



# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

STUDENT BOOK

► **11th Grade | Unit 7**

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# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY 1107

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**Author:**

Alpha Omega Staff

**Editor:**

Alan Christopherson, M.S.

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# The Search for Peace

## Introduction

Suspicion and distrust among nations on the European mainland reached the breaking point in 1914 when Serbian-Austrian relations collapsed. This event set off a chain reaction of active and reactive involvement as Europe and the world embarked on the first global conflict. The United States strove to remain neutral, but was drawn into the conflict of World War I, supplying the men and equipment that brought the war to a close and the Allies to victory.

After World War I, the United States departed from Wilson's progressivism and entered into Harding's restoration of "normalcy." Although the United States had enhanced its prosperity and its position of respect in the world community, the nation was ill-prepared for the shock of 1929. When the stock market crashed, thousands of people were left destitute; the subsequent years of the Great Depression also took their toll. The administration of Franklin Roosevelt brought practical promises and positive actions, giving hope to the confused and stricken people of the United States.

In this unit you will study the triumph, confusion, and desperation in the history of our nation between 1914 and 1940. The major focal points of your study will include the role of the United States in World War I, the aftermath of that conflict, the return to normal times, the prosperous living of the twenties, the dark days of the Great Depression, and America's struggle under the Roosevelt administration to overcome the economic stagnation.

United States history can be seen as a drama of our nation's will to triumph over seemingly insurmountable obstacles in a struggle for independence, unity, stability, and respect. The segment of that history from 1914 to 1940 included the vital learning experiences of global warfare, postwar difficulties, and economic depths, each contributing to the present stature of the United States.

## Objectives

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAK®. When you have finished this LIFEPAK, you should be able to:

1. Describe the opposing forces and their engagements on the European front in World War I.
2. Describe the United States' war effort at home and abroad.
3. Outline the plans for world peace at the close of World War I.
4. Describe the changing postwar attitudes as the United States returned to normalcy.
5. Explain the effects of urbanization and prohibition on United States' society.
6. Outline the philosophy and policies of Coolidge.
7. Describe the prosperity and disaster of the Hoover years.
8. Describe the effects of the Great Depression on the United States' wealthy and poor.
9. Explain the effects of Franklin D. Roosevelt's leadership on recovery in the United States during the depression years.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

# 1. THE GREAT WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

Although hostilities eventually extended around the world, most of the decisive action in the Great War—World War I—took place on the European continent. Europe is also the place where the subsequent peace talks were negotiated. Therefore, the focus

of your study in this section will be on the European continent, noting the rising tension and hostilities among those nations, the unavoidable involvement of the United States, and the proposals and terms for a hopeful world peace.

## Section Objectives

**Review these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Describe the opposing forces and their engagements on the European front in World War I.
  - 1.1 List the Allied and Central Powers, telling how each became involved in the war.
  - 1.2 Outline the war strategies on the European front.
2. Describe the United States' war effort at home and abroad.
  - 2.1 Describe the measures taken on the home front in support of the war effort.
  - 2.2 Tell the advantages the United States supplied to the Allied cause.
3. Outline the plans for world peace at the close of World War I.
  - 3.1 List the terms and effects of Wilson's Fourteen Points.
  - 3.2 List the terms and effects of the Treaty of Versailles.

## Vocabulary

**Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.**

**armistice** ..... A temporary end of hostilities by mutual agreement; a truce.

**reparations** ..... Money paid by the defeated countries for acts of war.

**stalemate** ..... A deadlock or tie.

**vengeance** ..... An act of revenge for a wrong or injury.

**Note:** All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAK appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

# THE FIRST GLOBAL CONFLICT

World War I was called the Great War before World War II reduced its claim to that title. It was the first world-wide war using modern weapons. Airplanes were used for the first time, mainly for reconnaissance. Tanks were introduced, although they were not highly effective. Poison gas was also used, killing and blinding many. Moreover, this was a war that destroyed civilian lives. War was no longer a disagreement between armies, it was a contest for survival among nations, in this case, mainly the nations of Europe.

**The antagonists of Europe.** The first global conflict began as a result of the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his wife by a member of a Serbian secret society

on June 18, 1914. Furious at the brazen actions of this small Balkan nation, Austria was determined to punish Serbia (a Russian ally) severely for the assassination. Being assured of German backing if Russia should support Serbia, the Austrians issued an ultimatum to Serbia—meet Austrian demands concerning the anti-Austrian movement in Serbia or face war. When the Serbs agreed to only partially meet the Austrian demands, Austria declared war on Serbia.

Austria's declaration of war initiated a chain reaction among European nations because of the previously negotiated alliances throughout the continent. Russia, pledging to aid the Serbian government, refused to stop her mobilization in defense of the Serbs



| World War I battle fronts



when Germany ordered her to halt. Thus, Germany declared war on Russia and its ally, France. Determined to defeat France before Russia was prepared to fight, Germany ignored the neutrality of Belgium and boldly marched across the Belgian border enroute to France.

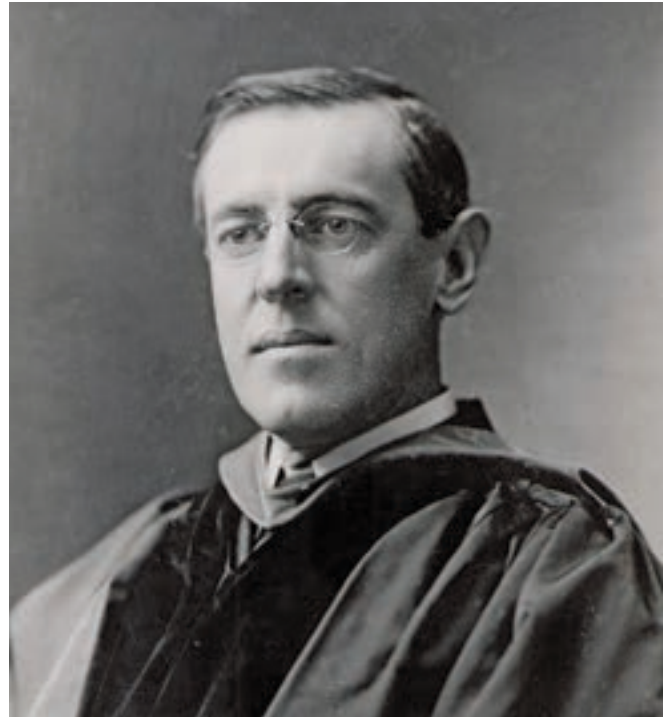
The conquest of Belgium caused an international uproar toward Germany and hastened Great Britain's decision to join forces with France and Russia. Realizing that the only possible gains in war would come from Austrian-controlled territories, Italy joined the war in 1915 as an ally of Russia, France, and England. Italy's new alignment was a shocking blow to her former partners in the Triple Alliance.

Nation by nation, battle lines were drawn. Turkey joined the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary), giving Germany and Austria control of Constantinople and blockading the Russian fleet stationed in the Black Sea. In 1914 Japan entered the war on the side of Great Britain in accordance with their previous treaty, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. Countries throughout the world were soon armed for the global confrontation, World War I. Few European nations remained uninvolved; only Switzerland, Spain, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries declared their neutrality.

In their move to take France, the Germans did not consider the bravery and genius of the French. In a desperate move, French soldiers were driven in taxi cabs from Paris to the front line to stop the German advance. This heroic action halted the surprised German troops and was soon followed by a stiff French counterattack, saving Paris and stalling German hopes for a quick victory.

Although French resistance was much stronger than Germany had expected, Germany had little difficulty overcoming Russian resistance. Poor equipment, disorganized supply lines, and weak leadership contributed to the defeat and containment of the Russian forces by the well-equipped, disciplined Germans. When the Allies (Great Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, Belgium, Japan, Montenegro) were defeated in their efforts to aid the battered Russians, Germany grew confident in its strong, strategic military position in Central Europe.

By 1916 the war had reached a **stalemate**. Much of the land war was fought in trenches where little ground was gained and many lives were lost. At sea, German submarines (U-boats) sank shipments of supplies destined for England and France. The French and British navies blockaded the North Sea



| Woodrow Wilson

to prevent supplies from reaching Germany. Neither side had a clear advantage that could break the stalemate, and both sides were suffering heavy losses and growing weary of war. Nevertheless, the impasse could not last forever; and both sides were desperate in their attempts to enlist additional support. Propaganda flooded the United States, taking advantage of the intense interest with which sympathizers were watching both sides.

**The role of the United States.** The United States had declared neutrality from the beginning of the war. President Woodrow Wilson had strong support from the people when he said, "The war is one with which we have nothing to do, whose causes cannot touch us." Wilson also said that the United States would remain free to "do what is honest ... and truly serviceable for the peace of the world."

Although such thinking was noble, idealistic, and certainly desirable, it proved to be only illusory. In spite of public opinion, the United States had to make a decision and choose sides. Although German-Americans supported the Central Powers, most citizens in the United States were pro-British and supported the Triple Entente (France, Great Britain, Russia) and the Allied powers. Propaganda was widely used by both sides in the conflict, but French and British data was far more convincing to



the United States public. However, the United States was not drawn into global war through propaganda tactics; it entered the war because Germany was sinking American supply ships heading for England and France.

Looking at the situation from Germany's viewpoint, the indiscriminate sinking of ships was an expedient tactic. Germany would either lose the war on the seas or risk driving the United States into the massive conflict. The United States complained about the German activities and continued to trade with Great Britain. This tense situation was aggravated on May 7, 1915, when a British passenger ship, the *Lusitania*, was sunk by a German U-boat, killing 128 American citizens. When President Wilson sternly rebuked the Germans for the tragedy, Berlin answered with an apology, assuring that such an incident would not happen again. Although a temporary halt was enacted, the Germans later resumed sinking American ships in British waters, killing many Americans. Convinced that the United States could prevent a German victory, President Wilson went to Congress with a war message. Congress responded on April 6, 1917, by declaring war on Germany.

The entrance of the United States into the war gave the Triple Entente and their allies a tremendous boost in morale. Although training troops for the battlefield takes time, by the end of the war in November of 1918, more than two million United States soldiers were in France. The United States had been preparing some for the possibility of war since the early days of European tension.

Industry was especially affected, being influenced by the war's surging production demands and stimulated by President Wilson's request for a United States naval buildup. To meet any possible future challenge, the Committee on Industrial Preparedness had been created to enhance the military resources of the United States. A War Industries Board was also developed to oversee and control the production of manufactured goods within the United States. Given strong advisory power, the Board increased national production to include additional military needs.

Although the United States Navy had been increased and was well prepared for action, the army was small, ill-equipped, and poorly trained. The problem of staffing the armed services was alleviated by the Selective Service Act. This act was passed to

draft eligible men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty into the armed forces. The act eventually was expanded to include men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five. Many men volunteered for military duty. Almost five million men served in the armed forces during World War I, and over one million took part in front-line duty in Europe.

Many generals of the Entente wanted to integrate the United States troops into European armies; however, General John J. Pershing, leader of the United States troops, was determined to keep his troops as an independent force. United States servicemen chose the battle song "Over There" as their theme and determined that they would not return home until, "it's over, over there."

The Germans desperately tried to end the war before the Allies were reinforced by fresh American troops by conducting major offensives on their western front in the spring and summer of 1918. Germany was able to send more troops to France because of the Communist Revolution in Russia, which caused the Russians to withdraw from the war in 1917. The German offensive was nearly fatal for the Allies. However, United States troops and supplies poured onto the battlefield in northeastern France just in time. Reinforced by the United States, the Allies' counterattack was successful. Strategic Allied victories included the battle at Cantigny, the Argonne Forest, and Chateau-Thierry. These victories resulted largely from the freshly trained *dough-boys* (soldiers) from the United States.

The United States also contributed to the defeat of the Central Powers by generously supplying the Allies with food, ammunition, troops, and other war needs. Citizens in the United States manifested a spirit of sacrifice by often giving up food or gas that could be used to help the war effort in Europe.

American soldiers and supplies poured into Europe's battleground and halted the fierce German offensives of 1918. The Allied counterattacks dealt a severe blow to the German resistance and morale. As their German partners were being pushed steadily back, Bulgaria and Turkey saw no hope for victory and asked for peace. Austria-Hungary split into two separate countries when a peaceful revolution ended that empire. With its allies retreating from the war, Germany foresaw the inevitable invasion of its homeland. Germany signed an **armistice** on November 11, 1918, following several days of negotiations.

**Choose the best answer(s).**

- 1.1** Which four things were true of World War I?  
\_\_\_\_\_ a. By 1916, it was a stalemate in the west  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Russia did not fight well  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Much of the fighting was done from trenches  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Italy fought with the Central Powers  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Britain blockaded Germany
- 1.2** The three nations siding with Russia included:  
\_\_\_\_\_ a. France  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Turkey  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Bulgaria  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Italy  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Japan
- 1.3** Four neutral nations included:  
\_\_\_\_\_ a. Switzerland  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Spain  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Serbia  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Scandinavia  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Holland  
\_\_\_\_\_ f. Serbia
- 1.4** Three measures passed to meet America's wartime needs included:  
\_\_\_\_\_ a. the Committee on Industrial Preparedness  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. the Selective Service Act  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. the War Industries Board  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. the Industrial Production Council
- 1.5** Indicate three areas where United States reinforcements contributed greatly to Allied victories in France.  
\_\_\_\_\_ a. Catigny  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Berlin  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Argonne Forest  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Chateau-Thierry



804 N. 2nd Ave. E.  
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