THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES, 1919
Russia’s defeat in 1917 meant the Germans were able to bring thousands of troops from the Eastern Front to the West. In early 1918, the Germans launched the ‘Ludendorf Offensive’, which nearly overwhelmed the Allied defences. They recovered, and then launched their own offensives which took them into Germany. Germany was exhausted and on the point of collapse.
With the failure of the Ludendorf Offensive, and with the exhausted state of Germany, the German generals recognized that it was time to sue for peace with the Allies. The Kaiser was forced to abdicate on November 8th and a new democratic republic was established.

But how would the Allies deal with a defeated Germany?
On November 8, 1918, Imperial Germany came to an end when a democratic republic was established. Though it was intended to have Wilhelm tried as a ‘war criminal’ he was eventually allowed to spend the rest of his life in exile in the Netherlands. He died in 1941.
What did France want from the treaty?

Security

Revenge

Reparations

Clemenceau wanted to make sure that Germany could not invade France in the future. He was determined that Germany should be made to pay for the damage that had been caused in northern France by the invading German armies.
In public Lloyd-George said he wanted to punish the Germans. The British public was very anti-German at the end of the war.

In private he realized that Britain needed Germany to recover because it was an important trading partner.

He was also worried about the “disease from the east”, communism. The Russian government had been overthrown by a communist revolution in 1917. Lloyd-George believed that the spread of communism had to be stopped. A strong Germany would be a barrier against it.
What did America Want?

Woodrow Wilson wanted the treaty to be based on his Fourteen Points – 3 Main Goals:

1. Stop secret alliances

2. Promote self-determination – right of people of their countries to determine their government, free from outside influence.

3. Establish the League of Nations

He believed Germany should be punished but not severely. He wanted a just settlement that would not leave Germany feeling resentful.

Wilson wanted to set up an international organization called The League of Nations which would settle disputes.

The American public did not support him. They were fed up with involvement in European affairs. The USA became more isolationist.
The Treaty of Versailles, 1919

**War Guilt Clause**: Germany had to accept blame for starting WW1.

**Germany’s Military Forces Reduced**:
- Army restricted to 100,000 men.
- No modern weapons such as tanks, military air force.
- Navy could not have battle ships over 10,000 tons and no U-Boats.

**Reparrations**: Germany forced to pay massive fine for war damages - $80 billion; today $500 billion.

**No Union with Austria**

**German Overseas Territories**: Germany lost Chinese ports [Amoy and Tsingtao], Pacific Islands, and African colonies [Tanganika and German SW Africa].

**Rhineland to be De-Militarized**

**German National Territory**: Germany lost national territory which was given to France, Belgium, Denmark, most went to Poland.

**League of Nations Approved**

**Baltic States Independent**

The Treaty was designed to cripple Germany militarily, territorially and economically.
The Great War was to see the collapse of four continental empires. These were to be replaced by new nation states.
Imagine that it is 1918. You are an American who has just opened up the morning newspaper to see this photo. Use the questions to post your tweet.
Twitter Wall

• How do you feel about President Wilson traveling to the peace conference in France?
• What hopes do you have?
• What fears concern you?
Ratify or Reject

- Reservationists – senators who approved the treaty, but only with some changes. (Republicans)
- Irreconcilables – senators strongly opposed the treaty. (Republicans)
- Internationalists – senators who strongly supported the treaty. (Democrats)
Analyze Notes

- Use the outline provided to highlight and support arguments for both ratification and rejection of the Treaty of Versailles.
- Use the History Alive textbook from pages 320-323 for additional information to support both sides.
- Work with your assigned partner.
Debate: Reject or Ratify?

- You and your partner will be given a series of six statements or prompts to help you debate the question: Should the United States ratify or reject the Treaty of Versailles?
- To start the debate, the irreconcilable senators will read the first prompt (on a future slide) to the internationalist senators.
- You will have about one minute to debate the prompt, taking turns explaining your points of view. Remember to use historical evidence from your notes.
Debate: Reject or Ratify?

- After a minute, the Senate will be called to order. The internationalist senators will then read the second prompt to the irreconcilable senators. You will have one minute to debate that prompt.
- You will repeat this process until you have debated all six prompts.
All internationalist senators should stand up, point their thumbs up, and enthusiastically say, "Ratify the Treaty of Versailles!"

Then all irreconcilable senators should stand up, point their thumbs down, and enthusiastically say, "Reject the Treaty of Versailles!"
Debate Prompts

1. Irreconcilable: Honorable Senator, the Treaty of Versailles is clearly full of flaws. How can you support it? (Discuss for one minute.)

2. Internationalist: My esteemed colleague, you say the treaty is “full of flaws,” but I wonder, can you even describe two of them? (Discuss for one minute.)

3. Irreconcilable: Senator, it looks to me like that League of Nations could drag the United States into a lot of trouble. Why do you admire it so much? (Discuss for one minute.)
Debate Prompts

4. Internationalist: My fellow Senator, you talk about the League causing trouble. Just what kind of trouble are you talking about? (Discuss for one minute.)

5. Irreconcilable: Why can’t you internationalists understand that our national sovereignty is more important than foolish dreams of collective security? (Discuss for one minute.)

6. Internationalist: Are you kidding? Do you irreconcilables ever consider that collective security might have prevented this tragic war from ever occurring in the first place? (Discuss for one minute.)
Homework

- You will now write a five-paragraph essay in response to the question: Should the United States have ratified or rejected the Treaty of Versailles?
- Due
Perhaps it would gee-up better if we let it touch earth.'

SOURCE WORK: 1) First, describe the storyline shown in the cartoon. 2) Then, relate the political message intended by the cartoonist – what does the horse represent, what does the cart represent, why is it stuck in the air, who are the two men, why is one carrying a whip and one a shovel – what is the political message?
1. Describe the scene shown, what is the storyline?
2. Then, assess the individual features in the cartoon.
3. Then, identify the political message intended by the cartoonist.

‘Punch’ was Britain’s main political magazine of the period.

Why the candle ‘snuffer’? What political message does it represent?

What does the ‘Angel’ represent?

What does the candle represent?

What is the general political message of the cartoon?
1. Describe the scene shown, what is the storyline?

2. Then, assess the individual features in the cartoon.

3. Then, identify the political message intended by the cartoonist.

‘Who’ / or ‘what’ is the man representing?

What is represented by the ‘hand’?

What does the plank represent?

What is the political message of this cartoon?
Describe the condition of the room in which this family is living?

How is the child shown? Why?

Look at the caption, what is its political message?

How reliable is this source?

A German cartoon published in 1919. The German mother is saying to her starving child: 'When we have paid one hundred billion marks then I can give you something to eat.'
Name the people emerging from the building.

What does the building represent?

Why is the ‘child’ weeping, and what is meant by ‘1940’?

What is meant by this comment?

**HOW USEFUL IS THIS SOURCE AS HISTORICAL EVIDENCE:**

i. What do we learn from it about the period being studied?

ii. How reliable is this source?
Vengeance! German Nation

Today in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles the disgraceful Treaty is being signed. Do not forget it! The German people will with unceasing labour press forward to reconquer the place among nations to which it is entitled. Then will come the vengeance for the shame of 1919.

*From the ‘Deutsche Zeitung’ [‘The German Express’] newspaper.*

**Source 7:**

Only fools, liars and criminals could hope for mercy from the enemy. In these nights hatred grew in me, hatred for those responsible for the dead.

*By Adolf Hitler, who had served in the army and became a future leader of Germany*