

Indigenous Responses to Imperialism Student Worksheet

Introduction:

How did people who lived in countries coveted by European powers react to imperialism? In this lesson, you will consider two very different responses of indigenous peoples to imperialism. Keep in mind the pro-imperialist arguments from earlier lessons in this unit, and assess how such arguments were viewed by indigenous peoples.

Directions:

All Web links for this lesson can be found at:

<http://www.socialstudies.com/worldlinks.html>

The People of Canton: Against the English, 1842

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1842canton.asp>

1. Why do you think the document likens the British to animals? Why do you think the document continually refers to the British as “barbarians”?
2. Restate in your own words the meaning of this phrase from the document: “These people having long steadily devoured all the western barbarians, and like demons of the night, they now suddenly exalt themselves here.”
3. Why does the document argue against making peace with the British?
4. What do you think this document was intended to accomplish?

Dadabhai Naoroji: The Benefits of British Rule, 1871

<http://cuwhist.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/dadabhai-naoroji-the-benefits-of-british-rule-1871.pdf>

5. What are the categories the author uses to assess how Britain has ruled India? Which of these categories do you think he regards as most important?
6. In the “Detriments” section, the author includes “financially” as one of the categories used to judge British rule, but this category is absent in the “Benefits” section. Why do you think this is?
7. At the end of the “Benefits” section, the author states “I know that it is only in British hands that her [India’s] regeneration can be accomplished.” Speculate as to why he might think this.
8. What do you think the author sees as the greatest benefit of English rule? What do you think he sees as the greatest detriment? Support your choices.

9. In all, do you think the author is in favor of or against British rule? Cite examples from the document to support your conclusion.

10. What do you think the author's motive was for writing this piece?

11. These two documents offer very different views of British imperialist policies. What do you think might account for these differences? Explain why Great Britain might not have applied the same policies in all regions of the Empire.