

**Primary Source
Document
Analysis**

Monroe Doctrine

Background on the Monroe Doctrine: The Monroe Doctrine was written in response to events that took place between 1820 and 1823. In the early 19th Century, many Latin American nations won their independence from Spain. Between 1820 and 1823, Spain and other European powers hoped to maintain a sphere of influence over these new nations; additionally, Russia tried to exert control over North American territories along the northwest Pacific Coast. The constant threat of foreign influence over the American continent led President Monroe to issue the Monroe Doctrine as part of his annual message to Congress; the doctrine would dictate US foreign policy for many years to come.

Primary Source: Monroe Doctrine - 1823

Directions: Read the excerpts of the Monroe Doctrine below. Answer the analysis questions that follow each section. In addition, following section three are general analysis questions to answer.

Section 1:

1	...the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and
2	interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents by the free and
3	independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are <u>henceforth not to be</u>
4	<u>considered as subjects</u> for future colonization by any European power.....

- 1) What does section 1 of the Monroe Doctrine say about future European colonization on the American continent?

Section 2:

1	The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and
2	happiness of their fellowmen (Europeans) on the other side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the
3	European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it
4	comport with our policy to do so.... With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European
5	power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments in the Americas
6	who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on
7	great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for
8	the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner, by any European power, in
9	any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States...

- 1) What does section 2 of the Monroe Doctrine say about American involvement in European affairs?

- 2) How will the United States view European powers trying to oppress or control free countries on the American continents?

Section 3:

1	It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense or war... to declare that we would consider any attempt on their (European Nations) part to extend their (European nations) system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.
2	
3	
4	

- 1) According to section 3, under which two conditions will the United States make preparations for war?
- a)
 - b)

General Analysis Questions

- 1) How does the Monroe Doctrine extend or continue the American policy of neutrality / isolationism?
- 2) As a citizen of the United States in 1823, how could the Monroe Doctrine provide you with a sense of optimism regarding your country's position in the world?
- 3) Based on this document, predict the likely position the United States would take if:
- a) In 1830 Great Britain sent troops to occupy Argentina (a free nation after 1816)
 - b) In 1830, Spain sent troops to occupy the Spanish colonies in South America