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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2022 Volume II: American Global Power from Empire to Superpower

Creating Filipino Nationality: Race and Hierarchy in the Context of Empire (1886-1916)

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This unit is a look at the history of colonization of the Philippine islands between 1886 and 1916. In a single generation, the Filipino people experienced a shrinking Spanish Empire, two wars for independence against Spain and the U.S.A., and the reorganization of Filipino society with ties to Mainland U.S. culture.

This unit can be taught in both US and World History classes. It examines events from many perspectives to understand how Filipino people constructed identity in combination with, and in opposition to, Spanish and American colonial cultures. Filipino voices and sources are used as much as possible.

The culminating project of this unit has students write a series of imagined newspaper articles. This will help students to imagine what it would be like to experience the events under discussion. An important part of the lesson is gaining experience in writing first-hand narrative in the form of newspaper articles. This is particularly relevant, since newspapers were the primary source of news and information for the public at the time period that this lesson covers. Students today rarely interact with newspapers and so the production of printed news is a way of conveying information in a historical format.

(Developed for World History, grade 11; recommended for World History and U. S. History, grades 10-12)

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