

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

CIVICS UNIT

From *The Annexation of the Philippines: Teaching American Democracy Using Primary Sources*.
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Determining Foreign Policy Priorities

To further provide students with a general introduction to foreign policy and the debate over annexation of the Philippine Islands, distribute Handout 1, “Foreign Policy Priorities.” Defining US national interests and understanding how they are translated into foreign policy priorities is often very difficult. This lesson will encourage students to discuss competing demands on the foreign policy agenda of the US. Teachers might ask students to conduct a survey and summarize their results about current perceptions and evaluations of our foreign policy priorities.

Refer students to the appropriate chapter in their history textbooks in which the foreign policy decision to annex the Philippine Islands is described.

Divide the class into several groups and distribute one set of primary source documents to each group. Each group member should take responsibility for examining several documents. Instruct students to look for evidence and write in the margin the specific foreign policy priority. Allow sufficient class time for groups to compare their findings.