Theodore Roosevelt related websites.

Public Lands Established by Theodore Roosevelt

The conservation legacy of Theodore Roosevelt is found in the 230 million acres of public lands he helped establish during his presidency. Much of that land - 150 millions acres - was set aside as national forests. Roosevelt created the present-day USFS in 1905, an organization within the Department of Agriculture. The idea was to conserve forests for continued use. An adamant proponent of utilizing the country's

resources, Roosevelt wanted to insure the sustainability of those resources.

Roosevelt was also the first president to create a Federal Bird Reserve, and he would establish 51 of these during his administration. These reserves would later become today's national wildlife refuges, managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Today there is a national wildlife refuge in every state, and North Dakota boasts the most refuges of any state in the country.

During Roosevelt's administration, the National Park System grew substantially. When the National Park Service was created in 1916 - seven years after Roosevelt left office - there were 35 sites to be managed by the new organization. Roosevelt helped created 23 of those. See below for a list of the sites created during his administration which are connected with the National Park Service.

National Parks

National parks are created by an act of Congress. Before 1916, they were managed by the Secretary of the Interior. Roosevelt worked with his legislative branch to establish these sites:

Crater Lake National Park (OR) - 1902

Wind Cave National Park (SD) - 1903

Sullys Hill (ND) - 1904 (now managed by USFWS)

Platt National Park (OK) - 1906 (now part of Chickasaw National Recreation Area)

Mesa Verde National Park (CO) - 1906

Added land to Yosemite National Park (CA)

National Monuments

Roosevelt signed the Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities - also known as the Antiquities Act or the National Monuments Act - on June 8, 1906. The law gave the president discretion to "declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic and scientific interest... to be National Monuments."

Since he did not need congressional approval, Roosevelt could establish national monuments much easier than national parks. He dedicated these sites as national monuments:

Devil's Tower (WY) - 1906

El Morro (NM) - 1906

Montezuma Castle (AZ) - 1906

Petrified Forest (AZ) - 1906 (now a national park)

Chaco Canyon (NM) - 1907

Lassen Peak (CA) - 1907 (now Lassen Volcanic National Park)

Cinder Cone (CA) - 1907 (now part of Lassen Volcanic National Park)

Gila Cliff Dwellings (NM) - 1907

Tonto (AZ) - 1907

Muir Woods (CA) - 1908

Grand Canyon (AZ) - 1908 (now a national park)

Pinnacles (CA) - 1908 (now a national park)

Jewel Cave (SD) - 1908

Natural Bridges (UT) - 1908

Lewis & Clark Caverns (MT) - 1908 (now a Montana State Park)

Tumacacori (AZ) - 1908

Wheeler (CO) - 1908 (now Wheeler Geologic Area, part of Rio Grande National Forest)

Mount Olympus (WA) - 1909 (now Olympic National Park)

Roosevelt also established Chalmette Monument and Grounds in 1907, a site of the Battle of New Orleans. It is now a part of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.

Roosevelt Writings on Conservation

Theodore Roosevelt was the first president of the 1900s, a time of great expansion and development. His devotion to conserving our natural and cultural history helped establish a precedent at an important time in our nation's history. When many still considered our resources inexhaustible, Roosevelt saw them as something to protect and cherish:

It is also vandalism wantonly to destroy or to permit the destruction of what is beautiful in nature, whether it be a cliff, a forest, or a species of mammal or bird. Here in the United States we turn our rivers and streams into sewers and dumping-grounds, we pollute the air, we destroy forests, and exterminate fishes, birds and mammals -- not to speak of vulgarizing charming landscapes with hideous

advertisements. But at last it looks as if our people were awakening.

The great preservationist John Muir, concerned over the destruction of western areas, invited President Roosevelt to camp in Yosemite National Park. After his trip, Roosevelt remarked: "It was like lying in a great solemn cathedral, far vaster and more beautiful than any built by the hand of man."

He provided a counter-balance to those who sought to exploit the natural world for personal gain. When Congress fought his efforts to create a national park at the Grand Canyon, Roosevelt used his executive power to protect it as a national monument:

In the Grand Canyon, Arizona has a natural wonder which is in kind absolutely unparalleled throughout the rest of the world. I want to ask you to keep this great wonder of nature as it now is. I hope you will not have a building of any kind, not a summer cottage, a hotel or anything else, to mar the wonderful grandeur, the sublimity, the great loneliness and beauty of the canyon. Leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it.

"Theodore Roosevelt and Conservation." National Parks Service, November 16, 2017.

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/historyculture/theodore-roosevelt-and-conservation.htm#:~:text=The%20conservation%20legacy%20of%20Theodore,within%20the%20Department%20of%20Agriculture>.

SQ3: Featured Source J

Labor Battles in the Gilded Age**Gilded Age Capitalism and the Rise of Unions**

By the late 1800s the United States' industrial output and GDP was growing faster than that of any other country in the world.

At the center of the nation's economic success was a dynamic and expansive industrial capitalism, one consequence of which was mass immigration. From 1865 to 1918, 27.5 million immigrants poured into the United States, many aspiring to the opportunities afforded by the nation's economic successes.

The late nineteenth century was a time when industrial capitalism was new, raw, and sometimes brutal. Between 1881 and 1900, 35,000 workers per year lost their lives in industrial and other accidents at work, and strikes were commonplace: no fewer than 100,000 workers went on strike each year. In 1892, for example, 1,298 strikes involving some 164,000 workers took place across the nation. Unions—which function to protect workers' wages, hours of labor, and working conditions—were on the rise.

Strikes and strikebreaking: The Homestead Strike

On June 29, 1892, Henry Clay Frick, the manager of the Homestead Steelworks outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—motivated by a desire to break the union of skilled steel workers who for years had controlled elements of the workflow on the shop floor in the steel mill and slowed output—locked the members of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers (AA) out of the Homestead Steelworks. In response, the next day, AA members struck the plant.

In the first days of the strike, Frick decided to bring in a group of strikebreakers (commonly called scabs). To get inside the steelworks, the replacement workers would have the daunting task of making their way past picketing strikers who had surrounded the steelworks. But Frick hadn't hired any old strikebreakers: he decided to hire men from the Pinkerton detective agency, who were technically dubbed “detectives” but who were actually armed men seeking to push past striking workers and forcibly reopen the steelworks.

On July 6, gunfire broke out between striking workers and some of the three hundred Pinkerton detectives that Frick had hired. The Pinkerton agents, who were aboard barges being towed toward the side of the steelworks that bordered the Monongahela River, were pinned down in the barges by gunfire from the striking workers. By the next afternoon, with several having been killed on both sides, the Pinkertons raised a white flag of surrender.

Five days later, however, 6,000 state militiamen who had been dispatched by the governor of Pennsylvania marched into town, surrounded the steelworks, and reopened the plant. The state government had sided with the owners. The union had been defeated.

The Pullman Strike

George Pullman was an engineer who designed a popular railroad sleeping car. (Before the advent of cars and airplanes, Americans traveled long distances by rail and slept in railroad cars on the trains.) George Pullman manufactured the nation's most popular sleeping cars, and Pullman was so successful that he built a company town outside Chicago, where the 12,000 workers who built Pullman sleeping cars worked and lived. But when, in the spring of 1894, amid a general economic downturn and decline in prices nationally, Pullman cut workers' wages without also proportionally reducing rents on the company-owned houses or prices of goods sold in the company-owned stores, workers struck.

The Pullman Strike, which had begun in May, spread the next month to become a nationwide railroad strike as the American Railway Union, led by Eugene V. Debs, called out workers on railroads across the country in sympathy with Pullman workers.

In turn, the railroad companies placed bags of US Mail onto trains striking workers were refusing to move. Declaring that the American Railway Union was illegally obstructing the delivery of the United States mail, rail owners enlisted the support of US President Grover Cleveland. Cleveland dispatched troops to Chicago, ostensibly to protect the US Mail, and an injunction was issued against the union. Debs and other strike leaders were imprisoned when they refused to abide by the court-ordered injunction and call off the strike. The injunction was upheld by the courts, and the strike was ended by late July. Again, government—this time the federal government—had sided with employers in a labor-management dispute.

The Federal Government and the Labor Movement

The limits and legal rights of those who own companies and those who work in companies is an ongoing debate in American politics. As a nation equally committed to both capitalism and the rights of individuals, the United States has struggled to balance the needs of corporations and the needs of workers.

As in the Homestead and Pullman strikes, government in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries often sided with management and against unions. But not always. In the 1902 anthracite coal strike President Teddy Roosevelt threatened coal mine owners that if they did not bargain in good faith with the coal workers' union that the federal government—would take over control of the mines. The owners quickly capitulated to his demands and the strike was settled.

C3 TEACHERS

In the Great Depression, the federal government enacted provisions on behalf of workers and labor unions. President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Wagner Labor Relations Act into law on July 5, 1935. The Wagner Act established federal guidelines for allowing unions to organize and established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) as a federal agency to enforce the Act's pro-labor provisions.

In 1947, however, Congress amended the Wagner Act with the Taft-Hartley Act (still in effect today), which restricts the activities and power of labor unions.

“Labor Battles in the Gilded Age (Article).” Khan Academy. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/the-gilded-age/gilded-age/a/labor-battles-in-the-gilded-age#:~:text=The%20Homestead%20Strike%20occurred%20at,steelworkers%20ultimately%20lost%20the%20strike.>

SQ3: Featured Source K

Theodore Roosevelt and Labor Reform – Excerpt

...In 1882, the freshman New York state assemblyman Roosevelt met with labor leader Samuel Gompers, who was campaigning for a bill to ban cigar manufacturing in New York City tenement buildings. At first, Roosevelt opposed the bill (as did most if not all of his Republican colleagues), but he agreed to allow Gompers to take him on a tour of these tenements. Roosevelt was shocked by the horrific conditions under which cigar makers toiled, and personally lobbied for reform to New York Governor Grover Cleveland. The bill initially floundered, and later passed, but was ultimately found unconstitutional by the New York Supreme Court.

Roosevelt often developed his opinions by seeing how the other half lived, quite literally. His friend Jacob Riis, author of *How The Other Half Lives* (1890) worked with Roosevelt as Civil Service Commissioner and New York Police Commissioner to “witness first-hand the calamitous conditions affecting the poor.” Roosevelt had actually approached Riis rather than the other way around after reading his book. Many laws intended to help the working-class people of New York were passed thanks to the Roosevelt-Riis partnership....

...Practical reform was always at the forefront of Roosevelt’s political actions. As this relates to labor, he made it his mission to strike a balance between capital and labor, seeking to curb unrestrained avarice and exploitation on the one hand, and violent uprisings on the other. Early in his presidency, he began pushing for the creation of a Department of Commerce and Labor, and he continued to push for protective laws similar to those he had championed as Governor of New York.

One of the most significant episodes of Roosevelt’s first term as president was the Anthracite Coal Strike. Because George F. Baer (President of the Reading Railroad) and other industry leaders refused to negotiate working conditions, over 100,000 laborers under the leadership of John Mitchell and the United Mine Workers walked out in May of 1902. The strike went on for months, a coal shortage developed, and Roosevelt saw no choice but to intervene. But instead of using brute force, he instead chose to use the government as a third-party arbitrator...

...The Progressives’ need to serve the people can especially be seen in their campaigning for major labor reforms. Roosevelt and the Progressive Party were for workman’s compensation, the prohibition of child labor, and the elimination of the sweatshop. The Progressive Party platform included planks for health and safety standards and at least one day off per week. There were many planks for women’s labor as well – minimum wage standards, an eight-hour day, the prohibition of night work. They were against convict contract labor – an issue on which Roosevelt had voted the other way as a state assemblyman in New York. They even included an early form of social security and unemployment insurance...

Hansard, William. “Theodore Roosevelt and Labor Reform.” TR Center - Labor Reform, September 5, 2022. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Blog/Item/Labor%20Reform>.

SQ3: Featured Source L

Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Thomas J. Dolan

April 29, 1907.

My dear Mr. Dolan:

No letter could have pleased me more than yours. You took just the ground that a good, sane, American citizen ought to take. I do not regard a man as fit to hold public office in America if he is not a staunch friend of labor; and personally I am not merely a friend of labor, but a strong friend of organized labor, a strong believer in unions; and the very fact that I believe with all my heart in the cause of the wage-worker and would do everything *legitimate* for him, makes me feel it incumbent on me to set my face like a flint against lawlessness and disorder and violence, and scrupulously to try to do real justice without regard to persons as between labor and capital, rich man and the man who is not so well off.

Let me repeat how much genuine pleasure your letter gave me.

Sincerely yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Thomas J. Dolan. Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o199234>. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library. Dickinson State University.

SQ3: Featured Source M

South America and the Monroe Doctrine (1914)

SOUTH AMERICA AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THE South American nations I have visited are, of course, keenly interested in the attitude of the United States in the international affairs of America. They are especially interested in the Monroe Doctrine.

As regards the Monroe Doctrine, there has been much misapprehension of our attitude, and this is largely due to the fact that not a few of our own citizens have both misunderstood and misrepresented it. In its essence the Doctrine is simply that America is no longer to be treated as if it were Africa, or parts of Asia, and subject to settlement by conquest by Old World powers. Most of our people accept this view.

There are, however, a few who say secretly and a still smaller number who say openly that we ought not to take this view, and that the Monroe Doctrine ought to be abrogated because it would be well to have foreign powers establish themselves on the American continent. This view has been advanced by certain magazine writers, and it is often upheld privately, the usual ground being that it would be in the interest of civilization to have European powers establish themselves in and send their colonists to portions of South America. The men who take this attitude usually pride themselves upon being very intelligent and advanced individuals. As a matter of fact, they are absolutely ignorant of the matter about which they write or speak. They do not understand the conditions of South America. They do not understand or, indeed, really care for the honor and interest of the United States. They do not understand what it is they really advocate. One favorite statement of the people of this school is that it would be well to have Germany, for instance, take possession of the southern province of Brazil; and they sometimes say that they would not object to European powers taking possession of various other portions of temperate South America.

They do not understand that the nations of temperate South America are already so advanced that what they advocate is a sheer impossibility—aside from the further fact

that, even if it were possible, it would be so terrible a calamity that all the peoples of the two Americas would have to combine to prevent its occurrence. There is a great need of immigration from Europe to South America. That immigration is already steadily taking place. I believe it would diminish rather than increase if the South American countries, instead of being independent, were merely colonies of Old World countries. With negligible exceptions, the children and grandchildren of the European immigrants become first-class Brazilians, Argentines, Chileans, Uruguayans. In my travels I have met literally hundreds of prominent men, including many officers of the army and navy, whose fathers or grandfathers were Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Irishmen, Poles, Spaniards, or Italians. One and all, they were citizens of the country in which they were born, pure and simple. They were enthusiastic and patriotic Argentines or Brazilians or Chileans or Uruguayans. Often they could hardly speak the language of their fathers or grandfathers at all. Rarely did they speak it save as a foreign tongue. In short, they behaved exactly as similar men in our own country behave. It is as idle to talk of any foreign nation conquering and holding, as in some shape a colony, any portion of these countries as it would be to talk of their conquering and holding in such manner and for such purpose Rhode Island or Wisconsin or Oregon. The countries of the future in temperate South America will be the countries of to-day. The South Americans of the future will be Brazilians or Argentines or Uruguayans or Chileans. They will not be Englishmen or Irishmen or Germans or Frenchmen or North Americans, for what I have said about the assimilation of immigrants applies just as much to immigrants from the United States as from Europe.

In tropical America the conditions are somewhat different. But, as regards tropical America also, it is no less emphatically true that no good can come from any foreign conquest of the country by an Old World

582

nation, and that the United States never could, never ought to, and never would permit any such foreign conquest.

Another type of well-meaning but singularly short-sighted American attacks the Monroe Doctrine from another standpoint. He says it is an "outworn policy," and that there is no longer need of applying it. This gentleman also is often a man of learning, a college graduate, or even a college professor. He is but one degree wiser than the individual whom I have already considered. Indeed, in some respects he is even more futile. So far as the seas and lands which in any way control the approaches to the Panama Canal are concerned, there is more need of the assertion of the Monroe Doctrine now than ever before. It is an act of folly in a private citizen, and of unpardonable folly in a public servant, to fail to recognize that this is the case. If the approaches to the Canal were dominated by nations as powerful, as stable and orderly, as ready to do justice, and as able to enforce justice as the great countries of temperate South America, the case would be wholly different. But as it is, no man in his senses can soberly deny that some at least of these countries are as yet struggling with conditions which render it always possible that they will themselves commit wrong on other countries, and thereby invite a retaliation which they are powerless to resist, and which would certainly take the form of territorial compensation—that is, territorial aggrandizement—by some big military Old World power, unless the United States were to forbid. This is precisely what so nearly happened in our own time in Venezuela and in Santo Domingo. In both these countries the United States had to interfere during the last decade to prevent territorial aggression at their expense by Old World military powers.

In its essence the Monroe Doctrine is merely that there shall not be this territorial aggrandizement by Old World powers in America. In practice, when we come to deal with a few of the less responsible and more disturbed American powers, we have to take into account the fact that they sometimes commit wrongs for which it is right that there should be redress on behalf of the aggrieved party. In certain cases almost the only form of redress practically open to the aggrieved party, unless the United States intervenes, is the seizure of territory. In these cases, if the United States is wise, it

will itself act, both doing justice and exacting justice. The ideal instance of such action was that taken by the United States during my Administration in regard to Santo Domingo.

The Government of Santo Domingo had sunk, through chronic revolution, into a condition of utter impotence and disorder. The custom-houses of various ports had been pledged for debts. There was no way of paying these debts, and the Governments of certain nations to which the creditors belonged were about to take action. This would have meant permanent territorial possession of the most important parts of the island by certain foreign powers. I did not believe that, either in our own interest or in the interests of America as a whole, this should be permitted. Accordingly I acted, the action being ultimately taken at the request of Santo Domingo itself. We organized the custom-houses, sending out a trained American official to take charge, with natives under him. We forbade any interference with the custom-houses by any revolution or otherwise. We also forbade foreign powers to take possession of them or any of the rest of the country. We collected the revenue, applying part to the uses of the Government and part to the satisfaction of honest claims against the Government. Peace came as a result of our efforts, and Santo Domingo has been more prosperous than ever before. The forty-five per cent which we turned over to the Government exceeded what in actual practice they had ever received when they had collected all the revenue for themselves. The creditors received satisfaction for their just claims, the Government was better off than it had ever previously been, the United States was saved all possible danger of future complications with great military powers, and, in short, we have never in our diplomatic history done anything more thoroughly satisfactory or that more thoroughly justified itself. It was strictly an instance of working out the Monroe Doctrine in the interest of the United States, in the interest of all people dealing with Santo Domingo, and, above all, in the interest of Santo Domingo itself. It furnished the proper, and the only proper, precedent for our action in Central America.

The Monroe Doctrine was connected with our action in Panama only in the sense that it would have been impossible for us to have permitted any foreign government to construct the Canal. This attitude on our part

had as a necessary corollary that unless we shirked our duty we were bound to construct the Canal ourselves. We acted with scrupulous regard to the rights of Colombia until Colombia's behavior became such that it would have been criminal weakness for us further to hesitate, and, moreover, an act of criminal injustice to the people of Panama, the people actually in possession of the Isthmus. If there is any truth at all in the "consent of the governed" theory, here at Panama was a capital instance of its application. The people of Panama were governed from Colombia without their consent. The people of Panama felt that it was vital that the Canal should be built by the United States—and it was literally vital from their standpoint.

Colombia, from evil motives, and with an ethical obliquity as great as, but no greater than, that of the American defenders of Colombia's action, refused to carry out the treaty which at its own instance the United States had made with it. Accordingly the United States acted. Its action was in accordance with the highest ethical principles. We should have made ourselves objects of derision if we had failed to follow the course we did follow. Curiously enough, no nation will benefit more than Colombia itself will ultimately benefit by our action. Colombia was standing in her own light. We have in no way hurt Colombia. She will be immeasurably richer when we have built the Canal which she herself was impotent to dig and which she wanted to prevent us from digging. To say that the United States owes Colombia a dollar is not only a falsehood, is not only a wicked and unworthy attack upon our own National character, but is an offense against international good morals and a justification of the worst international practices.

I was interested to see how every public man of any consequence whom I met in South America cordially approved our action as regards the Panama Canal. The only men who disapproved it were those who were professionally hostile to the United States and were eagerly seizing on everything that could be twisted into a means of attacking the United States. In Rio de Janeiro two or three of the most prominent men, while talking with me one day, spoke of the fact that a very eminent Colombian had himself told them that the United States followed the only possible course if it intended to have the Canal built and not to see the Isthmus under the control of a foreign power. One of these

men added: "It was exactly as if in going down a narrow street on business of importance I met a man who refused to let me pass. I would try to get by him on one side, and then I would try the other side, but if he still persisted in trying to prevent me I should put him aside and continue my journey; and not to do so would be weakness on my part." Of course these statesmen would not speak in public unless it were necessary. But in the Argentine, one of the noted international jurists of the nation, a prominent public man, Señor Zabellos, now in the Chamber of Deputies, spoke as follows:

"And now we come precisely to the rock on which the Monroe Doctrine is founded in the other hemisphere, that is to say, on its relation to the interests of the United States. Now we come to Panama. . . . President Roosevelt could not permit the Isthmus of Panama to come under the influence of a European nation, because the Isthmus of Panama is the vital point of the continent of America. Sir Walter Raleigh called it the key of the world, and to lose it would be a vital blow to American military strength. Without this, a squadron in the Atlantic would be utterly powerless to help a squadron in the Pacific. As England cast aside her spirit of insular conservatism and broadened her business policy by commanding both entrances to the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal and Gibraltar, so President Roosevelt risked his reputation and even the peace of his country to conserve for America the key of Panama. But, gentlemen, did this in any way or shape affect the dignity of the other republics? What other countries of America have the same world problems as Panama and Mexico, the latter on the frontier of the United States, and the former the throat of the continent itself? They have nothing in common with the problems of the River Plata, or the shores of Brazil, or the coast of Chile. The Monroe Doctrine is necessary to-day to the United States. The Caribbean Sea washes the coast of the richest part of the United States, and it is necessary that it be dominated by them, in order to guarantee the independence and security of the United States. Under these circumstances, when there is constant danger of European intervention, as in the case of Venezuela, the United States said to the powers, in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine, You can urge your claims in accordance with inter-

national procedure, but you cannot take territory, because if you do you will have to deal with the armed forces of the United States. The powers thereupon became less aggressive and the matter was settled by arbitration. This action of the United States emphasized once more the doctrine that no European power will be permitted to acquire territory on the continent of America."

Our own public servants and our own publicists are much to blame because they fail to discriminate among the nations of Latin America. They often speak as if great and stable communities, entitled to stand on a footing of full equality with the United States, were really to be ranked with some small nominal republic in which a succession of greedy dictators, presiding over a helpless population, has resulted in complete governmental bankruptcy and political, social, and industrial anarchy. To speak of "Latin America" as an entity is true only in the sense in which it would be true to speak of "English America" as an entity, including both the United States and Jamaica, were Jamaica an independent republic. It is no injustice to Jamaica to say that in such event it would be impossible to treat her and the United States as of exactly the same types, however desirable it would be that each should respect and treat fairly the other. In the same way there are differences between certain Spanish-American tropical countries and great free nations like Chile and the Argentine. Our people as a whole fail to realize that certain of the South American countries are entitled to be treated on a footing of exact equality, precisely as we treat England and France, Germany and Italy, Holland and Sweden. Not only have I again and again in my speeches endeavored to bring out this point at home, but I was able to bring it out in the countries themselves. I discussed the general subject in my first Brazilian speech. After that I never alluded to the matter unless in response to some speech made to me. I thus spoke once in Uruguay, as I have already mentioned, and twice in Buenos Aires, once on the occasion when the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Letters was conferred upon me by the University of Buenos Aires, and once at the great dinner of the Museo Social. These two speeches at Buenos Aires were received with the utmost cordiality, and they express my deep convictions—convictions which I believe will be shared by all the people of the United

States in so far as the actual facts are vivid to their minds.

In the course of the speech in the University of Buenos Aires I said:

"After the United States was founded as a republic, for over three-quarters of a century, for nearly ninety years after the Declaration of Independence, that Declaration was made a lie by our own acts in relation to slavery. Every criticism of the United States which said that it gave the lie by its acts to its declarations about freedom was just, and no critic of the United States ought to take back any condemnation of the United States made during that ninety years because of the existence of slavery. These condemnations were just. But when we abolished slavery we were entitled to have our critics say so. Then we were entitled to the credit for what we had done.

"The same thing is true of the republics of Latin America in connection with the disorders that marked their early growth. I shall always regret, deplore, and condemn the existence of chronic revolutionary disturbance in any Latin-American republic, and as long as the habit of revolutionary disturbance is chronic I shall never say that the republic in which it is chronic has a proper national life or a history worthy of respect. I shall never say it while such a condition of affairs exists; for if I did say it I would be speaking an untruth. As a philosopher of my own country, Emerson, has said: 'In the long run the most uncomfortable truth is a better traveling companion than the pleasantest falsehood.' But when a nation gets past the stage of disorder and weakness and revolutionary disturbance, when it has definitely entered on a career of orderly liberty and achieved justice, of power to do justice to others and to exact justice from others, then I take off my hat to it as I do to the Argentine Republic. You understand, friends, that in so far as my criticism applied, and applies, both about the past and as regards the nations that still deserve it, I do not retract it. But when a nation has shown by its acts that it is past that stage, then that nation stands as my own did when it got past the stage of being a slave-owning power. We earned the reprobation of all mankind, we of the United States of the North, when, while claiming to be a free nation, we remained the last of the great nations to have slavery in existence. We earned and we deserved, and it was right that we should receive, the con-

(Continued on page following illustrations)

demnation of mankind under these circumstances. But when we abolished slavery then we were entitled to stand with our heads erect in the faces of the nations of mankind. And just the same is true of the Argentine Republic to-day, as it has been for decades in the past.

"The Monroe Doctrine is meant to express the fact that the Western Hemisphere is not to be treated as Africa or mid-Asia is treated, as a subject for conquest by any Old World power. It is a doctrine which the United States promulgated, partly as a matter of policy in its own interest, partly as a matter of policy in the interest of all the republics of the New World. But as rapidly as any other republic grows to possess the stability, the prosperity that comes with stability, the self-respecting insistence upon doing right to others and exacting right from others, just so rapidly that country becomes itself a sponsor and guarantor of the Monroe Doctrine, with which the United States of the North no longer has any concern, so far as the Doctrine relates to it. Specifically, the Argentine Republic can protect itself, just as the United States of the North can protect itself; and in all our dealings as regards the Monroe Doctrine, and as regards all other matters, the reciprocal attitude of the United States of the North and the Argentine toward one another must be that of an equal speaking to an equal, with mutual respect, and each with self-respect.

"Have I put it absolutely clearly? I wish there to be no doubt of my meaning. As far as you are concerned, we have no more concern with the Monroe Doctrine about you than you have about us. If ever it became vitally necessary to enforce it, each would help the other. The attitude of our people—yours, mine—should also be one of cordial good will and friendship towards the peoples of Europe. We are of European descent—your people, our people. We have inherited the Old World European culture. We are bound to the peoples of Europe by a thousand ties, and I welcome every increase of friendship between either of our peoples and the peoples of Europe. But let me add this—and it has been said by you—we are not simply colonies of the Old World, we are new nations. Ours is a new nation, yours is a new nation. The American of the North, the Argentine of the South, both represent new peoples. Each nation holds within its veins the blood of many different European stocks. Each is like many European nations,

and different from any one European nation. And we have such problems in common, such beliefs and ideals, and methods of government, and ways of life, and habits of thought, that we inevitably are closer together, and will in the end have a closer and more understanding relationship with one another, than is possible at the present time among European peoples. As has been so well said, each must remember that the citizen of each country cannot be a good citizen of the world unless he is a good citizen of his own country first. We must first and foremost be citizens of the Argentine, citizens of the United States, in the full sense of the word, patriotically, with pride, with eager desire to identify ourselves with our own national life, before we can be of any help in the great world at large. I think so well of you just because you are Argentines and not imitations of something else. If you were merely the imitations of something else, I would not visit you; I would visit the originals of which you were the copies. Never forget that the most intensely patriotic devotion to your own country is not merely compatible with, but should be the inspiration of, the heartiest good will and respect for all the other nations of the world."

And at the dinner of the Museo Social I said, in part:

"The Monroe Doctrine is, in its essence, merely the statement that the soil of the New World is not to be the scene of territorial aggrandizement by any nation of the Old World. It is a doctrine which every self-respecting nation of the two Americas should treat as of cardinal importance, both as a matter of self-interest and also from the standpoint of the common interest of all the nations of the Western Hemisphere. It is not a matter of international law, it is a matter of American policy—a policy which should be partly based upon the self-interest of every American nation, and partly upon the common interest, the disinterested sense of community of ideals and purposes among all American nations. It is not worth the paper on which it is printed unless back of it there is potential force. I have always championed every practical measure to bring nearer the day when we shall be able to substitute other methods than those of war for the settlement of international disputes. I have always fought in every way to further the cause of the peace of righteousness throughout the world. But as yet it would be an act of

criminal folly for the great free nations not to remember that we must make might the servant of right instead of divorcing might from right. As yet no movement for peace amounts to anything unless the peoples behind it possess, in addition to the love of justice, the power and the determination in time of need to use the potential force that is theirs. As yet the proclamation of such a policy as the Monroe Doctrine is not worth the paper on which the words are inscribed unless back of the words lies the power of action, unless back of the proclamation lies the potential strength to enforce it, and the will to use that strength should the need arise.

"Ninety years ago, when the Doctrine was first proclaimed, the only American nation that had sufficient strength to gain even a scanty and discourteous hearing from the Old World was the United States of America. At that time the only hearing even the United States received was both scanty and discourteous; nevertheless, it could at times make itself heard and heeded; and therefore the guardianship of the Doctrine had to rest with the United States. But times have changed. Certain of the Latin-American nations have grown with astonishing speed to a position of assured and orderly political development, material prosperity, readiness to do justice to others, and potential strength to enforce justice from others. These nations are able to enforce order at home and respect abroad. These nations have so developed their institutions that they themselves do not wrong others, and that they are able to repel wrong from others. Every such nation, when once it has achieved such a position, should become itself a sponsor, and guarantor of the Doctrine; and its relations with the other sponsors and guarantors should be those of equality.

"Prominent among these nations is your own, the Argentine. You are not only one of the great free nations of the future, you are already a great free nation of the present. In size, in political stability, in virile energy, in orderly development, in patriotic self-respect, and in the right to the respect of others you rank on a footing of entire equality with the great free nations of mankind. As far as you are concerned, my feeling is that the Monroe Doctrine in the sense of special guardianship thereof by the United States of the North no longer applies. You need no protection. You are fit to be the champion of your own Monroe Doctrine.

"In other words, you have so developed that you have the right to expect that in all international relations between the Argentine and the United States the treatment shall be on both sides absolutely and without qualification that of an equal to an equal, based on an exact mutuality of respect and obligation. There are other Latin-American powers which have achieved this position, and as regards them also what I have said should apply. I most earnestly hope that under the stimulus of the example of you and of these other Latin-American nations that have achieved a similar position, all of the Latin-American peoples will finally reach such a level of orderly self-government, of material prosperity, of potential strength, and of political and social conduct as to make the Monroe Doctrine, in the sense of being a merely unilateral doctrine, a thing of the past and to substitute for it a common agreement among all the free republics of the New World. This time has come as regards you. It has not come as regards any nation in which there is still chronic revolutionary disturbances, in which the hands of social order and justice are so relaxed that the nation is impotent to do justice to others or to enforce justice from others.

"The history of the United States shows with extraordinary clearness the point I wish to make. When our Civil War broke out, when revolutionary disturbance reduced us to impotence abroad, all our power to enforce respect for the Monroe Doctrine, or for any other policy we championed, vanished like smoke into thin air. Old World powers at once began again to treat this continent as subject to conquest and exploitation. A European empire was established immediately south of us. When the period of revolutionary disturbance came to an end, when the Union was restored, and the United States again became a great Nation, this empire crumbled at once into dust, and once more we were able to reassert the right of the peoples of this country to independence.

"In short, the history of my own country shows that it is useless to claim a right or a privilege unless the country claiming it acknowledges the obligation and duty that go with the privilege. We cannot claim the privileges of freedom unless we exercise the duties of freedom. You of the Argentine and we of the United States, both of us, I am happy to say, have reached the stage where we can truthfully say that we have

performed and are performing our duties with at least measurable success, and therefore that we are entitled to the privileges and to the rights that should accompany the performance of duty. One of these rights is absolutely self-respecting mutuality of regard and equality of treatment between us.

"I need hardly say that the championship of the Monroe Doctrine in no way implies any course of action toward any European power save one of the kindest good will. It should be the object of all of us—of you of the Argentine and of us of the United States—to cultivate close and friendly relations with the peoples of Europe. We are of their blood and of their culture. We are knit to them by many close ties of sympathy and interest. Like them, we are part of that great commonwealth of the spirit which, when we use the term in its best and highest significance, we speak of as civilization. We should try to extend the area of that great international commonwealth, not by conquest where it is possible to avoid conquest, but by good will, by friendliness, by just treatment. Let us hope that in the end every right-thinking, right-acting people in any part of either the Old World or the New shall be admitted to full brotherhood with all other peoples who are striving for justice, for generous good will and fair dealing among the nations of mankind.

"Nevertheless, close though the ties are that knit our several nations to the nations of the Old World, let us not forget that we are ourselves separate and individual nations, each with its own distinguishing characteristics. We have our own interests, needs, special characteristics, and special fields of work. We are not colonies. We are nations—we have reached the status of manhood. We must not lay overemphasis on supposed racial terms which often indicate a linguistic rather than a racial affinity. The blood of many European stocks runs in the veins of all of us. Each is akin to various European peoples, each is separate from every European people. Each Argentine citizen should learn Argentine first and foremost; don't let him dwell abroad, or be a mere copy of something from abroad. Let him stand on his own feet. This is the same advice I have always given to my own people.

"Allusion has been made here to the successful effort made under my Administration, and by my direction, to secure admission to the Hague Conference for the nations

of the New World on a footing of entire equality each with the others and with the several nations of the Old World. I would have felt myself derelict in my duty if I had not striven for this end. Will you permit me also to say that my deeds as President made good every word I have ever spoken in reference to the duty of the United States toward the other nations of this continent? In Panama I acted not only with scrupulous good faith, but in the only way that was consonant with my duty towards, not alone my own country, but all the countries of the New World and of the Old World as well. I served the cause of mankind by what I did, and any other action would have been culpable weakness and folly. I specially ask you to consider what we did in reference to Cuba under my Administration, and what we did in reference to Santo Domingo. We intervened to save Cuba from the effects of a desolating struggle under which her population had diminished in numbers by more than a million, the loss falling far more heavily upon women and children than upon men. When at last we intervened, we said that as a result of our interference Cuba should be independent.

"I doubt if there was a chancellery in Europe which believed that this promise was more than an empty form. During my Administration I made it an actual fact. We started Cuba on the path of stable and prosperous self-government, and then we left the island and left her a sovereign and independent nation. Later, when there was a revolutionary disturbance, we intervened, but we intervened only to make peace, to secure an honest election, and once more to start the island on a path of stable self-government. Again we left Cuba. She is now absolutely independent. I have every hope and belief that her stability and growth are firmly assured, and that from henceforth on she will continue as an absolutely independent and prosperous nation."

And then I told also the story of our course with Santo Domingo, essentially as I have told it above in this article.

I do not here attempt to discuss all the sides of the Monroe Doctrine. As regards the collection of debts from weak nations, I am inclined to think we shall ultimately come to the doctrine of the distinguished Argentine international jurist, Señor Drago, whom I had the honor of meeting. But, however this may be at present, we must face facts; and the facts are as I have stated them.

SQ3: Featured Source N

Roosevelt's "Big Stick" Foreign Policy

While President McKinley ushered in the era of the American empire through military strength and economic coercion, his successor, Theodore Roosevelt, established a new foreign policy approach, allegedly based on a favorite African proverb, “speak softly, and carry a big stick, and you will go far” ([Figure](#)). At the crux of his foreign policy was a thinly veiled threat. Roosevelt believed that in light of the country’s recent military successes, it was unnecessary to *use* force to achieve foreign policy goals, so long as the military could *threaten* force. This rationale also rested on the young president’s philosophy, which he termed the “strenuous life,” and that prized challenges overseas as opportunities to instill American men with the resolve and vigor they allegedly had once acquired in the Trans-Mississippi West.



Roosevelt was often depicted in cartoons wielding his “big stick” and pushing the U.S. foreign agenda, often through the power of the U.S. Navy.

Roosevelt believed that while the coercive power wielded by the United States could be harmful in the wrong hands, the Western Hemisphere’s best interests were also the best interests of the United States. He felt, in short, that the United States had the right and the obligation to be the policeman of the hemisphere. This belief, and his strategy of “speaking softly and carrying a big stick,” shaped much of Roosevelt’s foreign policy.

“Roosevelt’s ‘Big Stick’ Foreign Policy.” U.S. History, Age of Empire: American Foreign Policy, 1890-1914, Roosevelt’s “Big Stick” Foreign Policy | OER Repository - Affordable Learning LOUISiana, n.d.

https://louis.oercommons.org/courseware/lesson/417/student/#CNX_History_22_04_BigStick.

SQ3: Featured Source O

Theodore Roosevelt Speech “Lincoln and the Race Problem” – Excerpt

...Neither I nor any other man can say that any given way of approaching that problem will present in our times even an approximately perfect solution, but we can safely say that there can never be such solution at all unless we approach it with the effort to do fair and equal justice among all men; and to demand from them in return just and fair treatment for others. Our effort should be to secure to each man, whatever his color, equality of opportunity, equality of treatment before the law. As a people striving to shape our actions in accordance with the great law of righteousness we can not afford to take part in or be indifferent to oppression or maltreatment of any man who, against crushing disadvantages, has by his own industry, energy, self-respect, and perseverance struggled upward to a position which would entitle him to the respect of his fellows, if only his skin were of a different hue.

Every generous impulse in us revolts at the thought of thrusting down instead of helping up such a man. To deny any man the fair treatment granted to others no better than he is to commit a wrong upon him – a wrong sure to react in the long run upon those guilty of such denial. The only safe principle upon which Americans can act is that of “all men up,” not that of “some men down.” If in any community the level of intelligence, morality, and thrift among the colored men can be raised, it is, humanly speaking, sure that the same level among the whites will be raised to an even higher degree; and it is no less sure that the debasement of the blacks will in the end carry with it an attendant debasement of the whites.

The problem is so to adjust the relations between two races of different ethnic type that the rights of neither be abridged nor jeopardized; that the backward race be trained so that it may enter into the possession of true freedom while the forward race is enabled to preserve unharmed the high civilization wrought out by its forefathers. The working out of this problem must necessarily be slow; it is not possible in offhand fashion to obtain or to confer the priceless boons of freedom, industrial efficiency, political capacity, and domestic morality. Nor is it only necessary to train the colored man; it is quite as necessary to train the white man, for on his shoulders rests a well-nigh unparalleled sociological responsibility. It is a problem demanding the best thought, the utmost patience, the most earnest effort, the broadest charity, of the statesman, the student, the philanthropist; of the leaders of thought in every department of our national life. The Church can be a most important factor in solving it aright. But above all else we need for its successful solution the sober, kindly, steadfast, unselfish performance of duty by the average plain citizen in his everyday dealings with his fellows...

“(1905) Theodore Roosevelt, ‘Lincoln and the Race Problem’, February 7, 2020.

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/1905-theodore-roosevelt-lincoln-and-race-problem-3/>.

SQ3: Featured Source P

[Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Albion W. Tourgee](#)

November 8, 1901.

My dear Mr. Tourgee:

Your letter pleases and touches me. I too have been at my wits' ends in dealing with the black man. In this incident I deserve no particular credit. When I asked Booker T. Washington to dinner I did not devote very much thought to the matter one way or the other. I respect him greatly and believe in the work he has done. I have consulted so much with him it seemed to me that it was natural to ask him to dinner to talk over this work, and the very fact that I felt a moment's qualm on inviting him because of his color made me ashamed of myself and made me hasten to send the invitation. I did not think of its bearing one way or the other, either on my own future or on anything else. As things have turned out, I am very glad that I asked him, for the clamor aroused by the act makes me feel as if the act was necessary.

I have not been able to think out any solution of the terrible problem offered by the presence of the negro on this continent, but of one thing I am sure, and that is that inasmuch as he is here and can neither be killed nor driven away, the only wise and honorable and Christian thing to do is to treat each black man and each white man strictly on his merits as a man, giving him no more and no less than he shows himself worthy to

have. I say I am ^{sure} that this is the right solution. Of course I know that we see through a glass dimly, and, after all, it may be that I am wrong; but if I am, then all my thoughts and beliefs are wrong, and my whole way of looking at life is wrong. At any rate, while I am in public life, however short a time that may be, I am in honor bound to act up to my beliefs and convictions. I do not intend to offend the prejudices of anyone else, but neither do I intend to allow their prejudices to make me false to my principles.

Faithfully yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

Private

Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Albion W. Tourgee. Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o180529>. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library. Dickinson State University.

Supporting Question 4

The fourth supporting question— How has the Office of the President of the United States changed?

The formative task involves students examining the presidencies of George Washington, Teddy Roosevelt, and one modern president of their choice [ranging from Carter to Biden]. New sources provided for this task will allow students to analyze the presidency of George Washington. For researching Theodore Roosevelt, students will use their notes and sources provided from Formative Task 3. When researching the modern president of their choice, students will be given the independence to find, critique, and utilize sources of their own choosing. The final portion of this formative task will have students use their findings to determine how the role of the presidency has changed. Students will create a description of the three presidencies which exhibits their understanding of how they acted as presidents and how their roles, responsibilities, and policies differed between each other. All answers and notes for the tasks within the supporting question will be recorded within the What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures:

- Sourcing the documents so students identify the creator and purpose of the document/source
- Contextualizing and Close Reading Strategies
- Source Evaluation
- Utilization of Background Knowledge
- Silent Reading Strategies
- Collaboration with one or more students
- Note Taking and Information Recording Strategies
- Gradual Release of Responsibilities
- Independent Research

The scaffolds and other materials may be used to support students as they work with sources:

- Annotated Test
- What is the Presidency Inquiry Packet

The following sources were selected to allow students to utilize a variety of sources to examine how the perceived roles and responsibilities of the presidency have changed over the course of US History.

- **Featured Source A:** George Washington webpage of the White House website
- **Featured Source B:** UVA Miller Center article, “George Washington: Domestic Affairs”
- **Featured Source C:** UVA Miller Center article, “George Washington: Foreign Affairs”
- **Featured Source D:** George Washington’s Farewell Address (1796)

SQ4: Featured Source A

[The White House: George Washington](#)

Born in 1732 into a Virginia planter family, he learned the morals, manners, and body of knowledge requisite for an 18th century Virginia gentleman.

He pursued two intertwined interests: military arts and western expansion. At 16 he helped survey Shenandoah lands for Thomas, Lord Fairfax. Commissioned a lieutenant colonel in 1754, he fought the first skirmishes of what grew into the French and Indian War. The next year, as an aide to Gen. Edward Braddock, he escaped injury although four bullets ripped his coat and two horses were shot from under him.

From 1759 to the outbreak of the American Revolution, Washington managed his lands around Mount Vernon and served in the Virginia House of Burgesses. Married to a widow, Martha Dandridge Custis, he devoted himself to a busy and happy life. But like his fellow planters, Washington felt himself exploited by British merchants and hampered by British regulations. As the quarrel with the mother country grew acute, he moderately but firmly voiced his resistance to the restrictions.

When the Second Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia in May 1775, Washington, one of the Virginia delegates, was elected Commander in Chief of the Continental Army. On July 3, 1775, at Cambridge, Massachusetts, he took command of his ill-trained troops and embarked upon a war that was to last six grueling years.

He realized early that the best strategy was to harass the British. He reported to Congress, “we should on all Occasions avoid a general Action, or put anything to the Risque, unless compelled by a necessity, into which we ought never to be drawn.” Ensuing battles saw him fall back slowly, then strike unexpectedly. Finally in 1781 with the aid of French allies—he forced the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

Washington longed to retire to his fields at Mount Vernon. But he soon realized that the Nation under its Articles of Confederation was not functioning well, so he became a prime mover in the steps leading to the Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia in 1787. When the new Constitution was ratified, the Electoral College unanimously elected Washington President.

He did not infringe upon the policy making powers that he felt the Constitution gave Congress. But the determination of foreign policy became preponderantly a Presidential concern. When the French Revolution led to a major war between France and England, Washington refused to accept entirely the recommendations of either his Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who was pro-French, or his Secretary

of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, who was pro-British. Rather, he insisted upon a neutral course until the United States could grow stronger.

To his disappointment, two parties were developing by the end of his first term. Wearied of politics, feeling old, he retired at the end of his second. In his Farewell Address, he urged his countrymen to forswear excessive party spirit and geographical distinctions. In foreign affairs, he warned against long-term alliances.

Washington enjoyed less than three years of retirement at Mount Vernon, for he died of a throat infection December 14, 1799. For months the Nation mourned him.

“George Washington.” The White House, December 23, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/george-washington/>.

SQ4: Featured Source B

[George Washington: Domestic Affairs – Excerpt](#)

On April 30, 1789, Washington took the oath of office in New York City, the country’s capital until it moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1790. Right away, his biggest challenge was fleshing out the president’s daily activities and interactions. Article II of the Constitution says little about how the president should carry out the hefty responsibilities entrusted to the office.

The president would need assistance managing his duties, but the delegates to the Constitutional Convention rejected several proposals to create a cabinet. Instead, they created the Senate to serve as a council on foreign policy and empowered the president to request written advice from the department secretaries.

Washington witnessed the Convention debates and understood the delegates’ expectations. Accordingly, he planned his first visit to the Senate to consult on foreign policy about a treaty with Native American nations in August 1789. The senators proved unwilling to provide immediate feedback and requested that the president return the following week for their recommendation. Furious, Washington concluded the Senate could not provide the instantaneous advice diplomacy required.

Instead, Washington requested written advice from his department secretaries. He surrounded himself with talented advisors, then sought out their knowledge to make informed decisions—demonstrating his awareness of his own limitations. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of War Henry Knox, and Attorney General Edmund Randolph were intelligent, well-respected, and skilled. For example, Washington had only left the United States once as a teenager when he traveled to Barbados, and he had limited proficiency with foreign languages. Jefferson had served as a minister at the principle European courts and spoke French, the language of eighteenth-century diplomacy. Similarly, Washington did not have advanced training or higher education. Randolph had held almost every legal position in Virginia and successfully represented powerful clients, including Washington, as a private attorney. Washington depended on Jefferson’s firsthand foreign policy insights and Randolph’s legal expertise when grappling with complicated diplomatic and constitutional questions.

The secretaries represented different cultural, economic, and regional interests. Americans felt little loyalty toward the new federal government, but by choosing secretaries that pulled from different parts of the nation, Washington began to build tenuous emotional ties between the people and the government. While we might not think of Washington’s administration as particularly diverse, his contemporaries did, and they appreciated that cabinet deliberations included their perspective.

Washington quickly discovered that written correspondence was too cumbersome to manage the

challenging issues on his plate. By January 1790, Washington was inviting the secretaries to one-on-one consultations. Then on November 26, 1791, he convened the first cabinet meeting to discuss the state of the economic and diplomatic relationships between the United States and France, Great Britain, and Spain.

In addition to creating the cabinet, Washington was also singularly responsible for the formation of the first Supreme Court of the United States. Washington appointed eleven justices during his two terms in office and carefully selected individuals to represent almost all the original thirteen states. He also appointed jurists who had supported the ratification of the Constitution and interpreted the document as a grant of extensive executive authority. While the early Supreme Court experienced regular turnover, Washington's nominees ensured that the early Court was dedicated to preserving federal authority.

Financial Considerations

Washington's relations with Congress shifted as he increasingly turned to his cabinet for support. Early in his presidency, Washington had regularly consulted with James Madison and other leaders in Congress. As his agenda took shape, factions in Congress lined up in support or opposition.

The financial powers of the federal government sparked the most disagreement. The new Constitution empowered Congress to raise taxes and pass legislation that managed the national economy. Secretary of the Treasury Hamilton had a three-part plan to restore the economy and make full use of those powers. First, the federal government would assume the states' debts remaining from the war to ensure they were paid in full. Madison and Jefferson, leaders of a growing opposition faction, opposed this measure as unfair to states, like Virginia, which had already paid most of its debts.

Next, Hamilton planned to repay all bonds at face value. During the war, Congress had issued bonds to many veterans and investors. As confidence in Congress's ability to repay the bonds plummeted, many bond holders sold them to speculators at a fraction of the original price. Hamilton insisted that the current holders of the bonds be paid in full, meaning many speculators (often wealthy northerners) stood to make a fortune. Again, Madison and Jefferson opposed Hamilton's plan, arguing that the original bond holders deserved the money, not speculators.

Finally, Hamilton proposed the creation of a national bank that would provide ready credit to the government. The Madison-Jefferson faction opposed the creation of the bank on the grounds that it went beyond the powers the Constitution granted to Congress.

While Hamilton was pushing for the passage of these three bills, Congress was also debating the future location of the nation's capital. Hamilton negotiated a compromise: Madison would arrange the votes for assumption of the states' debts and full payment of securities, while Hamilton swung support behind Madison's preferred location for the new capital on the banks of the Potomac River.

Congress also passed the legislation to create the national bank, over significant opposition from inside Washington's cabinet. Jefferson objected to the cabinet and wrote an opinion outlining his position. Hamilton replied with a 13,000-word opinion that convinced Washington to sign the legislation on February 25, 1791, creating the First National Bank.

Relations with Native Americans

Whereas Congress passed legislation to craft a new financial system, Washington and the executive branch managed military affairs. Almost immediately tensions between Native Americans and settlers in the Northwest demanded the president's attention. In 1789, Arthur St. Clair, governor of the Northwest Territories, negotiated the Treaty of Fort Harmar, which forced Native American tribes off their homelands.

Washington did not believe in racial equality between whites and Native Americans, but he also placed them higher on a racial hierarchy than Black Americans. He advocated for protected Native American lands, contrary to the terms of the Treaty of Fort Harmar, largely to avoid conflict between land-hungry settlers and Native American nations. Nonetheless, when violence broke out, President Washington enforced the terms of the treaty. In 1791, St. Clair led 1,400 men into the Ohio wilderness, where Native Americans mowed them down in a surprise attack in November.

When news of St. Clair's defeat in the Battle of the Wabash reached Philadelphia, Congress increased the size of the army and Washington named Major General Anthony Wayne the new commander. In the summer of 1794, Wayne and his forces defeated the Native American confederacy at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The Shawnee, Miami, Ottawa, Chippewa, Iroquois, Sauk, and Fox peoples moved west, while white settlers rushed to seize their lands.

The Whiskey Rebellion

Other military matters closer to home also demanded Washington's attention. In 1791, Congress had passed an excise tax on whiskey distilleries. Western farmers hated the tax, as they distilled their excess grain into alcohol, which could be bartered or shipped to eastern ports for sale. They launched protests almost as soon as the tax went into effect. In July 1794, the protests turned violent when a group of rebels, led by Major James McFarlane, a Revolutionary War veteran, clashed with troops at the home of John Neville, the local tax collector. Shots were fired, and men on both sides were killed, before rebels set fire to Neville's house.

When news of the skirmish reached Washington, he convened the cabinet to determine how to proceed. The cabinet agreed the crisis required presidential action, rather than leaving it for the states or Congress to manage. At Secretary of State Randolph's encouragement, Washington sent a peace delegation to meet with the rebels before employing force, to demonstrate that he had exhausted all diplomatic options.

In August 1794, the peace commission sent word back to the president that their mission had failed. Washington summoned the militias of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey and rode out on October 1 to meet them. He inspected the troops, then turned around and returned to Philadelphia. The militias marched west to subdue the rebellion under the command of General “Light Horse” Harry Lee and Alexander Hamilton. They arrested hundreds of insurgents, but most charges were dismissed due to lack of evidence. Before retiring, Washington issued pardons for the convicted rebels. Once he had enforced the government’s constitutional right to collect taxes, he could afford to be merciful.

Slavery did not play a role in Washington’s domestic policy. The Constitution prohibited the eradication of the international slave trade before 1808, and emancipation legislation was largely a matter of state legislation. Although slavery was not on the cabinet’s agenda, it was a part of daily life. Every time the secretaries arrived for a cabinet meeting or official event, enslaved workers took their coats, offered beverages, and prepared meals. Enslaved groomsmen tended to the horses and carriages that carried officials to Congress Hall. And enslaved sailors manned the ships in port that delivered the linens and fine goods that adorned elite homes in Philadelphia.

Chervinsky, Lindsay M. “George Washington: Domestic Affairs.” UVA - Miller Center, August 29, 2023.
<https://millercenter.org/president/washington/domestic-affairs>.

SQ4: Featured Source C

George Washington: Foreign Affairs

Washington's foreign policy focused on protecting the independence of the new nation and avoiding expensive and deadly wars. During Washington's first term, European powers sought every opportunity to undermine American sovereignty. British forces provided ammunition and funds for Native American nations to attack western towns. Spanish imperial forces denied critical trade access to the Mississippi River, and settlements in Florida welcomed enslaved people who escaped from the southern colonies.

The French Revolution

While those challenges tested Washington's patience, they were nothing compared to the threat posed by the French Revolution and the subsequent war between France and Great Britain. In 1789, King Louis XVI summoned the Estates-General (the French version of the legislature). Over the next few years, the assembly passed constitutional reforms before forming the French Republic in September 1792.

Initially, Americans cheered the French Revolution as the natural successor to the American version, especially since many revolutionaries, such as the Marquis de Lafayette, had played important roles in both revolutions. However, the French Revolution devolved into anarchy and violence, culminating in the execution of the king and queen in 1793. Following the royal executions, a more radical regime assumed power under the leadership of Maximilien Robespierre, known as the Reign of Terror for its regular executions of suspected spies and traitors. By July 1794, when Robespierre was deposed, at least 16,000 people had been executed, most by the infamous guillotine.

The violence of the French Revolution horrified many Americans. Federalists, like Washington and Hamilton, distrusted the radicalism of the French Revolution and feared the anarchy would spread to North American shores. Democratic-Republicans, like Jefferson, opposed the violence but remained more loyal to the French. Both sides demonstrated their preferences through clothing—the Federalists wore black cockades on their hats or pinned to their dresses, while the Democratic-Republicans adopted the blue, red, and white cockade.

These conflicting loyalties clashed in February 1793, when the Revolutionary regime in France declared war on Great Britain. Soon the conflict threatened to engulf the United States. With the war looming, Washington convened his cabinet in April 1793 and asked for the secretaries' advice on how to remain neutral. The secretaries unanimously agreed the nation must avoid war but disagreed on how best to enforce that neutrality. Hamilton advocated for a strict neutrality, which would favor the British, while Jefferson preferred a looser neutrality, which would benefit the French.

The arrival of the new French minister to the United States complicated their attempts to keep the nation,

and its citizens, out of the conflict. The French minister, Citizen Edmond Charles Genêt, arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, in April 1793 and disregarded Washington's proclamation of neutrality. He traveled to Philadelphia and used its port to arm and outfit a fleet of French privateers, which were private ships sailing and attacking British ships under a French license. Genêt also ignored Jefferson's repeated warnings to cease his activities. In August 1793, Washington and the cabinet requested Genêt's recall from France—the first time the United States had requested the recall of a foreign minister.

In April 1793, Washington and the cabinet also crafted a series of rules of neutrality, which prohibited the arming of privateers and naval ships of belligerent nations and permitted the commerce of private vessels not intended for warfare. When Congress convened later that fall, they codified those rules into law, which governed periods of neutrality until the Civil War. By accepting the neutrality rules, Congress essentially approved of Washington's handling of the crisis and ceded authority over foreign policy to the executive branch.

Relations with Britain

While Washington and the cabinet were fighting to keep relations with France neutral, tensions with Britain accelerated. The Anglo-American relationship had never fully recovered after the end of the Revolution, and three sticking points threatened to devolve into a new conflict. First, once the colonies left the British empire, they lost trading privileges in British ports. American merchants insisted on free and neutral trade policy and demanded access to ports, especially in the Caribbean.

The second point of contention were the unfulfilled terms of the Treaty of Paris (1783). The treaty dictated that the British would turn over military forts in the Ohio Valley and pay restitution to southern slave owners for the enslaved individuals who had escaped on British ships. Americans would repay their prewar debts they owed to British merchants. Yet by 1794, the forts remained in British hands, southern slave owners remained uncompensated, and British merchant debts remained unpaid. From their base in the western forts, British officials provided aid and munitions to Native American nations to attack US borders.

The third point of contention was the British seizure of ships sailing back and forth between the United States and France. Americans insisted the ships were neutral, whereas the British insisted the ships were carrying war materials and aiding the French in their ongoing war.

In 1794, Washington sent Chief Justice John Jay to London to negotiate a diplomatic solution. Jay signed a new treaty on November 19, 1794 and sent it back to the United States for ratification. In June 1795, the Senate ratified the treaty in an emergency session, and Washington applied his signature in August. The treaty created commissions to adjudicate prewar debts owed to British merchants, opened British ports to limited American trade, and required British forces to withdraw from western forts on American territory.

Jay had entered the negotiations with almost zero leverage, so the concessions he extracted from the British were remarkable. But many southerners believed their interests had not been as well represented as those of northerners. Additionally, many Democratic-Republicans believed that the treaty violated the spirit of neutrality and the Franco-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce (1778). After months of contentious debates, in May 1796, the House of Representatives finally agreed to raise the funds to fulfill American obligations.

Simultaneously, Thomas Pinckney negotiated another, much more popular treaty with Spain. The resulting agreement, known as the Treaty of San Lorenzo or Pinckney's Treaty, resolved territorial disputes between the United States and Spain, granted American ships the right to sail and trade on the Mississippi River, and gave Americans the right to deposit goods for sale in the port of New Orleans (which was under Spanish control). This treaty was especially popular with farmers out west who depended on the waterways to send their goods to market, rather than over the mountains, which was much more expensive and impassible during winter.

Chervinsky, Lindsay M. "George Washington: Foreign Affairs." UVA - Miller Center, August 29, 2023.
<https://millercenter.org/president/washington/foreign-affairs>.

SQ4: Featured Source D

Washington's Farewell Address

Friends and Citizens:

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. . . .

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that, from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole. . . .

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heartburnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. . . .

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliance, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of

the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common counsels and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party

dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another. . . .

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop. Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none; or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making

acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them. . . .

Washington, George. "Farewell Address (1796)." National Constitution Center – [constitutioncenter.org](https://constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution/historic-document-library/detail/george-washington-farewell-address-1796).
<https://constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution/historic-document-library/detail/george-washington-farewell-address-1796>.

Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined the roles and responsibilities of the presidency as outlined by the constitution and as practiced by three key examples of those who held the office of president. They have engaged with a variety of primary and secondary sources ranging from historical photos, audio theater, and online articles which has allowed them to trace the gradual changes that have occurred within the American people's perceptions of these roles and responsibilities of the presidency.

Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understandings and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students must construct an argumentative essay in which they define and explain, in their own terms, the role of the position of the President of the United State and argue what responsibilities and powers are held within the office of the presidency. They must use evidence acquired throughout the inquiry to support their claim and to answer the question: "What is the Presidency?"

Students' arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- The office of the presidency is an administrative position which holds the responsibility of leading the nation and working to address the issues that face the American people
- The presidency is a position of power within the United States that gradually accumulated more and more authority in affairs of governing and assisting the people of the nation.
- The presidency has expanded from being the key position in one of the branches of the US Government, and has become one of the most powerful, and influential political offices within the nation, if not the world.
- The Presidency is the chief executive authority within the United States, the duty of which was to execute the laws established by Congress, but has taken an increased role influencing the lives of US citizens.

To support students in their writing the teacher will reinforce the importance of the skills of sourcing, close reading, document analysis, contextualization, and the efficient recording of findings and research. All of which are skills students have been developing and engaging with over the course of this inquiry.

To extend their arguments, students will construct an outline of their own presidential campaign. This includes the issues they will aim to address, their desired policies, along with a plan and rationale of achieving them. They must display their understanding of the presidency and present their campaign plan through a presentation lasting a minimum of 5-minute. This could be a speech, PowerPoint Presentation, poster presentation, and/or video.

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by taking the initiative to read up on current events within the United States, whether it's on a national scale or localized within their community, and analyze the actions and policies of a current or former president of the United States to address whatever issue or event covered in the current events. Students must assess what they've read using their knowledge gathered over the course of this inquiry and determine in what ways that President succeeded and/or failed to meet the criteria they've established for what role and responsibilities are to be fulfilled within the presidency. Students will write a letter to the president in which they explain how they believe the president is or is not fulfilling their duties as Commander and Chief and what actions they believe can and should be taken, along with evidence to support their claim. Letters can be scanned and displayed within classroom, school, or submitted to the TR Inaugural Site.

NAME:

“WHAT IS THE PRESIDENCY?” INQUIRY NOTE PACKET

Directions: Using the resources provided, fill out each box on the note chart with at least five pieces of relevant information.

How Does Someone Become President

What is the Intended Role and Responsibility of the
Presidency

How Does the Presidency Fulfill its Roles and Responsibilities

NAME:

“WHAT IS THE PRESIDENCY?” INQUIRY NOTE PACKET

Directions: Using the sources provided, identify and define five key issues that are prevalent within the modern United States. Afterwards, include a description of the cause and effects of these issues and what can or should be done to address them.

<p>-----</p>	<p>-----</p>	<p>-----</p>	
	<p>-----</p>	<p>-----</p>	

NAME:

“WHAT IS THE PRESIDENCY?” INQUIRY NOTE PACKET

Directions: With your understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and processes of the presidency, in addition to your research into five prevalent issues within the United States, give a description of how you would attempt to address these issues if you were the president, and what challenges you believe you’d face when doing so.

Who was Theodore Roosevelt and how did his rise to the office of the presidency differ from the standards established in Formative Task 1?

NAME:

“WHAT IS THE PRESIDENCY?” INQUIRY NOTE PACKET

Directions: Use the primary and secondary sources provided to research the five prevalent issues Theodore Roosevelt faced when he entered the presidency. Within each box of the chart, you must include the following information: (1) What was the issue and why was it significant, (2) How do these issues of the early 20th century compare to those addressed in Formative Task 2, (3) What actions did Roosevelt take to address these issues and how do his actions compare to those you would attempt as detailed in Formative Task 2.

Environmental Conservation

Question of Labor

Discrimination

US Role in the Global World

Urban Poverty

NAME:

“WHAT IS THE PRESIDENCY?” INQUIRY NOTE PACKET

Directions: Using the gathered evidence from the sources provided to determine whether or not Theodore Roosevelt fulfilled the duties and responsibilities of the presidency that were covered in Formative Task

1.

NAME:

Directions: Create a description of three presidencies which identifies and explains how they acted as presidents and how their roles, responsibilities, and policies differed between each other.

George Washington

Theodore Roosevelt
