**“I Believe in a British Empire”** by Joseph Chamberlain
**“The Noble Mansion of Free India”** by Jawaharlal Nehru

Examining the Issue: Colonialism

*Colonialism* refers to the rule of one nation over a group of people in a geographically distant land—usually for the purpose of maintaining control of that land’s resources. Between the 1600s and the 1800s, Great Britain built a vast empire that included colonies in parts of Asia, Australia, Africa, and North America. Although the growth of the empire slowed significantly in the early 1800s, the rise of industrialization fueled Great Britain’s need for raw materials, cheap labor, and worldwide markets. Through colonialism the British established a stronghold over millions of people, their lands, and their resources.

Make the Connection

Quickwrite

Think about impressions of British colonialism you have formed from your studies in history, from books you have read, or from movies you have seen. (Remember—the United States was once a British colony!) Make a list of some of these impressions. Then, based on your list, draw some conclusions about the ideals, principles, or beliefs behind British colonialism.

Reading Skills

Comparing Main Ideas Across Texts

As you read each selection, try to identify its main idea, or theme. Ask yourself, “How does this writer feel about the issue of colonialism?” Write a few sentences in response to this question. Then, after reading all of the selections, compare your notes. What different ideas do these writers express about their common topic?

The selections you will read—by Joseph Chamberlain and Jawaharlal Nehru—are speeches that address the issue of colonialism and its sister issue, patriotism. As you read, ask yourself how the points of view presented in these speeches are both alike and different.

“I Believe in the British Empire” ?s

1. Many British citizens were appalled by the brutal methods that were used to help win the Boer War. The “children beyond the seas” are the colonists—Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and even some black South Africans—who helped England fight and win the Boer War.
Does Chamberlain think that one can be critical of the British Empire and still be patriotic? How can you tell?
2. How does Chamberlain serve as an apologist for England here—someone who justifies and defends a belief or policy? How can you tell that he assumes his listeners agree with him?
3. What group of people is Chamberlain considering when he speaks of “the Empire”? What group does he say he is not including? How does he feel about the group he is excluding—and how can you tell? (Look for loaded words.)
4. What appeals is Chamberlain making to his audience here? Are they primarily appeals to emotion or to reason? Explain.
5. What does Chamberlain believe the “self-governing” colonies would do if England were in danger—and why would they do it? Why does Chamberlain think that the “Mother country’s” relationship with the colonies is “worth almost any sacrifice to maintain”?
6. Ultimately why does Chamberlain “believe in a British Empire”? How does he appear to view the rest of the world?

“Nobel Mansion of India”

What responsibility does the Indian government owe its people? What does the government need to do to fulfill this responsibility?

Post Reading Questions

Evaluate the selections you’ve just read for clarity and consistency. First, evaluate each piece separately. How clear is the author’s argument? Jot down words and phrases that contribute to or diminish the clarity of each argument. Then, look at the texts as a whole. Among these authors, is there a prevailing opinion on the issue of colonialism? Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? Why?