

Discover America

Course 10 - Teacher Guide



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5th Grade

Teacher Guide



Key Themes

- Bravery
- Perseverance
- Loyalty

Core Values

- Community
- Life
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the life and military career of Teddy Roosevelt before he became President.
- Explain who the Rough Riders were.
- Provide a concise overview of Teddy Roosevelt's involvement in the Spanish-American War.
- Summarize the escalating tensions preceding the Spanish-American War.
- Explain the concept of yellow journalism and its historical significance in media.
- Summarize the military accomplishments and profound impact of Theodore Roosevelt's career.



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Key Terms

- 01 **Battle of Las Guasimas** – the first of two battles won by the Rough Riders against the Spanish in Cuba on June 24, 1898.
- 02 **Battle of San Juan Hill** – the second battle won by the Rough Riders against the Spanish in Cuba that began on July 1, 1898.
- 03 **corruption** – the state of being evil.
- 04 **Gatling machine gun** - a hand-cranked firearm invented by Richard Gatling in 1861; features multiple rotating barrels offering continuous, rapid gunfire.
- 05 **monopolies** – the companies who had exclusive control over business in America.
- 06 **Panama Canal** – a man-made waterway that opened in 1914 in Panama; spans approximately 50 miles and connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
- 07 **Rough Riders** – a group of hunters, cowboys, sheriffs, glee club singers, Native Americans, and athletic college buddies who volunteered to fight for the United States against the Spanish in Cuba.
- 08 **The Spanish-American War** – conflict fought in Cuba and the Philippines that began in May 1898 between Spain and the United States.
- 09 **synonymous** – meaning the same as something else.

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Key Terms

- 10 **territories** – areas of land overseen by the federal government; they are like states but do not have the same sovereignty as states.
- 11 **Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt** – war hero who created the Rough Riders; later became the 26th President of the United States.
- 12 **USS Maine** – United States Navy battleship that sank at the harbor in Havana, Cuba.
- 13 **William McKinley** – the 25th President of the United States; in office at the start of the Spanish-American War.

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

Still a young nation trying to get its footing in the world, the United States declared war against Spain in May of 1898. One of the heroes of that war was Teddy Roosevelt, who left his office job and volunteered in the cavalry to help fight the war. Let's learn more about Roosevelt and his role in the Spanish-American War in this episode of Star Spangled Adventures!

WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures Episode:
America on the World Stage



Scan Me!



Teddy Roosevelt

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

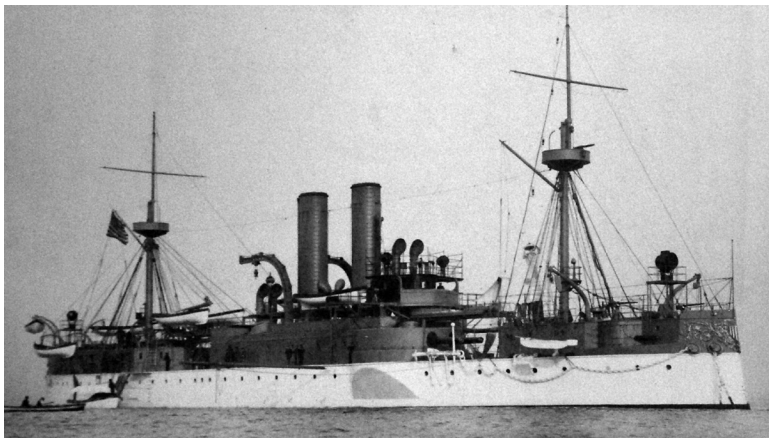
In the late 1800s, Cuba was struggling under Spanish control, fighting for its independence. To support the Cubans, the **USS Maine**, a battleship, was sent to Havana harbor, Cuba's capital. Tragically, less than a month later, on February 15, 1898, the ship exploded and sank, resulting in the loss of 268 sailors, most of its crew.

American newspapers quickly pointed fingers at Spain for the disaster, popularizing the rallying cry "Remember the Maine!" However, opinions about the cause of the explosion differed. While the U.S. Navy blamed a mine, some officers believed it was a fire in a coal bunker unrelated to Spain.

ASK Students

Who was responsible for sinking the USS Maine?

(allow students to respond)



USS Maine

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Lesson

TELL Students

William McKinley was President of the United States during this period. President McKinley initially wanted to avoid a conflict with Spain, especially since the country had recently endured a severe economic downturn that greatly affected businesses. However, when the USS Maine sank and Spain was blamed for the incident, pressure mounted on President McKinley to take action.

On April 20, 1898, he signed a resolution demanding that Spain withdraw from Cuba and authorized the use of military force to support Cuba's quest for independence.

ASK Students

Who was the President of the United States during the Spanish-American War?

(allow students to respond)



President William McKinley

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

Meanwhile, the Spanish government faced its own challenges from the Spanish public. Selling Cuba, similar to how they had previously sold Florida, was considered a betrayal by many Spaniards and risked starting a revolution. Despite knowing they were unlikely to win a war against the United States, the Spanish government believed it was preferable to face defeat in a war rather than risk a rebellion from within.

As a result, on April 21, 1898, Spain cut off communications with the United States and officially declared war.

ASK Students

What events led up to Spain entering into war with the United States?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

The **Spanish-American War** began in May of 1898. Rather than stay in the comfort of his government office in the U.S. as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, **Teddy Roosevelt** resigned his job, joined the fight, and led soldiers from the front lines to fight for liberty. In doing so, he formed the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry to help fight the war. Alongside his friend Leonard Wood, an American war hero, Teddy sifted through nearly 25,000 applications to create the group that came to be known as the Rough Riders.

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Lesson

ASK Students

Who were the Rough Riders?

Why did the Rough Riders volunteer to go fight in the war?

(allow students to respond)

TELL Students

The **Rough Riders**, led by future president Theodore Roosevelt, were the first volunteer group of troops made up of hunters, cowboys, polo players, sheriffs, glee club singers, Native Americans, and athletic college friends. They played a vital role in securing victories in two major battles against the Spanish in Cuba.

Their first significant triumph occurred at the **Battle of Las Guasimas** on June 24, 1898. Despite sustaining numerous casualties, the Rough Riders successfully fought off the Spanish forces.

Following their success at Las Guasimas, the Rough Riders planned to capture Santiago, a key city in Cuba essential for freeing the island from Spanish rule. The Spanish, anticipating the American advance, withdrew to defend the San Juan Heights.

A week later, on July 1, 1898, American forces, significantly outnumbering the Spanish, bravely charged the hill in an attempt to remove the defenders. The Spanish, with a clear line of sight, inflicted heavy casualties on the advancing Americans. Despite facing intense opposition, including heat exhaustion and enemy gunfire, American troops continued their relentless advance.

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

The American forces utilized a new weapon, the Gatling machine gun, to great effect. The **Gatling machine gun** was a hand-cranked firearm invented by Richard Gatling in 1861. It features multiple rotating barrels and was one of the first machine guns to offer continuous fire by using a rotating mechanism. Instead of using it defensively, as was typical, they advanced with the guns, allowing them to provide crucial support during the assault. Teddy Roosevelt led multiple charges up a section called Kettle Hill to reach the San Juan Heights. Despite facing enemy gunfire on foot, Teddy and his men showed remarkable bravery as they charged the Hill. This pivotal victory was later known as the Battle of San Juan Hill. This victory solidified Roosevelt's reputation as a war hero and marked a turning point in the Spanish-American War. Roosevelt was even awarded the Medal of Honor in 2001, long after his death, for his bravery in the **Battle of San Juan Hill**, the only United States President to achieve this honor.

On the same day, the Americans also achieved victory at the Battle of El Caney, while the U.S. Navy defeated the Spanish Royal Navy at the Battle of Santiago de Cuba. These additional victories effectively brought an end to the Spanish-American War. In Spain's effort to seek peace, the United States acquired Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippine Islands from Spain.

ASK Students

How did Roosevelt show courage and perseverance during the Spanish-American War?

Do you think Cuba, Philippine Islands, Puerto Rico, and Guam are still part of the United States today?

*(Answer: No, the Philippine Islands and Cuba are independent countries today. Puerto Rico and Guam are still part of the U.S. today. They are called **territories**, which are overseen by the federal government like states but do not have the same sovereignty as states.)*

(allow students to respond)

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

The Republican Party saw an opportunity in Theodore Roosevelt's rising popularity. They backed him as a candidate for governor of the state of New York. Roosevelt, known for his energetic approach, quickly became a reformer, upsetting many within his own party as he tackled political **corruption** (the state of being evil). His rivals within the Republican Party nominated him for Vice President in the 1900 election, thinking his role would be minor. However, the assassination of President McKinley elevated Roosevelt to the presidency.

As President, Roosevelt showed an interest in preserving the environment, leading to the establishment of America's first national parks. He also advocated for fair treatment of workers and aimed to break up monopolies that dominated the business landscape. **Monopolies** are companies who have exclusive control over business in America. Roosevelt also initiated the construction of the Panama Canal, a project that transformed global trade. The **Panama Canal** is a man-made waterway that opened in 1914 in Panama. The length of the canal spans approximately 50 miles and connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

ASK Students

What did Theodore Roosevelt become known for before and during his term as President of the United States?

(allow students to respond)

WATCH

Learn More With Liberty Video:
Tensions Rising!



Scan Me!

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Lesson

TELL Students

By the end of his term, Roosevelt had become **synonymous** (meaning the same as something else) with the fighting spirit of America, admired for his strength and integrity. His dedication to conservation earned him a place on Mount Rushmore, a monument honoring influential American leaders. Few Americans have displayed the toughness, loyalty, and courage of President Theodore Roosevelt.

ASK Students

What does Teddy Roosevelt's legacy teach us?

(allow students to respond)



Mount Rushmore

WATCH

Optional Course Videos:

Learn More With Liberty: The Rough Riders

Learn More With Liberty: Teddy Roosevelt

Scan Me!



Major Battles of the Spanish-American War

Complete the graphic organizer below to identify when each battle took place and why the battle was significant during the Spanish-American War.

Battle of Las Guasimas

Took Place On:

Significance:

Battle of San Juan Hill

Took Place On:

Significance:

Battle of Santiago de Cuba

Took Place On:

Significance:

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade Assessment

01 In what month and year did the United States declare war on Spain?

02 What was the name of the war between Spain and the United States?

03 Who left his office job and volunteered in the cavalry to help fight the war against Spain before becoming President of the United States?

04 What was the name of the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry led by Teddy Roosevelt that helped fight in the Spanish-American War?

05 What battleship was sent to Havana harbor, Cuba's capital, and later exploded and sank?

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade Assessment

06 Describe features of the Gatling machine gun and its importance in the Spanish-American war.

07 What is/are the significant battle(s) the Rough Riders won against the Spanish during the Spanish-American War?

08 What issues did Theodore Roosevelt support during his presidency?

09 In what national monument is Theodore Roosevelt's face featured?

10 President Roosevelt initiated the construction of the _____, a project that transformed global trade.

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade **Assessment Key**

- 01 May of 1898
- 02 The Spanish-American War
- 03 Theodore Roosevelt
- 04 The Rough Riders
- 05 USS Maine
- 06 The Gatling machine gun featured a hand-crank, multiple rotating barrels, and continuous fire by use of a rotating mechanism. This gun provided crucial support for Americans. Instead of using it defensively (as was typical), they advanced with the guns.
- 07 The Battle of Las Guasimas and The Battle of San Juan Hill
- 08 Preserving the environment, establishing U.S. National Parks, and fair treatment of employees.
- 09 Mount Rushmore
- 10 The Panama Canal

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Student Text

Still a young nation trying to get its footing in the world, the United States declared war against Spain in May of 1898. One of the heroes of that war was Teddy Roosevelt, who left his office job and volunteered in the cavalry to help fight the war.

In the late 1800s, Cuba was struggling under Spanish control, fighting for its independence. To support the Cubans, the USS Maine, a battleship, was sent to Havana harbor, Cuba's capital. Tragically, less than a month later, on February 15, 1898, the ship exploded and sank, resulting in the loss of 268 sailors, most of its crew.

American newspapers quickly pointed fingers at Spain for the disaster, popularizing the rallying cry "Remember the Maine!" However, opinions about the cause of the explosion differed. While the U.S. Navy blamed a mine, some officers believed it was a fire in a coal bunker unrelated to Spain.

William McKinley was President of the United States during this period. President McKinley initially wanted to avoid a conflict with Spain, especially since the country had recently endured a severe economic downturn that greatly affected businesses. However, when the USS Maine sank and Spain was blamed for the incident, pressure mounted on President McKinley to take action.

On April 20, 1898, he signed a resolution demanding that Spain withdraw from Cuba and authorized the use of military force to support Cuba's quest for independence.

Meanwhile, the Spanish government faced its own challenges from the Spanish public. Selling Cuba, similar to how they had previously sold Florida, was considered a betrayal by many Spaniards and risked starting a revolution.

Despite knowing they were unlikely to win a war against the United States, the Spanish government believed it was preferable to face defeat in a war rather than risk a rebellion from within.



President William McKinley

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Student Text

As a result, on April 21, 1898, Spain cut off communications with the United States and officially declared war.

The Spanish-American War began in May of 1898. Rather than stay in the comfort of his government office in the U.S. as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Teddy Roosevelt resigned his job, joined the fight, and led soldiers from the front lines to fight for liberty. In doing so, he formed the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry to help fight the war. Alongside his friend Leonard Wood, an American war hero, Teddy sifted through nearly 25,000 applications to create the group that came to be known as the Rough Riders.



Rough Riders

The Rough Riders, a diverse group led by future president Theodore Roosevelt, were made up of hunters, cowboys, polo players, sheriffs, glee club singers, Native Americans, and athletic college friends. They played a vital role in securing victories in two major battles against the Spanish in Cuba.

Their first significant triumph occurred at the Battle of Las Guasimas on June 24, 1898. Despite sustaining numerous casualties, the Rough Riders successfully fought off the Spanish forces.

Following their success at Las Guasimas, the Rough Riders planned to capture Santiago, a key city in Cuba essential for freeing the island from Spanish rule. The Spanish, anticipating the American advance, withdrew to defend the San Juan Heights.

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America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Student Text

The American forces utilized a new weapon, the Gatling machine gun, to great effect. The Gatling machine gun was a hand-cranked firearm invented by Richard Gatling in 1861. It features multiple rotating barrels and was one of the first machine guns to offer continuous fire by using a rotating mechanism. Instead of using it defensively, as was typical, they advanced with the guns, allowing them to provide crucial support during the assault. Teddy Roosevelt led multiple charges up a section called Kettle Hill to reach the San Juan Heights. Despite facing enemy gunfire on foot, Teddy and his men showed remarkable bravery as they charged the Hill. This pivotal victory was later known as the Battle of San Juan Hill. This victory solidified Roosevelt's reputation as a war hero and marked a turning point in the Spanish-American War. Roosevelt was even awarded the Medal of Honor in 2001, long after his death, for his bravery in the Battle of San Juan Hill, the only United States President to achieve this honor.

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In Spain's effort to seek peace, the United States acquired Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippine Islands from Spain. Do you think Cuba, Philippine Islands, Puerto Rico, and Guam are still part of the United States today?

No, the Philippine Islands and Cuba are independent countries today. Puerto Rico and Guam are still part of the U.S. today. They are called territories, which are overseen by the federal government like states but do not have the same sovereignty as states.



Teddy Roosevelt

America on the World Stage - 5th Grade

Student Text

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As President, Roosevelt showed an interest in preserving the environment, leading to the establishment of America's first national parks. He also advocated for fair treatment of workers and aimed to break up monopolies that dominated the business landscape. Monopolies are companies who have exclusive control over business in America. Roosevelt also initiated the construction of the Panama Canal, a project that transformed global trade.

By the end of his term, Roosevelt had become synonymous (meaning the same as something else) with the fighting spirit of America, admired for his strength and integrity. His dedication to conservation earned him a place on Mount Rushmore, a monument honoring influential American leaders. Few Americans have displayed the toughness, loyalty, and courage of President Theodore Roosevelt.

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Mount Rushmore

America on the World Stage

Resource List

- 01 <https://millercenter.org/president/roosevelt/life-before-the-presidency>
- 02 <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Theodore-Roosevelt>
- 03 <https://www.nps.gov/thrb/learn/historyculture/tr-rr-spanamwar.htm>
- 04 <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-maine-explodes>
- 05 <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Theodore-Roosevelt/The-Square-Deal>
- 06 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/theodore-roosevelt/>
- 07 <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Encyclopedia/War-and-Military-Affairs/The-Spanish-American-War>

