

Chapter 15: World War I and Beyond 1914 -1920

US History Objectives:

8.01: Examine the reason why the United States remained neutral at the beginning of World War I but later became involved.

8.02: Identify political and military turning points of the war and determine their significance to the outcome of the conflict;

8.03: Assess the political, economic, social and cultural effects of the war on the United States and other nations.

Section 1: From Neutrality to War

In 1914, nationalism, militarism, imperialism and entangling alliances combined with other factors to lead the nations of Europe into a brutal war. The war quickly stretched around the globe. The United States remained neutral at first but ended up abandoning its long tradition of staying out of European conflicts.

Use the web links and/or your textbook to find definitions of the following: Alsace-Lorraine; militarism; Francis Ferdinand; William II; Western Front; casualty; contraband; U-boat; Lusitania; Zimmerman Note.

While the most common long-term causes of World War I are generally seen as:

1. Militarism: The building up of large armies by the European powers
2. Nationalism: Loyalty and devotion to one's nation – a particular problem when some of the European empires held many unwilling nations within their border
3. Imperialism: Political, military and economic dominance of a stronger country over a weaker one.
4. Alliances: Some secret and some open, the alliances tied together countries with promises of support for each other's decisions.

The immediate cause of World War I was the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo. Austria threatened Serbia; Serbia called on her Russian allies; Austria called on her German allies; France had an alliance with Russia. England vowed to protect Belgium through which Germany would invade France. Soon all of Europe was involved in a brutal war.

- Study the map on page 488. Answer question 2 based on this study. Then read page 489: Deadly Technology Leads to Stalemate. Take this information and use it to answer question 3 on page 488.

Page 490 lists some of the deadly technology, much of which first appeared in World War I:

1. Machine guns: could fire 600 bullets per minute.
2. Artillery field guns; caused more casualties than any other type of weapon.
3. Poison gas: chlorine, phosgene and mustard gas could kill, blind or burn victims.

4. Submarines: German U-boats used torpedoes and deck guns to sink ships.
 5. Tanks and armored cars: Both sides developed vehicles that could go through rough ground and barricades with limited success.
 6. Airplanes: Used for reconnaissance, bombing but did not prove decisive.
- Analyze the political cartoon on page 491 about trying to remain neutral.
 - Read the Infographic on pages 492-493 and answer the Thinking Critically questions about the effects of U-boats and their effect in bringing the US into the war.
 - Read the section America Goes to War. Note the reasons given for the US to go to war throughout its history. Answer the connect to your world questions. Prepare an argument (in writing) supporting or opposing the War on Terrorism. Use web code; neh-0612 for additional materials.

Section 2: The Home Front

Before the war, the federal government played a minor role in the daily lives of most Americans. But during World War I, the government assumed new powers. It regulated industrial and agricultural production, worked to shape public opinion, and established a new military draft. While war required sacrifice, it also brought new economic opportunities and many Americans migrated to other parts of the country in search of these opportunities. The war permanently changed Americans' relationship with their government.

- Selective Service Act; conscientious objector; Espionage Act; Great Migration.
- As you read this chapter, complete the chart shown on page 496 to summarize the key points in how Mobilization, Opposition and Social Change were issues that affected those on the Home Front.
- Read the Infographic on page 499 and answer the questions about Life on the Home Front during World War I.

Americans were not used to having an “enemy” living right in their country. German Americans were the largest groups of immigrants to the United States and were mostly loyal Americans in every way. Nevertheless, anti-German hysteria led to schools stopping the teaching of German and the playing of the music of Beethoven and Brahms; German measles became liberty measles; hamburgers became liberty steaks; dachshunds became liberty pups. Some German Americans were harassed and a few were killed for no other reason except that they were born in Germany.

Women found jobs open to them that had formerly been restricted to men and thousands enlisted when the Army Nurse Corps was formed. African Americans migrated from the rural south to the industrial north in large numbers seeking better lives and job

opportunities. More than three hundred thousand served in the military in segregated units under the command of white officers.

Section 3: Wilson, War, and Peace

When the United States entered World War I in the spring of 1917, the conflict had become a deadly, bloody stalemate. The war would be won or lost on the Western Front in France. Since 1914, both sides had tried desperately to break the stalemate there --- and failed. The American entry into the war would play a key role in the Allied victory.

- Use the web links and/or your textbook to find the definitions of: convoy; Vladimir Lenin; John J. Pershing; Fourteen Points; self-determination; League of Nations; reparations.
- Study the Map Skills section on page 507 and answer the questions about American involvement in World War I.
- Study the Infographic on pages 508 and 509 and answer the Thinking Critically question about why American casualties were relatively few compared with the other combatants in World War I.
- Before the war ended, Woodrow Wilson, the American President, presented his “Fourteen Points for Peace.” These were idealistic and offered plans for a better world for all. Unfortunately, when Wilson went to the Paris peace talks, he found that his chief allies were mainly interested in punishing Germany and returning the world to the way it was before the war.and his own country would not support the League of Nations. Analyze Wilson’s Fourteen Points as presented on page 514 and decide how the world might have been better if they had been fully or mostly adopted at that time.
- Read **Should the US Have Joined the League** on page 512 and answer questions 1, 2 and 3.

Section 4: Effects of the War

The end of World War I produced an unstable international order. The loss of territory and the harsh reparations imposed by the Allies encouraged a strong desire for revenge in Germany. Meanwhile, Lenin’s Soviet Russia threatened revolution throughout the industrial world. In the United States, the horrors of the war along with widespread fear of communists and radicals led Americans to question their political, if not their economic role in the world.

- Use the web links and/or your textbook to find definitions of: influenza; inflation; Red Scare; Palmer Raids; Sacco and Vanzetti;
- As you read this section, identify and record the main ideas in a concept web as shown on page 515 on the Effects of World War I.

At the end of the war, the United States was faced with a number of problems that, while related to the War, were not directly caused by it:

1. The influenza epidemic: A deadly virus, which many scientists believed originated in the United States and then spread to the rest of the world, killed 550,000 Americans as compared to the 50,000 Americans who were killed in the war itself.
2. The Red Scare: After seeing how the Communists had taken control of Russia and hearing Lenin's goals to plot revolutions throughout the world, including the United States, Americans became frightened of what could happen to them. The Palmer Raids arrested thousands of people on suspicion of possible violence including some known radicals and many who were simply immigrants from southern or eastern Europe. Two immigrants from Italy who were known anarchists (people opposed to any form of government), Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, were arrested for killing two during a holdup near Boston. Though there was little evidence against them, the two were convicted and executed for what many believe was a combination of their ethnicity and political beliefs.

Summary:

Causes and Effects of America's Entry into World War I

CAUSES

1. Many Americans have cultural ties with England and France
2. Reports of German atrocities in Belgium outrage Americans
3. Germany continues its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare despite promises to stop.
4. In the **Zimmerman Note**, Germany offers Mexico the chance to regain lost U.S. territory.

AMERICAN'S ENTRY INTO WORLD WAR I

EFFECTS

1. Allies defeat the Central Powers
2. Government's role in daily life increases.
3. African Americans and Mexican Americans migrate north
4. More women enter workforce.
5. United States refuses to join League of Nations.
6. United States becomes leading economic power.