

Indian Imperialism? Positive or Negative?

Name _____

Date _____

Imperialism In India Activity

SITUATION: It is the late 19th century and you are a newspaper reporter for the *London Times*. You've been assigned to cover the brewing situation that is happening in India around this time. You begin by traveling around the country, talking to everybody that will give a statement. You make sure to include Indians, both rich and poor, as well as British nationals that have moved to India. You want to know how people view British imperial activities in India; whether they view it in a positive or negative light. You become rather confused when you find that most people see both positive and negative effects of imperialism. Suddenly, you receive an angry telegram. It's from your editor back in London. He says he needs a story from you by the end of the week or your rear end will be hanging from the wall. You decide to write a story concluding that imperialism had both positive and negative effects for England, the mother country, and India, the colony.



PART 1: Read and analyze each of the documents below and answer the questions that follow.

1. In this excerpt, adapted from O.P. Austin's "Does Colonization Pay?" in *The Forum*, both positive and negative results of imperialism are pointed out.



Modern progressive nations [European colonizers] . . . seek to control "garden spots" in the tropics. Under their direction, these places can yield the tropical produce that their citizens need. In return the progressive nations bring to the people of those garden spots the food-stuffs, and manufactures they need. They develop the territory by building roads, canals, railways and telegraphs. The progressive nations can establish schools and newspapers for the people of the colonies. They can also give these people the benefit of other blessings of civilization which they have not the means of creating themselves.

According to this author, what are the benefits of imperialism to the colony?



What are the benefits of imperialism to the colonizer?



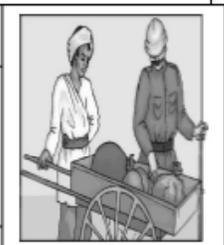
Positive	Negative
<p>With the spread of imperialism and colonialism , foreign powers took an interest in India and thus introduced new means of transport and communication. Modern technology and education were also introduced. It set a social framework in place that has provided education and health care for many of its' people. It has also had (limited) success in overcoming the caste system and ending the practice of infanticide (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infanticide#India_and_Pakistan). Imperialism also provided a framework for the government to move toward a free society without falling into communism. All of the above has made India one of the fast growing economies in the world, thus better able to support themselves.</p>	<p>Imperialism drained India's wealth. It destroyed India economically and politically. India became dependent due to imperialism. It destroyed India's handicraft and small scale industries. The imperialistic powers treated India as a place to extend their power.</p>
<p>When the British colonized India they built 40,000 miles of railroad and 70,000 miles of paved roadway. As a result the British made it much easier to travel across India. Another good affect that the British had on India was the jump in agriculture, through large scale irrigation works. About 30 million acres were put into cultivation. Industrialization had also begun. Because of all these reasons almost no famine existed in British colonial India. The English also built many institutions in India and setup a productive government. "They have framed wise laws and have established courts of justice"</p>	<p>Prior to Britain colonizing India there were many more divers skilled labors. Such as shipbuilding, metalwork, glassblowing, and paper making. With the break up there was a noticeable rise in the unemployment India.</p>

2. In this speech, Dadabhai Naoroji, an Indian, describes the effect of imperialism on India.

To sum up the whole, the British rule has been – morally, a great blessing; politically peace and order on one hand . . . on the other, materially, impoverishment . . . The natives call the British system . . . “the knife of sugar.” That is to say there is no oppression, it is all smooth and sweet, but it is the knife, nevertheless.

In later comments, he stresses the negative aspects.

Europeans [the British] occupy almost all the higher places in every department of government . . . Natives, no matter how fit, are deliberately kept out of the social institutions started by Europeans . . . All they [the Europeans] do is live off of India while they are here. When they go, they carry all they have gained.



How is British imperialism both positive and negative for India?



3. This excerpt is adapted from *The Economic History of India Under Early British Rule*, by an Indian, Romesh Dutt.

Englishmen . . . have given the people of India the greatest human blessing – peace. They have introduced Western education. This has brought an ancient and civilized nation in touch with modern sciences, and modern life. They have built an administration that is strong and efficient. They have framed wise laws and have established courts of justice.



What benefits did India gain during British imperialism?

4. This excerpt is adapted from British historian, J.A.R. Marriott's book, *The English in India*.

British brains, British enterprise, and British capital have changed the face of India. Means of communication have been developed. There are great numbers of bridges, more than 40,000 miles of railway, and 70,000 miles of paved roads. These testify to the skill and industry of British engineers. Irrigation works on a very large scale have brought 30 million acres under cultivation. This has greatly added to the agricultural wealth of the country. Industrialization has also begun. India now has improved sanitation and a higher standard of living. It has a fine transport system and carefully thought-out schemes for relief work. Because of these things famines have now almost disappeared.

List 5 benefits of imperialism cited by this author.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4.

5.

5. This excerpt, from *India: A Restatement* by British writer Sir Reginald Coupland, points out the social and economic impact of imperialism on India.

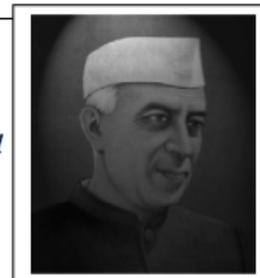


British rule brought with it from the West certain standards of humanity that Indian society had not yet reached. Early action was taken to stop infanticide [the killing of girl babies] . . . The slave trade was ended and the owning of slaves was forbidden . . . One result of the new order was a steady rise in the value of India's export trade.

What are the benefits of imperialism identified by this author?

6. This excerpt, from *The Discovery of India*, by Jawaharlal Nehru, explains how India became a "typical" colonial economy.

This process continued throughout the 19th century. Other old Indian industries – shipbuilding, metalwork, glass, paper – and many crafts were broken up. Thus the economic development of India was stopped and the growth of new industry was prevented . . . A typical colonial economy was built up. India became an agricultural colony of industrial England. It supplied raw materials and provided markets for England's industrial goods. The destruction of industry led to unemployment on a vast scale . . . The poverty of the country grew. The standard of living fell to terribly low levels.



What are the negative effects of imperialism that Nehru points out? _____

