

# ACTIVITY SEVEN: NEGOTIATIONS

## TEACHER DEBRIFING SHEET

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Describe the possible economic, political, social, and military outcomes of the Treaty of Versailles.
2. Compare and contrast the viewpoint brought by the United States to the Treaty of Versailles negotiations with the viewpoints of the major European Allies (Great Britain and France).
3. Predict how the setup and membership of the League of Nations might affect international relations.
4. Do you think the Treaty of Versailles set the stage for a lasting peace? Why or why not?
5. What are the costs of war and the price of peace?

### TASK:

Imagine that the leaders of the Allied nations have had a change of heart and have invited a delegation (group of representatives) from Germany to help edit the Treaty of Versailles before it is finalized. Pretend that your group is the German delegation. Create a visual to be used to persuade the Allies to change three key clauses of the Treaty of Versailles (either edit or remove existing clauses). Your visual must demonstrate the importance of the changes you are proposing and must explain how these changes will impact your people and the people of the world. Prepare to present your visual to the Allied delegations at the Paris Peace Conference.

### TASK EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- Presentation/visual persuades the Allies to change three key clauses of the Treaty of Versailles; each change must either edit or remove an existing clause.
- Visual clearly represents the German point of view and is presented to the Allied delegations at the Paris Peace Conference.
- Group accurately incorporates at least five pieces of World War I historical information (events, geography, data, people, etc.) into the presentation/visual.
- Presentation/visual makes use of at least three of the following: color, symbols, exaggeration, emotion, and/or personal testimony.
- Presentation/visual includes discussion of the costs of war and the price of peace.

### EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

1. Should blame be placed at the end of a war? Why or why not?
2. Imagine that it is just after World War I and you are a citizen of France. What do you want your country's representatives to the Paris Peace Conference to know? Why?
3. Who was likely to agree with Woodrow Wilson's idea of self-determination? Why?
4. Who was likely to disagree with Woodrow Wilson's idea of self-determination? Why?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of disarmament? For whom?
6. Describe the economic challenges Germany faced after the war.
7. Which of the political cartoons from your Resource Cards is most memorable and why?
8. Imagine that it is just after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and you are a citizen of Germany. How has the Treaty changed daily life for you?
9. What were the pros and cons of the League of Nations?
10. How might the makeup of the membership of the League of Nations increase and/or decrease its effectiveness?

## ACTIVITY SEVEN: NEGOTIATIONS

### ACTIVITY CARD



Read the CONTEXT-SETTING CARD. Then use the information on your RESOURCE CARDS to talk about the DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.



Examine the TASK and complete the project to meet all of the EVALUATION CRITERIA.

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## ACTIVITY SEVEN: NEGOTIATIONS

### CONTEXT-SETTING CARD

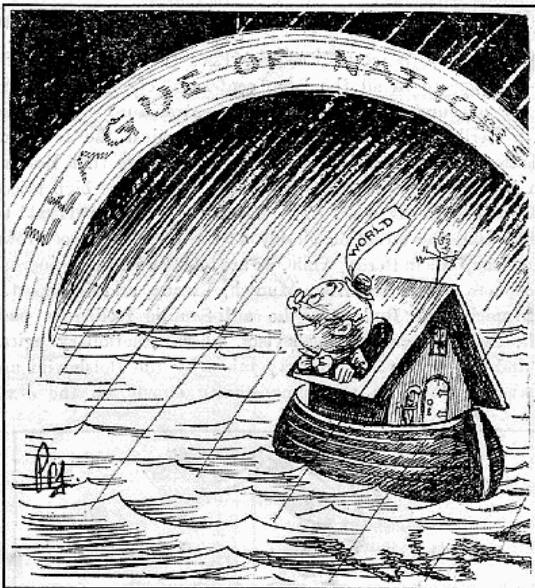
In January of 1919, delegates (representatives) from Allied nations met in Paris, France, to write a peace treaty. While twenty-seven nations participated in the Paris Peace Conference, the power to make decisions rested primarily (mainly) in the hands of the “Big Three:” the leaders of Great Britain, France, and the United States. Many nations that had participated in World War I were not represented at the conference, including countries on the losing side (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire) and inhabitants of the colonies in Africa and Asia.

The three major players at the Paris Peace Conference all had different views as to what should be included in the treaty. The French, who had suffered heavier losses than any other Allied country, wanted Germany to accept blame and pay for the war. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States felt very differently. Wilson had outlined his peace plan in January of 1918, before the war’s end, in his “Fourteen Points” speech, in which he asked for what came to be known as a “peace without victory” (a peace that would treat the losing side well). The British, led by David Lloyd George, held a viewpoint somewhere between that of France and the United States.

Despite their differences, the delegates at the Paris Peace Conference worked together to write a treaty. The final version of the Treaty of Versailles tended more toward the French viewpoint than toward the American viewpoint. Key clauses of the Treaty of Versailles blamed Germany for World War I, forced Germany to pay reparations (payments for damages caused during the war), limited the German military, and took away some of Germany’s territory.

#### *Key Ideas from Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points:*

- no secret treaties
- freedom of the seas
- free trade
- disarmament (an end to militarism)
- self-determination (the right of nations to govern themselves)
- a League of Nations (an international organization that would help to maintain the peace by settling international arguments)



“The Rainbow” *Literary Digest*,  
September 13, 1919

While the negotiators at the Paris Peace Conference spent much of their time figuring out how to deal with Germany, that was not their only topic of discussion. Another important goal of the Paris Peace Conference was to set up a new international organization, the League of Nations, which was designed to maintain the peace and prevent future conflicts. The first twenty-six articles (or clauses) of the Treaty of Versailles established (set up) the League of Nations. These twenty-six articles are also known as the “Covenant of the League of Nations.”

After six months of negotiations, the Treaty of Versailles was finalized on June 28, 1919. Only history would tell whether or not the Treaty of Versailles would create the lasting peace intended by its authors.

## ACTIVITY SEVEN: NEGOTIATIONS

### RESOURCE CARD 1 (OF 4) War Guilt





The Treaty of Versailles laid the blame for World War I on Germany in what has come to be known as the “war guilt clause”:

#### *Article 231, Treaty of Versailles:*

The Allied and Associated Governments affirm [claim] and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals [peoples] have been subjected [have suffered] as a consequence [result] of the war imposed [forced] upon them by the aggression [violent behavior] of Germany and her allies.

The Allies feared another war with Germany. This fear was particularly strong for the French since they shared a long border with Germany. In order to prevent future aggression by Germany, the Treaty of Versailles put limits on the German military. Most of the limits dealt with the makeup of the different branches of the German military (see table at right). In addition to limits on the makeup of the German military, Articles 42, 43, and 44 demilitarized a zone on either side of the Rhine River (near Germany’s border with France), forbidding Germany from having any kind of military presence in the region.

The influence of the French is clear in both the war guilt clause and in the limits placed on the German military. Woodrow Wilson, the U.S. President, disagreed with the French; he did not want a harsh peace that laid blame on Germany. David Lloyd George, the leader of Great Britain, was persuaded by the British public to take a position similar to that of the French.

Limits on the German Military	
	<b>Article 160</b> of the Treaty of Versailles limited the German army to 100,000 men. <b>Article 173</b> of the Treaty of Versailles ended the draft in Germany.
	<b>Article 181</b> of the Treaty of Versailles forbade the German navy from having submarines.
	<b>Article 181</b> of the Treaty of Versailles limited Germany’s navy to six battleships.
	<b>Article 198</b> of the Treaty of Versailles forbade Germany from having an air force.

#### *Allied Reply to German Protest Against Proposed Peace Terms, Paris Peace Conference, May 1919:*

The conduct [behavior] of Germany is almost unexampled [unique] in human history. The terrible responsibility which lies at her doors can be seen in the fact that not less than seven million dead lie buried in Europe, while more than twenty million others carry upon them the evidence of wounds and sufferings, because Germany saw fit to gratify [satisfy] her lust [desire] for tyranny [unlimited power] by resort to [use of] war.

#### *David Lloyd George, leader of Britain, in a speech given to the British Parliament, July 3, 1919:*

Germany not merely provoked [caused], but planned the most devastating [terrible] war the earth has ever seen... She deliberately embarked upon it [started it], not to defend herself against assailants [attackers], but to aggrandize herself [increase her power] at the expense of her neighbors. I cannot think of a worse crime.

## ACTIVITY SEVEN: NEGOTIATIONS

### RESOURCE CARD 2 (OF 4) Reparations

Article 232 of the Treaty of Versailles required that Germany pay for the damages caused by the war. Such payments are known as reparations.

*Article 232 of the Treaty of Versailles:*

...The Allied and Associated Governments, however, require, and Germany undertakes, that she will make compensation [pay] for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allied and Associated Powers and to their property ...

While the total amount of reparations to be paid was not decided until 1921, the Treaty of Versailles did provide some economic aid to France:

*Article 45 of the Treaty of Versailles:*

As compensation [payment] for the destruction of the coal mines in the north of France and as part payment towards the total reparation due from Germany for the damage resulting from the war, Germany cedes [gives up] to France in full and absolute possession, with exclusive [sole] right of exploitation [use], unencumbered [unburdened] and free from all debts and charges of any kind, the coal mines situated [located] in the Saar Basin...



Ruins, Ypres, France



After a bombardment, Soissons, France, 1917

French Losses As A Result Of WWI	Totals
Forest destroyed (square miles)	1,857
Farmland destroyed (square miles)	8,000
Houses destroyed	300,000
Factories destroyed	6,000
Schools destroyed	1,500
Churches destroyed	1,200
Livestock (farm animals) lost	1,300,000

*Allied Statement, Paris Peace Conference, May 1919:*

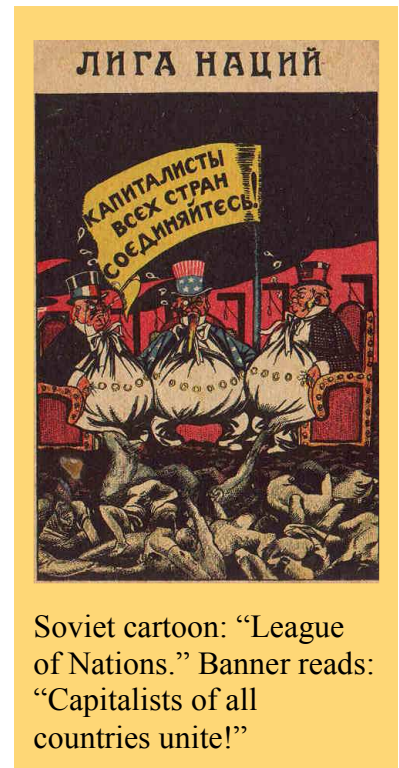
There must be justice for the peoples who now stagger under [are burdened with] war debts...  
There must be justice for those millions whose homes and land, ships and property German savagery [cruelty] has spoliated [looted] and destroyed.

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### RESOURCE CARD 3 (OF 4) The League of Nations

Written into the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations was an international organization designed to maintain the peace. Its headquarters were set up in the city of Geneva, Switzerland, because Switzerland was a neutral country. The idea was that the countries of the League of Nations would provide “collective security” if a member nation was attacked. The League would work together to protect that member nation through the use of any or all of the following: international pressure, trade sanctions (refusal to trade with an aggressor nation), or force. In addition to providing collective security, the League set up special committees to deal with particular issues, such as the Health Organization and the International Labor Organization.

The original forty-five countries who were members of the League of Nations had all been on the Allied side or neutral during World War I. Countries that had been part of the Central Powers (Germany and her allies) were not allowed to join the League right away. The Soviet Union (formerly Russia) was also not allowed to join; the Soviet Union had become a communist country and other countries feared the spread of communism. Although all member nations were part of the League Assembly, power in the League was in the hands of the League Council, whose permanent members were Britain, France, Italy, and Japan.



Soviet cartoon: “League of Nations.” Banner reads: “Capitalists of all countries unite!”

### The United States’ Rejection of the League of Nations

While U.S. President Woodrow Wilson had been a major supporter of the League of Nations, the U.S. Senate refused to allow the United States to join the League of Nations. After the war, the American people wanted to avoid being drawn into conflicts around the world. Many felt that the League of Nations would do just that, since the League asked member nations to defend any other member nation under attack.

Without the United States as a member nation, the League was weakened. In the words of Marcel Cachin, a French politician, 1920:

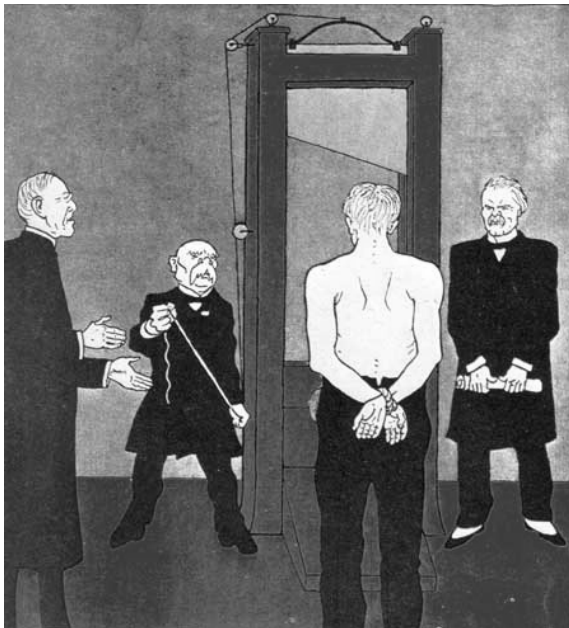
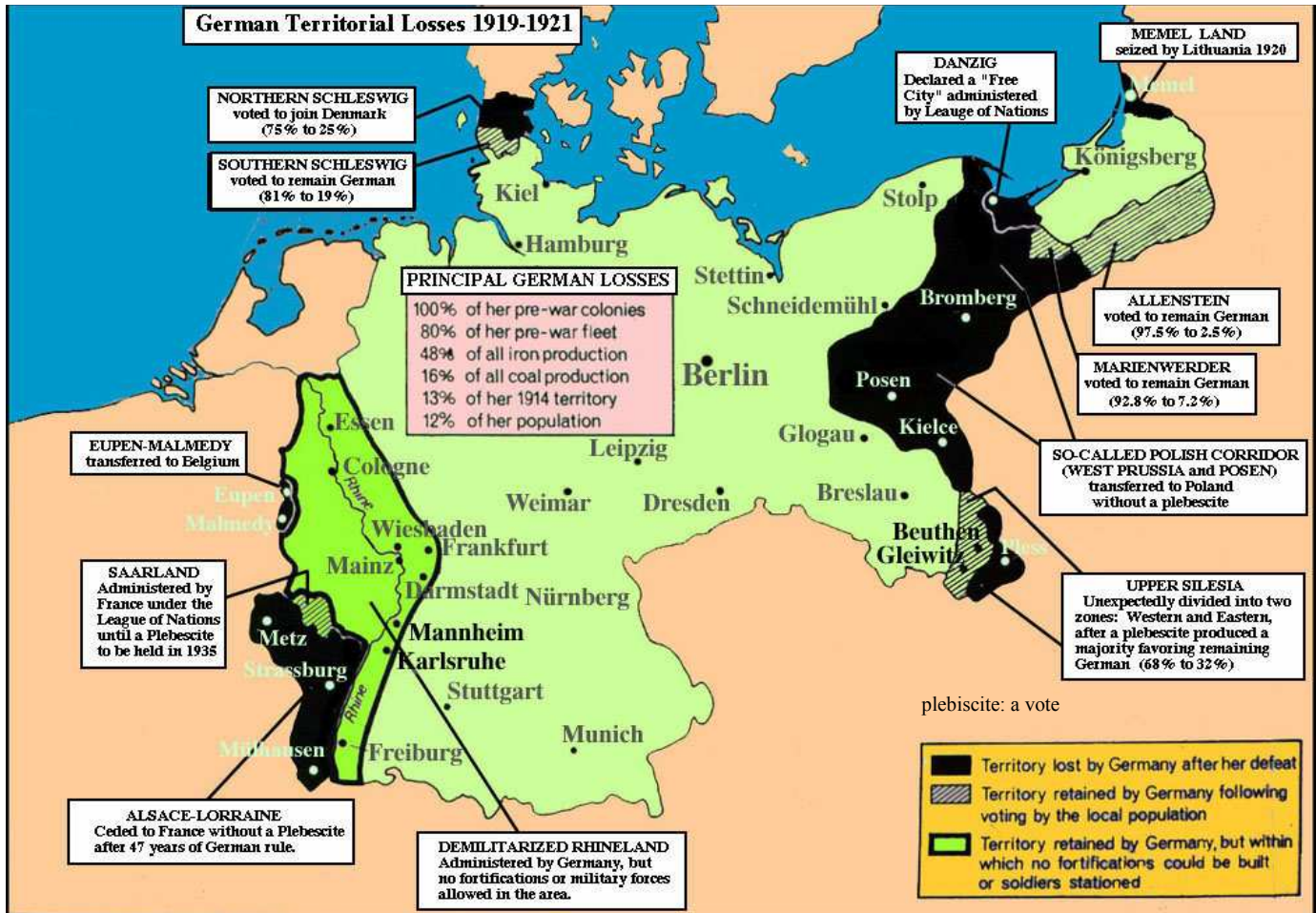
*The defeat suffered by Wilsonism in the United States strikes at the very existence of the League of Nations. America’s place will remain empty at Geneva, and the two countries that dominate, France and Great Britain, are divided on almost every one of the topics to be discussed.*



“The Gap in the Bridge,” British cartoon, 1919

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## RESOURCE CARD 4 (OF 4) The Treaty of Versailles: Impact on Germany



*Editorial, from the Dutch newspaper, Algemeen Handelsblad, on the Treaty of Versailles, June 1919:*

The financial burden is so heavy that it is no exaggeration to say that Germany is reduced to economic bondage [slavery]. The Germans will have to work hard and incessantly [endlessly] for foreign masters, without any chance of personal gain, or any prospect [chance] of regaining [getting back] liberty or economic independence.

The political cartoon at left is from the June 3, 1919 issue of the German magazine *Simplicimus*. It shows Germany about to be executed by (left to right) U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, French President Georges Clemenceau, and British Prime Minister David Lloyd George.

## ACTIVITY SEVEN: NEGOTIATIONS

### INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Do you think the Treaty of Versailles set the stage for a lasting peace? Why or why not? Justify your answer with specific evidence.

#### **Evaluation Criteria:**

- Response clearly states whether or not the Treaty of Versailles set the stage for a lasting peace.
- Response includes at least three reasons in support of your answer; each reason is supported with at least two pieces of specific historical evidence.
- Response includes multiple perspectives.
- Response addresses the costs of war and the price of peace.