

Diplomacy & Foreign Policy



We've Got to Work Together

Did you know there are almost 200 countries in the world? Each one has its own government, its own traditions, its own list of needs and wants. And since we're all here on the same planet, every country has to interact with other countries. There's no other option.

A country's strategy for dealing with other countries is called its **foreign policy**. A **policy** is a plan that includes an overall goal and the kinds of actions that are appropriate to take in order to achieve the goal. A policy is like a guideline. It determines what kinds of decisions will be made and what actions will be taken.

Example: One Goal, Two Policies

Imagine that a country's goal is to have peaceful relationships with other countries. Policy A and Policy B, below, show that there is more than one way to achieve that goal. Both policies aim to gain peace, and there are pros and cons for each, but the actions the country would take are very different—as are the likely outcomes!



Policy A

One policy might be to gain peace by talking. Under that policy, the government might decide to send people to negotiate with another country when there is a problem and come up with a compromise.

Policy B

A different policy might be to gain peace through military force. Under that policy, the government might decide to invade a country when there is a problem, overthrow that country's government, and put in a new, friendly government.

What is FOREIGN POLICY?

F
O
R
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I
G
N

P
O
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C
Y

Write what stands out about each of the interests.

What is your reaction
to NATIONAL
INTERESTS?

Like/+

Dislike/-

Would change?~

Looking Out for Number One

Has anyone ever told you they were doing something for your "best interest?" A country is always trying to act in its own best interest by trying to get other countries to act in ways that are beneficial and not harmful. A country's **national interest** is all the things a country believes would be for its benefit. National interest ties directly to a country's foreign policy.

For example, Country A might make deals with other countries over who can use water from a river so that Country A can have water for fields. Or, Country A might go to war with those countries to try to get all the water for itself. In another example, Country B, a wealthy country, might send money to help a poor country because it benefits Country B to have a world where other countries are stable. Or, Country B might ignore the poor country's problems and use the money to build homeless shelters for Country B's own people.

In the "National Interest"

Here's a list of some issues that countries might consider part of their national interest:

- Environment
- Weapons of mass destruction
- Water rights
- Territorial boundaries
- Historical sites
- Hunger
- Spread of disease
- Trade
- Energy or food production

1.1 DEFINING NATIONAL INTEREST

Most people act out of self-interest. They base their actions on what will be to their benefit or advantage. However, not all people define self-interest in the same way. For example, some value financial success more than anything else, so their actions reflect their desire to increase their personal wealth. Others value religious ideals and act according to their faith. Still others value power and seek ways to increase their authority over others.

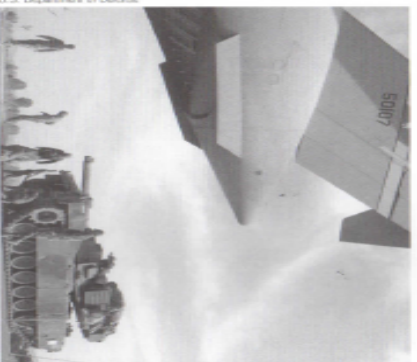
Underlying the behavior of nations is the concept of *national interest*. Just as most people behave according to their own perception of what is best for them, on the national level, citizens look to their leaders to carry out policies that promote their nation's self-interest. At first glance, the idea of national interest may seem fairly simple: It is what is best for a particular nation. However, not all residents of a nation agree on what is best. Perceptions of national interest vary from person to person and evolve over time.

National interest is a combination of the security, economic, and ideological concerns of a country. Even though every nation in the world tries to meet certain basic needs so it can survive and improve its citizens' living standards, each nation is unique and has its own set of concerns. Some countries, such as Mali or Bangladesh, are concerned primarily with survival—with feeding their people or protecting themselves from attack. Others, like Niger or Malaysia, seek to develop their natural resources, so they can trade them for food and other commodities. Nations such as Japan and the

United States have relatively little difficulty feeding their people and are more concerned with the continued growth of their industrial economies. Although every country in the world has a unique perception of its own national interest, all share three broad concerns: security, economics, and ideology.

SECURITY INTERESTS

The most basic interest of any nation, from the tiny island state of Grenada to the giant People's Republic of China, is ensuring its physical survival. National governments form armies to protect themselves from attack and join military alliances to bolster protection against more powerful foes.



U.S. Department of Defense
Nations maintain armed forces to defend their security interests.

A nation's concern about security stems from its perception of outside threats. For example, Israel maintains a large, well-equipped military because it is surrounded by hostile neighbors. In contrast, Switzerland has a relatively small army because of its neutrality during the Cold War, its friendly relations with all European nations, and its protection provided by the mountainous regions near its borders.

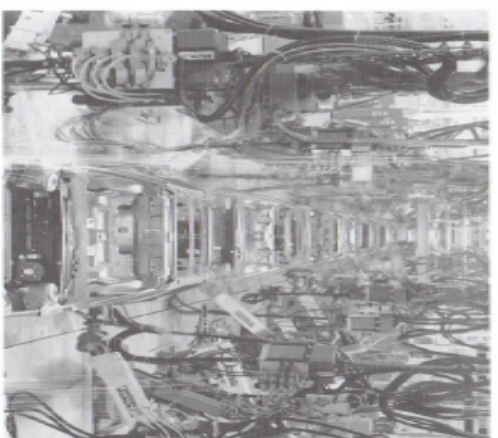
But security interests mean more than just protection against outside attack. A nation must also ensure that social order is maintained and that its citizens are safe from violence and crime. To do this, countries must have laws to protect their people and a police force and legal system capable of enforcing those laws.

ECONOMIC INTERESTS

Countries seek to promote the economic welfare of their people. Economic interests of nations vary according to the availability of resources and the development of those resources.

Developing countries, like many in sub-Saharan Africa, need to obtain the basic necessities of life—food and water, shelter, and health care—for their people. They lack the agricultural methods or the manufacturing industries that would enable them to move beyond basic survival. Because they are unable to produce enough food, they trade raw materials or cash crops for food and advanced technology. Some developing countries also concentrate on attracting foreign investment and tourism to strengthen their economies.

Other nations, such as Germany and Japan, are highly industrialized and turn out a variety of products, including processed food, industrial machinery, automobiles, computers, software, and clothing. *Industrialized nations* usually produce more than they need. They then



Economic interests are determined by a country's needs, resources, and level of development.
Chrysler Corporation

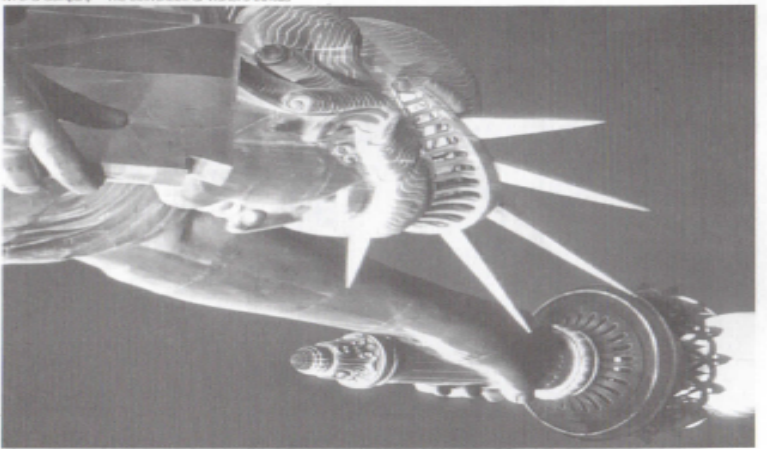
export these products—mostly manufactured goods—to other nations in exchange for needed raw materials, other finished products, or money.

The economic growth of many nations depends on their ability to buy and sell products or services abroad. Their economic interests are determined by the wants and needs of their citizens, the types of products they have to sell, and how developed their economies are.

IDEOLOGICAL INTERESTS

Security and economic concerns alone do not explain why nations behave as they do. Ideology—a combination of the beliefs, values, culture, religion, and historical experiences of a nation's people—also plays a role. All countries are interested in protecting their way of life at home, and many try to promote it abroad as well.

For example, U.S. leaders encourage people around the world to hold free elections because they believe



Nations work to protect and promote ideological interests at home and abroad.

democracy is the best form of government. Iran, on the other hand, believes that governments—particularly in the Middle East and North Africa—should follow the religion of Shi'ite Islam. Iranian leaders encourage other nations to adopt forms of government based on Islamic values and beliefs.

These three concerns—security, economics, and ideology—do not exist independently. Often, an economic or ideological concern is also a security concern. For example, if people do not have enough to eat, the stability and therefore the security of their government may be threatened. Some leaders believe that the phys-

ical security of their nation depends on adherence to a particular religion. Such leaders encourage their citizens to do whatever is necessary—including going to war—to defend ideological beliefs. Some countries are also willing to forego greater economic benefits to maintain their ideological interests.

The responsibility for defining the national interest falls to a nation's political leaders. In each country of the world, a national government assesses threats to its security, the health of its economy, and the strength of its ideology to determine its national interest.

NATIONAL INTEREST CONCERNS

Although every nation has a unique perception of its own national interest, all nations share three broad concerns: security, economics, and ideology. To determine its national interest, a national government assesses threats to its security, the health of its economy, and the strength of its ideology.

National Interest

Security Interests

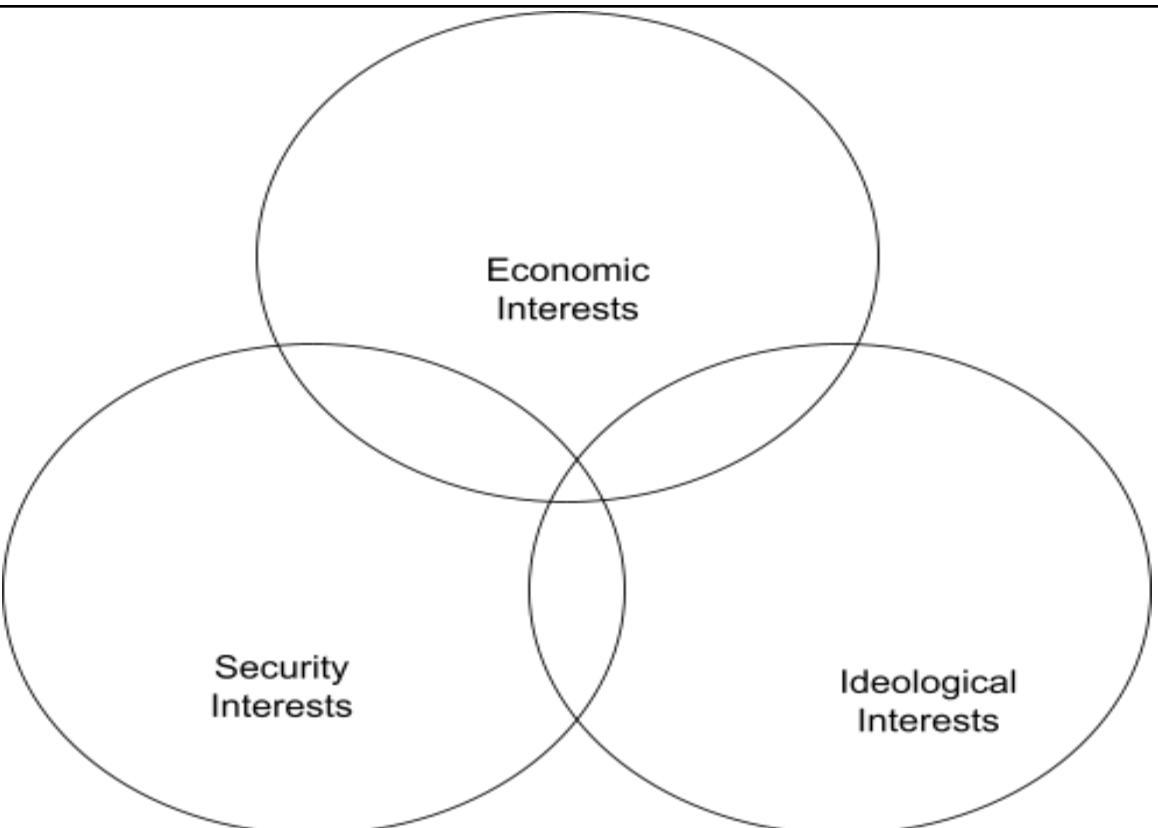
- Protecting natural borders
- Maintaining relations with allies
- Ensuring the safety of citizens from violence and crime

Economic Interests

- Providing citizens with an adequate standard of living
- Ensuring economic development and growth
- Establishing trade relations with other nations

Ideological Interests

- Supporting a way of life at home and promoting it abroad
- Protecting the cultural and religious heritage of a nation
- Promoting a system of government



Diplomacy & Foreign Policy

Getting Involved... Or Staying Away?



A country's attitude about foreign policy will lie somewhere on a continuum between isolationism and internationalism. With a policy of **internationalism**, a country chooses to get involved in other countries' problems when there is a great need. With a policy of **isolationism**, a country focuses on its own problems and does not get involved in other countries' issues.



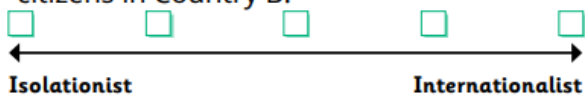
All Alone in the World?

Maybe you've heard the expression, "It's a small world." Advances in technology make countries more connected with each other more than ever before. That makes it harder and harder for countries to practice isolationism and ignore what is going on in the world around them. Most countries lean toward internationalism because they recognize that trouble in the world affects everyone. For example, a country that does not enforce its internet laws can be a safe place for people who want to hack into computer systems around the world. To protect their own citizens, other countries might pressure that government to enforce its laws.

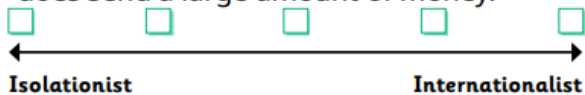


1. After a huge earthquake, a tsunami hit Country B and killed 200,000 people. Entire towns on the coastline were washed away. Country B is very poor and cannot feed all the people made homeless by the disaster.

A. Country Y sends thousands of military troops to build temporary houses, clear roads, and serve tons of food to homeless citizens in Country B.



B. Country Y does not send any people, but does send a large amount of money.



C. Country Y sends a few experts to advise Country B about what to do and begins developing a tsunami warning system to protect Country Y from a similar disaster.



2. Most of the world's rainforest is located in Countries F, G, and H. Country R has no rainforest, but it believes the rainforest is very important to the world for many reasons. A lot of people in Countries F, G, and H do not have jobs. They are cutting down the rainforest in order to plant crops. Country R is worried that the rainforest will soon disappear forever.

A. Country G works to save its own forest without talking to Countries F and H.



B. Countries F, G, and H research new crops that their citizens could grow without cutting down the rainforest.



C. Country R sends scientists to collect rare plant species out of the rainforest before it is all gone and bring the plants back to Country R for use in developing new medicines.



Let's explore this [video about Foreign Policy](#). Answer the questions below based on the video and your approach.

Leaders can choose _____ or _____. What type of [approach](#) do you think leaders should choose? Why?

[Idealism](#) tends to focus on what works for their country must work for others also while [realists](#) aim to see what works for that country, even if it would not work in their own country. What are your thoughts on this [approach](#)? Which type of leader do you think you would be? Why?

Lastly, countries need to try and [approach](#) foreign policy either [unilaterally](#) (which means how many countries? __) or [multilaterally](#) (which is different because it would make ____ countries). Which approach would you think is best? Why?

Case Study: [How Did the United States Approach the Tiananmen Square Crackdown?](#)

What was happening in China prior to the Tiananmen Square protest?

What type of national interest would you say China had at that time - security, ideological, or economic interest? Why would you choose that?

List some of the ways the US responded:

What did POTUS Bush realize about the US response?

What was the legacy of these events? How did it impact the US-China relationship?

If you were a leader of a country, how would you have handled it? (Aim to include what we just covered - isolationist or engagement, idealist or realist, unilaterally or multilaterally)



Enrichment Options -

- Explore what Human Rights Watch has reported about human right [violations](#) since this demonstration
- Read what BBC reported [about what happened in Tiananmen Square](#)
- Are you curious about what the youth in [China](#) believe about the day when nothing happened?
- Create a [political cartoon](#).

If we get to it - [PRO/CON: Should the U.S. send weapons to Ukraine?](#) *Note this article is from 2014 and not the current events happening with Ukraine. *Adjust the Lexile level to one you feel most comfortable reading at and use the Read-Aloud feature to best appreciate the article. Let's explore the [background](#) on the topic.

Choose the PRO side (weapons should be sent to Ukraine) or the CON side (weapons will make the situation worse). Do you have any background on the topic? What do you want to learn about this side you chose?

Based on the argument side you chose, which position can you identify in the article - unilateral or multilateral, idealist or realist, engagement or isolationist?

Foreign Policy Exit slip

- What are the THREE most important things you learned about foreign policy?

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- What are TWO ways a country can make itself more important in the global community?

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- What is ONE thing hashtag to summarize this lesson? Why?

Rubric

	4 = exceeds	3 = meets	2 = approaching	1 = needs help	0 = missing
Warm-up	Student reflected on the activity by writing a rationale for each statement	Student completed the activity by having a "ranking" for each statement	Student partially completed the rankings	Student did not use the key provided or finished all the statements	Student did not complete the section
TicTacToe	Student positively contributed to each of the breakout rooms and demonstrated completion using initials or color coding	Student completed the three boxes and shared in most of the breakout rooms Responses are color-coded are noted with initials	Student did not complete 3 boxes or did not participate in more than 1 breakout room; no additional TTT completed	Student did not complete at least two boxes and did not participate in breakout room sessions	Student did not complete any TTT boxes
Exit slip	Student completed 321 & an enrichment option	Student completed 321 with specific examples	Student partially completed 321	Student responses are too brief	Student did not complete 321

Enrichment:

1. Rank the countries on page 12 based on "power". At the end of the list, explain how you chose the most powerful to least powerful countries
2. Choose a [developing country](#) that would benefit from a military or economic relationship with the US. How would the US benefit from the relationship?
3. Take a look at the [White House foreign policy page](#). Rank the issues (along the top) based on priority. Explain how President Trump or President-elect Biden could handle one of the issues.
4. Using the link for the White House foreign page above, click on an issue. Looking through some of the headlines, summarize what the current concern is about so the general public would understand.
5. Using your U1 Summative (ideal country), create a fictional page about one of the options below:
 - a. Description of their security, economic, and ideological interests (it can be like the chart on page 10)
 - b. Explain your country's economic and military power
 - c. Explain the benefits of their geographic location
 - d. Devise how the country is technologically advanced
 - e. A foreign policy concern and how the country responded using at least one of the TTT boxes from above