

Rule Britannia!

Directions: After reading the lyrics to “Rule Britannia” (the British national anthem) and the words of the poems “The White Man’s Burden” and “The Brown Man’s Burden”, answer the questions below *in complete sentences* on a separate sheet of paper.

When Britain first, at heaven’s command,
Arose from out the azure main,
Arose, arose, arose from out the azure main.
This was the charter, the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sang the strain.

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rule the waves.

Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee,
Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
Must in their turn, must in their turn,
To tyrants fall,
While thou shall flourish,
Shall flourish great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rule the waves.

Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke.
More dreadful, more dreadful
From each foreign stroke.
As the loud blast that tears the skies,
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rule the waves.

Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.

Thee haughty tyrants ne’er shall tame,
All their attempts to bend thee down,
All their attempts, all their attempts
To bend thee down,
Will but arouse thy generous flame.
But work their woe and thy renown.

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rule the waves.

Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.

To thee belongs the rural reign,
Thy cities shall with commerce shine,
Thy cities shall, thy cities shall
With commerce shine.
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine.

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rule the waves.

Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.

The muses still, with freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair,
Shall to thy happy coast,
Thy happy coasts repair,
Best isle of beauty,
With matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair.

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rule the waves.

Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.

“Rule Britannia”

1. What type of emotions do you think this song would have stirred in British people of the late 19th century when they listened to it?
2. What is the primary message of the song?
3. How might this song have led people to support imperialist actions?

“The White Man’s Burden” by Rudyard Kipling, 1899

Take up the White Man's burden--
Send forth the best ye breed--
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild--
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden--
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
An hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden--
The savage wars of peace--
Fill full the mouth of Famine
And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch sloth and heathen Folly
Bring all your hopes to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden--
No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper--
The tale of common things.

The ports ye shall not enter,
The roads ye shall not tread,
Go mark them with your living,
And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden--
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard--
The cry of hosts ye humour
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light:--
"Why brought he us from bondage,
Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden--
Ye dare not stoop to less--
Nor call too loud on Freedom
To cloke your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden--
Have done with childish days--
The lightly proffered laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!

Directions: After reading the poems “The White Man’s Burden” and “The Brown Man’s Burden”, which display two very different attitudes towards imperialism, answer the questions below.

“The White Man’s Burden”

4. Describe what you think Kipling means by “the white man’s burden.”
5. How would you characterize the tone of this poem?
6. To whom do you think the poem is addressed?
7. What do you think Kipling hoped to accomplish by publishing this poem?
8. List two or three words or phrases that Kipling uses to describe native peoples. How do these examples reveal Kipling’s attitude towards these peoples?
9. Give three examples of some of the specific difficulties Kipling foresees in taking up “the white man’s burden.”
10. Kipling portrays “the white man’s burden” as a difficult and thankless undertaking, yet urges that it be taken up nevertheless. How does the last verse of the poem reveal why he thinks it should be taken up in spite of all the difficulties associated with it?

“The Brown Man's Burden” by Henry Labouchère, 1899

Pile on the brown man's burden
To gratify your greed;
Go, clear away the "niggers"
Who progress would impede;
Be very stern, for truly
'Tis useless to be mild
With new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child.

Pile on the brown man's burden;
And, if ye rouse his hate,
Meet his old-fashioned reasons
With Maxims up to date.
With shells and dum-dum bullets
A hundred times made plain
The brown man's loss must ever
Imply the white man's gain.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
compel him to be free;
Let all your manifestoes
Reek with philanthropy.
And if with heathen folly
He dares your will dispute,
Then, in the name of freedom,
Don't hesitate to shoot.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
And if his cry be sore,
That surely need not irk you--
Ye've driven slaves before.
Seize on his ports and pastures,
The fields his people tread;
Go make from them your living,
And mark them with his dead.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
Nor do not deem it hard
If you should earn the rancor
Of those ye yearn to guard.
The screaming of your Eagle
Will drown the victim's sob--
Go on through fire and slaughter.
There's dollars in the job.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
And through the world proclaim
That ye are Freedom's agent--
There's no more paying game!
And, should your own past history
Straight in your teeth be thrown,
Retort that independence
Is good for whites alone.

Pile on the brown man's burden,
With equity have done;
Weak, antiquated scruples
Their squeamish course have run,
And, though 'tis freedom's banner
You're waving in the van,
Reserve for home consumption
The sacred "rights of man"!

And if by chance ye falter,
Or lag along the course,
If, as the blood flows freely,
Ye feel some slight remorse,
Hie ye to Rudyard Kipling,
Imperialism's prop,
And bid him, for your comfort,
Turn on his jingo stop.

“The Brown Man’s Burden”

11. In Kipling’s poem, each verse begins “Take up the white man’s burden”; in this poem, the author has changed this line to read “Pile on the brown man’s burden.” What is the significance of this?
12. How would you characterize the tone of this poem?
13. To whom do you think the poem is addressed?
14. What do you think the author hoped to accomplish by publishing this poem?
15. What is the author’s main objection to what Kipling advocates in “The White Man’s Burden”?
16. What does the author see as the true motivating force behind imperialism?