Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United States, was a man of many firsts, including being the youngest person to assume the U.S. presidency at age 42 after the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901. His dynamic personality and robust masculinity made him the epitome of the Progressive Era's spirit of reform. Roosevelt was the first American to win a Nobel Peace Prize, which he received in 1906 for his role in negotiating the end of the Russo-Japanese War. His diplomatic efforts were pivotal in the Treaty of Portsmouth, which earned him international acclaim and solidified his reputation as a peacekeeper on the global stage. An avid naturalist, Roosevelt had a profound impact on the American environmental movement. During his presidency, he established the United States Forest Service and signed into law the creation of five national parks. He also initiated the National Monuments Act, under which he proclaimed 18 new U.S. National Monuments. His actions protected approximately 230 million acres of public land. Through these unprecedented conservation efforts, Roosevelt laid the groundwork for the future National Park Service, ensuring the preservation of America's natural beauty for generations to come. Before his presidency, Theodore Roosevelt endured a personal tragedy that would shape his character and future. On February 14, 1884, he suffered the devastating loss of both his mother and his first wife, Alice Hathaway Lee, within hours of each other. His mother died of typhoid fever, and his wife succumbed to kidney failure shortly after giving birth to their daughter. Stricken by grief, Roosevelt left the infant with his sister and retreated to the Badlands of the Dakota Territory, where he lived as a cowboy and cattle rancher, finding solace in the strenuous life and the wilderness. Roosevelt's contributions to literature and writing were as significant as his political achievements. He authored over 35 books on various subjects, including history, biology, geography, and philosophy. His works, such as 'The Naval War of 1812' and 'The Wilderness Hunter,' reflected his diverse interests and profound knowledge. Roosevelt's writing was not only prolific but also influential, providing insights into his life, experiences, and the world as he saw it. His literary legacy offers a unique window into the life of one of America's most dynamic presidents. Known for his 'speak softly and carry a big stick' foreign policy, Roosevelt believed in American leadership on the world stage. This approach was evident in his actions such as the construction of the Panama Canal, which revolutionized maritime trade by connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. His corollary to the Monroe Doctrine asserted the U.S. right to intervene in the affairs of Latin American countries to stabilize the economic affairs of small states in the Caribbean and Central America if they were unable to pay their international debts, thereby expanding American influence in the region. Theodore Roosevelt's adventurous spirit was legendary, and his near-death experience on a river in Brazil is a testament to that. In 1913, after his presidency, he embarked on the Roosevelt-Rondon Scientific Expedition to explore the River of Doubt (later named Rio Roosevelt in his honor). During the treacherous journey, Roosevelt suffered a serious leg wound, which led to a life-threatening infection. Despite his condition and against his team's advice, he refused to be a burden and insisted on continuing, which nearly cost him his life. Roosevelt was instrumental in reforming the American political system. He championed the cause of the 'Square Deal'—a domestic program that promised fairness for workers, consumers, and big businesses. This included regulation of railroad rates and pure foods and drugs, as well as the promotion of fair trade practices. His administration saw the passage of the Hepburn Act, which strengthened the Interstate Commerce Commission's ability to regulate railroad rates, and the Pure Food and Drug Act, which established the Food and Drug Administration to oversee the safety of food and pharmaceuticals. In an event that exemplified his robust spirit and resilience, Theodore Roosevelt survived an assassination attempt while campaigning for a third term as president under the Progressive Party banner in 1912. Before a speech in Milwaukee, a would-be assassin shot him in the chest. The bullet was slowed by a glasses case and a folded copy of his speech in his breast pocket. Undeterred, Roosevelt delivered his scheduled speech with the bullet still in his body, proclaiming, 'It takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose,' referencing the nickname of his Progressive Party. Roosevelt was a polymath with a wide range of interests and expertise. He was a historian, a biographer, an essayist, a soldier, a hunter, a naturalist, and a statesman. His intellectual curiosity led him to become a voracious reader, reportedly reading a book a day even during his presidency. His personal library contained over 10,000 books, many of which contained annotations in his own hand. Roosevelt's deep and varied knowledge contributed to his effective leadership and his ability to connect with people from all walks of life. After leaving the presidency in 1909, Roosevelt went on an African safari sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution, collecting specimens for the Smithsonian's new Natural History museum, which is now the National Museum of Natural History. Over the course of the expedition, Roosevelt and his team collected thousands of animals, from insects to large mammals. This massive collection effort contributed significantly to the scientific understanding of the region's biodiversity and was a remarkable achievement in the field of natural history.