**Document A**

Source: Madison, James. Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1811-1813. MONDAY JUNE 1,1812. Online Posting. American Memory Website. Library of Congress. June 20, 2011

**Excerpt from President James Madison’s Message to Congress June 1, 1812**

British cruisers have been in the continued practice of violating the American flag on the great highway of nations, and of seizing and carrying off persona sailing under it…

The practice… is so far from affecting British subjects alone that, under the pretext of searching for these, thousands of American citizens, under the safeguard of public law and of their national flag, have been torn from their country and from everything dear to the; have been dragged on board ships of war of a foreign nation and exposed, under the severities of their discipline, to be exiled to the most distant and deadly climes, to risk their lives in the battles of their oppressors, and to be the melancholy instruments of taking away those of their own brethren.

British cruisers have been in the practice also violating the rights and the peace of our coasts. They hover over and harass our entering and departing commerce… Under pretended blockades… our commerce has been plundered in every sea, the great staples of our country have been cut off from their legitimate markets, and a destructive blow aimed at our agricultural and maritime interests…

In reviewing the conduct of Great Britain toward the United States, our attention is necessarily drawn to the warfare just renewed by the savages on one of our extensive frontiers- a warfare which is known to spare neither age nor sex… It is difficult to account for the activity and combinations which have for some time been developing themselves among tribes in constant intercourse with British traders and garrisons, without connecting their hostility with that influence, and without recollecting the authenticated examples of such interposition [meddling] heretofore furnished by the officers and agents of that government… We behold on the side of Great Britain a state of war against the United States, and on the side of the United States a state of peace toward Great Britain.

1. What is the source of this document?
2. Is this primary or secondary source?
3. Based on the information provided in document A, what conclusion can we make about president Madison’s position on the war with Great Britain?

**Document B**

Source: *Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session (1812), II, 2219-2221

**Excerpt from a Statement Signed by 34 Federalist Congressmen.**

…How will war upon the land protect commerce upon the ocean? What balm has Canada for wounded honor? How are our mariners benefited by a war which exposes those who are free, without promising release to those who are impressed?

But it is said that war is demanded by honor… If honor demands a war with England, what opiate lulls that honor to sleep over the wrongs done us by France? On land, robberies, seizures, imprisonments, by French authority; at sea, pillage, sinkings, burning, under French orders. These are notorious. Are they unfelt because they are French?... With full knowledge of the wrongs inflicted by the French, ought the government of this country to aid the French cause by engaging in war against the enemy of France?...

The undersigned cannot refrain from asking, what are the United States to gain by this war? Will the gratification of some privateersmen compensate the nation for that seep of our legitimate commerce by the extended marine of our enemy which this desperate act invites? Will Canada compensate the Middle states for New York; or the Western states for New Orleans?...

Signed by thirty-four congressmen.

1. What is the source of this document?
2. Is this primary or secondary source?
3. What is the main idea of this document?
4. Read the following statement and explain if the statement is in favor or against the war…? “*with full knowledge of the wrongs inflicted by the French, ought the government of this country to aid the French cause by engaging in war against the enemy of France*?”

Document C

Source: *Annals of congress,* 11th congress, 1st Session (1810). 58*0*

**Henry Clay- Kentucky. Feb. 22, 1810**

It is said … that no object is attainable by war with Great Britain. In its fortunes, we are to estimate not only benefit to be derived to ourselves, but the injury to be done the enemy. The Conquest of Canada is in your power. I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous when I state that I verily believe that the militia of Kentucky is alone competent to place Montreal an Upper Canada at your feet. Is it nothing to the British nation; is it nothing to the pride of her Monarch, to have the last of the immense North American possessions held by him in the commencement of his reign wrested from dominion? Is it nothing to us to extinguish the torch

that lights up savage warfare? Is it nothing to acquire the en􀆟 re fur trade connected with that country and to destroy the temptation and the opportunity of viola􀆟 ng your revenue and other laws?

1. What is the source of this document?
2. Is this document primary or secondary source?
3. Based on the information provided above, what conclusion can we make about Henry Clay’s position on the war?

1. Read the following statement by Henry Clay and explain if the statement is in support or against the war of 1812…?- “*I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous when I state that I verily believe that the militia of Kentucky is alone competent to place Montreal an Upper Canada at your feet.”*

**Document D**

Source Congressman John Randolph -Virginia Dec. 9, 1811

An insinuation had fallen from the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Grundy) that the late massacre of our brethren on the Wabash had been instigated by the British Government. Has the President given any such information? Has the gentleman received any such, even informal, from any officer of this Government? Is it so believed by the Administration?... this insinuation was of the grossest kind… he was ready to march to Canada…

Advantage had been taken of the spirit of the Indians, broken by the war which ended in the Treaty of Greenville… It was our own thirst for territory, our own want of moderation, that had driven these sons of nature to desperation, of which we felt the effects…

*Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session (1811), I, 446.

Source: *Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session (1811), I, 533.

**Congressman John Randolph -Virginia Dec. 9, 1811**

Sir, if you go to war it will not be for the protection of, or defense of your maritime rights. Gentlemen from the North have been taken up to some high mountain and shown all the kingdoms of the earth; and Canada seems tempting in their sight. That rich vein of Genesee land, which is said to be even better on the other side of the lake than on this.

Agrarian cupidity [greed], not maritime right, urges the war. Ever since the report of the Committee on Foreign Relations came into the House, we have heard but one work- like the whip-poor-will, but one eternal monotonous tone- Canada! Candida! Canada! Not a syllable about Halifax, which unquestionably should be our great object in a war for maritime security.

It is to acquire a preponderating Northern influence that you are to launch into war. For purposes of maritime safety, the barren rocks of Bermuda were worth more to us than all the deserts [of Canada]…

1. Is this document primary or secondary source?
2. How does this document help answer the analytical question?
3. What is Congressman Randolph’s position on the conflict with Great Britain?

**Document E**

Source: *Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session (1811), I, 426

**Congressman Felix Grundy –Tennessee. Dec. 9, 1811**

…It cannot be believed by any man who will reflect, that the savage tribes, uninfluenced by other Powers, would think of making war on the United States… They have already felt the weight of our arms; they know they hold the very soil on which they live as tenants… How, then, sir, are we to account for their late conduct? In one way only; some powerful nation must have intrigued with them, and turned their peaceful disposition towards us into hostilities. Great Britain alone has intercourse with those Northern tribes… British gold… baubles and trinkets, and the promise of support and a place of refuge if necessary, have had their

effect…

This war, if carried on successfully, will have its advantages. We shall drive the British from our Continent- they will no longer have an opportunity of intriguing with our Indian neighbors, and setting on the ruthless savage to tomahawk our women and children…

1. Is this document primary or secondary source?
2. Read the following statement and explain Congressman Grundy’s position on the conflict with Great Britain……

*“They have already felt the weight of our arms; they know they hold the very soil on which they live as tenants… This war, if carried on successfully, will have its advantages. We shall drive the British from our Continent- they will no longer have an opportunity of intriguing with our Indian neighbors, and setting on the ruthless savage to tomahawk our women and children…”*

**Document F**

Source: Walker. London, October 15, 1808. British Cartoon Prints Collection, Library of Congress.



1. Is this document primary or secondary source?
2. Based on the cartoon above, what conclusion can we draw about merchant’s position on the conflict with Great Britain?

**Document G**

Source: Impressment of American Soldiers by the British. Pratt, Marla L., American History Stories, 1890. Boston: Educational Publishing Co. From the University of South Florida’s Educational Technology

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1. Is this document Primary or Secondary Source?
2. Based on the information presented in this document, does this document suggest that it was necessary or not to necessary to go to war with Great Britain?

**Document H**

**Source:** From the diary of Ely Playter, York Militia

"April 28th. Walked down to the back of the Town, met Young Debtlor who told me his father was dead, was wounded in the leg, had it cut off and died soon after.

April 29th. At home packing up my things and hideing [sic] them. D. Brooks passed on his way to Kingston and many others also. An [American] officer and some men came to my house, broke the door and took many things away. We watched them til dark.

April 30th. I went to the Garrison and signed my parole and got a pass. I spoke to General Dearborn of his men plundering my house. He said it was contrary to his orders. The appearance of the town and garrison were dismal, the latter shattered and rent by cannonballs and the explosions of the magazine, not a building but shows some marks on it. The town thronged with the Yankees, many busy, the Council office with every window broke and pillaged of everything, the Government Building, the Block House and the buildings adjacent all burned to ashes."

**Source:** Monument to the Battle of York, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

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The monument reads: Defence of York, now Toronto

In memory of officers, non commissioned officers and men who were killed or died of wounds in the following regiments or companies of regiments engaged in the defence of York April 27th 1813

Royal Artillery Royal Naval Artificers 8th Regiment (of Foot)

Royal Newfoundland Regiment Glengary Fencibles Militia Incorporated Militia.

1. What is the source of this document?
2. Is this document Primary or Secondary Source?
3. How does this document help answer the analytical question?