

TITLE: Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?

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SUMMARY: This lesson is specifically designed for students to engage in the ways that the United States handled the Philippine-American War. The lesson is seen through the lens of the idea of McKinley's benevolent assimilation. Students will be asked to examine evidence and determine whether or not the United States actually practiced benevolent assimilation during the first years of occupation of the Philippines through a short document based question.

LEVEL: This particular lesson is designed for an 11th grade classroom.

CONTENT AREA: This particular lesson is designed for a United States History course.

DURATION: Recommended time is two 50 minutes classes

OBJECTIVES:

Below are the learning objectives of the lesson. By the end of the lesson students will be able to understand the larger context of the motivations of imperialism as well as understand the more specific instance between the United States and the Philippines. The following objectives below will be addressed:

Essential Question: Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?

- Understand the positive and negatives of annexation of the Philippines and the Philippines-American war.
- Debate the goals and application of benevolent assimilation

Outcome Goals:

- Enhance reading ability through questioning
- Deeper understanding of primary sources

PROCEDURE:

Day 1

Anticipatory Set (5 – 10 minutes):

When students enter the room please handout **Worksheet #1**. Instruct students to use their sources, it could be personal devices or materials in the room to look up the definition to two separate words. The two words are benevolent and assimilation. Once students have successfully found the definition of benevolent and assimilation and instruct them to use both definitions in one sentence together. Have students share their answers with the class. Use the sentences that students share to preview the lesson that follows. Review briefly the Spanish-American war as well as the annexation of the Philippines.

Instructional Time (5 -10 minutes):

This portion of the lesson is key to set the stage of what students will be ultimately answering. It is important to explain to students that benevolent assimilation is a term that President McKinley used during his explanation and justification for annexing the Philippines. They must understand the question that they are answering which is; "Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?" Also review the expectations of a good thesis statement; an example may help. The ultimate goal is for students to analyze the documents, use the information they learn, and an answer the question with a satisfactory thesis statement.

Teachers may decide to extend their instructional time as well. If teachers decide to do so, hand out to students **Worksheet #2**. In the worksheet are the documents that the students will be working with to answer the mini-DBQ question. Have students independently work on **Document A:** President McKinley's Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation; then as a class review the answers either as a whole class or students may partner up or be placed in small groups.

Independent Work Time (30 Minutes):

Students will then have time to work on their own to analyze and answer the questions of the five documents. If teacher has not done so yet, hand out **Worksheet #2** to each student at this point in the lesson. Teachers may also decide to have students work in small groups of 3 or less or independently depending on the skill level of the class and the needs of each individual student.

Below are the sources of evidence that each student will be analyzing. Questions have been created for each source for students to complete. Use the background below (this is also listed in the materials/references section) to help contextualize the evidence for students as you distribute each one.

Document A: President McKinley's Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation

Summary: President McKinley's statement of benevolent assimilation became his justification for the annexation of Philippines. McKinley cites the intentions of the United States not as a conqueror but one that will help uplift the Filipino peoples. He extends that the United States will also bring good governance to the islands.

Document B: Life Magazine Cover, May 22, 1902

Summary: This Life Magazine cover displays an example of atrocities that the United States committed during the Philippine-American war. This particular cover displays the early torture technique of water boarding; a Philippine soldier would have water poured down his throat and then rolled on his and water pushed out of his stomach before suffocation. This was done by United States troops as a form of punishment and torture for information.

Document C: Letter from Theodore Conley, of a Kansas Regiment

Summary: The letter from Theodore Conley is letter among a collection of letters put together by the Anti-Imperialist league that was created to protest and educate the masses on the mistreatment done during the Philippine-American war. In Conley's letter he is particularly disappointed in the war as a regression of American values; specifically noting that this war (Philippine-American war) was much like the Revolutionary War except that the United States was now the tyrant.

Document D: Benevolent Assimilation Political Cartoon

Summary: Summary: The cartoon depicts the positives that benevolent assimilation could bring. On the left hand side the Filipino is depicted as excited to see Uncle Sam on the left. Uncle Sam is symbolically bringing "Civil Government," "Prosperity," "Enlightenment," and "Amnesty."

Document E: Excerpt from Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*

Summary: This small excerpt from Howard Zinn's best seller exemplifies his viewpoint of telling the history of the United States from the people's point of view. In many cases those who have been oppressed. In this two page excerpt Zinn notes two separate accounts, one from a general returning from the Philippines in 1901 and officer marines who described the testimony of Littletown Waller and their experiences with the seemingly unnecessary death and murder during the war.

Closure (10 minutes): Have students write an exit slip using a notecard. Have them write two things down.

- One question they have from the lesson today
- Whether or not they think the Philippines have acted upon benevolent assimilation.

These can be read before the lesson the next day for a check for understanding. Use this time as well to dialogue with the class about the various issues and complexities raised imperialism and the problems faced after the annexation of a new land. Some discussion questions that could be used but are not limited too are below:

- What difficulties will the imperial nation both home and abroad? (Logistics, ideologies, opposition, etc.)
- How do you incorporate new groups and especially diverse groups as citizens into a new culture?
- What happens when the nation does not want to assimilate with the imperial nation?
- Quickly look over the questions from the exit slips and use one!

Day 2

Anticipatory Set (5 - 10 Minutes):

Quickly review the outcomes and assessment of the lesson. Again review how to properly write a thesis statement and the expectations of the analysis of documents. This is also a time to introduce the graphic organizer **Part 3: Conclusion – Answer “Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?”** from **Worksheet #1**.

Independent Work (30 - 35 Minutes):

Allow students to continue to work on the analysis of evidence, if time is needed, as well as writing their thesis. As a formative check have student’s first check in their analysis of their documents. Instruct them to continue with the graphic organize and then critique their thesis statements. Continue to have students improve on their statements as most will be able to write a better statement the second and third time around. Teachers may also want to partner students during the process to allow for self-check and self-reflection with their peers during the process.

Whole class discussion (5-10 Minutes):

Use the last part of class to have a whole class discussion and sharing of the conclusions that each student came up with. Other options include assigning the PSA and conclusions for homework, dividing students into small groups to present their PSA with one another.

Concerns: Student being able to understand the concepts of human rights, students empathizing with a concept that is not relevant in their own lives or will not be affected by it, timing of lesson, assessing before creation of PSA. If there is a concern over the length of this lesson it can be extended depending on the class period to fill another day.

Lesson Assessment:

- **Worksheet #1** and Thesis Statement – assess the ability of students to successfully interpret historical sources as well and develop a logical argument.

MATERIALS/REFERENCES:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hist32/History/19th%20Century.htm>

Summary: The cartoon depicts the positives that benevolent assimilation could bring. On the left hand side the Filipino is depicted as excited to see Uncle Sam on the left. Uncle Sam is symbolically bringing “Civil Government,” “Prosperity,” “Enlightenment,” and “Amnesty.”

"The Philippine-American War, 1899–1902 - 1899–1913 - Milestones - Office of the Historian." *The Philippine-American War, 1899–1902 - 1899–1913 - Milestones - Office of the Historian*. Web. 15 Jan. 2016.

Summary: This source provides an overview of the Philippine-American War. It provides an overview from 1898 until the end of the declared war in 1902. It also briefly follows the policy of the United States until it granted the Philippines independence in 1946.

"Philippine History -- McKinley's Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation." *Philippine History -- McKinley's Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation*. Web. 15 Jan. 2016. <<http://www.msc.edu.ph/centennial/benevolent.html>>.

Summary: President McKinley's statement of benevolent assimilation became his justification for the annexation of Philippines. McKinley cites the intentions of the United States not as a conqueror but one that will help uplift the Filipino peoples. He extends that the United States will also bring good governance to the islands.

Soldier's Letters, pamphlet (Anti-Imperialist League, 1899). Reprinted in Philip S. Foner and Richard Winchester, *The Anti-Imperialist Reader: A Documentary History of Anti-Imperialism in the United States*, Vol. 1 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984), 316–323.

Summary: The letter from Theodore Conley is letter among a collection of letters put together by the Anti-Imperialist league that was created to protest and educate the masses on the mistreatment done during the Philippine-American war. In Conley's letter he is particularly disappointed in the war as a regression of American values; specifically noting that this war (Philippine-American war) was much like the Revolutionary War except that the United States was now the tyrant.

Zinn, Howard. "Chapter 12: The Empire and the People." *A People's History of the United States: 1942-present*. New York: HarperCollins, 2003. 315-16. Print.

Summary: This small excerpt from Howard Zinn's best seller exemplifies his viewpoint of telling the history of the United States from the people's point of view. In many cases those who have been oppressed. In this two page excerpt Zinn notes two separate accounts, one from a general returning from the Philippines in 1901 and officer marines who described the testimony of Littletown Waller and their experiences with the seemingly unnecessary death and murder during the war.

APPENDICES:

Worksheet #1

Mini DBQ: The Philippine-American War

Name: _____

Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?

Part 1: Understanding Benevolent Assimilation

Directions: Using the resources available to you look up the definition to the following two words.

Benevolent: _____

Assimilation: _____

Now, using the two definitions write one sentence that best describes what **Benevolent Assimilation** means below:

Application: How might this new definition apply to the new America after the Spanish-American War?

Part 2: The Documents

Directions: Either as an individual or with a partner you will be analyzing documents that will ultimately allow you answer the question above. Using your documents you will need to answer the questions that pertain to that specific document. Read the background information below before you continue.

Background: The decision by U.S. policymakers to annex the Philippines was not without domestic controversy. Americans who advocated annexation evinced a variety of motivations: desire for commercial opportunities in Asia, concern that the Filipinos were incapable of self-rule, and fear that if the United States did not take control of the islands, another power (such as Germany or Japan) might do so. Meanwhile, American opposition to U.S. colonial rule of the Philippines came in many forms, ranging from those who thought it morally wrong for the United States to be engaged in colonialism, to those who feared that annexation might eventually permit the non-white Filipinos to have a role in American national government. Others were wholly unconcerned about the moral or racial implications of imperialism and sought only to oppose the policies of President William McKinley's administration.

After the Spanish-American War, while the American public and politicians debated the annexation question, Filipino revolutionaries under Aguinaldo seized control of most of the Philippines' main island of Luzon and proclaimed the establishment of the independent Philippine Republic. When it became clear that U.S. forces were intent on imposing American colonial control over the islands, the early clashes between the two sides in 1899 swelled into an all-out war. Americans tended to refer to the ensuing conflict as an "insurrection" rather than acknowledge the Filipinos' contention that they were fighting to ward off a foreign invader. Source: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1899-1913/war>

Document A: President McKinley's Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation

1. What did McKinley promise to prove to the people of the Philippines?

2. What do you think he means when he references “In the fulfillment of this high mission?”
3. Infer, what types of improvements would you think the President would want to make in the Philippines to achieve Benevolent Assimilation?

Document B:

1. Who are the main characters in this cartoon?
2. What appears to be happening on the cover of Life Magazine? Why would they be doing this?
3. Does this action break the promise of President McKinley’s promise of benevolent assimilation? Why or why not?

Document C:

1. What purpose does the author suggest men are sacrificing their lives for?
2. What comparison is made between the Philippines-American war and the American War for Independence?
3. How is this comparison relevant to the idea of benevolent assimilation? Does it support McKinley’s justification for the annexation of the Philippines?

Document D:

1. Who does the character on the left symbolize? What about the character on the right?
2. What does it appear the character on the right is doing?
3. Describe the emotions shown by the character on the left.
4. How does this cartoon show the positives of the benevolent assimilation proclamation?

Document E: Howard Zinn *A People's History of the United States*

1. How does the quote from the American general compare to the story of Littletown Waller's testimony?
2. Why would the Secretary of War say "The war in the Philippines has been conducted by the American army with scrupulous regard for the rules of civilized warfare... with self-restraint and with humanity never surpasses" despite stories that suggest otherwise?
3. Choose three adjectives to describe the actions of American soldiers in the Philippines?
4. Do these accounts break President McKinley's promise of benevolent assimilation? Why or why not?

Part 3: Conclusion – Answer “Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?”

Directions: Use the graphic organizer below to help sort your thoughts. Pick one piece of evidence from at least three documents to answer the question above.

Document #	Explanation/Evidence for how the document answers the question above.

Final Step! - Create a thesis statement that answers the question: “Did the actions of the United States during the American-Philippine war reflect the ideas of benevolent assimilation?”

and from disease, in a war waged for the purpose of conquering people who are fighting as the Cubans fought against Spanish tyranny and misrule. There is not a feature of the whole miserable business that a patriotic American citizen, one who loves to read of the brave deeds of the American colonists in the splendid struggle for American independence, can look upon with complacency, much less with pride. This war is reversing history. It places the American people and the government of the United States in the position occupied by Great Britain in 1776. It is an utterly causeless and defenseless war, and it should be abandoned by this government without delay. The longer it is continued, the greater crime it becomes—a crime against human liberty as well as against Christianity and civilization.....Those not killed in the trenches were killed when they tried to come out.....No wonder they can't shoot, with that light thrown on them; shells bursting and infantry pouring in lead all the time. Honest to God, I feel sorry for them.

Document D: Benevolent Assimilation Political Cartoon



Document E: Excerpt from Howard Zinn's *People's History of the United States*

Early in 1901 an American general returning to the United States from southern Luzon said:

One-sixth of the natives of Luzon have either been killed or have died of the dengue fever in the last few years. The loss of life by killing alone has been very great, but I think not one man has been slain except where his death has served the legitimate purposes of war. It has been necessary to adopt what in other countries would probably be thought harsh measures.

Secretary of War Elihu Root responded to the charges of brutality: "The war in the Philippines has been conducted by the American army with scrupulous regard for the rules of civilized warfare... with self-restraint and with humanity never surpassed."

In Manila, a Marine named Littleton Waller, a major, was accused of shooting eleven defenseless Filipinos, without trial, on the island of Sumar. Other marine officers described his testimony.

The major said that General Smith instructed him to kill and burn, and said that the more he killed and burned the better pleased he would be; that is wilderness. Major Waller asked General Smith to define the age limit for killin, and he replied "Everything over ten."