



Delegates gathered in Paris in 1919 to discuss peace terms. The treaty between the Allies and Germany was signed in June in the Hall of Mirrors, shown here, at the palace of Versailles.



Interactive Flipped Video

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By 1917, European societies were cracking under the strain of war. Casualties on the fronts and shortages at home sapped morale. The stalemate dragged on, seemingly without end. Soon, however, the departure of one country from the war and the entry of another would tip the balance and end the stalemate.

>> Objectives

Describe how World War I became a total war

Explain how U.S. entry into the war led to an Allied victory

List the effects of World War I in terms of financial costs, high casualty rates, and political impact

Describe the issues at the Paris Peace Conference and the impact of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points

Summarize the terms and impact of the Treaty of Versailles

>> Key Terms

total war
conscription
contraband
Lusitania
propaganda
atrocities
Fourteen Points
self-determination
armistice
pandemic
reparation
radical
collective security
mandate

World War I Ends

Governments Direct Total War

As the struggle wore on, nations realized that a modern, mechanized war required the channeling of a nation's entire resources into the war effort, or **total war**. To achieve total war, governments began to take a stronger role in directing the economic and cultural lives of their people

Recruiting and Supplying Huge Armies Early on, both sides set up systems to recruit, arm, transport, and supply armies that numbered in the millions. All of the warring nations except Britain immediately imposed universal military **conscription**, or "the draft," which required all young men to be ready for military or other service. Britain, too, instituted conscription in 1916. Germany set up a system of forced civilian labor as well.

Governments raised taxes and borrowed huge amounts of money to pay the costs of war. They rationed food and other products, from boots to gasoline. In addition, they introduced other economic controls, such as setting prices and forbidding strikes.

Blockades and Submarines Impact Economies At the start of the war, Britain's navy formed a blockade in the North Sea to keep ships from carrying supplies into and out of Germany. International law allowed wartime blockades to confiscate **contraband**, or military



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supplies and raw materials needed to make military supplies. Items such as food and clothing were exempt. Still, the British blockade stopped both types of goods from reaching Germany. As the war progressed, it became harder and harder to feed the German and Austrian people. In Germany, the winter of 1916 and 1917 was remembered as “the turnip winter,” because the potato crop failed and people ate turnips instead.

To retaliate, Germany used U-boats to create its own blockade. In 1915, Germany declared that it would sink all ships carrying goods to Britain. In May 1915, a German submarine torpedoed the British liner **Lusitania** off the coast of Ireland. Almost 1,200 passengers were killed, including 128 Americans. Germany justified the attack, arguing that the *Lusitania* was carrying weapons.

When American President Woodrow Wilson threatened to cut off diplomatic relations with Germany, Germany agreed to restrict its submarine campaign. Before attacking any ship, U-boats would surface and give warning, allowing neutral passengers to escape to lifeboats. Unrestricted submarine warfare stopped—for the moment.

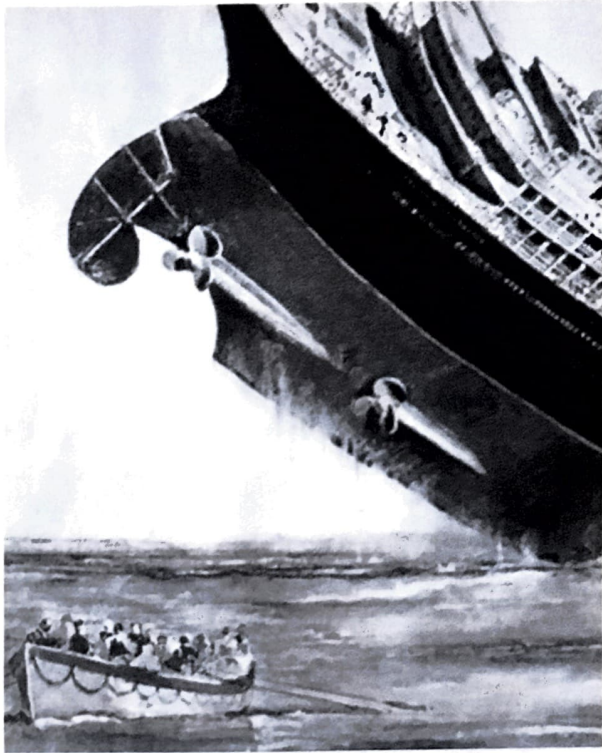
The Propaganda War Total war also meant controlling public opinion. Even in democratic countries, special boards censored the press. Their aim was to keep complete casualty figures and other discouraging news from reaching the public. Government censors also restricted popular literature, historical writings, motion pictures, and the arts.

Both sides waged a propaganda war. **Propaganda** is the spreading of ideas to promote a cause or to damage an opposing cause. Allied propaganda played up the brutality of Germany’s invasion of Belgium.

The British and French press circulated tales of **atrocities**, horrible acts committed against innocent people. Although some atrocities did occur, often the stories were distorted by exaggerations or completely made up.

Governments also used propaganda to motivate military mobilization, especially in Britain before conscription started in 1916. In France and Germany, propaganda urged civilians to loan money to the government.

Women Contribute to the War Effort Women played a critical role in total war. As millions of men left to fight, women took over their jobs and kept national economies going. Many women worked in war industries, manufacturing weapons and supplies. Others joined women’s branches of the armed forces. When food shortages threatened Britain, volunteers



>> This painting portrays the sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German submarine. Unrestricted submarine warfare worsened American public opinion of Germany.



>> Posters such as this British one helped to stoke patriotic emotions. **Determine Author's Purpose** What did the creators of this poster hope that men would do after viewing this image?

 **Interactive Gallery**

in the Women's Land Army went to the fields to grow their nation's food.

Nurses shared the dangers of the men whose wounds they tended. At aid stations close to the front lines, nurses often worked around the clock, especially after a big "push" brought a flood of casualties. In her diary, English nurse Vera Brittain describes sweating through 90-degree days in France, "stopping hemorrhages, replacing intestines, and draining and reinserting innumerable rubber tubes" with "gruesome human remnants heaped on the floor."

War work gave women a new sense of pride and confidence. After the war, most women had to give up their jobs to men returning home. Still, they had challenged the idea that women could not handle demanding and dangerous jobs. In many countries, including Britain, Germany, and the United States, women's support for the war effort helped them finally win the right to vote, after decades of struggle.

? **DRAW CONCLUSIONS** How can total war increase the power of government and have a lasting political impact?



>> Women worked as nurses at the front in difficult and dangerous conditions. Here, a French general honors a nurse who took part in the battle of Verdun in 1916.

Morale Breaks Down

Despite inspiring propaganda, by 1917 the morale of troops and civilians had plunged. Germany was sending 15-year-old recruits to the front, and Britain was on the brink of bankruptcy.

War-Weary Civilians and Soldiers Long casualty lists, food shortages, and the failure of generals to win promised victories led to calls for peace. Instead of praising the glorious deeds of heroes, war poets like British soldier Siegfried Sassoon began denouncing the leaders whose errors wasted so many lives.

You smug-faced crowds with
kindling eye

Who cheer when soldier lads march
by,

Sneak home and pray you'll never
know

The hell where youth and laughter
go.

—Siegfried Sassoon, "Suicide in the Trenches"

As morale collapsed, troops in some French units mutinied. In Italy, many soldiers deserted during the retreat at Caporetto. In Russia, soldiers left the front to join in a full-scale revolution back home.

Revolution in Russia Three years of war had hit Russia especially hard. Stories of incompetent generals and corruption eroded public confidence. In March 1917, bread riots in St. Petersburg erupted into a revolution that brought down the Russian monarchy. (You'll learn more about the causes and effects of the Russian Revolution in another lesson.) The new Russian government continued the war effort.

At first, the Allies welcomed the overthrow of the tsar. They hoped Russia would institute a democratic government and become a stronger ally. But in October of that year, a second revolution brought V. I. Lenin to power. Lenin had promised to pull Russian troops out of the war. Early in 1918, Lenin signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (brest lih TAWFSK) with Germany. The treaty ended Russian participation in World War I.

Russia's withdrawal had an immediate impact on the war. With Russia out of the struggle, Germany could concentrate its forces on the Western Front. In the spring of 1918, the Central Powers stood ready to achieve the great breakthrough they had sought for so

long. But by then, Germany faced a new opponent. The United States had been dragged into the war.

? CITE EVIDENCE What evidence shows that soldiers' morale declined and negatively affected the war effort?

The United States Enters the War

Soon after the Russian Revolution began, another event altered the balance of forces. The United States declared war on Germany. Many factors contributed to the decision of the United States to exchange neutrality for war in 1917.

Unrestricted Submarine Warfare A major reason for the U.S. entry into the war was German submarine attacks. After the sinking of the *Lusitania* and under pressure from President Wilson, Germany had agreed to restrict its submarine campaign. By early 1917, however, Germany was desperate to break the stalemate in the war. On February 1, the German government announced that it would resume unrestricted submarine warfare. Wilson angrily denounced Germany.

Anti-German Sentiment Grows Many Americans supported the Allies because of cultural ties. The United States shared a cultural history and language with Britain and sympathized with France as another democracy. On the other hand, some German Americans favored the Central Powers. So did many Irish Americans, who resented British rule of Ireland, and Russian Jewish immigrants, who did not want to be allied with the tsar. The resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare, however, increased anger toward Germany and spurred support for the Allies.

Another German move also angered Americans. In early 1917, the British intercepted a message from the German foreign minister, Arthur Zimmermann, to his ambassador in Mexico. In the note, Zimmermann wrote that if Mexico joined Germany in the event of war with the United States, Germany would help Mexico "to reconquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona." Britain revealed the Zimmermann note to the American government. When the note became public, anti-German feeling intensified in the United States.

Wilson Asks for a "War to End War" In April 1917, Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany. "We have no selfish ends to serve," he stated. Instead, he painted the conflict idealistically as a war "to make



>> Soldiers ate, slept, fought and died in the trenches. As the war dragged on and casualties mounted, morale was severely tested.



>> Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917. Here, President Wilson reads a German message and ponders what to do. **Analyze Political Cartoons** What does the overflowing waste basket suggest?

the world safe for democracy” and later as a “war to end war”

The United States needed months to recruit, train, supply, and transport a modern army across the Atlantic. But by 1918, about two million American soldiers had joined the war-weary Allied troops fighting on the Western Front. Although relatively few American troops engaged in combat, their arrival gave Allied troops a much-needed morale boost. Just as important to the debt-ridden Allies was American financial aid.

Wilson's Fourteen Points Though he had failed to maintain American neutrality, Wilson still hoped to be a peacemaker. In January 1918, he issued the **Fourteen Points**, a list of his terms for resolving both this war and future wars. He called for freedom of the seas, free trade, large-scale reductions of arms, and an end to secret treaties. For Eastern Europe, Wilson favored **self-determination**, the right of people to choose their own form of government. Finally, Wilson urged the creation of a “general association of nations” to keep the peace in the future.

? INFER Why did President Woodrow Wilson think that World War I was “the war to end wars”?

The Great War Ends

A final showdown on the Western Front began in early 1918. The Germans badly wanted to achieve a major victory before eager American troops arrived in Europe.

Final Offensive In March 1918, the Germans launched a huge offensive on the Western Front with troops newly freed from fighting in Russia. By July, the spring offensive had driven the Allies back 40 miles, the biggest German breakthrough in three years. The rapid push exhausted the German forces and cost heavy casualties.

By then, fresh American troops were pouring into the Western Front. The Allies launched a counter-offensive, slowly driving German forces back through France and Belgium. In September, German generals told the Kaiser that the war could not be won.

Germany Asks for Peace Uprisings exploded among hungry city dwellers across Germany. German commanders advised the kaiser to step down. William II did so in early November, fleeing into exile in the Netherlands.

By autumn, Austria-Hungary was also reeling toward collapse. As the government in Vienna tottered, the subject nationalities revolted, splintering the

WOODROW WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS	
1. No secret treaties	10. Peoples of Austria-Hungary should have freest opportunity for autonomous development.
2. Freedom of the seas	11. Occupation forces to be evacuated from Romania, Serbia and Montenegro; Serbia should have free and secure access to the sea
3. Free trade	12. Autonomous development for the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire; free passage for all ships through the Dardanelles
4. Large-scale reduction of arms	13. Independence for Poland, with free and secure access to the sea
5. Impartial adjustment of colonial claims based on interests of governments and native populations.	14. Formation of a general association of nations to guarantee to its members political independence and territorial integrity (the League of Nations)
6. Evacuation of all Russian territory; providing Russia the best opportunity for self-determination	
7. Evacuation and restoration of Belgium as a sovereign nation	
8. Liberation of France; return of the region of Alsace-Lorraine to France	
9. Readjustment of Italy's frontiers based on recognizable lines of nationality	

>> **Analyze Information** Which of Wilson's Fourteen Points deal with countries having free access to international commerce? Why did Wilson consider this so important?

The Costs of World War I

COUNTRY	ALLIES				CENTRAL POWERS	
	RUSSIA	BRITISH EMPIRE	FRANCE	UNITED STATES	GERMANY	AUSTRIA-HUNGARY
MOBILIZED FORCES	12,000,000	8,904,467	8,410,000	4,355,000	11,000,000	7,800,000
KILLED	1,700,000	908,371	1,357,800	116,516	1,773,700	1,200,000
WOUNDED	4,950,000	2,090,212	4,266,000	204,002	4,216,058	3,620,000
PRISONERS AND MISSING	2,500,000	191,652	537,000	4,500	1,152,800	2,200,000
TOTAL CASUALTIES	9,150,000	3,190,235	6,160,800	323,018	7,142,558	7,020,000
CASUALTY RATE	76%	36%	73%	7%	65%	90%
FINANCIAL COSTS	\$25 billion	\$55 billion	\$48 billion	\$32 billion	\$60 billion	\$22 billion

SOURCE: *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military History*, R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy; *The Great War*, www.pbs.org.

>> World War I ended in 1918, but its human and economic costs would be felt for decades. Many nations had thrown all their resources into the fight, and their losses were staggering.

empire of the Hapsburgs. Bulgaria and the Ottoman empire also asked for peace.

The new German government sought an **armistice**, or agreement to end fighting, with the Allies. At 11 A.M. on November 11, 1918, the Great War at last came to an end.

The Human Toll The human and material costs of the war were staggering. More than 8.5 million men had died in battle. More than twice that number had been wounded, many of them disabled for life. Historians estimate that at least 6 million civilians also lost their lives as a result of the war.

The devastation was made even worse in 1918 by a deadly **pandemic** of influenza. A pandemic is the spread of a disease across a large area—in this case, the whole world. In just a few months, the flu killed more than 20 million people worldwide.

The Economic Toll In battle zones from France to Russia, homes, farms, factories, roads, and churches had been shelled into rubble. People had fled these areas as refugees. Now they had to return and start to rebuild. The costs of reconstruction and paying off huge war debts would burden an already battered world.

Shaken and disillusioned, people everywhere felt bitter about the war. The Allies blamed the conflict

on their defeated foes and insisted that the losers make **reparations**, or payments for war damage. The stunned Central Powers, who had viewed the armistice as a cease-fire rather than a surrender, looked for scapegoats on whom they could blame their defeat.

The Political Toll Under the stress of war, governments had collapsed in Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman empire. Political **radicals**, or people who wanted to make extreme changes, dreamed of building a new social order from the chaos. Conservatives warned against the spread of Bolshevism, or communism, as it was soon called.

Unrest also swept through Europe's colonial empires. African and Asian soldiers had discovered that the imperial powers were not as invincible as they seemed. Colonial troops returned home with a more cynical view of Europeans and renewed hopes for independence.

? GENERATE EXPLANATIONS Why might the war cause an economic recession or depression in Europe?

Making the Peace

Just weeks after the war ended, President Wilson boarded a steamship bound for France. He had decided to go in person to Paris, where Allied leaders would make the peace. Wilson was certain that he could bring a "just peace" to the world. "Tell me what is right," Wilson urged his advisors, "and I'll fight for it."

To a weary, angry world, Wilson seemed a symbol of hope. His talk of democracy and self-determination raised expectations for a just and lasting peace—even in defeated Germany. Sadly, it would not be that easy. Europe was a shattered continent. Its problems, and those of the world, would not be solved for many years afterward.

Allies Have Conflicting Goals The victorious Allies met at the Paris Peace Conference to discuss the fate of Europe, the former Ottoman empire, and various colonies around the world. The Central Powers and Russia, under its new communist government, were not allowed to take part in the negotiations.

Wilson was one of three strong leaders who dominated the Paris Peace Conference. He was a dedicated reformer and at times was so stubbornly convinced that he was right that he could be hard to

work with. Wilson urged for "peace without victory" based on the Fourteen Points.

Two other Allied leaders at the peace conference had different aims. British Prime Minister David Lloyd George had promised to build a postwar Britain "fit for heroes"—a goal that would cost money. The chief goal of the French leader, Georges Clemenceau (KLEM un soh), was to weaken Germany so that it could never again threaten France. "Mr. Wilson bores me with his Fourteen Points," complained Clemenceau. "Why, God Almighty has only ten!"

Obstacles to Settlement Crowds of other representatives circled around the "Big Three" with their own demands. Among the most difficult issues were the secret agreements made by the Allies during the war. Italy had signed one such treaty. The Italian prime minister, Vittorio Orlando (awr LAN doh), insisted that the Allies honor their secret treaty to give former Austro-Hungarian lands to Italy. Such agreements often violated the idea of self-determination.

Self-determination posed other problems. Many people who had been ruled by Russia, Austria-Hungary, or the Ottoman empire now demanded national states of their own. The territories claimed by these peoples often overlapped, so it was impossible to satisfy them all. Some ethnic groups became unwanted minorities in newly created states.

Wilson had to compromise on his Fourteen Points. However, he stood firm on his goal of creating an international League of Nations. The League would be based on the idea of **collective security**, a system in which a group of nations acts as one to preserve the peace of all. Wilson felt sure that the League could correct any mistakes made in Paris.

The Treaty of Versailles In June 1919, the Allies ordered representatives of the new German Republic to sign the treaty they had drawn up at the palace of Versailles (vur sy) outside Paris. The German delegates were horrified. The Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to assume full blame for causing the war.

It also imposed huge reparations that would burden an already damaged German economy. The reparations covered not only the destruction caused by the war, but also pensions for millions of Allied soldiers or their widows and families. The total cost of German reparations would come to over \$400 billion in today's money.

Other parts of the treaty were aimed at weakening Germany. The treaty severely limited the size of the once-feared German military. It returned Alsace and Lorraine to France, removed hundreds of square miles of territory from western and eastern Germany, and



>> In this cartoon, President Wilson says to the dove, "Here's your olive branch. Now get busy." **Analyze Political Cartoons** Does the cartoonist think Wilson's solution will work?



>> **Analyze Maps** Based on this map and the text, why were many Germans unhappy with the territorial changes that occurred after World War I?



stripped Germany of its overseas colonies. The treaty compelled many Germans to leave the homes they had made in Russia, Poland, Alsace-Lorraine, and the German colonies to return to Germany or Austria.

The Germans signed because they had no choice. However, German resentment of the Treaty of Versailles would poison the international climate for 20 years. It would help spark an even deadlier world war in the years to come.

? COMPARE POINTS OF VIEW How did the goals of the Big Three Leaders—Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau—conflict?

Effects of the Peace Settlements

The Allies drew up separate treaties with the other Central Powers. These treaties redrew the map of Eastern Europe and affected colonial peoples around the globe. Like the Treaty of Versailles, these treaties left widespread dissatisfaction.

New Nations in Europe A key principle of Wilson's Fourteen Points was self-determination. This goal helped a band of new nations emerge in Eastern Europe

where the German, Austrian, and Russian empires had once ruled.

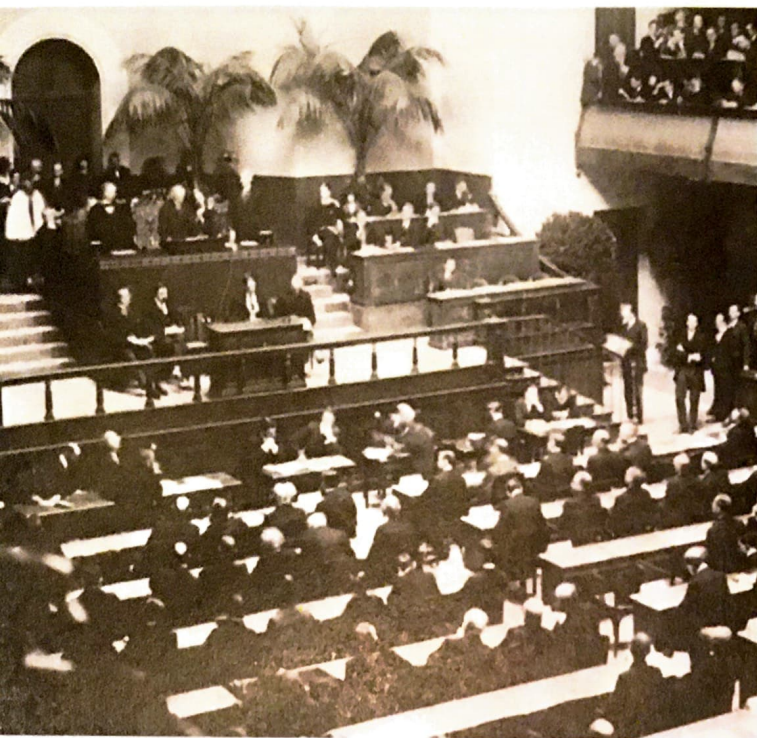
Poland became an independent nation after more than 100 years of foreign rule. The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia fought for and achieved independence. Three new republics—Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Hungary—rose in the old Hapsburg heartland. In the Balkans, the peacemakers created a new South Slav state, Yugoslavia, dominated by Serbia.

Despite the settlement, Eastern Europe remained a center of political conflict and unrest. The new nations were also relatively poor, with agricultural economies and little capital for industry.

The Mandate System European colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific had looked to the Paris Peace Conference with high hopes. Nationalist leaders in these regions expected that the peace would bring new respect and an end to imperial rule. They took up Wilson's call for self-determination.

However, the leaders at Paris applied self-determination only to parts of Europe. Outside Europe, the victorious Allies added to their overseas empires.

The treaties created a system of **mandates**, territories administered by Western powers. Britain and France gained mandates over German colonies in Africa. Japan and Australia were given mandates over some Pacific islands. The treaties handled lands that



>> Delegates attend the first meeting of the League of Nations on December 4, 1920, in the Hall of Reformation in Geneva, Switzerland.

used to be part of the Ottoman empire as if they were colonies, too.

In theory, mandates were to be held until they were able to stand alone. In practice, they became colonies, remaining under the political and economic control of the Allied powers. From Africa to the Middle East and across Asia, people living in the mandates felt betrayed by the peacemakers.

Widespread Discontent Germans and colonial peoples were not the only groups dissatisfied by the peace. Italy was angry because it did not get all the lands promised in its secret treaty with the Allies. Japan protested the refusal of the Western powers to recognize its claims in China. At the same time, China was forced to accept Japanese control over some former German holdings. Russia, excluded from the peace talks, resented the reestablishment of a Polish nation and three independent Baltic states on lands that had been part of the Russian empire.

All of these discontented nations bided their time. They waited for a chance to revise the peace settlements in their favor.

The League of Nations The Paris Peace Conference did offer one beacon of hope with the establishment of the League of Nations. More than 40 nations joined the League. They agreed to negotiate disputes rather than resort to war and to take common action against any aggressor state.

Wilson's dream had become a reality, or so he thought. On his return from Paris, Wilson faced resistance from his own Senate.

Some Republican senators, led by Henry Cabot Lodge, wanted to restrict the treaty so that the United States would not be obligated to fight in future wars. Lodge's reservations echoed the feelings of many war-weary Americans. Wilson would not accept Lodge's compromises. In the end, the Senate refused to ratify the treaty, and the United States never joined the League.

The loss of the United States weakened the League's power. In addition, the League had no power outside of its member states. As time soon revealed, the League could not prevent war. Still, it was a first step toward something genuinely new—an international organization dedicated to maintaining peace and advancing the interests of all peoples.

? DRAW CONCLUSIONS How did the refusal of the United States to join the League of Nations weaken the League's power?

ASSESSMENT

- 1. Identify Cause and Effect** How did World War I affect the role of women in society?
- 2. Analyze Context** Why did it take so long for the United States to enter World War I?
- 3. Make Generalizations** How does a long war with a high number of casualties generally affect civilians' and soldiers' opinions of their government?
- 4. Compare and Contrast** After World War I, why were conditions ripe for social and political change in Russia, but not in the United States?
- 5. Predict Consequences** How might the harsh provisions of the Treaty of Versailles affect conditions in Germany?