

Monroe Doctrine

Teams

- Portugal (four people)
- Spain (four people)
- Great Britain (four people)
- US (four people)
- Russia (four people)
- Newly independent Latin America (four people)

Historical Timeline

1807 – Napoleon invades Portugal and Spain

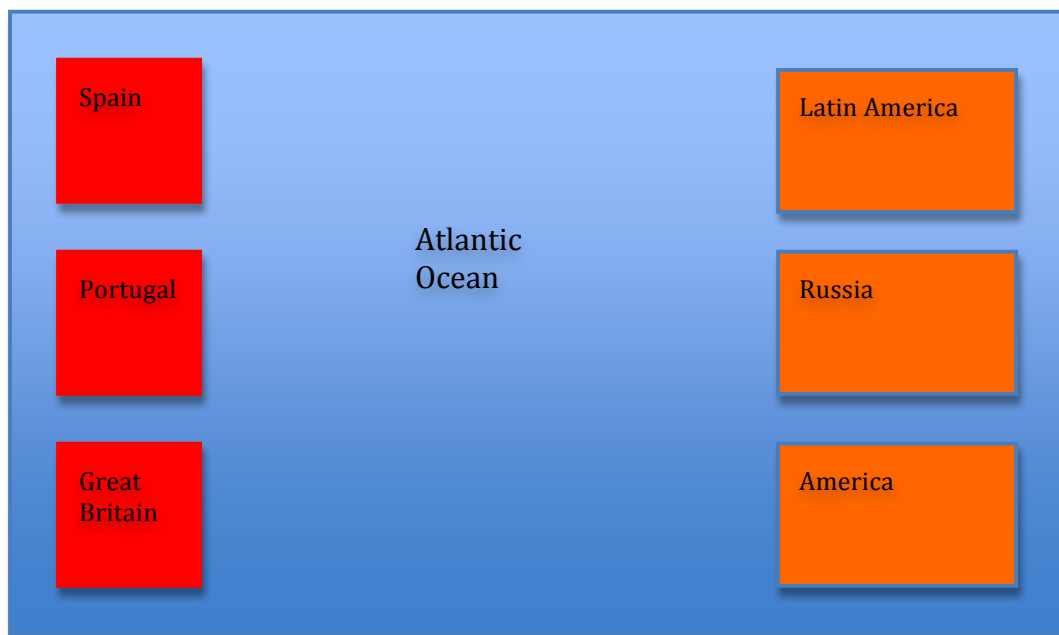
1815 – Napoleon defeated

1821 – Russians claim that Alaska's southern boundary is the 51st parallel and forbade other countries from going north of this line

1823 – Monroe gives speech and creates *Monroe Doctrine*

Simulation

This is a game of diplomacy. The simulation attempts to replay—in simplified form—the complex series of events that lead to the Monroe doctrine. After the simulation has finished, students will learn the way events actually played out in history. The room should be set up as shown below with a table or series of desks put together for each of the six groups:



Step One: Planning (10 minutes)

Before class, pull one student aside who will be the “spy” in the Spanish Group. This student will actually be a Latin American nationalist. The teacher should use discretion in knowing who is capable of maintaining secrecy about this until the time is right. This person is especially important to the game. When the groups form the teacher should secretly let the Latin American group know that they have a spy in the Spanish group, but the Spanish group cannot know about this spy.

Each team is given a paper with information about their countries political situation on it. Each team should read their paper in secret and answer their questions in secret. Other teams might gain unfair advantages if another team hears what they are saying. About five minutes into this, the teacher will stop the students and announce who the spy is and send them to Latin America.

Each person on the team will be given a role during the planning stage:

- Planner: This person will write down the groups responses to the questions at the end of their political situation cards to turn in.
- Runner/writer: This person is responsible for writing and sending the telegrams during step two of the simulation.
- Speaker: This person will present their case before the world court in step three of this simulation
- Artist: This person is responsible for drawing the propaganda poster for the world court simulation to go along with the speaker’s case.

Step Two: Diplomacy with other Nations (10 minutes)

To teach students about the complicated nature of diplomacy the teacher now announces that phase two is beginning where the runner can write a secret message to another country. The telegrams might ask whether one country would be willing to join in a treaty with another country (i.e. US asks Britain to back them if Spain or Portugal declares war on Latin America, etc.). All of these messages are a secret between the countries who send telegrams to one another. The teacher might encourage certain countries to “play both sides” by making promises to both sides and waiting to see how it plays out in the world court.

Step Three: World Court (20 minutes)

All the nations will come together for a world summit to discuss how to reach a solution to their problems. The teacher will preside as the leader of this summit and the speaker of each country will lay out what their plan of action is for their country. After each country has laid out their plan, a second round of discussion will take place as countries respond to accusations from other countries (for instance, America might “make public” a telegram between Spain and America that shows, based on what Spain has said at the world court, that Spain is untrustworthy).

Step Four: For homework, students will compare the way their event turned out with the historical events that led up to the Monroe Doctrine.

Group 1 – Portugal

Although your country was once a great power, **Napoleon** invaded your country in 1807. As a result, you had to pull all your resources from around the world to fight the French army and you were successful! During this time, however, your prized colony **Brazil** fought and won its independence. You have been gathered together to decide the future of Portugal at this pivotal time in history.

If you go to war with Brazil to win back your former colony, you will win quite easily because of superior weaponry and manpower, but you will probably be fighting a sustained **guerrilla war** for many years. A guerrilla war is a war where you fight you will have to fight a small, but decentralized force of **Brazilian nationalists** (those who want to fight for Brazil's independence from Portugal) and sustain casualties for many years to come. You will also have to send resources that could otherwise be used at home to help fight these small resistance movements and sustain the colony.

If you do not go to war with Brazil, you will save the money and save the lives that might be lost in a war. However, not going to war also means losing the virtually tax free trade you would receive from Portugal. The resources you might receive from Portugal as a result of increased trade would provide much needed food after a long war with Napoleon.

When considering going to war, you must also consider other nations in the region. America will not be happy if you go to war with Brazil because they have already recognized the new government leaders from free Brazil. If you go to war with Brazil, the new nation may also go to war with you. They are not a very powerful nation, but they could provide the country with the needed supplies for a long term resistance movement.

If you go to war, you must also consider how Britain will respond to your attack on Brazil. The British—being the ever cautious and nervous world power they are—may see your attack on Brazil as a way to get ahead of Britain on the world trading market. If they feel threatened economically, they may come to Brazil's aid. Unlike America, Britain has the potential to escalate this to a full-scale naval war where you have the potential of losing.

Consider all of these options carefully and write out how you plan of action answering the following questions:

- 1) Will you invade Brazil?
- 2) How will you respond if Britain tries to step in?
- 3) How will you respond if America declares war on you?

Group 2 – America

You are at the center of a number of developments in the “new world.” Russia is selling furs up and down the coast of the northwest. They say they do not want to set up any permanent colonies in Alaska, but you cannot be sure. Recently, the **Czar** has extended its claim to the 51st parallel and has said that no other ships from other countries can enter these regions. You could go to war with Russia over this, but they really haven’t encroached on specifically American lands yet (Alaska has not been annexed yet at this point in American history). Going to war with Russia, however, would take away resources that would otherwise be used at home.

Spain and Portugal are also talking about reclaiming their former colonies that they lost because of wars in Europe. They had to pull many of their troops home to fight Napoleon, but now troops are looking outward again and want to retake South America and portions of Spanish North America. Will you let Spain and Portugal back in? At this point in history, you do not have the manpower or the superior weaponry or the navy to defeat either of these countries. You have already recognized the new independent regimes that took over after Spain and Portugal left the new world. Would you send supplies to these new governments to aid them if the European powers attempted to take them back by force? If you do this, you will be sacrificing resources that could be used at home such as food for the people in time of war and ammunition that could be used for self-defense.

Britain also shares a distaste for seeing Spain and Portugal become powerful again in the Americas. Britain already has already profited greatly from the new republics and does not want to see a return to the **mercantilist** methods of Spain. You could form an alliance with them to fight both Spain and Portugal. Britain has a much more powerful navy than either Spain or Portugal. The only problem is that Britain does not recognize the new governments in Latin America like you do. If you ally yourselves with the British it will come at great personal cost to your relationship with Latin American countries. You have already recognized their new governments, but Britain cannot. This will be seen as hypocritical by the Latin American countries who followed suit in the revolutions of the new world. They will see you as traitors.

Consider all of these options carefully and write out your plan of action addressing the following questions:

- 1) What will your response be to the Russians?
- 2) What will your response be if Spain or Portugal invades Latin America?
- 3) How will you respond if Britain asks for a treaty against Spain and Portugal?

Group 3 – Spain

You have just recovered from a bloody war with France and have come out victorious. Napoleon has been defeated and now you must decide how you want to pursue trade in the new world. You had to pull most of your troops from your Spanish colonies in North and South America to fight Napoleon, but now that he has been taken care of, you can turn your attention again to the “new” world. Do you want to try to retake the countries by force? At the congress of Verona you got the backing of Russia, Prussia and France to try and take these places back by force.

If you do invade, you have been promised a large French force to help you regain your **mercantilist** empire. They will help you defeat the new republics like Mexico and bring back the empire. In return, France, Russia, and Prussia want a part in the trade and traffic of goods in South and Spanish North America. The downside to invasion is that you will upset both the Americans and British because of your encroachment. Britain already has good relationships with many of the new republics, and there is talk of a possible alliance of American and British power if you try to invade your former colonies. Is it worth the risk of upsetting these powers? While America is not a great military power, Britain still has one of the largest navies in the world, and would be a formidable enemy even to France and Spain combined. Do you think you could convince Russia to provide troops? What might be a good way to get Russia interested in providing troops?

Consider all of these options carefully and write out your plan of action addressing the following questions:

- 1) Are you prepared to go to war to gain back your former colonies?
- 2) What will you do if Britain and America attempt to try and stop you from winning the war?
- 3) How might Russia play into this for you?

Group 4 – Russia

Your main interest in North America is trading furs in the Northwest (modern Canada) and Alaska. You have stepped out boldly and claimed that no ship other than Russian can travel above the 51st parallel in the Pacific to interfere with your fur trading. You have little interest in the actual continent of North America and **domestic issues** are more important to you right now than branching out and creating colonies in the Northwest. You seem to think that colonization is more of a European thing. You would rather see your own people prosper. There have been too many revolutions in the new world for you to want to experiment there. You don't have the time for a revolution or the means to protect an empire in the Americas. You are content trading furs and bringing all the wealth right back to Russia.

America, however, sees you as a threat. What will you do if America does not honor your mandate of not traveling above the 51st parallel? Would you be willing to go to war over this? How will you help the Americans to understand your true intentions?

Spain also might call out for your help in a possible war to win back Spanish colonies in the Americas. What might you gain from helping them fight in a war? Could you use a possible war between Spain and America as a way to distract attention from your trading in the Northwest? What else might you gain from good a good relationship with France?

Consider all of these options carefully and write out your plan of action addressing the following questions:

- 1) What will you do if America declares war on you?
- 2) What requests might you make of France if they want your help in winning a war to gain back their colonies?

Group 5 – Great Britain

You are the greatest world power at this time in history. You are searching for ways to continue to keep this power as the great war against **Napoleon** is now over. You have established good relationships with the new Latin American countries who have won their freedom from Portugal and Spain. There is talk now, however, of Spain and Portugal trying to take their old colonies back by force. What will your plan of action be if this happens? You could defeat one of these countries fairly easily, but fighting them both would be a serious stretching of your military resources.

There are also other options. America is equally upset about the talk of Spain and Portugal coming back into North and South America. If you play your cards right, you might be able to get America to join you in your fight against them. With your power combined, you might be able to **diplomatically** end this battle without bloodshed. Spain and Portugal would be more worried to go to war with both Latin America, Britain and America. The problem, however, is that America recognizes the new governments in North and South America, while you do not. If you recognize the new countries, many other European countries might see you as a traitor and stop trading with you. How can you get America to help you without recognizing these new revolutionary governments in North and South America?

Russia is also a player in this battle. They are leaning right now towards helping Spain and Portugal, but you might be able to persuade them by secret financial compensation. You might also promise them something in the future that they might be able to use.

Consider all of these options carefully and write out your plan of action addressing the following questions:

- 1) How will you respond to the new problem of Spain and Portugal?
- 2) Is there a way that you could get American help?
- 3) What will do about Russia?

Group Six - Latin America

You have recently won your freedom from Spain and Portugal because they were too focused on wars in Europe. But now that there is peace in Europe, Spain and Portugal are threatening to come back and force colonial governments on you again. You are very scared and you do not have the resources to defeat them outright. You might be able to create small resistance movements, but if they send their armies in full force, you will not be able to resist forever. You need the help of the British and the Americans. The British are opposed to the Spanish and Portuguese wars because they already have good trading patterns with you. They might be willing to help. You might also be able to get America's aid based on your common understanding of overthrowing colonial governments.

You have to play all of these parties against each other. You are small pawns in a big world. How will you deal with Portugal and Spain? Is there some way for you to open up trade with them while still keeping independence? How might you get British help and American aid?

Consider all of these options carefully and write out your plan of action addressing the following questions:

- 1) What deals might you come to with Portugal and Spain?
- 2) How will you plead for aid from Britain?
- 3) How might you arouse sympathy on the world stage?