

# THEODORE ROOSEVELT

A P R E S I D E N T ' S V I S I O N

## PRIMARY SOURCE WORKSHEET

**EXCERPT FROM THEODORE ROOSEVELT'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS, WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 4, 1905.**

Much has been given us, and much will rightfully be expected from us. We have duties to others and duties to ourselves; and we can shirk neither. We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with the other nations of the earth, and we must behave as beseems a people with such responsibilities. Toward all other nations, large and small, our attitude must be one of cordial and sincere friendship. We must show not only in our words, but in our deeds, that we are earnestly desirous of securing their goodwill by acting toward them in a spirit of just and generous recognition of all their rights. But justice and generosity in a nation, as in an individual, count most when shown not by the weak but by the strong. While ever careful to refrain from wronging others, we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves. We wish peace, but we wish the peace of justice, the peace of righteousness. We wish it because we think it is right and not because we are afraid. No weak nation that acts manfully and justly should ever have cause to fear us, and no strong power should ever be able to single us out as a subject for insolent aggression.

Our relations with the other powers of the world are important; but still more important are our relations among ourselves. Such growth in wealth, in population, and in power as this nation has seen during the century and a quarter of its national life is inevitably accompanied by a like growth in the problems which are ever before every nation that rises to greatness. Power invariably means both responsibility and danger. Our forefathers faced certain perils which we have outgrown. We now face other perils, the very existence of which it was impossible that they should foresee. Modern life is both complex and intense, and the tremendous changes wrought by the extraordinary industrial development of the last half-century are felt in every fiber of our social and political being. Never before have men tried so vast and formidable an experiment as that of administering the affairs of a continent under the forms of a Democratic republic. The conditions which have told for our marvelous material well-being, which have developed to a very high degree our energy, self reliance, and individual initiative, have also brought the care and anxiety inseparable from the accumulation of great wealth in industrial centers. Upon the success of our experiment much depends, not only as regards our own welfare, but as regards the welfare of mankind. If we fail, the cause of free self-government throughout the world will rock to its foundations, and therefore our responsibility is heavy, to ourselves, to the world as it is to-day, and to the generations yet unborn. There is no good reason why we should fear the future, but there is every reason why we should face it seriously, neither hiding from ourselves the gravity of the problems before us nor fearing to approach these problems with the rebinding, unflinching purpose to solve them aright.

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Humanities Texas

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## QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What was the occasion of Roosevelt's speech?
2. How did Roosevelt feel the U.S. should treat foreign nations? How does this compare to what you read on the poster about Roosevelt's foreign policy?
3. According to Roosevelt, what responsibilities does the United States have because of its great wealth?
4. What is the difference, according to Roosevelt, between "peace" and the "peace of justice . . . and righteousness"?
5. By 1905, what perils had the U.S. "outgrown"? What "new perils" do you think Roosevelt refers to in the last paragraph?
6. What aspects of life in 1905 would Americans have viewed as especially "complex and intense"?
7. Why did Roosevelt believe that the success of the U.S. is important for the idea of democracy around the world?

## ACTIVITIES

Use your textbook and other print and online resources to complete the following activities.

1. Roosevelt said, "Power means invariably both responsibility and danger." List a few examples of the dangers the U.S. faced and the responsibilities it assumed during Roosevelt's presidency.
2. Imagine that you are an American in 1905 who attended Roosevelt's inauguration and listened to his address. Write a letter to your parents describing Roosevelt's message and how it made you feel.

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