Activity 1: The United States, Japan, and the “Open Door” in China

Directions: Read the documents below. To help guide your reading, answer the following questions, citing specific evidence from the documents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does Secretary of State Hay mean by an “open door” in China?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How might “spheres of interest” by other powers in China conflict with the principle of the “open door”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, what did Japan want from China in 1915?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How might the “Twenty-one Demands” come into conflict with the “open door” principle?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Permission is granted to educators to reproduce this worksheet for classroom use.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did the Lansing-Ishii Agreement try to resolve differences between the United States and Japan?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could the Lansing-Ishii Agreement be interpreted in more than one way? How might a Japanese diplomat interpret it differently from an American?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what sense might the Nine-Power Treaty be considered an improvement over the Lansing-Ishii Agreement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The First “Open Door” Note, 6 September 1899:
[http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1914m/opendoor.html](http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1914m/opendoor.html)

In September 1899 Secretary of State John Hay sent this message to the governments of Germany, Russia, England, Japan, Italy, and France. Although it specifically refers to the recent German acquisition of the Shantung province, the principle of the “open door” in China would serve as the basis for U.S. policy toward East Asia for much of the twentieth century.

At the time when the Government of the United States was informed by that of Germany that it had leased from His Majesty the Emperor of China the port of Kiaochow and the adjacent territory in the province of Shantung, assurances were given to the ambassador of the United States at Berlin by the Imperial German minister for foreign affairs that the rights and privileges insured by treaties with China to citizens of the United States would not thereby suffer or be in anywise impaired within the area over which Germany had thus obtained control.

More recently, however, the British Government recognized by a formal agreement with Germany the exclusive right of the latter country to enjoy in said leased area and the contiguous "sphere of influence or interest" certain privileges, more especially those relating to railroads and mining enterprises; but as the exact nature and extent of the rights thus recognized have not been clearly defined, it is possible that serious conflicts of interest may at any time arise not only between British and German subjects within said area, but that the interests of our citizens may also be jeopardized thereby.
Earnestly desirous to remove any cause of irritation and to insure at the same time to the commerce of all nations in China the undoubted benefits which should accrue from a formal recognition by the various powers claiming "spheres of interest" that they shall enjoy perfect equality of treatment for their commerce and navigation within such "spheres," the Government of the United States would be pleased to see His German Majesty's Government give formal assurances, and lend its cooperation in securing like assurances from the other interested powers, that each, within its respective sphere of whatever influence—

First. Will in no way interfere with any treaty port or any vested interest within any so-called "sphere of interest" or leased territory it may have in China.

Second. That the Chinese treaty tariff of the time being shall apply to all merchandise landed or shipped to all such ports as are within said "sphere of interest"..., no matter to what nationality it may belong, and that duties so leviable shall be collected by the Chinese Government.

Third. That it will levy no higher harbor dues on vessels of another nationality frequenting any port in such "sphere" than shall be levied on vessels of its own nationality, and no higher railroad charges over lines built, controlled, or operated within its "sphere" on merchandise belonging to citizens or subjects of other nationalities transported through such "sphere" than shall be levied on similar merchandise belonging to its own nationals transported over equal distances....

“Twenty-One Demands” Made by Japan to China, 18 January 1915:  
http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/21demands.htm

As an ally of Great Britain, Japan declared war on Germany in August 1914, and in the following month Japanese troops captured the Chinese province of Shantung, which had been under German control since 1899. Early in 1915 the Japanese government made the following demands to the Chinese government in Peking.

GROUP I

The Japanese Government and the Chinese Government, being desirous to maintain the general peace in the Far East and to strengthen the relations of amity and good neighbourhood existing between the two countries, agree to the following articles:

Article 1
The Chinese Government engage to give full assent to all matters that the Japanese Government may hereafter agree with the German Government respecting the disposition of all the rights, interests and concessions, which, in virtue of treaties or otherwise, Germany possesses vis-à-vis China in relation to the province of Shantung.

Article 2
The Chinese Government engage that, within the province of Shantung or along its coast, no territory or island will be ceded or leased to any other Power, under any pretext whatever....

GROUP II

The Japanese Government and the Chinese Government, in view of the fact that the Chinese Government has always recognized the predominant position of Japan in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, agree to the following articles....
Article 5
The Chinese Government agree that the consent of the Japanese Government shall be obtained in advance:
(1) whenever it is proposed to grant to other nationals the right of constructing a railway or to obtain from other nationals the supply of funds for constructing a railway in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, and (2) whenever a loan is to be made with any other Power, under security of the taxes of South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia.

Article 6
The Chinese Government engage that whenever the Chinese Government need the service of political, financial, or military advisers or instructors in South Manchuria or in Eastern Inner Mongolia, Japan shall first be consulted.

Article 7
The Chinese Government agree that the control and management of the Kirin-Chungchun Railway shall be handed over to Japan for a term of 99 years dating from the signing of this treaty.

GROUP III
The Japanese Government and the Chinese Government, having regard to the close relations existing between Japanese capitalists and the Han-Yeh-Ping Company and desiring to promote the common interests of the two nations, agree to the following articles:

Article 1
The two Contracting Parties mutually agree that when the opportune moment arrives the Han-Yeh-Ping Company shall be made a joint concern of the two nations, and that, without the consent of the Japanese Government, the Chinese Government shall not dispose or permit the Company to dispose of any right or property of the Company.

Article 2
The Chinese Government engage that, as a necessary measure for protection of the invested interests of Japanese capitalists, no mines in the neighbourhood of those owned by the Han-Yeh-Ping Company shall be permitted, without the consent of the said Company, to be worked by anyone other than the Said Company; and further that whenever it is proposed to take any other measure which may likely affect the interests of the said Company directly or indirectly, the consent of the said Company shall first be obtained.

GROUP IV
The Japanese Government and the Chinese Government, with the object of effectively preserving the territorial integrity of China, agree to the following article: The Chinese Government engage not to cede or lease to any other Power any harbour or bay on or any island along the coast of China.

GROUP V

Article 1
The Chinese Central Government to engage influential Japanese as political, financial, and military advisers....

Article 3
In the face of many police disputes which have hitherto arisen between Japan and China, causing no little annoyance the police in localities (in China), where such arrangement: are necessary, to be placed under joint Japanese and Chinese administration, or Japanese to be employed in police office in such localities, so as to help at the same time the improvement of the Chinese Police Service;

**Article 6**

In view of the relations between the Province of Fukien and Formosa and of the agreement respecting the non-alienation of that province, Japan to be consulted first whenever foreign capital is needed in connection with the railways, mines, and harbour works (including dockyards) in the Province of Fukien....

The Lansing-Ishii Agreement, November 2, 1917:
http://www.lib.byu.edu/estu/wwi/comment/japanvisit/JapanA2.htm

The Twenty-one Demands created a minor crisis in U.S.-Japanese relations, but after the United States entered the war against Germany in April 1917 both sides saw the need to smooth over their differences. Tokyo sent a special envoy, Ishii Kikujiro, to Washington, where in November he signed the following document along with U.S. Secretary of State Robert Lansing.

The governments of the United States and Japan recognize that territorial propinquity [proximity] creates special relations between countries, and, consequently, the government of the United States recognizes that Japan has special interests in China, particularly in the part to which her possessions are contiguous.

The territorial sovereignty of China, nevertheless, remains unimpaired, and the government of the United States has every confidence in the repeated assurances of the Imperial Japanese government that while geographical position gives Japan such special interests they have no desire to discriminate against the trade of other nations or to disregard the commercial rights heretofore granted by China in treaties with other powers.

The governments of the United States and Japan deny that they have any purpose to infringe in any way the independence or territorial integrity of China, and they declare, furthermore, that they always adhere to the principle of the so-called “open door” or equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China.

Moreover, they mutually declare that they are opposed to the acquisition by any government of any special rights or privileges that would affect the independence or territorial integrity of China or that would deny to the subjects or citizens of any country the full enjoyment of equal opportunity in the commerce and industry of China.

The Nine-Power Treaty Signed at Washington, February 6, 1922:
http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/forrel/1922v1/tr22-01.htm

One of several pacts signed at the Washington Conference of 1921-1922, the Nine-Power Treaty was an agreement among the United States, Belgium, Great Britain, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Portugal to guarantee the “open door” in China.

**ARTICLE I**
The Contracting Powers...agree:

(1) To respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China;

(2) To provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government;

(3) To use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China;

(4) To refrain from taking advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects or citizens of friendly States, and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such States.

ARTICLE II
The Contracting Powers agree not to enter into any treaty, agreement, arrangements or understanding, either with one another, or, individually or collectively, with any Power or Powers, which would infringe or impair the principles stated in Article I.

ARTICLE III
With a view to applying more effectually the principles of the Open Door or equality of opportunity in China for the trade and industry of all nations, the Contracting Powers, other than China, agree that they will not seek, nor support their respective nationals in seeking--

(a) any arrangement which might purport to establish in favour of their interests any general superiority of rights with respect to commercial or economic development in any designated region of China;

(b) any such monopoly or preference as would deprive the nationals of any other Power of the right of undertaking any legitimate trade or industry in China, or of Participating with the Chinese Government, or with any local authority, in any category of public enterprise, or which by reason of its scope, duration or geographical extent is calculated to frustrate the practical application of the principle of equal opportunity....

ARTICLE IV
The Contracting Powers agree not to support any agreements by their respective nationals with each other designed to create Spheres of Influence or to provide for the enjoyment of mutually exclusive opportunities in designated parts of Chinese territory....

ARTICLE VII
The Contracting Powers agree that, whenever a situation arises which in the opinion of any one of them involves the application of the stipulations of the present Treaty, and renders desirable discussion of such application, there shall be full and frank communication between the Contracting Powers concerned....