

Was the Monroe Doctrine needed to keep Europe at bay, or was it a pointless and arrogant gesture?



The Monroe Doctrine

Was It Necessary?

*Was the Monroe Doctrine needed to keep Europe at bay,
or was it a pointless and arrogant gesture?*



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Teacher Introduction

★ Using Primary Sources

Primary sources are called “primary” because they are first-hand records of a past era or historical event. They are the raw materials, or the evidence, on which historians base their “secondary” accounts of the past.

A rapidly growing number of history teachers today are using primary sources. Why? Perhaps it’s because primary sources give students a better sense of what history is and what historians do. Such sources also help students see the past from a variety of viewpoints. Moreover, primary sources make history vivid and bring it to life.

However, primary sources are not easy to use. They can be confusing. They can be biased. They rarely all agree. Primary sources must be interpreted and set in context. To do this, students need historical background knowledge. *Debating the Documents* helps students handle such challenges by giving them a useful framework for analyzing sources that conflict with one another.



*“Multiple,
conflicting
perspectives are
among the truths
of history.
No single
objective or
universal account
could ever put an
end to this endless
creative dialogue
within and
between the past
and the present.”*

From the 2011 Statement on Standards
of Professional Conduct of the Council of
the American Historical Association.

★ *The Debating the Documents Series*

Each *Debating the Documents* booklet includes the same sequence of reproducible worksheets. If students use several booklets over time, they will get regular practice at interpreting and comparing conflicting sources. In this way, they can learn the skills and habits needed to get the most out of primary sources.

Each *Debating the Documents* Booklet Includes

- **Suggestions for the Student and an Introductory Essay.** The student gets instructions and a one-page essay providing background on the booklet's topic. A time line on the topic is also included.
- **Two Groups of Contrasting Primary Source Documents.** In most of the booklets, students get one pair of visual sources and one pair of written sources. In some cases, more than two are provided for each. Background is provided on each source. *Within each group, the sources clash in a very clear way.* (The sources are not always exact opposites, but they do always differ in some obvious way.)
- **Three Worksheets for Each Document Group.** Students use the first two worksheets to take notes on the sources. The third worksheet asks which source the student thinks would be most useful to a historian.
- **One DBQ.** On page 20, a document-based question (DBQ) asks students to write an effective essay using all of the booklet's primary sources.

★ *How to Use This Booklet*

1. Have students read “Suggestions for the Student” and the Introductory Essay.

Give them copies of pages 5–7. Ask them to read the instructions and then read the introductory essay on the topic. The time line gives them additional information on that topic. This reading could be done in class or as a homework assignment.

2. Have students do the worksheets.

Make copies of the worksheets and the pages with the sources. Ask students to study the background information on each source and the source itself. Then have them take notes on the sources using the worksheets. If students have access to a computer, have them review the primary sources digitally.

3. “Debate the documents” as a class.

Have students use their worksheet notes to debate the primary source documents as a class. Urge students to follow these ground rules:

- Use your worksheets as a guide for the discussion or debate.
- Try to reach agreement about the main ideas and the significance of each primary source document.
- Look for points of agreement as well as disagreement between the primary sources.
- Listen closely to all points of view about each primary source.
- Focus on the usefulness of each source to the historian, not merely on whether you agree or disagree with that source’s point of view.

4. Have students do the final DBQ.

A DBQ is an essay question about a set of primary source documents. To answer the DBQ, students write essays using evidence from the sources and their own background knowledge of the historical era. (See the next page for a DBQ scoring guide to use in evaluating these essays.)

The DBQ assignment on page 20 includes guidelines for writing a DBQ essay. Here are some additional points to make with students about preparing to write this kind of essay.

The DBQ for this Booklet (see page 20):

Was the Monroe Doctrine necessary to keep Europe out of the Americas and to protect the young republic?

- Analyze the question carefully.
- Use your background knowledge to set sources in their historical context.
- Question and interpret sources actively. Do not accept them at face value.
- Use sources meaningfully to support your essay’s thesis.
- Pay attention to the overall organization of your essay.

★ *Complete DBQ Scoring Guide*

Use this guide in evaluating the DBQ for this booklet. Use this scoring guide with students who are already familiar with using primary sources and writing DBQ essays.

Excellent Essay

- Offers a clear answer or thesis explicitly addressing all aspects of the essay question.
- Does a careful job of interpreting many or most of the documents and relating them clearly to the thesis and the DBQ. Deals with conflicting documents effectively.
- Uses details and examples effectively to support the thesis and other main ideas. Explains the significance of those details and examples well.
- Uses background knowledge and the documents in a balanced way.
- Is well written; clear transitions make the essay easy to follow from point to point. Only a few minor writing errors or errors of fact.

Good Essay

- Offers a reasonable thesis addressing the essential points of the essay question.
- Adequately interprets at least some of the documents and relates them to the thesis and the DBQ.
- Usually relates details and examples meaningfully to the thesis or other main ideas.
- Includes some relevant background knowledge.
- May have some writing errors or errors of fact, as long as these do not invalidate the essay's overall argument or point of view.

Fair Essay

- Offers at least a partly developed thesis addressing the essay question.
- Adequately interprets at least a few of the documents.
- Relates only a few of the details and examples to the thesis or other main ideas.
- Includes some background knowledge.
- Has several writing errors or errors of fact that make it harder to understand the essay's overall argument or point of view.

Poor Essay

- Offers no clear thesis or answer addressing the DBQ.
- Uses few documents effectively other than referring to them in “laundry list” style, with no meaningful relationship to a thesis or any main point.
- Uses details and examples unrelated to the thesis or other main ideas. Does not explain the significance of these details and examples.
- Is not clearly written, with some major writing errors or errors of fact.

Suggestions to the Student

★ *Using Primary Sources*

A primary source is any record of evidence from the past. Many things are primary sources: letters, diary entries, official documents, photos, cartoons, wills, maps, charts, etc. They are called “primary” because they are first-hand records of a past event or time period. This *Debating the Documents* lesson is based on two groups of primary source documents. Within each group, the sources conflict with one another. That is, they express different or even opposed points of view. You need to decide which source is more reliable, more useful, or more typical of the time period. This is what historians do all the time. Usually, you will be able to learn something about the past from each source, even when the sources clash with one another in dramatic ways.

★ *How to Use This Booklet*

1. Read the one-page introductory essay.

This gives you background information that will help you analyze the primary source documents and do the exercises for this *Debating the Documents* lesson. The time line gives you additional information you will find helpful.



2. Study the primary source documents for this lesson.

For this lesson, you get two groups of sources. The sources within each group conflict with one another. Some of these sources are visuals, others are written sources. With visual sources, pay attention not only to the image’s “content” (its subject matter) but also to its artistic style, shading, composition, camera angle, symbols, and other features that add to the image’s meaning. With written sources, notice the writing style, bias, even what the source leaves out or does not talk about. Think about each source’s author, that author’s reasons for writing, and the likely audience for the source. These considerations give you clues as to the source’s historical value.

3. Use the worksheets to analyze each group of primary source documents.

For each group of sources, you get three worksheets. Use the “Study the Document” worksheets to take notes on each source. Use the “Comparing the Documents” worksheet to decide which of the sources would be most useful to a historian.

4. As a class, debate the documents.

Use your worksheet notes to help you take part in this debate.

5. Do the final DBQ.

“DBQ” means “document-based question.” A DBQ is a question along with several primary source documents. To answer the DBQ, write an essay using evidence from the documents and your own background history knowledge.

The Monroe Doctrine: Was It Necessary?

Napoleon's wars (1803–1815) greatly weakened the nation of Spain. In South and Central America, revolts against Spanish colonial rule soon broke out, and by 1823 several independent nations in the Americas had emerged. In the U.S., many people at first saw this as a hopeful sign that the entire hemisphere might soon become the home of freedom.

However, these new republics were not strong. Could they remain independent? Spain was too weak to take them back alone. But what if other more powerful European nations tried to help Spain get them back? In 1823, there were rumors that France might try to do that, or that France and Spain together would get help from another group of European monarchies, the "Holy Alliance" of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. This clearly worried U.S. President James Monroe.

Luckily for the U.S., Great Britain was also worried. Great Britain wanted to trade with the newly independent American republics. It also wanted to keep France out of the Western Hemisphere. That's why British Foreign Minister George Canning, in 1823, suggested that the U.S. join with Great Britain in warning other nations to leave the former Spanish colonies alone.

Some top U.S. leaders advised Monroe to accept this offer. One was former President Thomas Jefferson. However, Monroe's Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, disagreed. He feared the U.S. would be tying itself too closely to the British on this issue. After all, what if the British then used this agreement to keep the United States itself from acting as it saw fit in the Western Hemisphere?

In the end, Monroe agreed with Adams. As a result, the president issued what later came to be called the "Monroe Doctrine." It was actually a part of his message to Congress on December 2,

1823. Here is what Monroe said: First, he stated that the Americas were basically different from Europe; they were made up of republics, not monarchies. Secondly, he said that any effort by Europe to recolonize the Americas would be seen as a threat to the U.S. and would not be tolerated. Thirdly, in return for Europe staying out of the Americas, the U.S. promised not to interfere in European matters.

Was this declaration necessary? After all, Great Britain had already agreed to work with the U.S. to keep other nations out of the Western Hemisphere. Also, could the U.S. even back up this "Monroe Doctrine" with force if it had to?

This second question was certainly one that must have concerned America's leaders. The U.S. was not yet all that powerful. Only ten years before the Monroe Doctrine, the U.S. had come close to losing a war with Great Britain, the War of 1812. The nation's capital city, Washington, D.C., had been attacked and burned. The two visual sources for this booklet deal with the War of 1812 because of how that war shaped the views of those who announced the Monroe Doctrine. Many Americans must have wondered whether the U.S. was now ready to go it alone in dealing with the entire Western Hemisphere—or whether it would long depend for its safety on the friendship of Great Britain, whose powerful navy policed the seas.

In other words, was the Monroe Doctrine meant to be taken seriously? Was it just a bluff that U.S. leaders knew they could not enforce? Or was it necessary as a way to keep others out of the Americas while protecting the young nation's freedom to act on its own? The sources in this booklet can help you debate and decide these questions.

Monroe Doctrine Time Line

1787

• • • The U.S. Constitution is signed and sent to states for ratification.

1789

• • • George Washington becomes president. The French Revolution begins. At first, many Americans support it. As it becomes more violent, this support fades.

1792–1815

• • • Except for a few years, Great Britain and France are at war due to tensions arising out of the French Revolution and then because of wars undertaken by Napoleon Bonaparte who rules France from 1799 to 1815.

1795

• • • Jay's Treaty with Great Britain restores peaceful trade with it but fails to settle many issues between the two nations. The treaty is very unpopular in the U.S. Another U.S. treaty sets boundaries with the Spanish territories of Florida and Louisiana, and ensures the U.S. the right to navigate on the Mississippi River.

1796

• • • In his Farewell Address, Washington warns the nation to avoid permanent alliances with foreign nations. He especially seeks to remain neutral between Britain and France.

1798–1800

• • • France sees Jay's Treaty as favoring Britain. U.S. relations with France worsen. Two years of undeclared naval war ("Quasi War") with France follow. In 1800, Spain secretly gives Louisiana back to France.

1803

• • • The U.S. purchases the entire Louisiana Territory from France. France declares war on Great Britain again.

1806–1826

• • • With Spain weakened during the Napoleonic Wars, one part of Spanish America after another begins to fight and win its independence.

1807–1812

• • • Americans' anger grows as the British continue to seize American sailors at sea and force them into the British Navy. Starting with the Embargo of 1807, first President Jefferson and then President Madison try in several ways to use bans on trade to force Britain or France to respect American neutrality. None of these efforts work very well.

1812–1814

• • • War is declared against Great Britain. The British invade Washington, D.C. The U.S. is unable to win outright. However, the War of 1812 does strengthen America's hold over the lower Mississippi River valley and its ability to limit Indian resistance to westward expansion. With the end of the Napoleonic Wars, impressment of sailors also ends.

1817–1819

• • • Pirates, fugitive slaves, and Native Americans use Spanish Florida as a sanctuary. In 1817, General Andrew Jackson leads sweeping raids into the Spanish colony, risking war with Spain. Instead, in the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams convinces a weakened Spain to cede Florida to the U.S.

1822

• • • France is delegated by the European "Holy Alliance" to restore a deposed king to power in Spain. Americans worry Spain will try to reconquer its American colonies with European help.

1823

• • • British Foreign Minister Canning proposes that the United States and England together state that European powers will not be allowed to colonize America again. Instead, Monroe states the "Monroe Doctrine" as an independent U.S. policy.

Visual Primary Source Document 1



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-5643

Information on Document 1

The title of this 1813 print is “Columbia teaching John Bull his new Lesson.”

The print, by William Charles, is from the time of the War of 1812. On the left, Columbia, a maiden with staff and liberty cap, stands for the U.S. On the right is John Bull, a figure who stands for Great Britain. In the cartoon, John Bull is being “taught a lesson” about America’s willingness to fight for freedom of the seas. France’s Napoleon Bonaparte, the figure on a hillock in the center, is also being warned about these matters.

Columbia tells John Bull, “I tell you Johnny, you must learn to read Respect Free trade—Seamans rights &c.” She then scolds “Mounseer Beau Napperty” [France’s ruler, Napoleon] and threatens to teach him respect as well. Napoleon says he is glad Columbia is angry with John Bull, “But me no learn respect—me no learn retribution—Me be de grand Emperor.” John Bull says, “I don’t like that lesson—I’ll read this pretty lesson.” He points to the pages of a book that say “Power constitutes Right.”

Visual Primary Source Document 2



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-3115.

Information on Document 2

This cartoon is also from the time of the War of 1812. It is a British cartoon published in London in 1814 by an artist named S. W. Fores. In it, President James Madison and another man (probably Secretary of War John Armstrong) flee a burning Washington, D.C., with bundles of papers under their arms. The event is the British burning of the nation's capital city in 1814. The cartoon's title is: "The Fall of Washington, or Maddy in Full Flight." On the left, a group of merchants accuse Madison of fighting

Britain for no good reason. Madison and Armstrong are arguing about worthless promises of aid from Napoleon. On the right, other men mock the president for ever relying on Napoleon for any real help.

Even though both Documents 1 and 2 here are from the War of 1812, they dramatically illustrate the concerns about the European nations that were still very much alive in 1823 when the Monroe Doctrine was announced.

Study the Document: Visual Source 1

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Main Idea or Topic _____

Read the description for this cartoon (page 8 in the booklet). Based on this, on the cartoon itself, and on your own background knowledge, write a caption for the cartoon. Create a caption that sums up the meaning of the cartoon in ordinary modern-day language.

2 Background Knowledge _____

This cartoon is from the early part of the War of 1812. But it actually refers to problems between the U.S., Great Britain, and France going back over the previous seven or eight years. Make a list of those problems. Share your list in a discussion of the background knowledge a student needs to fully understand this cartoon.

3 Visual Features _____

Three figures are used here as symbols for the United States, France, and Great Britain. The symbols would have been widely understood at the time. What idea of each nation do these symbols give you? Notice the way they are drawn, their clothing, gestures, expressions, and other objects near them. How do all these add to the idea you get of each nation?

Study the Document: Visual Source 2

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Main Idea or Topic

Read the description for this cartoon (page 9 in the booklet). Based on this, on the cartoon itself, and on your knowledge of the War of 1812, write a caption for the cartoon. Create a caption that sums up the meaning of the cartoon in ordinary modern-day language.

2 Bias

This cartoon and the previous one (Document 1 on page 8 in this booklet) both offer strongly biased views of the United States. That is, they express a definite point of view about the nation. In what ways do they share the same bias? In what ways do they differ?

3 Background Knowledge

This cartoon is of a major low point for the U.S. in the War of 1812. The Monroe Doctrine was not announced until 1823, and it was a response to other events entirely. Yet some historians say Monroe and his advisers probably still recalled the event shown here and had it in mind when they decided the U.S. needed the Monroe Doctrine. What do you think these historians mean? Do you agree with them? Why or why not?

Comparing the Documents

★ *The Visual Sources*

Answer the question by checking one box below. Then complete the statements on the Comparison Essay worksheet. Use all your notes to help you take part in an all-class debate about these documents—and to answer the final DBQ for the lesson.

Which of these two primary source documents would be most useful to a historian trying to understand the origins of and reasons for the Monroe Doctrine?



Document 1

☐

Document 2

☐

Comparison Essay

I chose Document _____ because:

*I did **not** choose Document _____.*

However, a historian still might use the document in the following way:

Keep this in mind: Some sources are very biased. A biased source is one that shows you only one side of an issue. That is, it takes a clear stand or expresses a very strong opinion about something. A biased source may be one-sided, but it can still help you to understand its time period. For example, a biased editorial cartoon may show how people felt about an issue at the time. The usefulness of a source depends most of all on what questions you ask about that time in the past.

Written Primary Source Documents 1 & 2

Information on Documents 1 & 2

Document 1. The idea for the Monroe Doctrine arose in 1823 when British Foreign Secretary George Canning suggested that his nation and the United States together issue a declaration about Spain's former colonies in America. These colonies had recently become independent. Great Britain feared that other European powers would seek to control these new nations. The British may also have worried about the U.S. trying to do this as well.

Document 2. This is a letter from former President Thomas Jefferson to President Monroe, dated October 24, 1823. In the letter, Jefferson expresses his own views about Canning's suggestions.

Document 1

Is not the moment come when our Governments might understand each other as to the Spanish American Colonies? And if we can arrive at such an understanding, would it not be expedient for ourselves, and beneficial for all the world, that the principles of it should be clearly settled and plainly avowed?

For ourselves we have no disguise.

- 1. We conceive the recovery of the Colonies by Spain to be hopeless.*
- 2. We conceive the question of the recognition of them, as Independent States, to be one of time and circumstances.*
- 3. We are, however, by no means disposed to throw any impediment in the way of an arrangement between them, and the mother country by amicable negotiation.*
- 4. We aim not at the possession of any portion of them ourselves.*
- 5. We could not see any portion of them transferred to any other Power, with indifference.*

If these opinions and feelings are . . . common to your Government with ours, why should we hesitate mutually to confide them to each other; and to declare them in the face of the world?

Document 2

America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should therefore have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be to make our hemisphere that of freedom. One nation, most of all, could disturb us in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid, and accompany us in it. By acceding to her proposition, we detach her from the bands, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate a continent at one stroke, which might otherwise linger long in doubt and difficulty. Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm of any one, or all on earth; and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. With her then, we should most sedulously cherish a cordial friendship; and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more, side by side, in the same cause. . . . But I am clearly of Mr. Canning's opinion, that it will prevent instead of provoking war. With Great Britain withdrawn from their scale and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would not undertake such a war.

Written Primary Source Document 3

Information on Document 3

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams wrote this account of the November 7, 1823, Cabinet meeting at which Canning's proposal was discussed. The "Holy Alliance" he mentions was an alliance of the conservative European monarchies of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The British feared that these powers and France might interfere with Spain's former colonies. "Rush" is Richard Rush, the U.S. diplomat in England to whom Canning had directed his proposal. "Calhoun" is John C. Calhoun, a Southerner who was Monroe's Secretary of War. Adams also refers to Russia's Minister Baron Tuyl, whose government still saw Spain as the rightful ruler of its former American colonies. Russia also had plans to extend its control over what is now Alaska and other parts of the northwest coast of North America.

Document 3

The subject for consideration was, the confidential proposals of the British Secretary of State, George Canning. . . . The object of Canning appears to have been to obtain some public pledge from the Government of the United States, ostensibly against the forcible interference of the Holy Alliance between Spain and South America; but really or especially against the acquisition to the United States themselves of any part of the Spanish American possessions.

Mr. Calhoun inclined to giving a discretionary power to Mr. Rush to join in a declaration against the interference of the Holy Allies, if necessary, even if it should pledge us not to take Cuba or the province of Texas; because the power of Great Britain being greater than ours to seize upon them, we should get the advantage of obtaining from her the same declaration we should make ourselves.

I thought the cases not parallel. We have no intention of seizing either Texas or Cuba. But the inhabitants of either or both may exercise their primitive [that is, natural] rights, and solicit a union with us. They will certainly do no such thing

to Great Britain. By joining with her, therefore, in her proposed declaration, we give her a substantial and perhaps inconvenient pledge against ourselves, and really obtain nothing in return. Without entering now into the inquiry of the expediency of our annexing Texas or Cuba to our Union, we should at least keep ourselves free to act as emergencies may arise, and not tie ourselves down to any principle which might immediately afterwards be brought to bear against ourselves. . . .

The president was averse to any course which should have the appearance of taking a position subordinate to that of Great Britain. . . .

I remarked that the communications recently received from the Russian Minister, Baron Tuyl, afforded, as I thought, a very suitable and convenient opportunity for us to take our stand against the Holy Alliance, and at the same time to decline the overture of Great Britain. It would be more candid, as well as more dignified, to avow our principles explicitly to Russia and France, than to come in as a cock-boat in the wake of the British man-of-war.

Study the Documents: Written Sources 1 & 2

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Main Idea or Topic _____

In a paragraph, explain briefly just what George Canning proposed and why Thomas Jefferson thought it was a good idea.

2 Background Information _____

Jefferson says, "Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm." Based on what you know of Europe and America in the 1820s, explain why Jefferson and most other U.S. leaders would have felt this way.

3 Bias _____

Jefferson says that while all Europe "is laboring to become the domicile [home] of despotism, our endeavor should surely be, to make our hemisphere that of freedom." Do you think this was an accurate description of the difference between Europe and the U.S. in 1823? Or is this just Jefferson's biased point of view?

4 Author, Audience, Purpose _____

Jefferson had left political life long before 1823. Why do you think the Canning proposal led him to write to President Monroe and offer his advice?

Study the Document: Written Source 3

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Main Idea or Topic

Adams here disagrees with Jefferson (and Calhoun) about Canning's proposal. In your own words, what are the key similarities and differences between them as to how best to respond to Canning's proposal?

2 Author, Audience, Purpose

Documents 1, 2, and 3 (pages 14–15 in the booklet) were written by three important political figures. Canning was a British diplomat; Jefferson was a retired president advising another president he agreed with; Adams was a Secretary of State thinking about running for president later. Do these facts help you better understand these three documents? Explain.

3 What Else Can You Infer?

What is suggested or implied in the document? For example, what do Adams's words here suggest about the long-term view held by Adams and possibly other U.S. leaders about the nation's future dealings with the rest of the Western Hemisphere?

Comparing the Documents

★ *The Written Sources*

Answer the question by checking one box below. Then complete the statements on the Comparison Essay worksheet. Use all your notes to help you take part in an all-class debate about these documents—and to answer the final DBQ for the lesson.

Which of these primary source documents would be most useful to a historian trying to understand the origins of and reasons for the Monroe Doctrine?

Part of George Canning's suggestion for a joint U.S.-British declaration about Spain's former colonies, and a letter from Thomas Jefferson to President Monroe about Canning's suggestions.

Documents 1 & 2 ☐

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams's account of the November 7, 1823, Cabinet meeting at which Canning's proposal was discussed.

Document 3 ☐

Comparison Essay

I chose Documents _____ because:

*I did **not** choose Documents _____.*

However, a historian still might use the documents in the following way:

Keep this in mind: Some sources are very biased. A biased source is one that shows you only one side of an issue. That is, it takes a clear stand or expresses a very strong opinion about something. A biased source may be one-sided, but it can still help you to understand its time period. For example, a biased editorial cartoon may show how people felt about an issue at the time. The usefulness of a source depends most of all on what questions you ask about that time in the past.

Document-Based Question

Your task is to answer a document-based question (DBQ) on the meaning and value of the Monroe Doctrine. In a DBQ, you use your analysis of primary source documents and your knowledge of history to write a brief essay answering the question. Using all four sets of documents, answer this question.

Document-Based Question

Was the Monroe Doctrine necessary to keep Europe out of the Americas and to protect the young republic?

Below is a checklist of key suggestions for writing a DBQ essay. Next to each item, jot down a few notes to guide you in writing the DBQ. Use extra sheets to write a four- or five-paragraph essay.

- *Introductory Paragraph*
Does the paragraph clarify the DBQ itself? Does it present a clear thesis, or overall answer, to that DBQ?
- *The Internal Paragraphs—1*
Are these paragraphs organized around main points with details supporting those main ideas? Do all these main ideas support the thesis in the introductory paragraph?
- *The Internal Paragraphs—2*
Are all of your main ideas and key points linked in a logical way? That is, does each idea follow clearly from those that went before? Does it add something new and helpful in clarifying your thesis?
- *Use of Primary Source Documents*
Are they simply mentioned in a “laundry list” fashion? Or are they used thoughtfully to support main ideas and the thesis?
- *Concluding Paragraph*
Does it restate the DBQ and thesis in a way that sums up the main ideas without repeating old information or going into new details?

Visual Primary Sources

First Group—Document 1



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-5643

First Group—Document 2



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZC4-3115.