

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT—2009-2012

Motivating the Population: Rallying the Public to War
From Peter Joseph

Grade: 11th

Length of Class: 48 minutes

Inquiry (Essential Questions):

- How did the federal government gain public support for war in 1898 and 2003?
- What similar arguments were made for our motivation to use force?
- What different arguments were made for motivating our use of force?

Objectives (Content & Skills):

- Students will:
 - Analyze primary source documents
 - Explain the use of symbolic language
 - Assess the effectiveness of each source in galvanizing public support

Materials (Included below):

- 1898 request for a Declaration of War
- 1898 Declaration of War
- 2003 Address to the American public regarding the invasion of Iraq
- Gist worksheets (document analysis)
- Venn diagram

Activities:

Provide students with copies of the documents, either individually or at stations. Have them read the documents and complete the gist worksheets as they go.

After reading each document, the class should reassemble for a discussion. Create a master list of the 20 most important words, and discuss why these might have been chosen. Finally, have students complete the Venn diagram, either as part of the class or as homework, to complete the activity.

Connecticut Grade Level Expectations:

- Standard 1.1
 - 3. Trace the changing role of U.S. participation and influence in world affairs.
 - 7. Analyze the influence of nationalism on American society
- Standard 1.2
 - 14. Describe how major events in U.S. history have affected Connecticut citizens
- Standard 1.3
 - 18. Provide examples of conflict and cooperation in world affairs
- Standard 2.1
 - 1. Find relevant and accurate information from a variety of sources to answer a history/social studies question
- Standard 2.2
 - 3. Cite evidence from a source to determine an author's purpose and intended audience
- Standard 3.1
 - 1. Use evidence to develop an interpretation of a historical event
- Standard 3.2

- 5. Develop criteria for judging the actions or policies of an individual or group in the past

Joint Resolution of Congress, April 20, 1898

Whereas the abhorrent conditions which have existed for more than three years in the Island of Cuba, so near our own borders, have shocked the moral sense of the people of the United States, have been a disgrace to Christian civilization, culminating, as they have, in the destruction of a United States battle ship, with two hundred and sixty-six of its officers and crew, while on a friendly visit in the harbor of Havana, and can not longer be endured, as has been set forth by the President of the United States in his message to Congress of April eleventh, eighteen hundred and ninety-eight, upon which the action of Congress was invited: Therefore,

Resolved, First. That the people of the Island of Cuba are, of right ought to be, free and independent.

Second. That it is the duty of the United States to demand, and the Government of the United States does hereby demand, that the Government of Spain at once relinquish its authority and government in the Island of Cuba and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters.

Third. That the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the several States, to such extent as may be necessary to carry these resolutions into effect.

Fourth. That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said Island except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the Island to its people.

President McKinley's Request for a Declaration of War

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON April 25, 1899.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America:

I transmit to the Congress for its consideration and appropriate action, copies of correspondence recently had with the representative of Spain in the United States, with the United States minister at Madrid, and through the latter with the Government of Spain, showing the action taken under the joint resolution approved April 20, 1898, "for the recognition of the independence of the people of Cuba, demanding that the Government of Spain relinquish its authority and Government in the island of Cuba, and to withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters, and

directing the President of the United States to use the land and naval forces of the United States to carry these resolutions into effect."

Upon communicating to the Spanish minister in Washington the demand which it became the duty of the Executive to address to the Government of Spain in obedience, to said resolution, the minister asked for his passports and withdrew. The United States minister at Madrid was in turn notified by the Spanish minister for foreign affairs that the withdrawal of the Spanish representative from the United States had terminated diplomatic relations between the two countries, and that all official communications between their respective representatives ceased therewith.

I commend to your especial attention the note addressed to the United States minister at Madrid by, the Spanish minister of foreign affairs on the 21st instant, whereby the foregoing notification was conveyed. It will be perceived therefrom that the Government of Spain, having cognizance of the joint resolution of the United States Congress, and in view of the things which the President is thereby required and authorized to do, responds by treating the reasonable demands of this Government as measures of hostility, following with that instant and complete severance of relations by its action which by the usage of nations accompanies an existent state of war between sovereign powers.

The position of Spain being thus made known, and the demands of the United States being denied, with a complete rupture of intercourse, by the act of Spain, I have been constrained, in the exercise of the power conferred upon me by the joint resolution aforesaid, to proclaim, under date of April 22, 1898, a blockade of certain ports of the north coast of Cuba, between Cardenas and Bahia Honda, and the port of Cienfuegos, on the south coast of Cuba, and to issue my proclamation dated April 23, 1898, calling forth volunteers.

I now recommend the adoption of a joint resolution declaring that a state of war exists between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain, that the definition of the international status of the United States as a belligerent power may be made known and the assertion of all its rights in the conduct of a public war may be assured.

William McKinley

DECLARATION OF WAR WITH SPAIN

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, First. That war be, and the same is hereby, declared to exist, and that war has existed since the 21st day of April, A. D. 1898, including said day, between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain.

Second. That the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the several States to such extent as may be necessary to carry this act into effect.

Approved, April 25, 1898.

President George W. Bush's Speech to the Nation on the Coalition Invasion of Iraq, March 19, 2003

My fellow citizens, at this hour American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign.

More than 35 countries are giving crucial support, from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense.

To all of the men and women of the United States armed forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you.

That trust is well placed.

The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military.

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military — a final atrocity against his people.

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable and free country will require our sustained commitment.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon.

Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent.

For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people and you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly, yet our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder.

We will meet that threat now with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures and we will accept no outcome but victory.

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others. And we will prevail.

May God bless our country and all who defend her.

McKinley's Request for War: What's the gist?

Name of Author(s)	
Types of Documents (speech, newspaper article, etc.)	
What has Congress identified as reasons to intervene in Cuba?	
How do the authors justify their desire to go to war with Spain?	
Where and when is this taking place?	
What 20 words are key to understanding this document?	

President Bush's Speech on the Invasion of Iraq: What's the gist?

Name of Author(s)	
Types of Documents (speech, newspaper article, etc.)	
What has President Bush identified as the reasons to invade Iraq?	
How does President Bush justify his desire to invade Iraq?	
Where and when is this taking place?	
What 20 words are key to understanding this document?	