

## Unit 7

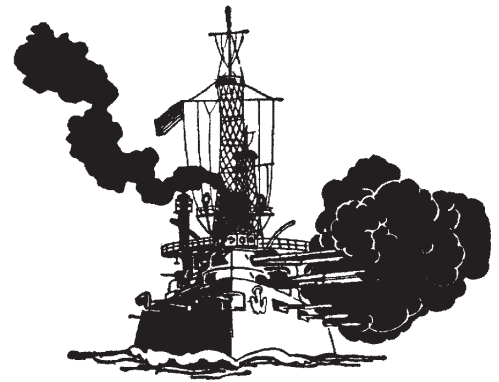
1914 –  
1918

# World War I

In 1914 a terrible war broke out between two groups of nations in Europe. At that time it was called the Great War, but many years later it came to be known as World War I.

The United States had long tried to avoid getting tangled up in European conflicts. President Woodrow Wilson tried to keep America out of this war as well. Deadly attacks on American ships by German submarines, however, finally forced the U.S. into action in 1917. America's entry into the war helped bring the fighting to an end in 1918.

This unit examines World War I and America's role in ending the war. It will explain how the United States tried to provide leadership for a better future at the war's end. We will also see that America's involvement in World War I set the stage for the later rise of the U.S. to a global superpower.



### Internet resources:

[www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap)

### Words and people to know:

Allied Powers / Allies

Central Powers

empire

Woodrow Wilson

Archduke Franz Ferdinand

militarism

alliances

imperialism

nationalism

Western Front

trench warfare

submarine warfare

*Lusitania*

Zimmerman telegram

armistice

Fourteen Points plan

Treaty of Versailles

League of Nations

reparations payments

United States Senate

isolationism

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<b>Glossary for Unit 7 Vocabulary Words</b>		

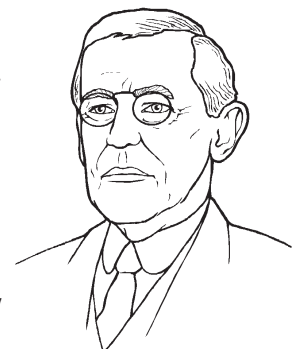
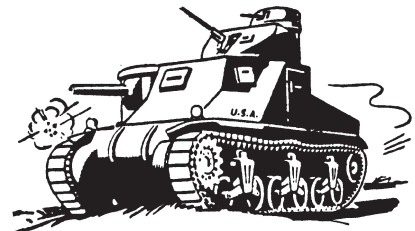
**Internet Support Site: [www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap)**

**Notes:**


# Outline – World War I

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1. **World War I (1914 - 1918) started in Europe, but it eventually involved the U.S.**
  - A. It ended the long tradition of the U.S. avoiding involvement in European conflicts.
  - B. It set the stage for the rise of the U.S., several decades later, to a global superpower.
2. **The war spread quickly in Europe once it began.**
  - A. **Central Powers:** Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire (Turkey), and Bulgaria.
  - B. Major **Allied Powers:** Great Britain, France, Russia, Belgium, Serbia, and later the United States.
3. **Immediate cause: An Austrian archduke was assassinated in 1914.**
  - A. Archduke Franz Ferdinand was killed in a plot organized by the Serbian military. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia one month later.
4. **Background causes: Europe was a “powder keg” just waiting to explode.**
  - A. **Militarism** – the desire of many European nations to use their military might.
  - B. **Alliances** – many European nations had agreements linking them together.
  - C. **Imperialism** – some European nations wanted to expand their territory.
  - D. **Nationalism** – a strong desire to boost national glory and power.
5. **The war became terribly deadly because of modern weapons.**
  - A. Submarines (called U-boats by Germans)
  - B. Airplanes
  - C. Machine guns
  - D. Poison gas
  - E. Tanks
6. **Trench warfare made it impossible for either side to win quickly.**
  - A. Both sides became bogged down in the lines of trenches in northern France known as the Western Front.
7. **The United States joined the war on the side of the Allies in 1917. The reasons:**
  - A. Germany’s deadly submarine attacks on ships such as the *Lusitania*.
  - B. Germany’s **Zimmerman telegram** to Mexico, asking it to attack the U.S.
  - C. The U.S. had many economic, cultural, and political ties to Great Britain.
  - D. The U.S. found it hard to stay neutral in a world at war.
8. **The U.S. helped the Allies win the war in 1918.**
  - A. Two million U.S. soldiers were added to Allied forces.
  - B. America sent food and military supplies to the Allies.
  - C. Germany asked for an armistice (a cease fire) in 1918.



President  
Woodrow  
Wilson

## Outline – continued

### After the war ended in 1918

9. The U.S. tried to provide leadership after the war ended.

- A. President Woodrow Wilson proposed a **Fourteen Points** plan for a peace treaty that would be fair to all sides.
- B. As part of the plan, Wilson proposed forming a **League of Nations** as a peacekeeping organization.
- C. The U.S. Senate refused to ratify (approve) the final **Treaty of Versailles**, and the U.S. did not join the League of Nations when it was created.
  - \* This was a return to the pre-war policy of **isolationism**.  
(Isolationism = avoiding involvement.)



10. The Treaty of Versailles left Germany angry and financially ruined.

- A. Germany was forced to accept full blame for the war.
- B. Germany was forced to give the Allies billions of dollars in **reparations payments**.  
(Reparations = money paid to make up for damages.)



Europe During  
World War I

#### An Age of Empires

Germany was head of the German Empire.

Austria-Hungary was also called the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Great Britain was head of the British Empire.

Turkey was part of the Ottoman Empire.



## World War I: Who's Who

### Alliances in 1917

Pre-war national boundaries shown

0 600 miles

### Key to Alliances

Central Powers

Allied Powers

Neutral Nations

## Timeline: Key Events of World War I



1914

1915

1916

1917

1918

1919

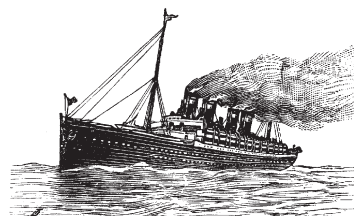
1920



The U.S. declared itself neutral when the war began. President Woodrow Wilson hoped the U.S. could help both sides negotiate an end to the war.

America sent soldiers, ships, and supplies to Europe to help the Allied Powers.

Although President Wilson signed the treaty, the U.S. Senate did not ratify (approve) it. The U.S. signed a separate treaty at a later date.



### Treaty of Peace

between the  
Allied Powers  
and  
Germany

June 28, 1919

# The Two Sides in World War I

World War I was fought between two groups of nations. These groups were called the Allied Powers and the Central Powers.



## Allied Powers

*(major members)*

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## Central Powers

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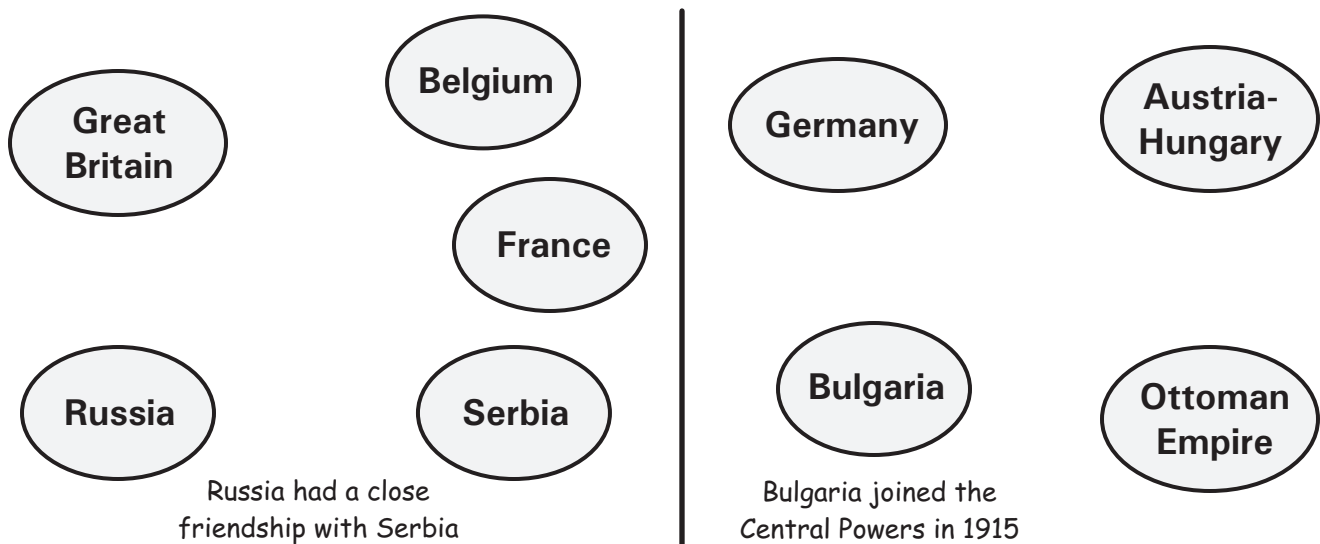
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Many of these countries were divided into the same two groups by their treaties of alliance even before the war began. The alliances caused the war to spread very quickly once Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia in 1914.



# The Background Causes of World War I

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Europe in 1914 is often described as a barrel of gunpowder just waiting for a spark to ignite it. The spark came that summer when an Austrian archduke was killed in a plot organized by military officers from the country of Serbia. Here are the background causes that had Europe already set to explode into war:



**M**

**Militarism –**

**A**

**Alliances –**

**I**

**Imperialism –**

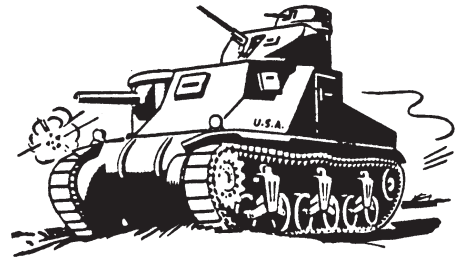
**N**

**Nationalism –**



# Why Did America Enter WW I?

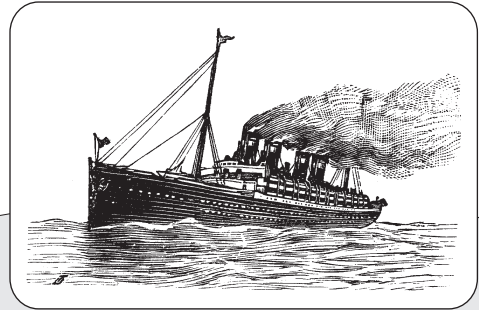
What were the main reasons the United States got involved in World War I in 1917?



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## Western Union Telegram

GERMAN LEGATION      via Galveston  
MEXICO CITY

130 13042 13401 8501 115 3528 416

18147 18222 21560 10247 11518 23677

98092 5905 11311 10392 10371 0302

23571 17504 11269 8276 18101 1017

22284 22200 19452 21589 67893 5569

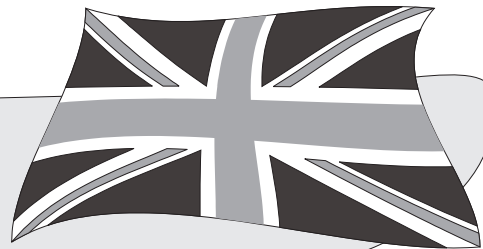
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# President Wilson and the League of Nations



At the end of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson proposed that a League of Nations be created to help prevent any future wars.

President Woodrow Wilson went to the peace treaty talks held at Versailles, France, just outside Paris. He had a list of proposals called the **Fourteen Points** plan. One of his ideas was for the creation of an organization of all the nations of the world. This organization would become known as the **League of Nations**.

## Point #14



Four horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



**League of Nations**

The final peace treaty, called the **Treaty of Versailles**, did include the proposal for a League of Nations. The U.S. Senate, however, refused to **ratify** (approve) the treaty. Many leaders in the Senate feared that joining the League might risk dragging America into some future war.

The U.S. later signed a separate peace treaty with Germany. America never did join the League of Nations. It was all a clear sign that Americans wanted to shift back to the pre-war policy of **isolationism**.

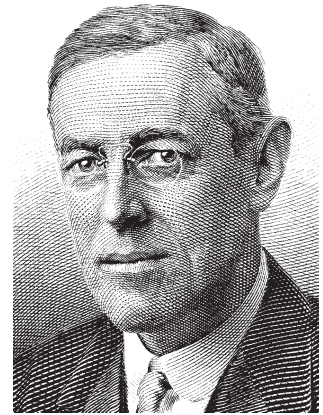
## Treaty of Peace

between the  
Allied Powers  
and  
Germany

June 28, 1919

# America's Changing Foreign Policy

America's foreign policy changed during World War I, and then changed again after the war ended.



President  
Woodrow Wilson

## 1914 – 1917: isolationism

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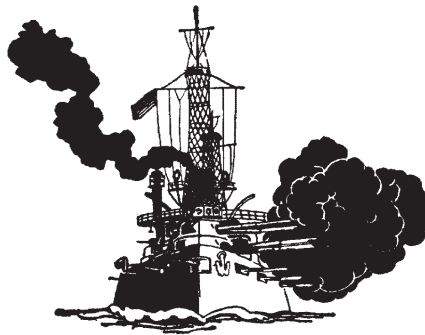
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Lusitania  
sunk - 1915

Zimmerman  
telegram  
1917

isolationism = not getting  
involved in disputes in  
other parts of the world



## 1917 – 1918: direct involvement

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WW I ends  
1918

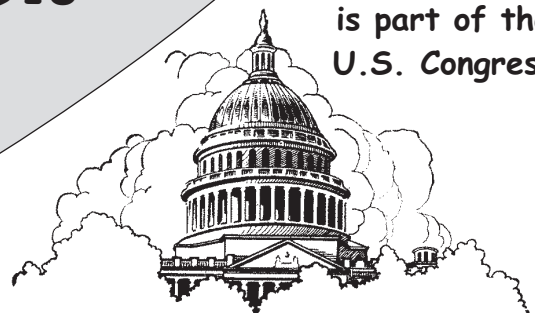
The Senate  
is part of the  
U.S. Congress

## After the war: back to isolationism

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**alliances** - agreements between nations, usually in writing, in which each nation agrees to come to the aid of the others if they are attacked.

**Allied Powers / Allies** - Great Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, and Belgium, as well as a few other European nations fighting against the Central Powers in World War I. The United States came in on the side of the Allies in 1917.

**armistice** - a cease-fire or truce agreed to by both sides during a war.

**Central Powers** - Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey (the Ottoman Empire). These countries fought against the Allied Powers in World War I.

**empire** - a group of nations or peoples spread over a wide area, and governed by a single nation or ruler (such as an emperor).

**Ferdinand, Franz** - the archduke of Austria-Hungary whose assassination in 1914 led to the start of World War I.

**Fourteen Points plan** - the fourteen proposals made by President Woodrow Wilson in 1918 as goals for the peace treaty at the end of the war.

**imperialism** - when a stronger nation holds or tries to gain control over weaker foreign lands, mainly for the benefit of the stronger nation.

**isolationism** - the belief or policy that the U.S. should avoid getting involved in troubles in Europe and other parts of the world.

**League of Nations** - an organization of the countries of the world, created after World War I. It was created in hope that nations could talk out their disputes rather than settle them by war. The idea was proposed as part of President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points plan, but America did not join the organization.

**Lusitania** - the British ocean liner that was attacked and sunk by a German submarine in 1915. The attack killed 128 Americans. It tilted public opinion in the U.S. against Germany and in favor of the Allied Powers.

**militarism** - a belief in building up the nation's military forces as a way to increase the nation's power and prestige in the world.

**nationalism** - an intense feeling in a group of people that they should have their own land and identity as a nation. Also, a feeling that goes beyond just patriotism to a sense that one's own nation is so special that it deserves greater honor and glory.

**reparations payments** - the term for the billions of dollars that Germany was required to pay the Allied Powers for damages caused by World War I.

**submarine warfare** - the use of submarines to attack and sink enemy ships. In World War I, German submarines were also called U-boats.

**Treaty of Versailles** - the name of the peace treaty that ended World War I. The peace talks and signing took place in Versailles, France, near Paris.

**trench warfare** - the type of fighting, common in World War I, in which the armies of each side dug large networks of trenches in the ground. This made it very difficult for either army to attack and defeat the other.

**United States Senate** - one of the two parts or houses of the U.S. Congress. The Congress is the law making branch of the American government. The Congress includes the Senate and the House of Representatives.

**Western Front** - the area of trenches and fighting in France during World War I near the border with Germany and Belgium. In wartime, the front is a term for where the fighting is actually taking place.

**Wilson, Woodrow** - the president of the U.S. who at first opposed American involvement in World War I, but later led the country into the war on the side of the Allies.

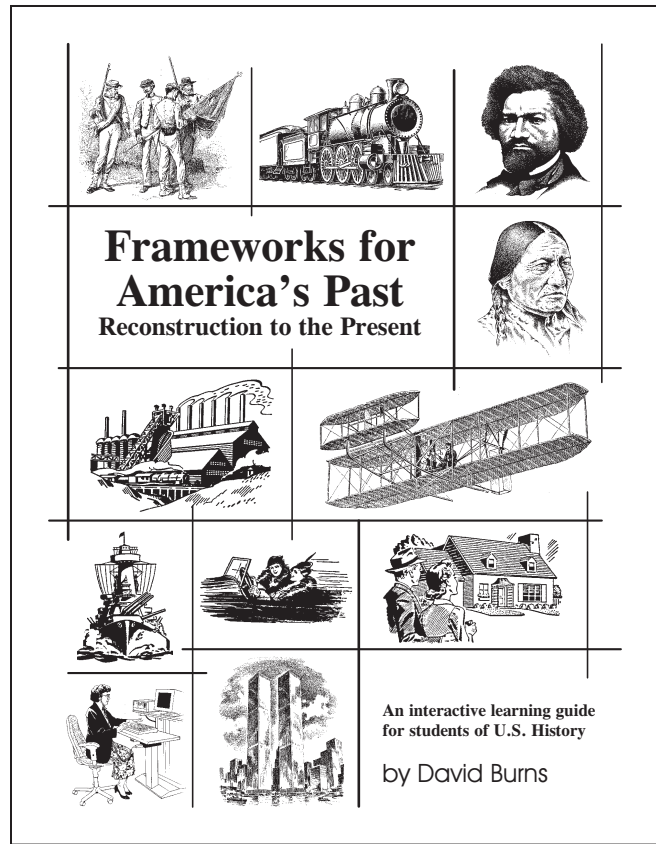
**Zimmerman Telegram** - the secret telegram sent in 1917 by Germany to Mexico. It asked Mexico to attack the U.S. if the U.S. entered World War I. The telegram angered Americans, and was one of the reasons America entered the war on the side of the Allies in 1917.



The Teacher Key and additional  
resources to use with these  
pages are at:

[www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap)

Fasttrack Teaching Materials  
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## Frameworks for America's Past Reconstruction to the Present

An interactive learning guide  
for students of U.S. History

by David Burns

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