**Imperialism**

**Imperialism** means one nation wins control of colonies or other nations. A nation that controls colonies is called an imperialist nation. Imperialism occurred in ancient times. The ancient Persians and ancient Greeks were imperialists. The Roman Empire was imperialist. Between 1870 and 1914, many European and Asian nations became imperialist nations.

There were four main reasons for the growth of imperialism. One reason was that the Industrial Revolution created a need for raw materials. Many European nations needed cotton, iron, and other raw materials for their factories. They got many raw materials from countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Another reason for the growth of imperialism was that many merchants wanted new markets in which to sell their goods. There were millions of people in

For many years, the British controlled the land and the people of India. The British used many Indians as servants.
Africa and in Asia. Imperialist nations hoped to sell many goods to these large populations.

A third reason was that many European nations felt that they had a right to conquer lands in Asia and in Africa. The Industrial Revolution had not reached many of these areas. Europeans felt that they were bringing new machines and ideas to their colonies. Colonies in Africa and Asia became good places to build factories. Many people in these colonies worked for low wages.

A fourth reason for the growth of imperialism was nationalism. Great Britain was the first nation to rule many colonies in Africa and Asia. As Great Britain’s empire grew, other nations began to want new lands, too. Countries such as France, Germany, the United States, and Japan were eager to expand their empires. People felt proud when their nation ruled a large empire. They thought that the colonies would make their nations greater and stronger.

By 1914 most of Asia and Africa was ruled by a few nations in Europe. Look at the maps on this page and on page 37. The maps show the areas in Africa and Asia that imperialist nations ruled in 1914.

The imperialist nations often sent soldiers to capture land and to make people work for them. In Africa, Europeans used weapons to make millions of Africans work in mines and on plantations. They also forced people in the colonies to pay high taxes. Africans had to work for Europeans in order to pay these high taxes.

Great Britain ruled more land and more people than any other nation ruled. Its empire included India, Egypt, South Africa, and many other colonies. By controlling South Africa, Great Britain controlled ninety percent of the world’s diamond trade. Queen Victoria was the ruler of Great Britain during much of its imperialism. She ruled from 1837 to 1901.

The British controlled a lot of land and people in Africa. They also controlled India. India provided
raw materials to Great Britain. It was also a good place for British merchants to sell their goods. Great Britain made a lot of money by controlling India.

At first, India was controlled by a British trade company. The British used many Indians as servants. They made the Indians pay high taxes. They also had an army of Indian soldiers called sepoys. Then in 1857 the sepoys began to fight against the British trade company. The British won the war against the sepoys. At this time the British government took control of India. The British ruled India until 1947.

In some ways the British helped India. They built canals, railroads, bridges, and new buildings. But the Indians did not like being ruled by the British. They were forced to work hard at low-paying jobs. They were treated as a lower class of people in their own country. In many parts of India, there were signs that read “For Europeans only.” The Indians were angry about this discrimination. Many Indians felt that they did not have any rights. Discrimination also happened in other European colonies.

The United States was also an imperialist nation. The United States ruled island colonies in the Pacific Ocean and in the Caribbean Sea. One island colony was Hawaii. The United States gained more colonies
after winning the **Spanish-American War** in 1898. Puerto Rico and Guam were two of these colonies.

Many countries wanted to control the businesses and trade in Latin America. But the United States said that it would fight to prevent other nations from starting colonies in Latin America. In this way the United States protected its own interests in Latin American businesses.

Many nations wanted to control China, a large nation in Asia. China was able to make most of the goods it needed. So China did not want to trade with other countries. Europeans wanted to find something that the millions of Chinese people would want to buy. Finally, the British began to sell a drug called **opium** to the Chinese. Many Chinese wanted this dangerous drug. The Chinese government tried to stop the opium trade. This led to the **Opium War** between China and Great Britain in 1839. This war was fought mostly at sea. China lost the war because it could not defeat the powerful British navy.
Great Britain gained many trade rights in China. Soon other nations, including France, Germany, Japan, and Russia, controlled cities along China's coast. The United States wanted to trade in China. It encouraged open trade in China for all nations.

The Industrial Revolution did not reach Japan until the late 1800s. Japan did not want to trade with other countries. But in 1853, four large United States ships entered a Japanese harbor. Americans asked that Japan start to trade with the United States. The Japanese felt that they had to agree to trade with the Americans. But the Japanese did not want to be ruled by other nations. They decided to make Japan a modern industrial nation. Soon the Japanese built railroads, machines, and many factories. Japan also became an imperialist nation. The Japanese conquered parts of Asia in order to get raw materials for their factories.

Imperialism helped the imperialist nations gain raw materials and wealth. The people in the colonies were hurt by high taxes, low-paying jobs, and discrimination. Imperialism also caused wars. Nations fought one another to rule colonies. In 1914 a terrible war began in Europe. Why did this war begin? You will learn the answer in Chapter 6.
Using Vocabulary

Match Up  Finish the sentences in Group A with words from Group B. Write the letter of each correct answer on the blank line.

Group A

1. A nation that controls colonies or other nations is an ______ nation.

2. Indian soldiers that worked for a British trade company were called ______.

3. When a nation gains control over more land, it ______ its empire.

4. Laws that treat a group of people unfairly are examples of ______.

Group B

a. sepoys
b. expands
c. discrimination
d. imperialist

Read and Remember

Finish the Sentence  Draw a circle around the word or words that best complete each sentence.

1. Europeans used weapons and ______ to force Africans to work for them in mines and on plantations.
   - canals
   - taxes
   - raw materials

2. The nation with the largest empire was ______.
   - Great Britain
   - Japan
   - Portugal

3. By controlling ______, Great Britain controlled ninety percent of the world's diamond trade.
   - India
   - Latin America
   - South Africa

4. The United States won the colonies of ______ during a war with Spain.
   - Japan and China
   - Puerto Rico and Guam
   - India and South Africa
Write the Answer  Write one or more sentences to answer each question.

1. What were four reasons that imperialism grew in the 1800s? .................................................................

2. How did the United States protect its interests in Latin America? .................................................................

3. How did Japan change after 1853? ..............................................................................................................

Think and Apply

Fact or Opinion  A fact is a true statement. An opinion is a statement that tells what a person thinks.

Fact  Wool is a raw material.

Opinion  Clothes that are made of wool are beautiful.

Write F next to each fact below. Write O next to each opinion. You should find two sentences that are opinions. The first one is done for you.

_____ 1. Nations such as France and Germany wanted to expand their empires during the late 1800s.

_____ 2. Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East are rich in raw materials.

_____ 3. It was not fair that the Indians were treated as a lower class of people in their own country.

_____ 4. Queen Victoria was the greatest ruler in the world.

_____ 5. The trade of a drug led to the Opium War of 1839 between Great Britain and China.

_____ 6. The British built railroads and bridges in India.
Skill Builder

Using Map Keys  Sometimes a map uses different colors or symbols to show different things. A map key tells what those colors or symbols mean. Look at the map about imperialism in Asia and Australia on page 37. Study the map and the map key. Then write the answer to each question below.

1. What color shows the land controlled by Germans?

2. What are two nations on the map that were controlled by the British in 1914?

3. Which nation controlled Korea?

4. Did France or Great Britain control more land in Asia?

5. Which land did the Dutch control?

Understanding a Political Cartoon  A political cartoon is a drawing that shows what an artist thinks about a certain person, event, or issue. An issue is an idea or a problem that people have different opinions about. Sometimes political cartoons seem funny, but they are usually about serious ideas. The political cartoon on page 38 is about imperialism. Study the political cartoon. Then circle or write the answer to each question below.

1. What nation does the pie represent?
   - Russia  - China  - India

2. The people in the drawing are from different nations. What are they doing to the pie?
   - dividing it  - eating it  - cooking it

3. The woman on the left is a woman you read about in this chapter. What is her name?
   - Marie Curie  - Empress Theodora  - Queen Victoria

4. Do you think the artist was pleased about what the other nations were doing to China? Explain your answer on a separate piece of paper.