

Duration

One or two class sessions of approximately 40 minutes each

Resources

1. Study Guide



2. Teacher Commentary



3. Student Handout



4. Homework



Objectives of the Lesson

- To describe the ideologies that contributed to imperialism from 1750 to 1900
- To introduce students to techniques and strategies useful for understanding source point of view in preparation for the Document-Based Questions (DBQ)
- To practice political cartoon analysis and evaluate sample responses

College Board Objectives from the 2020–21 CED

- **Topic 6.1:** Rationales for Imperialism from 1750 to 1900 (p. 116)
- **Learning Objective 6.A:** “Explain how ideologies contributed to the development of imperialism from 1750 to 1900.” (p.116)
- **Key Concept 5.2.III:** “A range of cultural, religious, and racial ideologies were used to justify imperialism, including Social Darwinism, nationalism, the concept of the civilizing mission, and the desire to religiously convert indigenous populations.” (p. 116)

Student Activities

- Class discussion of the various rationales and ideologies that contributed to imperialism
- Practice analyzing documents and evaluating sample responses

How to Use This Lesson Plan

This lesson has been designed to help students practice recognizing point of view in the sources that are provided for the DBQ by working with materials related the rationales behind imperialism in the 18th and 19th centuries. The DBQ is often

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a challenging task for students because it asks them to quickly engage with different kinds of documents. Each document represents the point of view and biases of its author. While these topics have been briefly addressed in previous Marco lesson plans that focus on closely reading primary sources, a concentrated lesson on point of view helps to ensure that students can recognize and address the biases of the sources that they use to support their argument.

In the worksheet included in this lesson, students are asked to develop sample responses that address different aspects of point of view. The stimulus for this exercise is a political cartoon lampooning Cecil Rhodes' plan to develop a telegraph line from Cairo to Cape Town.

Students tend to have the most success discussing point of view when they are already somewhat familiar with the time period or historical development being discussed. To help guide your discussion, we have provided some background context on imperialism below. It might be helpful if you present these materials in a kind of "mini-lecture" before starting the exercise on the worksheet, but you can also intersperse your discussion of the topic with the worksheet questions in a more fluid format if you choose.

We suggest that you conclude by assigning the included homework to help students get even more practice evaluating point of view.

Historical Context

European global dominance reached its high point in the 18th and 19th century as a result of imperialism, which was a potent mix of nationalism and social Darwinism that encouraged Europeans to claim as much of the globe as they could for their own empires. Broadly speaking, European politics were dominated by the idea of the nation, which was understood to be a community bounded together by a shared language and culture. Loyalty to the nation was encouraged through romantic idealism, liberal reforms, political reunification, and in the case of Zionism, an attempt to counteract the growing anti-Semitism of Europe.

The rise of nationalism also meant that individual nations were eager to expand their influence by expanding their physical and intellectual control to non-European countries. The political cartoons in the homework emphasize the idea of exerting control over other areas to benefit themselves. Document 1 shows European nations disregarding the opinions and rights of the Chinese people as they carve up the territory for their own purposes. Likewise, Document 2 shows a European country seizing more and more land for its own empire.

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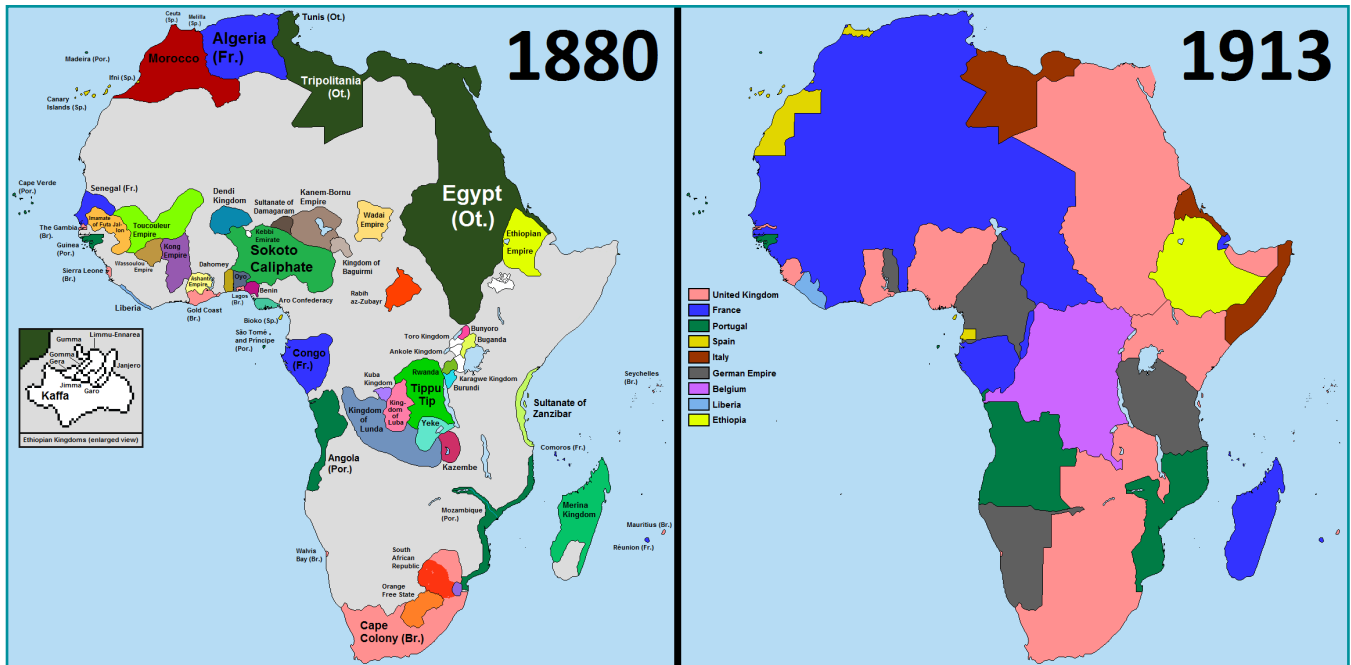
Many Europeans used social Darwinism to argue that it was a moral obligation of Europeans to spread their culture to Africa and other non-European nations. This approach, most clearly exemplified in Rudyard Kipling's poem *The White Man's Burden*, led to European culture being imposed across non-European societies. While this poem is not highlighted in the lesson, you may want to consider assigning it to your class as supplemental reading. Knowing some context will help students understand the image in Document 3, in which American military figures lower the American flag in front of native populations. This image is titled "The dream of the anti-expansionist" because it is intended to mock anyone who would think that a European should defer to native community. The underlying sentiment is that allowing native groups cultural or social sovereignty would be inconceivable, which was very much in line with Kipling's argument.

In some cases, imperialistic expansion was motivated by economics. As European markets expanded, technology led to greater profits, and the population increased exponentially. These developments forced Europeans to seek new markets and raw materials, especially in Africa. The political cartoon in the class worksheet focuses on Cecil Rhodes, a British imperialist who came to dominate many sectors of the South African economy in the late 19th century. He is particularly famous for developing a monopoly on the world's diamond supply through the De Beers Mining Company. Champions of imperialism felt that his actions represented the advance of civilization because he was able to make a profit, bring British culture to Africa, and dominate much of African politics. Critics, however, were quick to point out that his mines were rife with human rights abuses, that his policies eliminated the cultural and economic independence of native communities, and that manual labor in the mines was dehumanizing.

European competition for colonies and imperial expansion led to the development of national rivalries. The Berlin Conference attempted to organize European imperialism in Africa in order to mitigate potential conflicts from these emerging tensions over territory. Despite the Berlin Conference, imperialism continued to strain the relationship among European states.

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European influence dramatically expanded from in the 18th and 19th century. This map shows the rapid colonization of Africa.

Point of View

HANDOUT

Identity

Cecil Rhodes, a British imperialist, is pictured striding over the entire continent of Africa.

Perspective

Cecil Rhodes' reputation as a British imperialist shaped his divisive public persona. He was widely embraced by Europeans as a symbol of Britain's reach over new territories, but he was reviled by native populations for his willingness to step on others to get what he wanted.

Reliability

This political cartoon was published in *Punch Magazine*, which was known for being critical of imperialism and social striving, but it is unlikely that students would know this information. Since they are not likely to recognize the source, encourage students to think about whether political cartoons as a whole can be considered a reliable source. They speak to their audience, but they do not always speak to broader public sentiment.

Tone

This document can be read in two ways—encourage students to explore both perspectives. In one view (the imperialist view), Cecil Rhodes is shown as a triumphant figure who strides across Africa as a sign of his power and success. In the other view (the anti-imperialist view), Cecil Rhodes is rendered as an object of mockery who will inevitably collapse (like the Colossus at Rhodes) from a sense of his own self-importance.

HOMEWORK

Document 1

Identity

This image shows representations of Great Britain, Germany, Russia, and Japan carving up a cake labeled "Chine" for China while a caricatured Chinese official looks on.

Perspective

The perspective of this image shows imperialism in action. The four figures seated at the table are carving up China without consulting with the people who already live there, or even listening to their protests.

Reliability

Like all political cartoons, this image raises questions of reliability. While it is clearly not a straightforward representation of a historical event, it does reliably capture a late 19th-century perspective that is critical of imperialism.

Tone

This image is critical of imperialist powers who divided up nations without their consent as part of imperialist agendas. They are shown as self-serving, squabbling, and single-minded.

Document 2

Identity

This cartoon features a octopus-like figure, labeled “England,” seizing control of all kinds of territory around the world.

Perspective

This cartoon uses imagery to convey the idea that England was seizing a large amount of territory for its own.

Reliability

Like all political cartoons, this image raises questions of reliability. While it is clearly not a straightforward representation of a historical event, it does reliably capture a late 19th-century perspective that is critical of imperialism.

Tone

The tone of this political cartoon is sharply critical. It criticizes England for seizing control of so much territory under its belief in imperialism. By extension, this cartoon criticized imperialism as a whole.

Document 3

Identity

The image shows a group of American military figures lowering the U.S. flag to the ground in front of a group of indigenous people.

Perspective

The perspective of this piece pits American military figures against those of a native community. The artist has taken pains to represent Americans in crisp military garb, while rendering the native community in ragged and unkempt clothing. These visual differences emphasize that the artist’s sympathies lie with the American imperialists.

Reliability

Like all political cartoons, this image raises questions of reliability. While it is clearly not a straightforward representation of a historical event, it does reliably capture a late 19th-century perspective that is critical of imperialism.

Tone

The tone of this political cartoon is critical. This image is titled “The dream of the anti-expansionist” because it is intended to mock anyone who would think that a European should defer to a native community. The underlying sentiment is that allowing native groups cultural or social sovereignty would be inconceivable, which was very much in line with the broader 19th-century development of imperialism.

Point of View

Directions: For the political cartoon below, write one or two sentences that could be used in a DBQ to highlight different aspects of point of view.

IDENTIFYING POINT OF VIEW

1. Identity
2. Perspective
3. Reliability
4. Tone

Document 1

Source: Henri Meyer, “China—the cake of kings...and of emperors,” *Le Petit Journal*, January 16, 1898, showing caricatures of Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom, William II of Germany, Nicholas II of Russia, a Japanese samurai, and the French Marianne carving up a large cake labeled Chine while a caricatured Chinese official helplessly looks on

**Identity**

Write or type your response in this area.

Perspective

Write or type your response in this area.

Reliability

Write or type your response in this area.

Tone

Write or type your response in this area.

Document 2

Source: Unknown artist, 1888, political cartoon of England as an octopus with its hands in various nations around the world



Identity

Write or type your response in this area.

Perspective

Write or type your response in this area.

Reliability

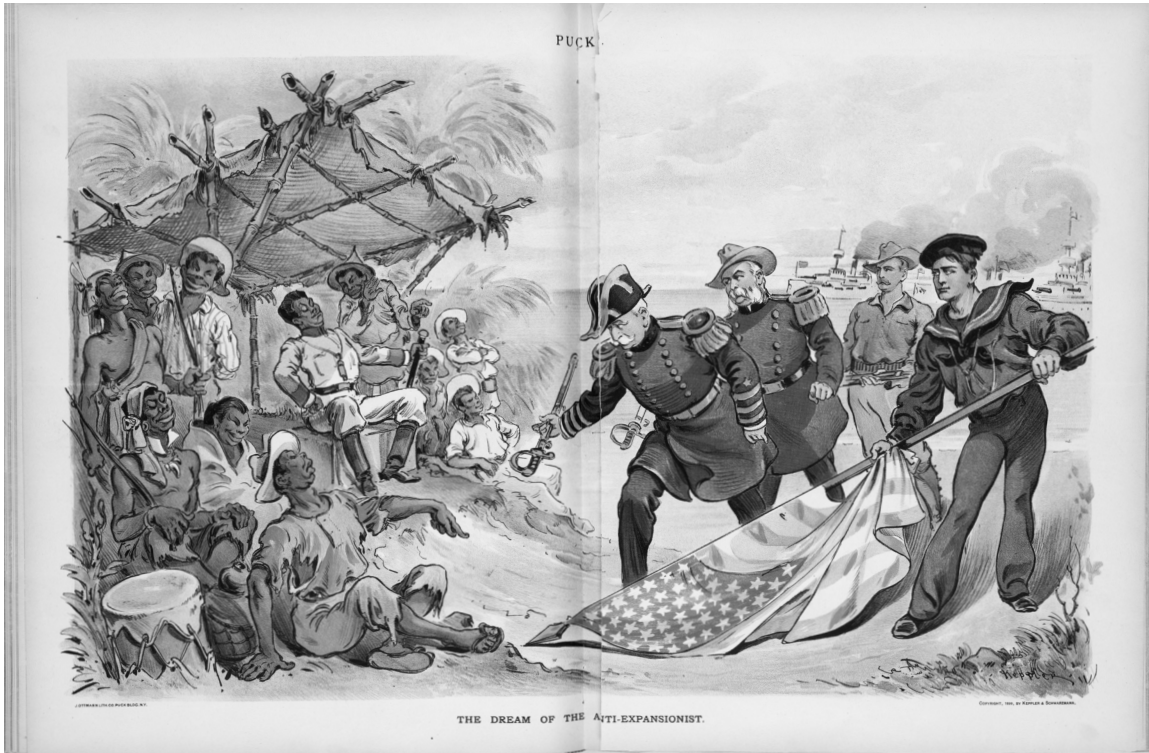
Write or type your response in this area.

Tone

Write or type your response in this area.

Document 3

Source: Udo Keppler, “The dream of the anti-expansionist,” 1899, political cartoon showing American military figures bowing and lowering the American flag in homage to indigenous populations



Identity

Write or type your response in this area.

Perspective

Write or type your response in this area.

Reliability

Write or type your response in this area.

Tone

Write or type your response in this area.

Point of View

Directions: For the political cartoon below, write one or two sentences that could be used in a DBQ to highlight different aspects of point of view. Compare your response to the sample response shown.

IDENTIFYING POINT OF VIEW

1. Identity
2. Perspective
3. Reliability
4. Tone

Document 1

Source: Edward Linley Sambourne, “The Rhodes Colossus,” *Punch*, December 10, 1892, published after Cecil John Rhodes announced plans for a telegraph line from Cairo to Cape Town



Identity

Write or type your response in this area.

Check your response: *Who is the subject of this political cartoon? What do you know about Cecil Rhodes' role in European history? What does the cartoonist's identity add to your understanding of the piece? Why do all of these things matter?*

Sample Response

Cecil Rhodes, a well-known imperialist in Africa, is seen looming over the entire continent.

Perspective

Write or type your response in this area.

Check your response: *Is there anything in this person's background that would shape his/her perspective on the topic? How do factors like personal history, nationalism, gender, or occupation shape his/her point of view?*

Sample Response

Although he was a very successful businessman, Cecil Rhodes had an unfortunate reputation for overpromising and underdelivering. The cartoonist highlights the outsized promise of Rhodes' proposed telegraph line by showing both Rhodes and the telegraph line as larger than life.

Reliability

Write or type your response in this area.

Check your response: *Can this source be trusted? Why or why not? Who was its intended audience? Are we part of that intended audience?*

Sample Response

This cartoon was published in Punch, a satirical humor magazine that tried to “punch” at social figures using the press. Since it was intended to be published, we can assume that the cartoonist factored in the likes and dislikes of the Punch readership. This may have swayed his interpretation of Rhodes’ actions.

Tone

Write or type your response in this area.

Check your response: *Does the document use humor or satire? How? What point is achieved through that tone?*

Sample Response

The cartoon exaggerates Cecil Rhodes to cartoonish proportions, suggesting that both Cecil Rhodes and his plan for a telegraph were ridiculous because they were so extreme. The use of satire here, as demonstrated through the size of Rhodes, suggests that Rhodes' grand plans were not always supported by the people.

Point of View

Directions: For the political cartoon below, write one or two sentences that could be used in a DBQ to highlight different aspects of point of view. Compare your response to the sample response shown.

Document 1

Source: Edward Linley Sambourne, “The Rhodes Colossus,” *Punch*, December 10, 1892, published after Cecil John Rhodes announced plans for a telegraph line from Cairo to Cape Town

①



IDENTIFYING POINT OF VIEW

1. Identity
2. Perspective
3. Reliability
4. Tone

Commentary

- ① Encourage students to use the information provided in the caption and in the title of the image itself to form conclusions about identity. In this case, the caption tells the reader that the cartoon features Cecil Rhodes. Who was Cecil Rhodes? What was his public identity?

Identity

Write or type your response in this area.

Check your response: *Who is the subject of this political cartoon? What do you know about Cecil Rhodes' role in European history? What does the cartoonist's identity add to your understanding of the piece? Why do all of these things matter?*

Sample Response

Cecil Rhodes, a well-known imperialist in Africa, is seen looming over the entire continent.

Perspective

②

Write or type your response in this area.

② Perspective can be difficult for students to grasp because they are used to seeing historical sources as absolute authorities. One way to encourage students to think more critically about how factors like social class, gender, or family experience could influence a document is to have them reflect on how their own experiences shape their personal writings. A useful example of this is for students to think about how social media posts may reflect a distinct perspective. Consider comparing classroom-appropriate posts from different figures on social media to demonstrate this point. What does the post reveal about the person who made it? How does it show the influence of their personal circumstances, gender, family, or nationality?

Check your response: *Is there anything in this person's background that would shape his/her perspective on the topic? How do factors like personal history, nationalism, gender, or occupation shape his/her point of view?*

Sample Response

Although he was a very successful businessman, Cecil Rhodes had an unfortunate reputation for overpromising and underdelivering. The cartoonist highlights the outsized promise of Rhodes' proposed telegraph line by showing both Rhodes and the telegraph line as larger than life.

Reliability

③

Write or type your response in this area.

③ Reliability is often difficult for students because they are used to thinking of textbooks and historical sources as absolute authorities. Encourage them to try to think about sources in a different way by evaluating the trustworthiness of the material. You can continue the social media discussion above by asking students to think about the reliability of sponsored social media posts. Does knowing that a person received compensation alter their reliability? What about if they had a vested interest in being portrayed a certain way?

Check your response: *Can this source be trusted? Why or why not? Who was its intended audience? Are we part of that intended audience?*

Sample Response

This cartoon was published in *Punch*, a satirical humor magazine that tried to "punch" at social figures using the press. Since it was intended to be published, we can assume that the cartoonist factored in the likes and dislikes of the *Punch* readership. This may have swayed his interpretation of Rhodes's actions.

Tone

④

Write or type your response in this area.

- ④ Tone can often be the hardest aspect of point of view to teach because it is a little more abstract than the other components. If you find that your students are struggling to identify tone, encourage them to use first impressions to form their understanding. On first glance, what is the image trying to express? Is it critical or supportive? Humorous or serious? Then, use those first impressions to segue into a discussion of why those factors matter in their understanding of the document.

Check your response: *Does the document use humor or satire? How? What point is achieved through that tone?*

Sample Response

The cartoon exaggerates Cecil Rhodes to cartoonish proportions, suggesting that both Cecil Rhodes and his plan for a telegraph were ridiculous because they were so extreme. The use of satire here, as demonstrated through the size of Rhodes, suggests that Rhodes' grand plans were not always supported by the people.

Point of View

As you work through the documents provided for the DBQ, the most important thing to realize is that every document has a point of view. Historical documents always reflect the opinions of the author. The documents provided for you on the DBQ, like all historical documents, are NOT statements of fact. As such, you need to acknowledge point of view in your argument.

In order to earn full points for document use, you need to acknowledge how or why a document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.

ANALYSIS AND REASONING (0–2 Points)

1 POINT

For at least three documents, explains how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.

To earn this point, the response must explain how or why (rather than simply identifying) the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument about the prompt for each of the three documents sourced.

1 POINT

Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question.

A response may demonstrate a complex understanding in a variety of ways, such as:

- *Explaining nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables*
- *Explaining both similarity and difference, or explaining both continuity and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both cause and effect*
- *Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods*
- *Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes*
- *Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence*

This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.

NOTES

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There are four aspects of any document that you can use to incorporate a discussion of point of view into your overall response.

1. Identity

The most basic method to acknowledge point of view is to identify the author in the course of discussing the document's contents.

Example:

Cetshwayo, the Zulu king, spoke out against the presence of British military troops in Zululand.

2. Perspective

The second method is to acknowledge the factors that could shape an author's perspective. Many different aspects of a person's experience contribute to their perspective on a topic. By highlighting how the author's occupation, gender, class, political position, nationality, or personal history could influence the document, you are acknowledging the role of point of view in the historical document.

Example:

As a white imperialist in South Africa, Cecil Rhodes helped engineer legal systems that disenfranchised the black population. Given this background, it is not surprising that he spoke very dismissively of any people who were non-European.

3. Reliability

One of the challenges of the DBQ is that you may be given sources that vary in reliability, as the test writers can draw from a wide range of materials. You can show that you understand the power of point of view by weighing the reliability of each type of source. For example, would you consider government propaganda more or less reliable than a personal diary? What about a newspaper article?

Example:

Since the personal diary of the Christian missionary who lived through the Boxer Rebellion was never intended to be published by its author, it can be assumed to a relatively reliable account of the events the missionary lived through.

4. Tone

Finally, you can acknowledge and analyze point of view by addressing an author's tone. Authors often use tone to make a point through humor, satire, diction, or political commentary. You can demonstrate your understanding of point of view by explaining how the tone of the document shapes its message.

NOTES

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Example:

As a notable satirist, Mark Twain used dark humor to criticize the activities of American imperialists in the Philippines.

NOTES

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