

Document A: *New York Journal* (Modified)

DESTRUCTION OF THE WAR SHIP MAINE WAS THE WORK OF
AN ENEMY

Assistant Secretary Roosevelt Convinced the Explosion of the War
Ship Was Not an Accident.

The Journal Offers \$50,000 Reward for the Conviction of the
Criminals Who Sent 258 American
Sailors to Their Death.

Naval Officers All Agree That the Ship Was Destroyed on Purpose.
NAVAL OFFICERS THINK THE MAINE WAS DESTROYED BY A
SPANISH MINE.

George Bryson, the Journal's special reporter at Havana, writes that it is the secret opinion of many people in Havana that the war ship Maine was destroyed by a mine and 258 men were killed on purpose by the Spanish. This is the opinion of several American naval authorities. The Spaniards, it is believed, arranged to have the Maine drop anchor over a harbor mine. Wires connected the mine to the magazine of the ship. If this is true, the brutal nature of the Spaniards will be shown by the fact that they waited to explode the mine until all the men had gone to sleep. Spanish officials are protesting too much that they did not do it. Our government has ordered an investigation. This newspaper has sent divers to Havana to report on the condition of the wreck. This newspaper is also offering a \$50,000 reward for exclusive evidence that will convict whoever is responsible. Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt says he is convinced that the destruction of the Maine in Havana Harbor was not an accident. The suspicion that the Maine was purposely blown up grows stronger every hour. Not a single fact to the contrary has been produced.

Source: *Excerpt from New York Journal and Advertiser, February 17, 1898. Purchased by William Randolph Hearst in 1895, the Journal published investigative and human interest stories that used a highly emotional writing style and included banner headlines and graphic images.*

Document B: *New York Times* (Modified)

MAINE'S HULL WILL DECIDE
Divers Will Inspect the Ship's Hull to Find Out Whether the Explosion
Was from the Outside or Inside.
Magazines of War Ships Sometimes Blow Up Because of Too Much
Heat Inside –
Hard to Blow Up the Magazine from the Outside.

It has been a busy day for the Navy Department. The war ship Maine was destroyed in Havana Harbor last night. Officials in Washington and Havana have been sending cables all night long. Secretary Long was asked whether he thought this was the work of the enemy. He replied: "I do not. I am influenced by the fact that Captain Sigsbee has not yet reported to the Navy Department. It seems he is waiting to write a full report. So long as he has not made a decision, I certainly cannot. I should think from the signs however, that there was an accident – that the magazine exploded. How that came about I do not know. For the present, at least, no other war ship will be sent to Havana." Captain Schuley, who knows a great deal about war ships, did not entertain the idea that the Maine had been destroyed on purpose. He said that fires would sometimes start in the coal bunkers, and he told of such a fire on board another war ship that started very close to the magazine. The fire became so hot that the heat blistered the steel wall between the fire and the ammunition before the bunkers and magazine were flooded with water to stop the fire. He did not believe that the Spanish or Cubans in Havana had either the information or the equipment necessary to blow up the magazine, while the Maine was under guard.

Source: *New York Times*, February 17, 1898. Established in 1851, the *New York Times* provided investigative coverage of local New York issues and events, as well as national and international news.

Guiding Questions

Name _____

New York Journal

Sourcing

1. How long after the explosion of the *Maine* was this article written?
2. What does the headline of the article suggest about the newspaper's point of view?

Close Reading

3. Upon what type of evidence does the *New York Journal* base its claims?

New York Times

Sourcing

1. How does the date of this article compare with the date on the *New York Journal and Advertiser* article?

Close Reading

2. According to these headlines, what happened to the *Maine*?
3. What kinds of evidence does the *New York Times* include to support its account of the incident?