

# To what extent is the usa essay sample

Government, Military



To what extent is the USA's superpower status threatened by the emergence of the BRICs (15) A superpower defined is a very influential and powerful nation. Currently, we live in a unipolar world and the USA is the only superpower. Factors such as economy, population, military strength and geographical location determine a nations superpower status. It is debatable whether the USA is currently being threatened by the emergence of NICs such as the BRICS, Brazil, India, Russia and China. China may be considered to currently be the USA's biggest threat. China's military role is rising, it's spending on military is increasing by 18% a year on top of this its bases are being extended from Asia to Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. This shows China's military influence is growing which may threaten the USA especially considering that China has a staggeringly high population of 1.3 billion people so it has the potential to provide a very large army. China also has incredible economic strength, since early 1980s the economy has doubled in size every eight years. China has the largest sustained GDP in history. Because of this economic growth public spending on health and education over 50 years has provided China with a healthy, literate and skilled workforce. China has a 92.9 literacy rate which is quickly catching up to the USAs 99%.

The high population of skilled workers continues to emerge and develop which is why the USA would feel threatened. However, it may be argued that China isn't as big a threat as we may think if we judged by GDP Per Capita. In 2011 the USA's GDP per Capita was \$48,900 and China's was \$9,100 which shows that the living standards in China especially the more rural areas still have a way to go to be able to match the USA's. Chinas global

influence is also expanding as by the end of 2007 over 5000 Chinese companies had invested in 172 countries and regions around the world. This investment overseas shows China is making an impact all over the world which threatens the USA's strong media and global influence. The USA should be threatened by China's explosive emergence in population, economy, and military as the figures are continuously increasing and catching up to or and sometimes exceeding the USA's figures. However, factors like GDP Per Capita and social problems are holding China back from reaching that superpower status so the USA may not feel completely overpowered just yet. Russia's re-emergence as a global power may threaten the USA's superpower status.

Russia's Gazprom controls a third of the world's natural gas reserves and due to the growth of NICs such as India and China the demand for this natural gas has increased, 60% of Russian exports in 2007 were natural gas and oil which has helped to fund Russia's economic recovery since 1999. However Russia's GDP is \$2.01 trillion whereas the USA's is \$15.8 trillion, almost 8 times as much, this shows that in terms of wealth the USA should not feel threatened to an extent. Russia's military is also very strong, it currently exceeds its economic power. Many argue Russia's military strength is its strongest superpower asset with 2,485,000 military reserves it is currently ranked with the second strongest military force in the world and is quickly emerging which may threaten the USA's status. However the USA should only feel threatened to a point as it has the number one military in the world with a base in every continent, this spreads its global influence and shows a worldwide sense of authority. 45% of the USA's economy is spent on

the military showing that it will continue to be at an excellent standard which Russia may struggle to match or exceed.

The USA has stronger global influence holding the most TNC's in the world which are spread all over the world. However, the TIMES named Vladimir Putin number 1 on their list of most powerful people in the world with Barack Obama second. Although the list is not an official measure of anything it still has millions of readers which are influenced and aware of this. The USA should feel threatened by Russia's military and its oil and gas reserves but not threatened by Russia as a nation as it still has deeply rooted problems to do with the economy as well as social matters which hold it back from reaching the USA's superpower status again. India is currently the second fastest emerging economy behind China. This emergence is sure to make the USA feel partially threatened however this wealth is not being used on rural India and 830 million people (almost 70 percent of the population) live in the largely poor countryside where over 160 million people have no access to water, electricity or sanitation. So, social problems in the country hold India back from becoming a superpower. However, the unemployment rate in the USA is higher than in India by 0.5%.

This shows that although India has deeply rooted social problems it still is developing rapidly and effectively and the USA's weakness of unemployment may not be able to fall. India's military is ranked 4th in the world so it is very strong, due to India's large population of 1.2 billion (the second largest in the world behind China) and its increasing military personnel its military may be one of its strongest assets in becoming a superpower. However it is still

three places behind the USA and so to make the world have a bipolar superpower status with India it will need to invest in the military as much as the USA does and India does not have the economic strength to do so with only \$3, 900 GDP Per Capita. The USA should not feel as threatened by India as it should by China and even Russia because of India's deeply rooted social and economic problems which may be acting as a barrier for development to become a superpower status. Many argue that out of the BRICS Brazil is the least threatening to the USA. Brazil is perhaps the least threatening in terms of military force as it's military is currently ranked 14th in the world showing it is not that high in strength or number.

Brazil also has the lowest GDP at \$2. 39 trillion which is behind Russia, India and China showing it is the least economically strong of the BRICs so it can not pose much of a threat to the USA economically. However Brazil's unemployment rate is only 6% which is lower than the USA's which shows it is developing into a stronger power. Brazil is also a member of the OECD so it does exert some influence and shows power by being part of important groups. Because Brazil's military ranking and economic strength is quite far behind the USA's it may not be viewed as strong a threat as the other members of the BRICs. To conclude, the USA should feel threatened most by China as it's economy, military and development is growing fast and has the potential to meet the USA's and challenge it. That being said, social problems and factors such as GDP may be holding China back partially and so the USA superpower status should only feel threatened by China to an extent.

Russia threatens the USA in terms of military power and oil dependence however it's economy is not strong enough to match the USA's so it is not yet at a point where it can threaten the USA. This is a similar situation in India, even though the economy is progressing it is not strong enough and the exceptionally high poverty ensures that India has a long way to go before it is as developed as the USA. Brazil acts as a small threat however its influence through organisations such as OECD show it is developing yet still needs major improvement to be seen as the same superpower strength as the USA. Thus showing that the USA is ahead of the BRICS but China has possibly got the potential to overtake it if it develops more and solves its social and economic problems.