

**United States History and Government**  
**Content –Specific Rubric**  
**Thematic Essay—January 2005**

**Theme: Foreign Policy**

Since 1900, United States foreign policy actions have often been based on national self-interest. These actions have had immediate and long-term results.

**Task:** Identify *two* important United States foreign policy actions **since 1900** and for *each*

- Discuss the historical circumstances surrounding the action
- Discuss *one* immediate **or** *one* long-term result of the action
- Evaluate the extent to which the action promoted the nation’s self-interest

You may use any important foreign policy action since 1900 from your study of United States history. Some suggestions you might wish to consider include Theodore Roosevelt’s Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1904), Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points (1918), the Lend-Lease Act (1941), the Marshall Plan (1947), the blockade of Cuba (1962), the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) agreements (1972), and the Persian Gulf War (1991).

**Scoring Note:** This thematic essay has a minimum of *six* components (*three* aspects [the historical circumstances, a result, and the extent of promotion of self-interest] for each of *two* foreign policy actions).

**Score of 5:**

- Thoroughly develops all aspects of the task evenly and in depth by discussing the historical circumstances surrounding *two* important United States foreign policy actions since 1900, discussing an immediate *or* a long-term result of each action, and evaluating the extent to which each action promoted the nation’s self-interest
- Is more analytical than descriptive (analyzes, evaluates, and/or creates information), e.g., for *Theodore Roosevelt’s Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine*, a response might state that as a result of this policy, the United States has continued to have a presence in Latin America, maintaining a base at Guantánamo, Cuba; helped overthrow a government in Guatemala that threatened United States-owned businesses; sent troops to intervene in the Dominican Republic, Granada, and Panama; *and/or* has extradited drug lords from Venezuela and Columbia
- Richly supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details, e.g., for *Theodore Roosevelt’s Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine*, details might include the European threat to collect debts in Venezuela; Roosevelt’s fear that European intervention in Latin American countries would threaten United States economic interests there; Latin America has become resentful over repeated United States intervention in Nicaragua and other nations; *and/or* the dominant trading partner with Latin American nations is still the United States
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme

#### Score of 4

- Develops all aspects of the task but may do so unevenly by discussing two aspects of the task more thoroughly than a third aspect for both foreign policies *or* discussing all three aspects of the task for one foreign policy action more thoroughly than for the other foreign policy action
- Is both descriptive and analytical (applies, analyzes, evaluates, and/ or creates information), e.g., for the *Persian Gulf War*, the response might state that the United States economic status was threatened by the possible loss of crude oil importation *or* that the war ensured the continued access to oil production and kept the price of oil down for several years
- Supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme

**Note:** At score levels 5 and 4, all **six** components of the task should be developed.

*Holistic Scoring Reminder:* This note applies only to the evaluation of Bullet 1.

#### Score of 3:

- Develops all aspects of the task with little depth *or* develops most aspects of the task in some depth
- Is more descriptive than analytical (applies, may analyze, and/or evaluate information)
- Includes some relevant facts, examples, and details; may include some minor inaccuracies
- Demonstrates a satisfactory plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that may be a restatement of the theme

**Note:** At score level 3, *at least four* components should be developed in some depth. **Exception:** When the information in an incomplete response meets level 5 criteria, *at least three* components should be developed evenly and in depth.

*Holistic Scoring Reminder:* This note applies only to the evaluation of Bullet 1.

#### Score of 2:

- Minimally develops all aspects of the task *or* develops some aspects of the task in some depth
- Is primarily descriptive; may include faulty, weak, or isolated application or analysis
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details; may include some inaccuracies
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; may lack focus; may contain digressions; may not clearly identify which aspect of the task is being addressed; may lack an introduction and/ or a conclusion

**Note:** At score level 2, *at least three* components should be developed in some depth.

*Holistic Scoring Reminder:* This note applies only to the evaluation of Bullet 1.

#### Score of 1:

- Minimally develops some aspects of the task
- Is descriptive; may lack understanding, application, or analysis
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, or details; may include inaccuracies
- May demonstrate a weakness in organization; may lack focus; may contain digressions; may not clearly identify which aspect of the task is being addressed; may lack an introduction and/ or a conclusion

#### Score of 0

Fails to develop the task or may only refer to the theme in a general way; *OR* includes no relevant facts, examples, or details, *OR* includes only the theme, task, or suggestions as copied from the test booklet; *OR* is illegible; *OR* is a blank paper

Historically all United States Foreign Policy has in some way benefited the U.S. At times intervention was needed on the United State's part to protect the Nation from attack. At other times the benefit hasn't always been clear or immediate in coming to the surface, but make no mistake every action by the United States in the area of foreign policy has reflected its personal interests.

In 1962 the cold war, which was a period of heightened tension between the USA and the U.S.S.R, the two world superpowers, was heating up. The U.S.S.R was attempting to build launch pads and outfit them with nuclear missiles on the island of Cuba. This would give the U.S.S.R first strike capabilities in the event nuclear war broke out. The president at the time JFK seeing the danger that this represented to the U.S demanded that the U.S.S.R remove the missiles. In classic cold war style the U.S.S.R tested the nerve of the U.S by continuing construction of the launch pads. JFK then ordered a blockade of Cuba to stop any U.S.S.R ships attempting to enter Cuban waters. The blockade worked and the U.S.S.R ships backed but U.S.S.R missiles were still in Cuba. To resolve this JFK made a secret

agreement with the U.S.S.R to remove American missiles in Turkey in exchange for the Soviet Union to remove their missiles in Cuba. The U.S.S.R agreed and removed their missiles in Cuba and the Cuban missile crisis was solved. In this case the U.S. took an active role in world affairs to protect itself. These events kept the cold war cold until the fall of U.S.S.R in 1991. In 1991 the U.S., with the assistance of a coalition it created in the UN, entered into the Gulf war. This time the U.S. acted to support an ally and to strengthen its ties with oil rich Kuwait. The cause for involvement was Iraq invading Kuwait. Losing oil from Kuwait might weaken the U.S. economy because the U.S. imports most of its oil. The war was a success the U.S. and its allies drove the Republican Guard of Iraq out of Kuwait, and contained Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Kuwait now saw the U.S. as heroes and an ally. To prevent further threats from Iraq, the U.N. placed sanctions on it. The U.S. now had a more secure oil supply.

In conclusion these two actions the U.S. took on foreign policy greatly helped the nation. We entered the blockade of Cuba to protect the nation from attack. We entered the Gulf war in 1991 to open new markets and make an ally in the middle east. Both events helped immediately and long term in the U.S.'s interest.