Spanish-American War: “A Splendid Little War”

Cuban Independence Movement
- Jose Marti – one hero of the Cuban Independence Movement
- led his people in a new revolt in 1895 after being overpowered by the Spanish several times
- Marti’s revolution – huge losses in human life and property
- sugarcane fields burned and buildings destroyed in an effort to get the Spanish to leave

Spanish Response
- Cuban people were put in concentration camps
- separation from the rebels >> decreased morale
- thousands of Cubans died of starvation and disease

Impact on the United States
- businessmen worried about loss of investments and trade in Cuba.
- government was concerned about a rebellion taking place so close to the United States
- many Americans concerned about the violence against Cubans and asked the government to do something about it
- Cleveland and McKinley both hoped for a peaceful settlement.

The American Press
- reported the tragedy in Cuba in graphic detail
- caused debate over America’s role in the crisis
- yellow journalism played a major role in the formation of pro-war opinion in the United States

“Remember the Maine”
- January 1898 – riots broke out in Havana
- McKinley responded by sending the battleship Maine to Havana to protect American citizens and property
- U.S.S. Maine in Havana Harbor for three weeks.
- February 15, 1898 – huge explosion shattered the Maine
- Americans blamed the Spanish
- Spain denied responsibility
- “Remember the Maine” became a rallying cry for revenge

After the Maine Incident
- McKinley sent the Spanish a strong note demanding a truce and an end to brutality against the Cubans
- Spanish agreed to some American demands, but McKinley and Congress were not satisfied
- April 19th, 1898 – Congress recognized Cuban independence and demanded a withdrawal of Spanish forces from the island.
- McKinley was authorized to use the army and navy to enforce American aims.
- On April 25th, 1898, Congress declared war on Spain.

War in the Philippines
- events in Cuba started the Spanish-American War in the Philippines, a Spanish colony, thousands of miles away
- February 1898 – Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt informed Commodore George Dewey to prepare for the possible military action in the Philippines.
- May 1, 1898 – U.S. launched a surprise attack on Manila Bay destroying most of the Spanish ships
- July 1898 – U.S. captured the city of Manila
Fighting in Cuba
☐ May 19, 1898 – Spanish Fleet entered the harbor of Santiago in Cuba
☐ American ships blockaded the coast trapping the Spanish in the harbor
☐ 17,000 American troops went ashore and along with the Cubans, they drove off the Spanish soldiers
☐ heavy fighting

The Rough Riders
☐ Roosevelt resigned his position as assistant secretary of the navy to join the fighting in Cuba.
☐ led the First Regiment of the U.S. Cavalry Volunteers
☐ cowhands and college students
☐ known as the Rough Riders
☐ Battle of San Juan Hill
  ☐ Intense fighting
  ☐ American’s captured San Juan Hill

Two days later the Spanish fleet attempted to break out of the Santiago harbor
Spanish fleet was destroyed in four hours, which ended Spanish resistance in Cuba.
• Took control of Puerto Rico in late July
• August 12th – Spanish signed an armistice, or peace agreement

American troops in landed in Puerto Rico in late July and took control of the island
an armistice was signed in August and the war ended

“A Splendid Little War”
☐ lost 400 Americans
☐ less than four months long

Not-So-Splendid
☐ more than 2,000 Americans died of yellow fever, malaria, and other diseases
☐ African Americans who fought in the war were placed in segregated units even though they fought alongside each other in the war.

Cuban Protectorate
☐ 1901 – U.S. granted Cuba full independence
☐ U.S. had certain rights
☐ Platt Amendment – Cuba could not make treaties with other nations
☐ gave the U.S. control of a naval base at Guantanamo Bay
☐ The U.S. could intervene in Cuban affairs if the country’s independence was threatened.

New Government for Puerto Rico
☐ the Foraker Act – U.S. set up a new government
☐ 1917, Jones Act – Puerto Rico made a territory of the United States
☐ American citizenship was granted to all Puerto Ricans.

Acquiring the Philippines
☐ U.S. gained possession of the Philippines in the treaty that ended the Spanish-American War
☐ Fierce debate among Americans
☐ Anti-imperialists fought approval of the treaty
  ☐ Argued that American rule of the Philippines went against the democratic principles that the U.S. was founded upon
  ☐ Opposed the large standing army necessary to control the Philippines
  ☐ Feared competition from Filipino laborers

Benefits
☐ provided a Pacific Naval Base
☐ a stopover on the way to China
☐ large market for American goods
☐ duty to help the “less civilized”
☐ Senate ratified the Treaty of Paris in 1899

Rebellion in the Philippines
☐ fight for independence from the U.S. in 1899
☐ more than 4,000 Americans died
☐ at least 200,000 soldiers and civilians died
☐ 1901 – U.S. transferred authority from a military to a civilian government headed by William Howard Taft
☐ Philippines gained independence in 1946