

Reader's Guide

The Spanish-American War, fought from April to August 1898, was a short but brutal war between Spain and its colony of Cuba, which was supported by the United States. It was a continuation of Cuba's Second War for Independence, which had begun in 1895. Cubans sought freedom from Spain and the right to govern themselves to improve their lives economically and socially. Initially the United States stayed out of the conflict in Cuba, but upon hearing of Spain's harsh treatment of Cuban civilians, a majority of the American public came to favor war with Spain. The explosion of an American battleship, the U.S.S. *Maine*, in a Cuban harbor on February 15, 1898, killing more than 250 of the soldiers aboard, also fueled the call to war.

After entering the conflict on Cuba's side on April 21, 1898, the United States fought against Spain in land and sea battles in the Spanish colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines until the two countries called a truce in August 1898. Having defeated Spain at almost every turn, the United States dominated the peace negotiations that resulted in the Treaty of Paris in December 1898. Under the terms of the



treaty, the United States assumed control of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines and established influence over newly independent Cuba.

Features

Spanish-American War presents a comprehensive view of the war, the events leading up to it, and its aftermath in three sections: Almanac, Biographies, and Primary Sources.

The Almanac contains six chapters that each focus on a particular aspect of the war, including Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain, U.S. entrance into the conflict, battles waged at Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, and the end of the war and peace negotiations.

The Biographies section profiles ten individuals who played key roles during the Spanish-American War. Readily recognizable figures such as the leader of the Rough Riders, Theodore Roosevelt, U.S. president William McKinley, and Red Cross relief worker and nurse Clara Barton are featured, as well as lesser-known people such as U.S. journalist Richard Harding Davis and Cuban military officer Máximo Gómez y Báez.

The Primary Sources section presents seven full and excerpted primary source documents that tell the story of the war in the words of the people who lived it. Included is Cuban general Calixto García's letter of protest to U.S. general William R. Shafter after his troops were excluded from the negotiations for the surrender of Santiago; and an excerpt from "The Report of the *Vizcaya*" sent by Spanish captain Antonio Eulate, whose ship was among those destroyed near Santiago harbor at the hands of the U.S. Navy.

Sidebar boxes highlighting people and events of special interest are sprinkled throughout the text, and each chapter, biography, and primary source entry offers a list of additional sources students can go to for more information. The volume begins with a timeline of important events in the history of the Spanish-American War, and a "Words to Know" section introduces students to difficult or unfamiliar terms (terms are also defined within the text). More than fifty-five black-and-white photographs and maps illustrate the material. The volume concludes with a general bibliography and a subject index so students can easily find the people, places, and events discussed throughout *Spanish-American War*.

Advisors

A note of appreciation is extended to the *Spanish-American War* advisors who provided invaluable suggestions when the work was in its formative stages:

Elaine Ezell
Media Specialist
Bowling Green Junior High School
Bowling Green, Ohio

Ann West LaPrise
Media Specialist
Renton Junior High School
New Boston, Michigan

Angela Leeper
Educational Consultant
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Raleigh, North Carolina

Comments and Suggestions

We welcome your comments on *Spanish-American War* and suggestions for other topics to consider. Please write: Editors, *Spanish-American War*, U•X•L, 27500 Drake Rd., Farmington Hills, Michigan 48331-3535; call toll-free: 1-800-877-4253; fax to 248-699-8097; or send e-mail via <http://www.gale.com>.