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Below is your reading passage; I hope it serves you well.

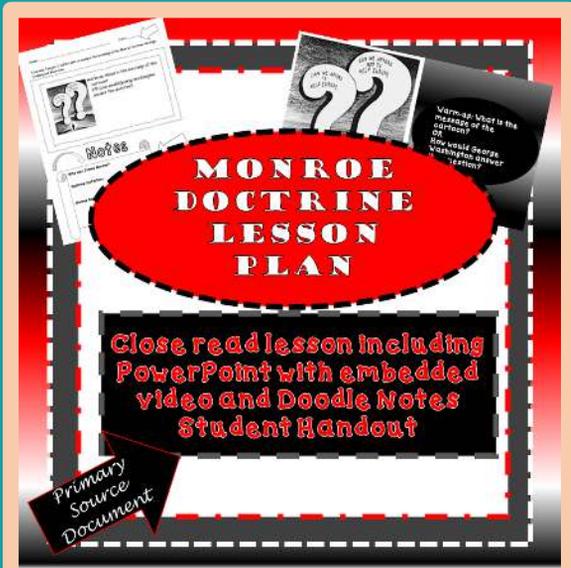
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Warmest Wishes,
Joan

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War of 1812



The defeat of the British at Yorktown (1781) led to peace and true independence for the United States. But, problems lingered, and it would take one more war to truly settle things with Great Britain. This war is easily remembered by the year it began.

Causes

There were various causes of the War of 1812, many arising from England and France fighting each other during the Napoleonic Wars. The United States declared themselves neutral, and declared an embargo (blockade), but this did not stop both sides from interfering with American trade to each side's enemies. England, however, was the dominant naval power and was the most problematic to the Americans.

England also "impressed" (seized) thousands of sailors from American ships, arguing that they were still English subjects and subject to a form of draft into the British Navy. In both cases, the United States saw this as a basic violation of international law as well as a basic threat to American sovereignty (power). A particularly controversial instance was the Chesapeake Affair (1807), involving the seizure of an American warship.

The English also supported Native Americans in the old Northwest Territory to provide a buffer zone with Canada. This inhibited American expansion and also helped the Native leader Tecumseh's attempt to form a tribal confederacy. There were American "war hawks" (such as Henry Clay and John Calhoun) that supported war for all these reasons, American national pride and expansionist reasons. Some thought war with England could even allow the United States to control Canada.

Opposition

England was primarily concerned with its war with France and in fact ended the trade restrictions that was a major issue. A war with America would be a side show. President James Madison was also wary about war. The minority Federalist Party, with strong support in New England and harmed by interference with shipping, also opposed war. Some members later met in 1814 in the "Hartford Convention" to voice their opposition. Congress as a whole declared war with Great Britain in June 1812, news of the change of British trade policy only coming weeks later.

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