

# America Becomes a World Power

*The Emergence of Modern  
America (1890–1930)*



Expansionist policies

**Territorial acquisitions**

Intervention

## Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

**Icons:** For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will learn about the territorial acquisitions made by the U.S. in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including:

- Alaska
- Hawaii
- Cuba
- The Spanish-American War.

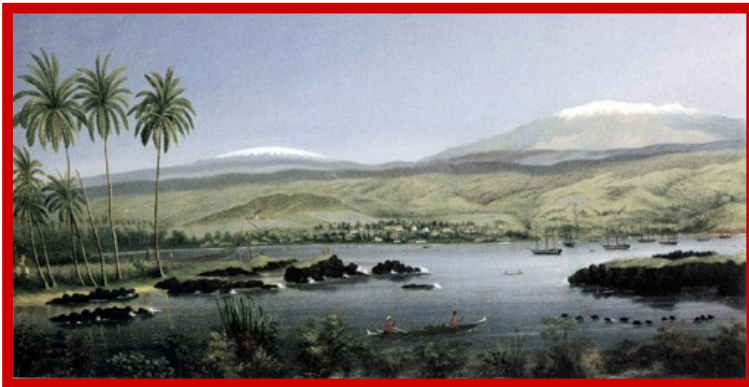
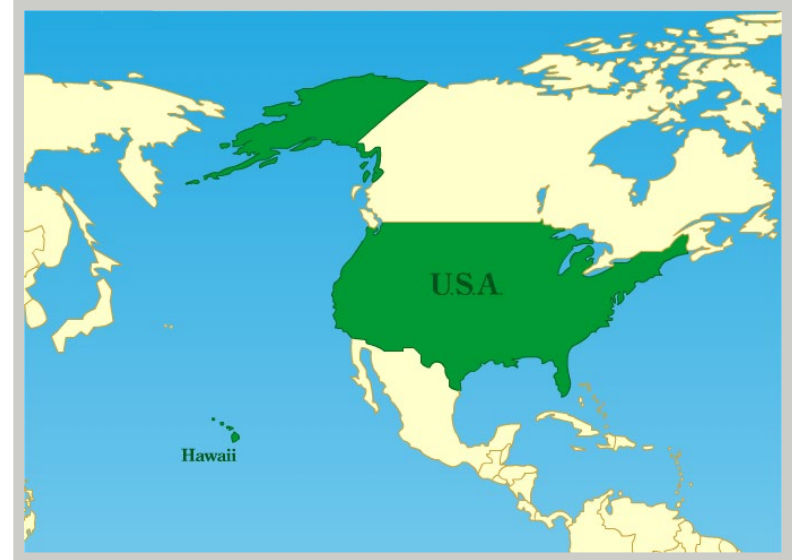


# Where is Hawaii?



Hawaii is a series of islands in the central Pacific Ocean.

Polynesian settlers found their way to Hawaii 1500 years ago. The islands were ruled by chieftains who fought over territory until they were all unified under a monarchy in 1810.



In 1820, Protestant missionaries arrived and the island began to thrive as a center of whaling, sugar production, and trade.

Why might Hawaii be of interest to the U.S.?



# Acquiring Alaska and Hawaii



After the Civil War and Reconstruction, the U.S. started to focus on external affairs. It sought the acquisition of new lands. Watch this animation to find out how it gained Alaska, Midway Island and Hawaii.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**





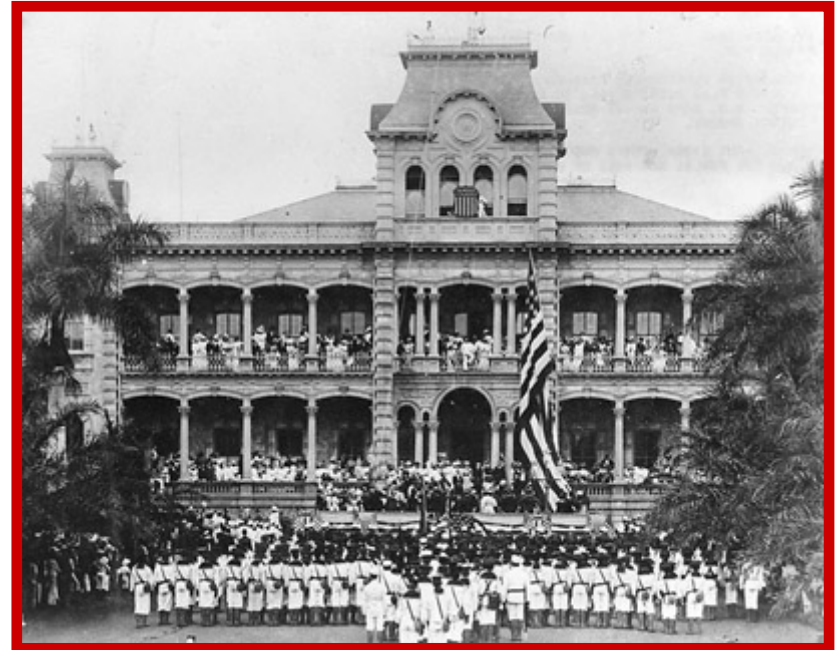


# The Hawaiian controversy



The acquisition of Hawaii was controversial because of the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893. President Cleveland investigated and found that it was conducted by American businessmen and plantation owners rather than natives.

However, the problem was not resolved and Hawaii was annexed in 1898. In 1993, President Clinton issued an Apology Resolution, apologizing for the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii.



The rebellion was partly a result of the U.S. removing tariffs on all sugar in 1890. How did this cause it?

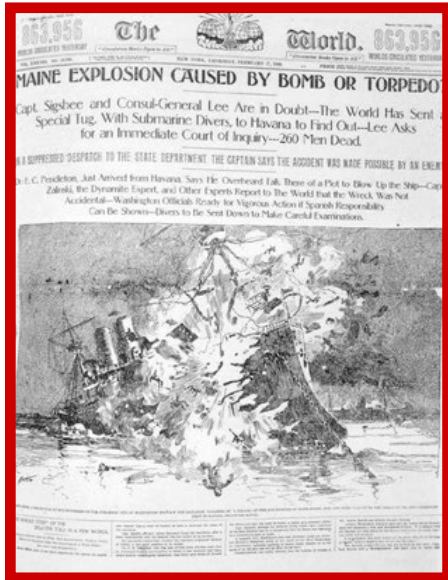
Cuba is located very close to the U.S. in the Caribbean, so it has been of interest to certain parties in the U.S. for a long time. It was a Spanish colony that had been wracked by anti-colonial rebellions throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the constant revolts, the Spanish rule was oppressive.

The Cuban economy was largely devoted to sugar plantations. Most of the sugar was exported to the U.S., but the Spanish reaped most of the benefits. Many Cubans resented their lack of political and economic freedoms.





At this time, some newspapers fought for supremacy by **sensationalizing** the news. Headlines were meant to grab attention by being fantastic or gory. Journalists sometimes stretched the truth or lied in order to outdo their competitors. This was known as **yellow journalism**.



Two major competitors were the *New York World*, edited by Joseph Pulitzer, and the *New York Journal*, edited by William Randolph Hearst.



Do you believe everything you read in the newspaper or see on the news?







# The Spanish-American War



The **Spanish-American War** was a conflict between the U.S. and Spain in 1898. It was caused by Cuba's struggle for independence and yellow journalism inflamed the situation.

Press on the newspaper headlines to see how the story unfolded and the war began.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**





The U.S. launched a naval blockade of Cuba on April 21, 1898, and also sent in infantry and cavalry for a land assault. They fought alongside Cuban independence fighters.



Future-president **Theodore Roosevelt** bravely led a charge of his **Rough Riders** in a key battle where they took San Juan Hill.

The U.S. Navy also won a decisive victory on July 3, when they destroyed the Spanish Caribbean fleet.





The Spanish-American War was fought in the Pacific Ocean as well as the Caribbean. The U.S.'s Asiatic Fleet, which had been waiting in Hong Kong, took the Philippines. Within hours of charging into Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, the U.S. Navy had destroyed all Spanish ships. After these heavy defeats, Spain sought peace.

The war lasted only four months and was a comprehensive victory for the U.S. It acquired Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines in the **Treaty of Paris**







The Treaty of Paris was the resolution that ended the Spanish-American War. It was signed in December 1898. The U.S. gained several territories from Spain.

Drag the labels to the correct places in the table to show the location of the territories and the terms under which they were acquired.

Press **start** to begin.

start



Are these acquisitions still owned by the U.S.?