



# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

STUDENT BOOK

► **8th Grade** | Unit 8

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# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY 808

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# A World In Conflict (1915–1945)

## Introduction

During the years after the Civil War, America became an industrial power and committed itself to progressive reforms to protect its unique form of government. The strength of both industry and government would be tested by fire between 1915 and 1945. Two world wars and the most devastating depression in American history would tear at the soul of the nation during that scant thirty-year period.

World War I was a very traditional war for power between the nations of Europe. The United States of 1860 would not have dreamt of getting involved, but this was America of 1914. In the early twentieth century, America was a powerful industrial nation with trading ties all over the world. America's biggest trading partner and cultural mother, Britain, was allied with America's European friend, France. Germany, the primary enemy, drew America into the war by destroying American ships and taking American lives.

After the "Great War" (the name for World War I before World War II made the name obsolete), America tried to return to its traditional isolation and enjoy the fruits of its now-massive economy. The "Roaring Twenties" were a time of free credit, heavy spending, social change, and speculation in the stock market. In 1929 the stock market crashed (prices fell rapidly), pulling America into a huge depression. A new Democratic president tried to buy the nation out of the depression through massive government spending, but recovery only came with the tremendous industrial demands of World War II.

The Second World War ended American isolation forever. The U.S. again tried to stay out of the war but was drawn in by a surprise attack on a navy base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. America poured its massive human and industrial resources into the war, enabling an Allied victory. The war left Europe in rubble and the U.S. as the leader of the free world for the next half century.

## Objectives

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

1. Describe the policies, personalities, and politics of the U.S. presidents from 1915 to 1945.
2. Describe the course of U.S. policy during the early years of World War I and the reasons behind it.
3. Describe the course of World War I.
4. Describe the Fourteen Points, the Treaty of Versailles, the problems negotiating the treaty, and Wilson's efforts to get it accepted in the U.S.
5. Describe the politics, problems, and pastimes of the Roaring Twenties.
6. Describe the course of the Great Depression and the New Deal.
7. Describe the causes and course of World War II.
8. Describe the policy of appeasement and early American neutrality.
9. Name the major U.S. commanders in World War II and their contributions.
10. Describe American involvement in World War II.
11. Name the major leaders of World War II and their nations.

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# 1. WORLD WAR I

Relations between the nations of Europe had long been managed by a policy known as “balance of power.” Under this theory, every nation used alliances to prevent any one nation from getting too powerful. Ideally, power would be evenly balanced among the competing nations and peace would be maintained.

By 1914 the balance of power was being maintained by two major competing alliances. France, Russia, and Britain formed the *Triple Entente*, while Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed the *Triple Alliance*. In 1914, rather than maintaining peace, the alliances drew the nations into the bloodiest war in their collective histories. Once the war began, Turkey and Bulgaria joined the Triple Alliance which became known as the Central Powers. The Entente became known as the Allied Powers and were joined by Romania, Serbia, Montenegro,

Greece, Japan, Belgium (once it was invaded), Italy (which changed sides), and eventually the United States.

The U.S. followed its longstanding policy of staying out of European affairs in the early years of the war. America remained neutral between 1914 and 1917. During that time, America grew closer to the Allies and came into increasing conflict with Germany. Trade with the Allies, Germany's violations of international law, Allied propaganda, and German submarine attacks on American vessels moved the U.S. slowly away from neutrality. Eventually, President Woodrow Wilson and the majority of the American people felt they could no longer honorably remain neutral. For the first time, America entered a major European war as a European ally.

## SECTION OBJECTIVES

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

1. Describe the policies, personalities, and politics of the U.S. presidents from 1915 to 1945.
2. Describe the course of U.S. policy during the early years of World War I and the reasons behind it.
3. Describe the course of World War I.
4. Describe the Fourteen Points, the Treaty of Versailles, the problems negotiating the treaty, and Wilson's efforts to get it accepted in the U.S.

## VOCABULARY

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

**communism** (käm' yə niz əm). A totalitarian system of government in which a single authoritarian party controls the state and industry with the official, but never completed, goal of creating a stateless society in which everyone shares equally in work and profits. In the political spectrum, communism is at the far left.

**convoy** (kän' voi). A protective escort, especially for ships.



# AMERICA from 1915 to 1945



**Woodrow Wilson**  
1913-1921  
Democratic



**Warren G. Harding\***  
1921-1923  
Republican



**Calvin Coolidge**  
1923-1929  
Republican



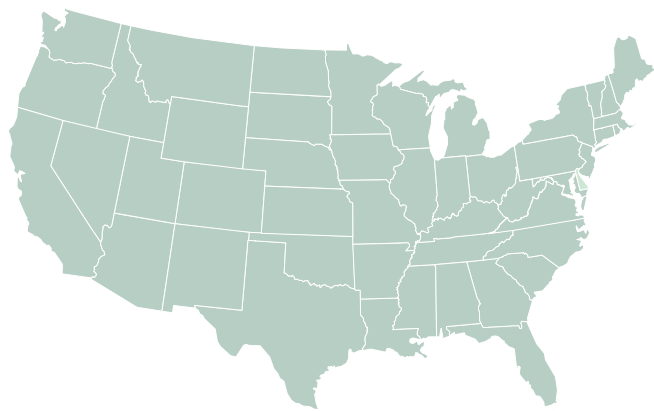
**Herbert Hoover**  
1929-1933  
Republican



**Franklin D. Roosevelt\***  
1933-1945  
Democratic



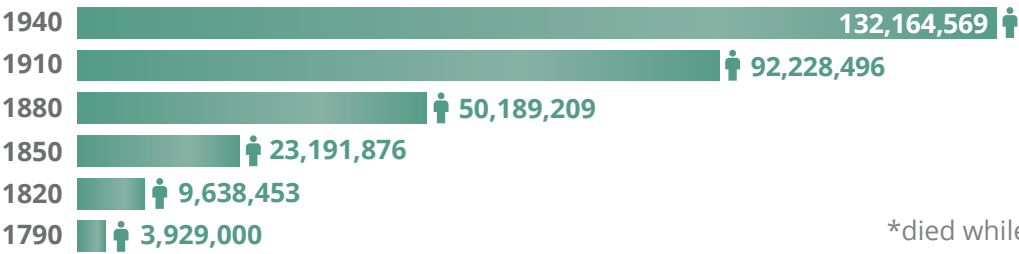
**Harry S. Truman**  
1945-1953  
Democratic



## STATES ADMITTED TO THE UNION

None

## POPULATION of the United States of America



\*died while in office

**mobilize** (mō' bə līz). To assemble and make ready for war duty; to prepare for action.

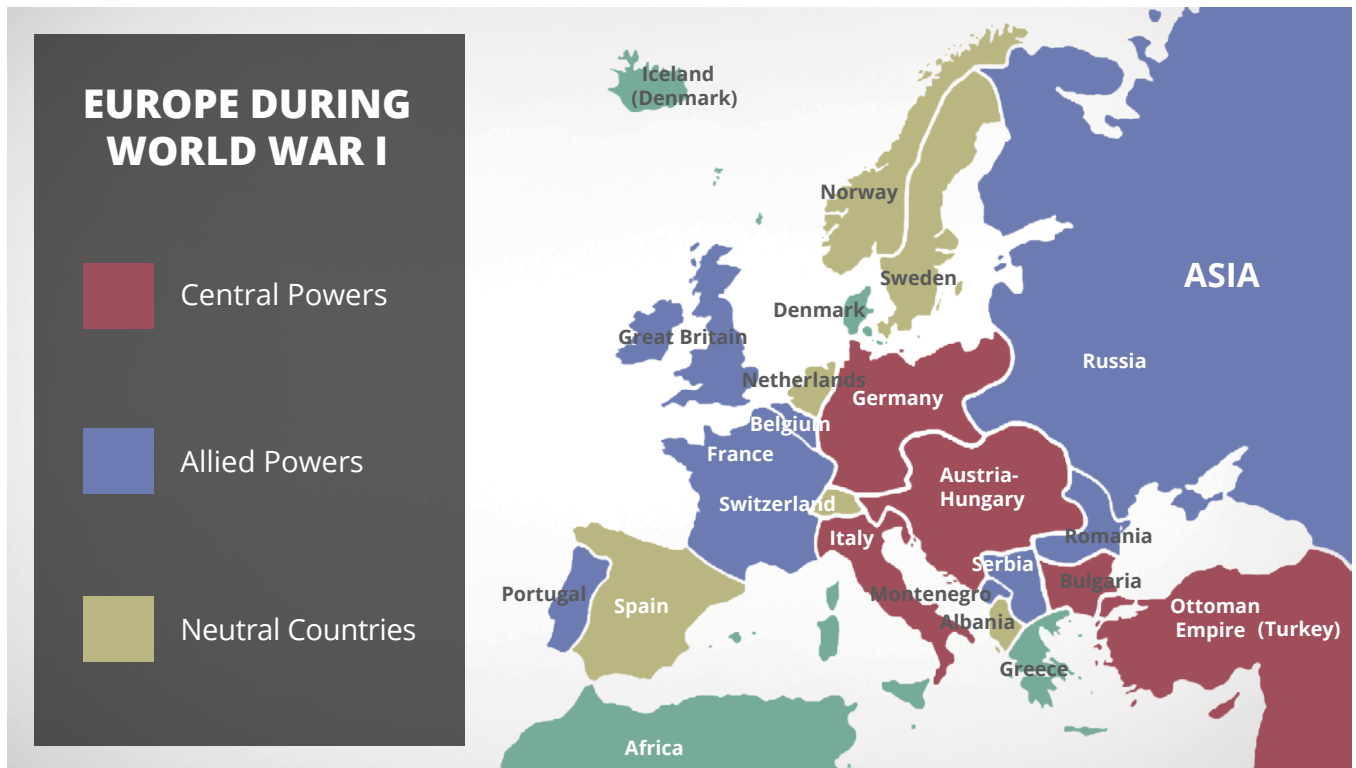
**offensive** (ə fen' sīv). Making attack; of, relating to, or designed for attack.

**pandemic** (pan dem' ik). An outbreak of disease occurring over a wide geographic area and affecting an exceptionally high proportion of the population.

**ultimatum** (əl tə mā t' əm). A final demand; one whose rejection will end negotiations and cause a resort to force or other direct action.

**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.

**Pronunciation Key:** **hat**, āge, cāre, fār; **let**, ēqual, tērm; **it**, īce; **hot**, ōpen, ōrder; **oil**; **out**; **cup**, pūt, rŭle; **child**; **long**; **thin**; /ʒh/ for **then**; /zh/ for **measure**; /ə/ represents /a/ in **about**, /e/ in **taken**, /i/ in **pencil**, /o/ in **lemon**, and /u/ in **circus**.



| World War I Europe



## Neutral America

**Background.** In 1914 Europe was a keg of gunpowder waiting for a match. France had been defeated by Germany in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. She had paid a huge indemnity and gave Germany the border regions of Alsace and Lorraine. The French army had been rebuilt and was eager for revenge.

Germany had been created by the cagey Prussian leader, Otto von Bismarck, from the many small German states after the war with France. Bismarck had defeated France and carefully worked to keep the other nations of Europe from uniting against Germany. In 1890 a new German ruler, Kaiser (Emperor) Wilhelm II threw out Bismarck and his careful policies. Wilhelm II was an unstable man who wanted to make Germany the greatest nation in the world. He began a massive arms buildup, including a huge, modern navy. Their navy threatened the master of the sea. She had to improve her own navy to keep ahead of Germany. These factors led to an arms race in Europe. To add to the tension, the nations were competing for colonies all over the world.

In 1914 the most dangerous place to be in Europe was the Balkan Peninsula north of Greece. Here, many different nationalities were living under the same government, all the while hating each other. Slavs, Croats, and Muslims fought each other in two brief wars in 1912 and 1913 which shifted the borders and encouraged more hatred. The slavic nation of Serbia in the Balkans was closely allied with Russia, the largest slavic power in Europe. Serbia was encouraging terrorism in the neighboring slavic regions of Austria-Hungary, hoping to bring them under Serbian control. It was there that the spark was struck that would cause the explosion in Europe.

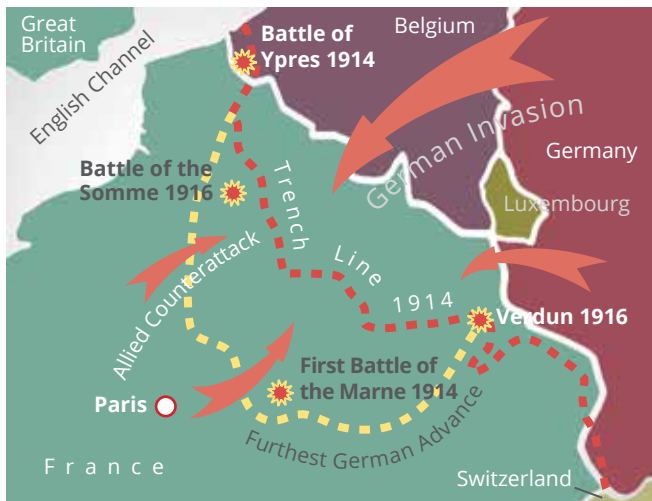
**The Lamps Go Out.** Austria-Hungary had annexed two Balkan provinces, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1908. In June of 1914, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, Archduke Franz



| Austria-Hungary's Archduke, Franz Ferdinand

Ferdinand, and his wife were touring the city of Sarajevo in Bosnia. They were assassinated by a Bosnian terrorist who had ties to Serbia. Austria, with the assurance of support from Germany, sent Serbia an **ultimatum** demanding the suppression of Serbian terrorism in a way that seriously violated Serbian national rights and pride.

Realizing this was a serious threat, Serbia sent a conciliatory note that fell short of the Austrian demands. On July 28th, exactly one month after the assassination, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Russia **mobilized** its army to be ready to support Serbia. Germany saw this as a threat and demanded Russia cease at once. Russia refused. Germany declared war on Russia on August 1st and on its ally, France, two days later. On August 4th, Germany invaded the neutral Belgium and as a result, Britain declared war on Germany. Each nation was obligated by treaty to fight with their allies, bringing on a general war all over Europe.



| The Western Front (1914-1916)

National pride, alliances, and an arms race drew Europe into a horrific war. Very few people had the slightest idea how awful the war would be. Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary of Britain, was one exception. “The lamps are going out all over Europe,” he said when Britain declared war. “We shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.”

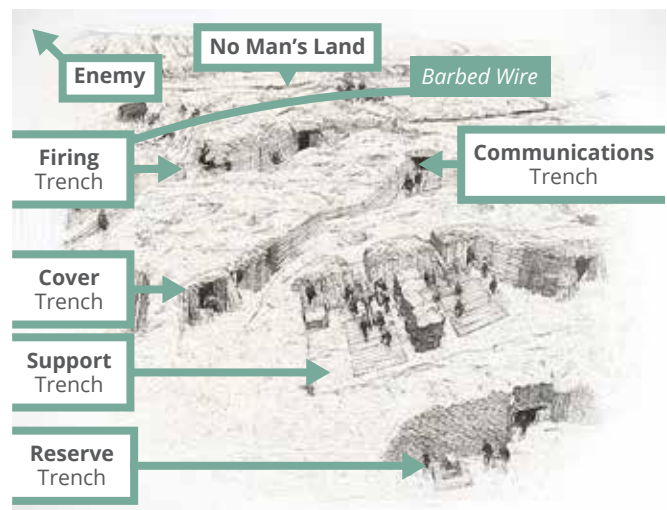
**Stalemate.** Germany was faced with a two-front war. Its battle plan called for the swift invasion and conquest of France before the huge, but slow, Russian army could be brought into battle. To insure speed on the western front, Germany attacked, not along the protected French-German border, but through neutral Belgium. This was a major mistake. It cast Germany as the aggressor and was a major factor in turning the U.S. toward the Allies.

The well-disciplined, well-equipped Germans made rapid progress, and by September 1914 they were threatening the French capital of Paris. The French and a small British army succeeded in throwing them back at the first Battle of the Marne (September 6-9). Then both sides “raced to the sea” in an effort to go around the enemy army. By November of 1914, a battle line had been established that ran from Switzerland to the North Sea. Both sides dug in and set up defensive positions. Thus began the horrific “trench warfare” of World War I.

Trench warfare was brutal. Each side set up several parallel rows of trenches facing the enemy. These would be 6-8 feet deep and wide enough for two men to pass each other. In between the two armies was “no man’s land,” bombed-out, open land protected on each side by barbed wire, machine guns, and artillery fire.

Attacks were wholesale slaughters. They began with artillery barrages followed by men “going over the top,” out of the trenches into the open across no man’s land. They ran unprotected into the machine gun and artillery fire of the enemy who was firing from fortified trenches. Losses were huge and gains were small. For example, close to a million men were wounded, killed, or captured in the battles of Verdun and the Somme in 1916, neither of which accomplished much. Moreover, the generals never learned from the failures. They continued to order attacks in spite of the losses, even when the western front barely moved for three and a half years! The suffering of the men intensified when both sides began to use poison gas that killed and blinded many.

On the eastern front, Germany pushed back the Russian armies that had attacked at the beginning of the war, but Austria-Hungary was less successful. Russia occupied part of their territory until 1915, when a combined German-Austrian army recovered it. Russia



| The Trench Warfare System

and Austria-Hungary battled each other to exhaustion in the years that followed. However, Austria succeeded in its initial goal when it finally occupied Serbia in late 1915.

Because so many nations were involved, battles were fought in many places other than central Europe. There were several clashes between colonial armies in Africa and Asia. Sea battles were fought in all the major oceans. Italy entered the war on the Allied side in the hopes of gaining territory. It fought a bloody but ineffective war against Austria-Hungary along their mountain border. The Allies unsuccessfully tried to capture the Turkish Dardanelles, the straits leading to the Black Sea and Russia's southern ports. This failure meant that the

more industrial western Allies could not easily resupply stumbling Russia.

World War I was the first war to see the extensive use of aircraft. Flimsy airplanes were used mainly to observe enemy troops and movements. The Germans used balloon-like airships called *zeppelins* to bomb enemy troops, including targets like London itself. Airplanes would shoot down the zeppelins and enemy observation planes. The often complicated plane-to-plane battles were called *dogfights*. Pilots who shot down five or more enemy ships earned the title of "ace." Eddie Rickenbacker, a professional race car driver before the war, eventually became America's greatest ace with twenty-two airplane and four balloon kills.



### Name the correct person or item.

- |      |       |  |
|------|-------|--|
| 1.1  | _____ | German Kaiser, World War I   |
| 1.2  | _____ | Most dangerous area of 1914 Europe   |
| 1.3  | _____ | Nation that wanted revenge for a war in 1870                                       |
| 1.4  | _____ | Weapon that blinded and killed in the trenches                                     |
| 1.5  | _____ | Austria-Hungarian heir, assassinated to begin the war                              |
| 1.6  | _____ | Battle which stopped the first German advance on Paris                             |
| 1.7  | _____ | Pilot with five or more "kills"  |
| 1.8  | _____ | "The lamps are going out all over Europe; ... "                                    |
| 1.9  | _____ | French provinces lost to Germany in 1870s  |
| 1.10 | _____ | Prussian leader, united Germany  |
| 1.11 | _____ | Neutral nation invaded by Germany  |
| 1.12 | _____ | Straits to the Black Sea not taken by Allies                                       |
| 1.13 | _____ | German airships used for bombing   |
| 1.14 | _____ | Land between enemy trenches  |
| 1.15 | _____ | America's greatest ace   |
| 1.16 | _____ | European policy of using alliance to prevent any nation from becoming too powerful |



**Complete the following.**

**1.17** Give the sequence of events that began the general war in Europe.

- a. Archduke assassinated in \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ sent an ultimatum to \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ declared war on \_\_\_\_\_, July 28th
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ mobilized in support of Serbia
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ declared war on \_\_\_\_\_ on Aug. 1st and  
then on \_\_\_\_\_ on Aug. 3rd
- f. \_\_\_\_\_ invaded \_\_\_\_\_, Aug. 4th
- g. As a result, \_\_\_\_\_ declared war on \_\_\_\_\_.

**1.18** What was Germany's basic battle plan?

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**1.19** What three things drew Europe into this war?

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**1.20** Why were casualties so heavy during offensives under trench warfare?

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**America's reaction.** With the full support of the U.S. public behind him, President Wilson issued a declaration of neutrality as soon as the war began. It was a European war, and most Americans saw it exclusively as a European problem. The Atlantic Ocean would keep America safely away from the battle.

There were several reasons why most Americans (including the president) favored the Allies. First of all, the U.S. had developed very good relations with Britain around the turn of the century. It was the source of American culture, an important business partner, and as many as half of all American citizens could trace their ancestry back to British lands.

Secondly, France was fighting with Britain. France was the nation that had given the U.S. key aid to achieve its own independence. There was a strong pro-French feeling among Americans, especially as France bore the brunt of the warfare in the west. Many Americans served in France as volunteers before America even entered the war.

On top of this, Germany almost worked to make Americans dislike her. Germany had an autocratic and aristocratic society (the type that democratic Americans despised). Wilhelm II was an arrogant man who threatened aggressively and loved military power and display. Moreover, the invasion of Belgium was a brutal violation of international law. Germany itself had signed a treaty in the 1800s guaranteeing Belgian neutrality. The German Chancellor made matters worse by calling that treaty “a scrap of paper.” From the beginning, Americans saw Germany as the wrongdoer in the war. However, there were always a few among the anti-British Irish-Americans and German-Americans who favored the Central Powers throughout the war.

William Jennings Bryan had been rewarded for his years of service to the Democratic Party with the job of Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson. Bryan was fanatic on the subject



| German Soldiers Marching

of keeping America neutral at all cost. He was an idealist who tried to prevent wars through treaties that required disputes to be arbitrated. At the beginning of the war, Bryan and Wilson were in agreement that America should stay on good terms with both sides and eventually try to mediate a peace.

**Neutral Trade.** The main problem with American neutrality was trade interests. America, and all industrial neutral nations, were willing to sell arms to both sides during a war at an excellent profit. In fact, the war orders from Europe pulled America out of a recession in 1914. Most American trade was with the Allies, which appeared less than neutral to the Germans.

The war trade with Germany quickly declined for a couple of reasons. The main cause was the success of the British blockade of the Central Powers. The British navy, the largest in the world, had cleared German opposition off the oceans by the end of 1914. The British were free to intercept and seize shipments to the Central Powers on the high seas. America resented the capture of American cargoes, but the British paid compensation and did not harm the ships or crew. While infuriating, the British actions were consistent with the Union



blockade during the Civil War and did no serious damage to U.S.-British relations.

The second reason for the decline in trade with Germany was that both sides ran out of cash. American bankers were willing to lend money to the Allies and did so throughout the war. Thus, the Allies were able to buy American guns using money from American loans. On the other hand, very few loans were made to the Central Powers who were considered a bad credit risk.

Neutral America rapidly became a munitions and supply factory for the Allies. Germany responded by declaring its own blockade around Britain, hoping to cut off the island nation's vital ocean supply lines. However, Germany had no ships available to enforce a blockade. They resorted to a new technology—submarines called U-boats.

**First U-boat Crisis.** In February of 1915, Germany announced that all *Allied* vessels sailing around Great Britain would be sunk by U-boats without warning. Wilson demanded and received assurances that neutral ships would not be targeted. However, no protection was promised for Americans traveling on Allied vessels. This provoked the first major American-German crisis.

War blockades up until the Great War used battleships to intercept merchant vessels bringing supplies to the enemy. Because most trading ships were unarmed or lightly armed, they quickly surrendered without a fight. The cargo might be seized, but no one died. In the rare instances where the warship sunk the merchant vessel, a warning was always given and arrangements were made for the safety of the crew. This was the accepted international procedure for blockades.

U-boats set up a totally different kind of blockade. They were very vulnerable to any kind of shipboard guns and, therefore attacked without warning. Ships were routinely destroyed with their cargoes and most, if not all, of the



| The Deadly U-Boat

crew died! This was a shocking innovation in the history of warfare. This kind of destruction would become normal in Twentieth Century wars, but this was the first time the world had seen it. Americans saw it as an example of German contempt for international law.

On May 7, 1915 a German U-boat sank the unarmed British passenger liner *Lusitania* without warning. The ship sank in less than twenty minutes and 1,198 people died, including 128 Americans. The outcry in America was tremendous. Wilson sent strong notes of protest to Germany. Bryan thought they were worded too strongly and might cause conflict. He resigned rather than sign one of them. The Germans gave some reassurances but did not keep them. After more sinkings, Wilson threatened to break off diplomatic relations (a step toward war) if Germany did not stop sinking unarmed ships without warning. Germany backed down and cut back her submarine operations, ending the crisis.

**Election of 1916.** Theodore Roosevelt did not want to split the Republican vote again and refused the Progressive Party's nomination in 1916. The Republicans nominated Supreme

Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes who had an excellent progressive record as governor of New York. The Democrats naturally chose Wilson who campaigned under the slogan, “he kept us out of war.” Hughes failed to make effective use of America’s lack of preparation for war by speaking on both sides of the issue. Wilson campaigned on his reform record, prosperity (ironically, due to the war), and American neutrality. He won the election by over a half million out of the 17.5 million votes cast.

**War.** By the beginning of 1917, Germany was getting desperate. The war was into its third year of stalemate, and Germany was suffering from shortages of all kinds, including food. The high command decided to gamble on a knock-out blow. They announced in January that they would resume submarine warfare and sink *all* ships, including American, in the blockade zone. Germany knew this would bring America into the war, but they believed they could defeat the Allies before the unprepared Americans were ready to fight. They almost succeeded.

Wilson broke diplomatic relations with Germany on February 3rd and began to prepare for war. In early March, an intercepted note from German foreign secretary Zimmermann made the situation worse. In the Zimmermann note, Germany sought an alliance with Mexico, offering them the chance to regain Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The offer was never seriously considered, but it did further arouse the American people.

Also in March, a revolution took place in Russia. The long-suffering Russian people rebelled against their autocratic ruler, the czar, and set up a democratic government. The Russian people needed more than just a new form of government. The devastating war was incredibly unpopular, but the new government decided to keep fighting. The **communists** would soon take advantage of that mistake.

Germany ended the last hope for peace when it sank several unarmed American merchant vessels in mid-March. President Wilson’s cup of patience was finally drained. Germany was at war with America, but we were not fighting back. On April 2, 1917, Wilson went before a joint session of Congress to ask for a declaration of war. His speech was a masterful presentation of his ideal of a just war. He finished with this statement:

*It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war ... But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which have always carried nearest to our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.*

*Congress declared war on April 6, 1917.*



**Answer these questions.**

- 1.21** What were the contents of the Zimmermann note? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.22** How did U-boats violate established international law and practice? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.23** What event at the start of the war turned America against Germany? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.24** What did Secretary of State Bryan want America to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.25** What was Wilson's 1916 campaign slogan, and what later event made it ironic? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.26** Why did neutral America trade mainly with the Allies? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.27** When the war began in 1914, what stance did most Americans favor? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.28** What happened to the *Lusitania*, and why did the incident cause Bryan to resign? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.29** What happened to the Russian government in March of 1917? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.30** What was the primary cause of America's declaration of war against Germany? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## The Great War

**The Crusade.** The American people quickly united in support of the war, with few exceptions, like reformer Robert LaFollette who opposed the war to the end. Even William J. Bryan supported the war effort. The peace-loving Woodrow Wilson proved he could lead a war if he had to do it.

Wilson saw the war as a crusade and convinced the American people of his vision. America was not seeking land or money in this war. She was fighting “to make the world safe for democracy.” Americans threw themselves into fulfilling that ideal.

The American economy was slowly organized on a war footing. The War Industries Board was set up and given the power to set prices, improve production, and eliminate waste. Railroads and communication were taken over by the federal government for the length of the war. Herbert Hoover, who had run a very successful program to bring food to starving Belgium, was put in charge of the Food Administration. His excellent organizational skills and popular appeals to save food resulted in substantial increases in the amount of food shipped to hungry Allies. Ship production was increased, and the time required to build a ship decreased, although most of the increase in shipping came too late for the war. By the time of the Armistice, Americans were building two ships for every one they lost to the U-boats. (The extended use of **convoys** eventually brought the U-boat menace under control).

One of Wilson’s fears about war was that it would arouse hatred among the American people. He was correct. German-Americans, who were typically loyal, faced harassment and occasional injury from the aroused public. Orchestras no longer played music by German composers such as Beethoven or Wagner. Sauerkraut was renamed “Liberty Cabbage,” and dachshunds became very unpopular. The Socialist Party publicly opposed the war, and its

leader was jailed for anti-war speeches. Tolerance has never been a public virtue during a war, and this one was no exception.

**“Lafayette, We are Here.”** By 1917 the Allies were in desperate shape. Battle losses were so high that the Allies were literally running out of men. A French **offensive** in the spring had been thrown back with heavy losses. Many of the French troops mutinied in the aftermath of the failure. They had had enough after three years of death and disease. Moreover, the Russian war effort was collapsing under the weak leadership of the new government and the growing communist revolt in the nation. The Allies desperately needed U.S. replacements on the western front.

This was not what the Americans expected. They had not initially planned to raise a huge army and ship it all the way across the Atlantic. In fact, the German high command believed they could not do so even if they tried; but faced with this critical situation, Wilson complied.

Congress reluctantly passed a conscription act a few weeks after the war began. In contrast to the bloody reaction to the Civil War draft, the public responded well to the new law. Eventually, men between the ages of 18 and 45 were required to register for the draft. No one could buy his way out of service, but exceptions were given to people working at jobs critical to the war effort, such as ship building. In the end, over four million men were taken into the armed services to fight the Great War; about half that number served in France.

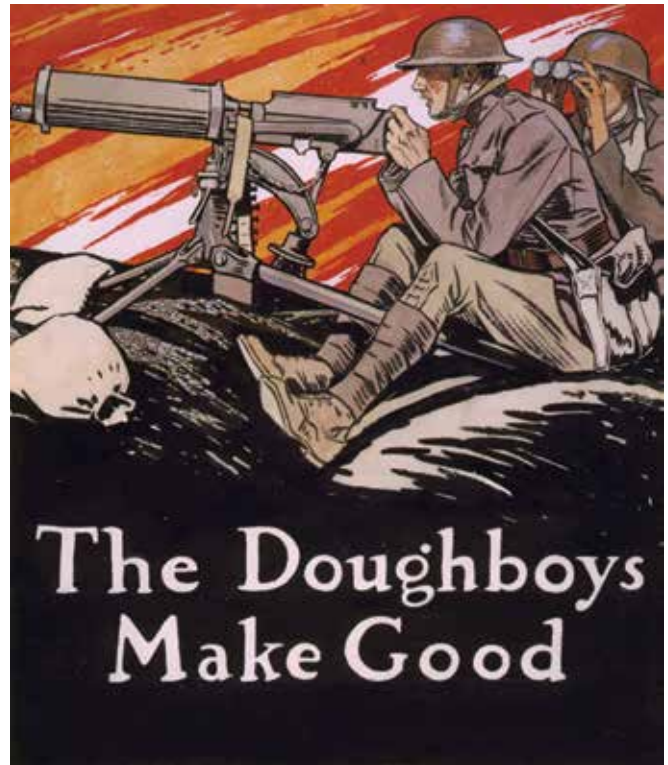
Still, it took time to organize, equip, train, and ship all of those men. The “Doughboys,” as the Americans were called, did not start arriving in France in large numbers until early 1918, almost a year after America entered the war. Recognizing the need to improve Allied morale, a group of soldiers named the American Expeditionary Forces were sent over in June of 1917.

Under the command of General John J. Pershing, the small, inexperienced A.E.F. began to train in quiet sectors of the front. One of Pershing's officers summed up the feelings of many Americans when he said upon arrival, "Lafayette, we are here."

**Russian Revolution.** The democratic government in Russia was unable to rule that battered land. Germany allowed Lenin, a communist exile, to return to Russia through Germany in 1917 in the hopes of damaging the Russian war effort. Lenin organized a communist revolution which overthrew the Russian government in October of 1917. The Bolsheviks (communists) fought a civil war for control of the country. They could not afford to fight Germany at the same time. In March of 1918, they made an expensive peace with Germany, giving the kaiser a huge chunk of what is now eastern Europe. This freed the Bolsheviks to fight in Russia and the Germans to fight exclusively on the western front.

**The End.** Germany quickly moved its armies from the east to France for a massive series of offensives beginning in March of 1918. The Americans were just beginning to arrive in strength, and at first the Germans succeeded in pushing forward. The May offensive brought the enemy back to the Marne River. They were again stopped with some American assistance. Newly-arrived American troops were thrown into the battle at Château-Thierry near Paris. They held and later cleared the Germans out of the Belleau woods nearby, in spite of high casualty rates.

Pershing insisted that the Americans should be set up as an independent army in charge of one portion of the front. The French and British wanted to use the Americans as replacements for their own battered forces. Pershing lent out units to do just that, but as the number of Americans grew, he continued to insist on a separate command. Gradually, through sheer stubbornness, he got his way. The Americans



| "Doughboy" War Picture

were given a portion of the front running north from the Swiss border.

In September, the Americans were placed in charge of driving the Germans out of the St. Mihiel salient (a bulge in the front). They were aided by a few French divisions. The Germans were quickly overwhelmed and driven back. The Americans immediately moved north and west to join in a major Allied offensive.

The greatest American offensive of the war was in the Meuse-Argonne region. It was an area of dense forest, rugged terrain, and impressive German defenses. More than a million Americans fought in the battle which resulted in over 120,000 casualties. By the end of October, the Germans were steadily pushed back until they lost everything they had gained in their offensives during the spring.

America's greatest hero of the war came out of this grinding battle. Sergeant Alvin York (then a corporal) was a committed Christian from Tennessee. York was a crack shot who suddenly

found himself in command when all of the officers and most of the men in his platoon were killed or wounded. York shot more than twenty of the Germans who had tried to finish off the Americans, and he captured 132 others!

By November it was clear that the war was almost over. The German allies had surrendered one by one. Germany itself was now fighting for its life on German soil. Hoping for a reasonable peace, the Germans offered to negotiate a cease fire. Under pressure from the Allies, the kaiser was forced to abdicate and an armistice was signed. The Great War ended on November 11, 1918 at eleven in the morning local time—the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

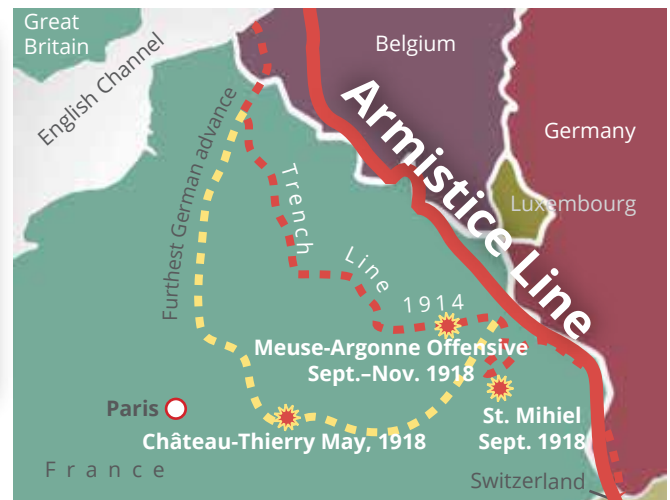
The heavy battle losses of the Great War were augmented by disease, most notably the

influenza **pandemic** of 1918-1919. This fierce virus routinely killed healthy young people within hours. The pandemic killed over 20 million people all over the world, including 500,000 Americans. That was four times the number of Americans killed in the war.

The human cost of the Great War was staggering. The number of dead from Russia alone was 1.7 million. Over 1.3 million French and 900,000 from the British Empire died. The American dead from the one year they were in the battle totalled over 100,000. Germany lost 1.7 million and Austria-Hungary 1.2 million. (Figures taken from the *World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia*, 1997). That did not include the men who lost limbs, eyesight, or their health during battle. A whole generation of European men were cut down. The two sides had to succeed in making peace, and that was their greatest failure of all.



Signing of the Armistice in a Railway Carriage



| The First World War's Armistice Line



### Complete these sentences.

- 1.31** Led by a man named \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ overthrew the Russian government in October of 1917.
- 1.32** America sent a force called the \_\_\_\_\_ to France under the command of \_\_\_\_\_ in June of 1917.
- 1.33** More Americans died in the \_\_\_\_\_ pandemic of 1917-18 than did in the war.
- 1.34** According to Woodrow Wilson, America was fighting “to make \_\_\_\_\_.”
- 1.35** Prices and production were under the control of the \_\_\_\_\_ during the war.
- 1.36** American soldiers, nicknamed \_\_\_\_\_, did not arrive in France in substantial numbers until \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.37** Newly arrived Americans helped to defend Paris in early 1918 when they held at \_\_\_\_\_ and then cleared the Germans out of the \_\_\_\_\_ woods.
- 1.38** \_\_\_\_\_, who killed more than twenty Germans and captured 132 more, was the greatest American hero of the war.
- 1.39** \_\_\_\_\_ managed the Belgium famine relief and the wartime Food Administration.
- 1.40** The greatest American offensive of the war was in the \_\_\_\_\_ region.
- 1.41** The Great War ended by an armistice on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ local time.



**Complete the following.**

**1.42** What were the terms of the American conscription act? \_\_\_\_\_

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---

**1.43** How did the communist revolution in Russia help Germany? \_\_\_\_\_

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**1.44** Explain the statement “Lafayette, we are here.” (Look up Lafayette, if necessary.) \_\_\_\_\_

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**1.45** How did Pershing want the American forces used in France? \_\_\_\_\_

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## The Peace that Failed

**Fourteen Points.** Woodrow Wilson was determined that *this* war would end with a just and fair peace. In January of 1918 he outlined Fourteen Points to be used as guidelines for a final treaty of peace. The basic points were:

1. Open negotiations of peace agreements and no secret treaties in the future
2. Freedom of the seas
3. As much free trade as possible
4. Reduction of armaments to the smallest amount necessary for nations to protect themselves
5. Judging of colonial claims in the interest of the people of the colony
6. Removal of German troops from the Russian territory taken by treaty in 1918; Russia to determine its own political future
7. Removal of German troops from Belgium, and the restoration of that nation
8. Removal of German troops from France; the return of Alsace and Lorraine
9. Adjust the borders of Italy based on the nationality of the people
10. Self-government for the different nationalities in Austria-Hungary
11. Removal of German troops from Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro with guarantees of their independence; Serbia to get a sea port
12. Independence for Turkey but with self-government for the different nationalities there; Dardanelles open to all shipping
13. Reestablishment of the nation of Poland (It had been divided up among its neighbors in 1795) with access to the sea



14. The creation of an association of nations to protect the smaller nations and preserve peace

These points were hailed all over the world by liberals and the oppressed, but they were quietly reviled by many of the powerful politicians who would have to enact them. The Germans signed the armistice under the belief these would be the basis of the final treaty.

**Treaty of Versailles.** When the war ended, Wilson announced that he would personally lead the American delegation to the peace conference. It was a bad decision for many reasons. It put him away from Washington for six long months. After the Republicans had gained control of Congress, it made the treaty a personal matter for Wilson and his Republican opponents. He compounded these errors by naming only one unimportant Republican to the peace delegation and no Senators, even though the Senate was required to approve the treaty.

Wilson was given a hero's welcome as he toured the capitals of Europe. His American troops had turned the tide and saved Europe from the "Huns" (Germans). His Fourteen Points held out a hope for a time of lasting peace out of the years of carnage. The crowds that greeted the American president were delirious with joy. From such heights, he fell hard.

In spite of the first of Wilson's points, the Paris treaty negotiations (January 1919) were held in secret. The Germans were not even invited to participate. Most of the decisions were made by the "Big Four": President Woodrow Wilson of the U.S., Prime Minister David Lloyd George of Britain, Premier Georges Clemenceau of France, and Premier Vittorio Orlando of Italy.

Wilson's agenda quickly ran into the hard expectations of his European counterparts. Lloyd George had promised to crush Germany in his election campaign. Clemenceau was determined to protect devastated France from future German militarism at all cost. Italy and



| L to R: David Lloyd George, Italian Foreign Minister Sonnino, Georges Clemenceau, and Woodrow Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference

smaller Allied countries came to collect territory as part of the spoils of war. Italy had actually entered the war because it had been promised territory in a secret treaty with Britain. Wilson was repeatedly forced to compromise on his Fourteen Points.

Wilson concentrated on his last point, the creation of an association of nations to insure peace in the future. He succeeded in making the League of Nations part of the peace treaty itself and personally took charge of writing the League Covenant at the beginning of the conference. He believed the League would be able to rectify any problems created by other areas of the treaty. However, the Senate refused to consider the League without the protection of the Monroe Doctrine, the right of member nations to handle their own immigration and trade as well as the right to withdraw from the League. The European leaders forced Wilson to yield on other key points to get these items added to the League Covenant.

France's primary demands were to make Germany pay for the cost of the war and so cripple that nation that it would never threaten France

again. France wanted to take the coal-rich border region of the Saar (as well as Alsace-Lorraine) for itself and also create a buffer state out of the west bank of the Rhine River. This would have placed thousands of Germans under French rule, and Wilson would not allow such a violation of self-determination. In the end, it was agreed that France would occupy the Rhineland for fifteen years, and the Saar region would vote on which nation would rule it after being under League control for that time period.

The Allies demanded that Germany assume full responsibility for starting the war. She was required to pay a huge indemnity to cover the civilian damages during the war, including Allied war pensions. Wilson was forced to agree to this, even though Germany had been stripped of some of its most productive regions, reducing its ability to pay anything. Germany was forced to dismantle most of its army and give the Allies its navy. (German sailors sunk many of their own ships rather than do this.)

Wilson also lost on Italy which took the regions it had been promised by the treaty with Britain, including parts of Austria and the port of Trieste on the Adriatic Sea. Italy demanded the Slavic port of Fiume, which was to be part of the new nation of Yugoslavia. Italy did not get it at the conference, but then forced Yugoslavia to cede the port to Italy in 1924. Japan succeeded in keeping the German colonies it captured in Asia, particularly control over China's Shantung peninsula, which was a gross violation of self-determination. Because of this, China refused to sign the treaty. Other European nations managed to keep control of captured German colonies by taking them as "mandates" under the nominal supervision of the League of Nations.

The map of Europe was redrawn by the Paris Conference. The nation of Poland was recreated from the land given up by Russia when it withdrew from the war, as were Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Poland was given an outlet to the sea which left part of Germany isolated east

of that nation. Austria-Hungary was divided (its emperor abdicated) into Austria and Hungary. Part of its land was given to create the nations of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia as well as to expand Romania. The Ottoman Empire was reduced to the nation of Turkey with most of its former territory in the hands of Britain and France.

The Treaty of Versailles came under severe criticism as soon as it became public. France was bitter that its revenge was so limited. Italy was bitter over Fiume. The idealists felt that Wilson had betrayed them. Germany was especially bitter. She had sued for peace, trusting the Fourteen Points. The harsh treaty forced them to accept full responsibility for the war, pay damages, lose a large section of industrial land, and lose their armed forces. Germany had no choice but to sign in June of 1919. However, the terms of the treaty would cause ruin, bitterness, and would build a foundation for the rise of Adolf Hitler and another war twenty years later.

**Senate Battle.** Isolationism returned to America with the end of the war. The League of Nations looked suspiciously like an entangling



| Post-World War I Europe

European alliance that the nation had avoided since the time of George Washington. The Senate was especially hostile, fearing the League would interfere with internal decisions. Led by Henry Cabot Lodge, a bitter enemy of Wilson, the Republican senate was in a fighting mood. However, the Senate was unwilling to reject the treaty outright. Instead, it sought to drag out the decision and water it down with amendments. The president refused to consider any amendments or alterations.

Wilson became increasingly frustrated with the Senate. Finally, in September of 1919 he decided to appeal to the American people. He began a speaking tour across the nation in order to build support for the League of Nations which he believed would repair the concessions he was forced to make in the treaty. He traveled 8,000 miles, making 32 speeches in 21 days, against the advice of his doctors. At the end of his tour, he collapsed and suffered a stroke that left him partially paralyzed. He was confined to a sick room during the critical months leading up to the Senate vote, increasingly out of touch and angry. The Senate rejected the treaty and the League of Nations in November of 1919. A serious

attempt was made to pass it again in March of 1920 with some reservations written by Lodge. Wilson himself doomed the compromise when he insisted that his supporters should vote against it because of the reservations. America never joined the League of Nations, but it made a separate peace with Germany.

**Conclusion.** The Great War was supposed to be the “war to end all wars.” Instead, it was the precursor to the greatest war yet, World War II. The wanton bloodshed and destruction destroyed ideals as well as nations. When it was over, America wanted to get back to the business of living. Little did they know that the world was changing.

The Great War marked the decline of Europe as the world power. Europe had dominated much of the world by trade and colonization since the 1500–1600s. Bled white by World War I, Europe’s power began to decline. A death blow would be delivered by a second great war twenty years later, devastating yet another generation of European manhood. The Great War was pivotal in the transition away from Europe and toward the United States as the leader of the Western world.





**Match these items.**

- |            |                    |  |
|------------|--------------------|--|
| 1.46 _____ | Poland             | a. Nation created after the war with a sea outlet through German territory |
| 1.47 _____ | Yugoslavia         | b. Senate Majority leader  |
| 1.48 _____ | Lloyd George       | c. Ideals which were supposed to be the basis for the peace treaty         |
| 1.49 _____ | Henry Cabot Lodge  | d. Association of nations created by the Treaty of Versailles              |
| 1.50 _____ | League of Nations  | e. Prime Minister of Great Britain   |
| 1.51 _____ | Monroe             | f. Premier of France   |
| 1.52 _____ | Fourteen Points    | g. Doctrine the Senate wanted protected in the League Covenant             |
| 1.53 _____ | Czechoslovakia     | h. Nation that took over control of Shantung peninsula from the Germans    |
| 1.54 _____ | Georges Clemenceau | i. New nation built from Serbia, Montenegro, and part of Austria-Hungary   |
| 1.55 _____ | Vittorio Orlando   | j. New nation created within Austria-Hungary                               |
| 1.56 _____ | Japan              | k. Premier of Italy  |

**Check the items that were part of the Fourteen Points.**

- |      |                          |   |
|------|--------------------------|---|
| 1.57 | <input type="checkbox"/> | recreation of Poland  |
| 1.58 | <input type="checkbox"/> | protection of American immigration policy   |
| 1.59 | <input type="checkbox"/> | independence for the Rhineland  |
| 1.60 | <input type="checkbox"/> | self-determination (their own government) for many of the nationalities of Europe |
| 1.61 | <input type="checkbox"/> | freedom of the seas   |
| 1.62 | <input type="checkbox"/> | German responsibility for the war   |
| 1.63 | <input type="checkbox"/> | setting up mandates to maintain European control over German colonies             |
| 1.64 | <input type="checkbox"/> | an association of nations to keep the peace                                       |
| 1.65 | <input type="checkbox"/> | the right of nations to withdraw from the League of Nations                       |
| 1.66 | <input type="checkbox"/> | part of Austria being given to Italy  |
| 1.67 | <input type="checkbox"/> | payment of a war indemnity by Germany   |
| 1.68 | <input type="checkbox"/> | restoration of Belgium  |
| 1.69 | <input type="checkbox"/> | open negotiations, no secret treaties   |

**Answer these questions.**

- 1.70** a. How did Wilson counter Senate attempts to stall the treaty? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. What happened to Wilson personally as a result? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.71** Why did the Treaty of Versailles lead to World War II? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.72** What was the goal of France at the negotiations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.73** How did America and Germany end the war between their nations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.74** What mistakes did Wilson make in setting up the American delegation to the Paris Conference? \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.75** What did Wilson believe was the most important part of the Treaty of Versailles? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.76** Which nations were the “Big Four” at the peace conference? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.77** What did the smaller Allied nations want at the Paris Conference? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.78** What was the coal-rich section of Germany that France wanted? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.79** Why would it be difficult for Germany to pay the war indemnity? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1.80** What happened to the world power of Europe because of the Great War? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Review the material in this section to prepare for the Self Test.** The Self Test will check your mastery of this particular section. The items missed on this Self Test will indicate specific areas where restudy is needed for mastery.

## SELF TEST 1

**Match these people** (each item, 2 points).

- |                    |                                    |                             |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>1.01</b> _____  | Wilson's Secretary of State        | a. Woodrow Wilson           |
| <b>1.02</b> _____  | Commander of the A.E.F.            | b. Wilhelm II               |
| <b>1.03</b> _____  | Russian Bolshevik leader           | c. Otto von Bismarck        |
| <b>1.04</b> _____  | Republican Senate Majority Leader  | d. Archduke Franz Ferdinand |
| <b>1.05</b> _____  | Kaiser of Germany                  | e. William Jennings Bryan   |
| <b>1.06</b> _____  | "He Kept Us Out of War"            | f. John J. Pershing         |
| <b>1.07</b> _____  | Prime Minister of Britain          | g. Lenin                    |
| <b>1.08</b> _____  | Prussian leader who united Germany | h. Lloyd George             |
| <b>1.09</b> _____  | Heir to the throne of Austria      | i. Georges Clemenceau       |
| <b>1.010</b> _____ | Premier of France                  | j. Henry Cabot Lodge        |

**Complete the following** (each numbered answer, 3 points).

- 1.011** What were the three major factors that drew Europe into World War I? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.012** What event triggered the war? (place, event, person) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.013** Describe why trench warfare offensive was ineffective and devastating. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.014** What actions by Germany were primarily responsible for drawing America into the war?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.015** What action by Germany early in the war cast her as the aggressor? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**1.016** What event in Russia allowed Germany to move troops away from the eastern front?

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.017** What disease killed more Americans than the war in 1918-19? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.018** What was the name of Wilson's liberal peace framework? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.019** What did France primarily want at the Paris Conference? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.020** Name three nations created by the Treaty of Versailles. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.021** What was the name of the association of countries created by the Treaty of Versailles?

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.022** What did Wilson do when the Senate stalled over approving the treaty? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.023** The Great War was the beginning of a change in the leadership of the western world. The leadership began to switch over to whom? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.024** What were airplanes used for during World War I? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.025** What did Americans want to do about the war when it began? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.026** Why did America wind up trading mainly with the Allies? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.027** Name the first two nations who were officially at war. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.028** How did submarine blockades differ from previous war blockades? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1.029 What was the Zimmermann note? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1.030 What was the Allies’ greatest need by the time America entered the war? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Choose the correct answer (each answer, 2 points).

- |                  |                    |               |                      |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Alvin York       | Eddie Rickenbacker | Meuse-Argonne | St. Mihiel           |
| <i>Lusitania</i> | zeppelins          | Dardanelles   | War Industries Board |
| Herbert Hoover   | Château-Thierry    |               |                      |

- |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|--|
| 1.031 | _____ | Set prices, improved production, and eliminated waste                        |
| 1.032 | _____ | American troops defended Paris against a German offensive                    |
| 1.033 | _____ | Airships used for observations and to drop bombs                             |
| 1.034 | _____ | America’s greatest ace   |
| 1.035 | _____ | Food Administration and Belgium famine relief effort                         |
| 1.036 | _____ | Greatest American offensive of the war                                       |
| 1.037 | _____ | Salient on the western front, pushed back by the Americans                   |
| 1.038 | _____ | Straits into the Black Seas, supply route to Russia                          |
| 1.039 | _____ | American sharpshooter hero, captured 132 Germans                             |
| 1.040 | _____ | British passenger liner sunk by German U-boat with the loss of 128 Americans |

80

100

SCORE \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER \_\_\_\_\_

initials

date



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