

USA: Part 1 - Growth of a Nation

Expansion & Conflict... After earning independence, the USA faced many challenges. They were broke and divided, and surrounded by French, British and Spanish territories. As with most revolutions, the Americans had agreed they wanted change, but could not agree on what kind. Eventually, through compromise and necessity, they unified around the US Constitution, agreeing to work together for a common goal.



The Americans began to turn their attentions to their Manifest Destiny. Manifest Destiny was the belief that the Christian God had given them all the land west of the Appalachian Mountains to the Pacific Coast. The expansion into these lands troubled both the Native Americans living there and the British colonists living in Canada to the North. The American efforts to expand were greatly benefitted by Napoleon. Napoleon had gained control of large North American property and had hoped to build a new French Empire. When he realized that this would be too costly to maintain the territory and conquer Europe, USA bought it from France. It became known as the Louisiana Purchase, that doubled the USA territory.

In light of the growing fears and the war with Napoleon (and the French-American partnership), Britain blockaded USA ships from being able to trade in Europe. The British also captured USA sea merchants and forced them to be soldiers on the British war ships. In 1812, USA saw this as an opportunity to conquer British colony of Canada to the north, in hopes of ending the British presence in North America. After three years of fighting, the "War of 1812" reached a stalemate, where neither side was gaining advantage, and a peace treaty was signed. For the Americans, it was viewed as a second independence from the power of Britain. It freed the Americans to continue their Manifest Destiny, or God granted expansion westward to the Pacific Ocean. For the Canadian colonists, the War of 1812 was viewed as stopping the expansion of the USA. The war of 1812 created a sense of Canadian nationalist feelings that resulted in Canada's independence in 1836. It also rooted a deep resentment and suspicion between USA and Canada, that exists to this day.

In 1823, the emboldened Americans proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine. The Monroe Doctrine stated that if any European countries made further attempts to *colonize* in North America, South America or the Caribbean, the USA would intervene and stop them. Despite the bold words, many European countries treated this statement like a child threatening their parent.

Industrialization & Migration... As the USA was in its early stages of being a country, it began to industrialize. The British had forbidden any British citizen from taking British industrial technology out of the country (#mercantilism). However, a British merchant memorized the factory layout, came to America, and started building his own factories. Like Britain, the USA had an abundance of easy to access coal, allowing this stolen British technology to thrive in its former colony.

The entrepreneurial spirit of American workers, empowered by the Capitalist minded government, with an abundance of cheap resources led to an explosion of Industry across America. States like Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and Wisconsin developed thriving industrial complexes along the Great Lakes. Soon, railroads and canals began to connect rapidly growing cities like Chicago, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Buffalo, and Pittsburg. Since neither Canada nor Mexico were a threat to invade, the USA invested all of its time and talents into developing its technologies.



Despite its early success, the USA had a population problem. There was a large amount of land and many factories, but few people to do the work. Meanwhile, back in Europe, urban centers were busting at the seams with their exploding populations and Ireland was suffering from a Potato Famine. The USA began to encourage migrants to make the journey across the Atlantic: the land of opportunity. A peasant/serf could work in a factory, earn wealth, and eventually buy cheap land - changing their family futures from serfdom to becoming the new land owning elite. In the 1850s, Irish and Germans poured into America. By the end of the 1800s, Italians, Polish, Scandinavians and Russians joined them. These migrants caused the cities in the North to explode. They served as cheap labor for building railroads, tunnels, dams and other infrastructure projects as the USA expanded West to fulfill its Manifest Destiny.

From Weakness to Strength... As the USA entered the 1900s, it was in a position of strength. The USA controlled all the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with no threat on either side. They had survived the Civil War - won by the North because of its industry and its endless supply of migrant soldiers. Slavery had been abolished (although not racism). Its factories were producing innovative technologies, such as telephones, light bulbs, radios, motion pictures, and cars. In Panama, the USA had used its technology to build the Panama Canal - connecting the Atlantic to the Pacific. It was an excellent 100 years for the USA.

In the late 1800s, a situation in the Caribbean tested the USA's position in the world. The Dominican Republic, a former French colony (#HaitianRevolution) in the Caribbean Sea, had borrowed lots of money from France. In 1902, Dominican Republic went bankrupt and could not pay the French back. France threatened to use military force to take the Dominican Republic over if the debts were not paid. USA President Theodore Roosevelt stood upon the Monroe Doctrine and issued the Roosevelt Corollary. The Roosevelt Corollary stated that if a European Country had ANY conflict for ANY reason with a Latin American country, the USA would get involved militarily. USA used its new industrial military might to force France to back off. Roosevelt negotiated a deal between France and the Dominican Republic to help them pay off their foreign debt. This marked the coming of age for USA on the world stage...



"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"
—Emma Lazarus





ASSIGNMENT

1) Fill out this chart with the the strengths/positives and weaknesses/negatives of each region.

Region	Strengths	Weaknesses
Europe		
South America		
North America		

2) Create an impact chart. As you read you are to evaluate each area on the level of impact the people in that region had on the world culturally, militarily, and economically.

- Rate each area as to how impactful you believe them to be at the at 1800 AD () and at 1918 AD ().
- Draw arrows to show whether they grew or shrunk in impact and influence.
- If there is change, ask yourself “What caused them to grow or shrink or stagnate in their influence?” and make note of it on your chart

Example

