

## **ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

### **CIVICS UNIT**

From *The Annexation of the Philippines: Teaching American Democracy Using Primary Sources*.  
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Congressional Hearing: Was the decision to annex the Philippine Islands in our national interest?

For this assessment, students analyze the issue of annexing the Philippines Islands as a case study in foreign policy by assuming roles as special assistants to the Bureau of South East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the State Department. Using primary source documents, students examine this foreign policy debate by developing a briefing book in preparation in a Mock Congressional Hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Teachers should point out for historical authenticity that if the annexation issue of the Philippines - or any other territory - occurred today, a hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would be held and televised on C-SPAN. State Department officials would prepare briefing materials to be delivered to Committee members and at a later date, State Department officials would deliver oral testimony to Committee members and answer follow-up questions from Senators. The role of the citizen in influencing foreign policy decision making would also become apparent -- through letters, phone calls, faxes, and most recently, e-mail correspondence. In 1899, the decision to annex the Philippines was assigned to a group of Peace Commissioners who communicated with the Secretary of State who, in turn, was in constant contact with President McKinley.

To provide a context for this assessment, at your discretion, conduct the introductory activities with students: (1) "What is Foreign Policy?" (2) "Determining Foreign Policy Priorities" (3) "Tools of the Trade: Diplomacy" and (4) "I Guess I'll Keep 'Em."

Because this assessment will be completed by groups, divide class into groups of 4-5 students. Distribute Handout #4, "Annexation of the Philippines: Time Line," the list of primary sources materials and packet of materials to students. Read directions out loud, explaining that each group will prepare a briefing book on the issue of annexing the Philippine Islands in preparation to a 4-5 minute presentation (testimony) to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Allow class time for students to meet in groups and to assign various tasks necessary for completions of the briefing book. Explain that much of the preparation for this assessment will be completed as homework.

Set a date for the Congressional Hearing. Video-taping students' hearing presentations and replaying their performances allow etchers flexibility in scoring (i.e., changing scores of earlier groups based on outstanding performances of groups scheduled later.)