



# LESSON PLAN:

## A SPLENDID LITTLE WAR?

*High School (9-12)*

### OVERVIEW:

Students use primary documents and other resources to learn more about the historical arguments for and against the United States entering the Spanish-American War as well as the worldwide American expansion that followed.

Resources include personal accounts, historical photographs, political cartoons, historical commentaries, a student worksheet, and a sample poster template. As written, students read personal accounts and historical commentaries and create a poster that represents a specific viewpoint on the Spanish-American War. Resources are flexible and can be used in a variety of ways.

**Estimated time:** 1-2 class periods, 75-90 minutes total

### STANDARDS:

Social studies standards vary by state. This lesson can be used to teach the following standards and similar wording may be found in your state standards.

#### Common Core State Standards

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6: Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

#### National Council for the Social Studies Standards

- NCSS.D2.His.1.9-12: Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- NCSS.D2.His.4.9-12: Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- NCSS.D2.His.12.9-12: Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will describe historical arguments for and against American participation in the Spanish-American War and the subsequent American worldwide expansion.
- Students will analyze primary sources in order to make inferences about the author's opinion of the Spanish-American War and American expansion as a world power.
- Students will create a mini-poster using historical resources that presents either a supportive or critical view of the Spanish-American War and American expansionism.

## RESOURCES NEEDED:

- Copies of Primary Source Excerpts (six different texts, but only need one excerpt per student)
- Copies of "A Splendid Little War?" Student Worksheet (one per student)
- Access to student resources for poster on ANC Education website:
  - Personal Accounts document
  - Historical Commentaries document
  - Political Cartoons PowerPoint
  - Historical Photographs PowerPoint

## LESSON ACTIVITIES:

- Introduction: 5 mins
  - Explain that the title of this lesson comes from a letter that U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom John Hay wrote to Teddy Roosevelt in July 1898, saying "It has been a splendid little war, begun with the highest motives, carried on with magnificent intelligence and spirit, favored by that Fortune which loves the brave." Not all Americans viewed the war so positively, however, and opinions differed about the reasons the United States declared war on Spain and whether the war's subsequent expansion worldwide was justified. In this lesson, students will explore these differing historical viewpoints.
- Reading Primary Sources Activity: 15-20 mins
  - Pass out the Primary Source Excerpts, one to each student (there are six different texts, but each student will only read one). Explain that students will have 5-7 minutes to read their excerpt and should pay special attention to whether the author seems to support the war and expansionism or is critical of it.
  - After students have completed the readings, lead a class discussion based on the Primary Source Excerpts to identify historical arguments for and against the Spanish-American War and American expansionism. Students should record arguments on their "A Splendid Little War?" Student Worksheet.
  - *Suggested discussion questions:*



- Who read [Text Title]? Do you think it was supportive or critical of the Spanish-American War?
- What argument did the author present to support their viewpoint?
- Can you think of other reasons Americans may have supported or been critical of the Spanish-American War and expansionism at this time?
- What do you think were the most convincing arguments at the time?

*Student responses will vary, but make sure the following concepts are addressed:*

- Supportive Arguments:
  - ✓ Desire to support Cuban Revolution and end Spanish atrocities
  - ✓ Need for far-flung bases to support Navy ships
  - ✓ American right/duty to govern other peoples instead of European powers
- Critical Arguments
  - ✓ Expansionism contrary to American principles of self-government
  - ✓ Safer ways to obtain worldwide influence
  - ✓ Human cost of war
- Explain Poster Activity: 5-7 mins
  - Explain that students will now use historical resources to create a mini-poster that presents either a viewpoint supportive or critical of the Spanish-American War and American expansion. Their poster must include:
    - An excerpt from a personal account of the war
    - An excerpt from a historical commentary
    - A political cartoon
    - A photograph with a caption
    - A title reflecting the chosen viewpoint
  - *Depending on time and resources available, you may choose to have students create their poster at home or during class. All resources are available on the Arlington National Cemetery Education website.*
  - In addition to creating the poster, students will record the name of each resource they used and 1-2 sentences describing how the resource supports their poster's viewpoint on the "A Splendid Little War?" Student Worksheet.



- Poster Activity: 45-60 mins
  - *Recommendations for poster-making:*
    - Students may find it easier to make a poster representing the viewpoint in the primary source excerpt they read at the beginning of the lesson, but to encourage exploration of the resources, this should not be a requirement.
    - Remind students that they only need to include excerpts of the personal account and historical commentary, so encourage them to find sections that strongly portray the viewpoint their poster represents.
    - While most of the written materials and political cartoons portray a clear opinion and viewpoint, the photographs may be used in many ways. For instance, a picture of a soldier's grave could be used to highlight the cost of war or to praise those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. The student's caption should clarify why they chose that particular photo to represent their viewpoint.
    - The sample templates are examples to get students started, but students are encouraged to be creative in their design. Depending on the length of the excerpts selected or the orientation of photos, there will be great variation in the size of the sections on each student's poster.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS:

- Display student posters around the classroom and share a few examples (or your own!) with Arlington National Cemetery by posting on Twitter using the hashtag #ANCEducation or #SpanAmWarANC
- Allow time for students to review their classmates' posters before leading a class discussion about their own opinions on the United States' entry into the war and subsequent expansion.
- Invite additional exploration of depictions of the Spanish-American War on the Library of Congress website:
  - The Spanish-American War in Motion Pictures: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/spanish-american-war-in-motion-pictures/about-this-collection/>
  - Selected images from the Collections of the Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/picamer/paSpanAmer.html>
- Invite additional exploration of personal accounts of the Spanish-American War on the Spanish-American War Centennial Website: <http://www.spanamwar.com/action.htm>



## Planning a Visit to Arlington National Cemetery?



Despite conflicting opinions about the reasons for and outcomes of the Spanish-American War, the United States government went to great lengths to properly honor the soldiers, sailors, and nurses who died during the war. In 1898, Congress enacted legislation to disinter and repatriate the remains of Americans who had died abroad, and many were buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Most of the graves of those who served in the Civil War or Spanish-American War feature a large shield emblem (this design was not used for subsequent conflicts).

The cemetery also has multiple memorials commemorating the Spanish-American War, including:

- Spanish-American War Memorial
- USS Maine Memorial
- Spanish-American Nurses Memorial
- Rough Riders Monument
- Buffalo Soldiers Centennial Memorial

If you are interested in more information and discussion questions to use with your class during a visit to the cemetery, a detailed walking tour is available here:

<https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/education>



## POSTER RUBRIC

Use this rubric to assess student achievement of expectations.

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Feedback
Student selected a personal account, historical commentary, and political cartoon that clearly supported the viewpoint presented on their poster.					
Student wrote a caption that connected the selected photograph to the viewpoint presented on their poster.					
Student clearly explained how the items selected for their poster presented a unified viewpoint of the Spanish-American War.					
	Total:				

1 = criteria not met; 2 = criteria partially met; 3 = criteria met; 4 = exceeds expectations



## SOURCES

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- Walsh, Henry J. "With Dewey At Manila." *The San Francisco Call*, June 12, 1898. Library of Congress. Accessed November 4, 2019. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1898-06-12/ed-1/seq-19/>





## POLITICAL CARTOONS

**Slide 2:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“And, Boys, Remember the Maine!”* April 3, 1898. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010255>

**Slide 3:** Louis Dalrymple. *“It’s got to be sooner or later – and it looks like ‘sooner’”* April 27, 1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/photos/?dates=1800-1899&fa=contributor:dalrymple,+louis%7Csubject:cartoons+%28commentary%29&sp=1&st=slideshow#slide-49>

**Slide 4:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“It’s hard to carry eggs in a paper bag during a cyclone.”* May 11, 1898. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010265>

**Slide 5:** Victor Gillam. *Remember the Maine! And Don’t Forget the Starving Cubans!* May 7, 1898. Historical Society of Pennsylvania. <http://digitalhistory.hsp.org/hint/politics-graphic-detail/doc/remember-maine-and-dont-forget-starving-cubans>

**Slide 6:** Louis Dalrymple. *“The duty of the hour; - to save her not only from Spain, but from a worse fate.”* May 11, 1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/photos/?dates=1800-1899&fa=contributor:dalrymple,+louis%7Csubject:cartoons+%28commentary%29&sp=2&st=slideshow#slide-16>

**Slide 7:** Udo J. Keppler. *“Celebrating July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1898 – The Triumph of the American battle-ship.”* July 6, 1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2012647579/>

**Slide 8:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“Untitled.”* February 4, 1899. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010306>

**Slide 9:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“Twentieth Century Twins – ‘Have we not lost our way?’”* February 18, 1900. National Archives. <https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/twentieth-century-twins?tmpl=component&print=1>

**Slide 10:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“Uncle Sam – ‘Me-thinks they’ll have a hard time catching him.’”* August 17, 1898. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010290>

**Slide 11:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“Uncle Sam’s Temptation.”* June 26, 1898. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010272>

**Slide 12:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“Uncle Sam – ‘Too late, my boys. I’ve already expanded.’”* September 14, 1899. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010331>

**Slide 13:** Clifford Kennedy Berryman. *“Whither?”* July 13, 1898. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6010279>





## PHOTOGRAPHS

**Slide 2:** L. Leland Barton. Co. I, 9 U.S. Vol. Inf., 1899. Photograph. 1899. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.54529/>

**Slide 3:** John F. Jarvis. Skirmishing - 16th Penna. Volunteers - Porto Rican Army. Photograph. 1898.

Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/97517869/>

**Slide 4:** The 38th Infantry on the Luneta, just after its arrival - Manila, P.I. Photograph. 1901. Library of

Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96524449/>

**Slide 5:** James H. White. Advance of Kansas Volunteers at Caloocan. Photograph. 1899. Library of

Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/98501192/>

**Slide 6:** Edward H. Hart. American troops on ramparts at Manila. Photograph. circa 1898-1901. Library

of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/resource/det.4a15136/>

**Slide 7:** A United States Army surgeon attending wounded soldiers in a field hospital during the Spanish-American war. The Red Cross emblem appears on the sleeve of one man. Photograph. 1898.

Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017872431/>

**Slide 8:** Some of our brave colored boys who helped to free Cuba. Photograph, 1899. Library of

Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2007682340/>

**Slide 9:** Edward H. Hart. U.S.S. New York, burial at sea of seamen killed at San Juan. Photograph. 1898.

Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016808056/>

**Slide 10:** James Burton. Our troops cheering upon receiving news of Santiago's fall. Photograph. 1898.

Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/92520580/>

**Slide 11:** Coffins of Spanish-American war dead. Photograph. 1898. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2007682428/>

**Slide 12:** Col. Roosevelt and officers of the Rough Riders [on horseback during Spanish-American War].

Photograph. 1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96505459/>

**Slide 13:** On the "Iowa" - Marine Guard drilling. Photograph. 1899. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/97517850/>

**Slide 14:** A welcome to Uncle Sam's protection - three Filipinos entering American lines, Pasay, P.I.

Photograph. 1899. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96525720/>

**Slide 15:** William Dinwiddie. General Miles, Shafter, Wheeler returning from the conference with Genral H. Toral which resulted in the surrender of the Province of Santiago de Cuba. Photograph.

1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002714491/>

**Slide 16:** Charles L. Wasson. Graves of heroes who fell in Cuba, Arlington, Va. Photograph. 1900.

Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018652263/>



**Slide 17:** "Till my regiment is mustered out" - Funston's reply when asked how long he could hold a captured trench. Photograph. 1899. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/97517813/>

**Slide 18:** A home ruined by Cuban War. Photograph. 1899. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c01807/>

**Slide 19:** William Dinwiddie. Landing of American troops at Baiquiri [sic], Cuba. Photograph. 1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2013651494/>

**Slide 20:** Martin H. Zahner. Taking the oath. Photograph. 1898. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/91730864/>

**Slide 21:** Destruction of "Maine", Havana harbor, Cuba, Spanish-American War 1898. Photograph. 1912. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2013646059/>