



World War I - the Rise of Imperialism Reading Comprehension

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked a period of intense competition between European powers for territories outside of Europe, which led to the rise of imperialism. This period was characterized by the acquisition of colonies, the establishment of protectorates, and the imposition of economic and political dominance over non-European countries. The causes of imperialism were numerous and complex, ranging from economic and strategic interests to ideological beliefs and national pride.

Economic interests were a primary motivation for imperialism. The industrial revolution had led to a significant increase in European production and trade, which in turn created a demand for raw materials and new markets. By acquiring colonies and territories overseas, European powers could secure access to these resources and markets, which would support their growing economies. Furthermore, imperial powers often forced their colonies to trade only with them, which ensured that they had a monopoly on the colony's resources and markets.

Strategic interests also played a role in the rise of imperialism. The acquisition of colonies allowed imperial powers to establish naval bases and refueling stations, which would help them maintain control over strategic waterways and shipping routes. Additionally, by controlling territories around the world, European powers could project their military power and influence beyond their borders.

Ideological beliefs also contributed to imperialism. Many Europeans believed that their civilization was superior to others and that it was their duty to "civilize" and "Christianize" non-European peoples. This belief, known as the "white man's burden," led to a wave of missionary activity in the colonies, as well as efforts to impose European values and customs on non-European societies.

National pride also played a role in the rise of imperialism. Many Europeans saw the acquisition of colonies as a symbol of their nation's greatness and power. Imperial expansion was also seen as a way to assert dominance over other European powers, particularly in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War.

The rise of imperialism had significant consequences for both European and non-European societies. For European powers, imperialism led to increased competition and tension between nations, as well as increased military spending to maintain their colonial empires. Non-European societies, on the other hand, suffered under the yoke of foreign domination, with their resources exploited for the benefit of European powers. Additionally, the imposition of European values and customs often led to the erosion of traditional cultures and the disruption of social and economic systems.

1. Which of the following WAS NOT a factor in the rise of imperialism before World War I?

- a) National pride
- b) Economic interests
- c) Competition between European nations
- d) North American markets

2. The industrial revolution resulted in

- a) German dominance
- b) demand for new markets
- c) ideological beliefs
- d) colonial cooperation

3. Which of the following is true concerning the interactions between imperial nations and their colonies?

- a) Many imperial nations sought colonies within Europe.
- b) Imperial nations allowed their colonies to trade with foreign nations.
- c) Many imperial nations restricted their colonies from trading with foreign nations.
- d) The industrial revolution led many imperial nations to grant independence to their colonies.

4. What was an advantage of imperialism during World War I? Select all that apply.

- a) Nations could trade territories with their allies.
- b) Nations could establish and arm naval bases at points around the world.
- c) Nations could control shipping routes.
- d) Nations could extend their influence beyond their borders.

5. Which best describes the idea of "white man's burden?"

- a) The idea that Europeans had the duty to "Christianize" cultures from different parts of the world.
- b) The idea that White people should integrate with cultures around the world.
- c) The idea that civilizations around the world had much to offer in terms of tradition and education.
- d) The idea that White people could gain wealth and knowledge from conquering other nations.

6. What word could replace "impose" in the following sentence?

This belief, known as the "white man's burden," led to a wave of missionary activity in the colonies, as well as efforts to impose European values and customs on non-European societies.

- a) force
- b) suggest
- c) disrupt
- d) entail

7. What question is answered in the final paragraph?

- a) Which European nations benefited most from the rise of imperialism?
- b) What role did national pride play in the rise of imperialism?
- c) How did imperialism impact traditional cultures?
- d) What was the main difference between imperialism and militarism?

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1. (d)
2. (b)
3. (c)
4. (b) (c) (d)
5. (a)
6. (a)
7. (c)