

Title of Lesson: *Alabama and the Treaty of Versailles*

(Suggested grade level: 6, 11)

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Author Information: Tammy Brown (Cohort 1: 2009-2010)

Central School

Madison County School System

Ryland, AL

Background Information:

Background information for teacher:

- The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has an excellent article, [“Treaty of Versailles, 1919,”](#) which summarizes the treaty and how it led to the rise of the National Socialist Party in Germany.

Overview of lesson: In this lesson students will use a list of Wilson’s Fourteen Points, a summary of the Treaty of Versailles, a letter from an Alabamian to a United States Senator about his view on the Treaty of Versailles, and political cartoons about the Treaty to help them form their own opinions about the treaty that ended WWI. Students will then create their own political cartoons about the Treaty of Versailles.

Content Standards

[Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies](#) (Bulletin 2004, No. 18)

Sixth Grade: Standard 5, p. 43

[National Standards for History, 1996](#)

Standards in History for Grades 5-12 (p. 112)

Era 7, Standard 2 – The changing role of the United States in world affairs through World War I

[National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies](#), (Bulletin 111, 2010)

Standard 5, Middle Grades – Individuals, Groups and Institutions, p. 108

Standard 5, High School – Individuals, Groups and Institutions, p. 139

Primary Learning Objective(s):

The student will be able to:

- Explain the essential ideas of Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles.
- Compare and contrast Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles.
- Discover the reasons why many Americans did not support the Treaty of Versailles.
- Analyze political cartoons about the Treaty of Versailles.
- Design and create a political cartoon expressing a view of the Treaty of Versailles.

Time allotted: 60 minutes

Materials and Equipment:

- Download and print the following political cartoons to be used in Step 7:
 - [“Muzzled? The Dog of War”](#)
 - [“Interrupting the Ceremony”](#)

- [“Seeing Things”](#)
- [“The Lamb from the Slaughter”](#)
- [“Take your Seats Gentlemen”](#)
- Summaries of Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles (attached)
- Compare and Contrast Organizer (attached)
- [Letter from Thomas W. Gilmer to U.S. Senator Oscar Underwood](#)
- Analysis of Portion of Letter from Thomas W. Gilmer to Senator Oscar W. Underwood (attached)
- [PowerPoint presentation: Treaty of Versailles](#)
- [Cartoon Analysis Worksheet](#) from the National Archives
- Treaty of Versailles Political Cartoon Rubric (attached)

Technological Resources:

- Computer
- Digital projector
- *PowerPoint* (v. '97-2003) – If you have a newer version, [a viewer](#) (free) may be downloaded from the internet.

Background/Preparation:

- This lesson should be taught at the end of a World War I unit. Students should have studied about the causes of World War I, the conduct of the war, the use of propaganda during the war, and the reasons for the United States entering the war.
- Students should also understand political cartoon analysis and persuasive writing.
- Students should understand the concept of isolationism.

Procedures/Activities:

Engagement/Motivation Activity: Tell students, “At the time World War I was being fought, it was called the “Great War.” Ask, “When do you think it would become known as World War I?” Allow time for response. Tell students, “World War I was also referred to as the ‘War to End All Wars.’ President Woodrow Wilson had a plan which he believed would accomplish this noble goal of ending wars. This plan was outlined in a speech to Congress in January, 1918, and became known as the Fourteen Points. When the war ended, Wilson traveled to Europe for the peace negotiations with the vision that his plan would become part of the completed peace treaty ending the war.”

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| Step 1 | Divide class into four groups. Give each group two or three of Wilson’s Fourteen Points (each group should have a different set). Tell the groups to read the assigned points and determine the meaning of each point. A speaker from each group will read the assigned points and explain what his/her group thinks each point means and whether they agree with these points. Although most students will agree with this peace plan, explain that this peace plan was rejected not only by Allied leaders but by the United States Congress. |
| Step 2 | After students have moved back to a whole-class configuration, show slides one through nine of the PowerPoint . Allow time for discussion. |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Step 3 | Pass out the summaries of Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles and the Compare and Contrast Organizer. Tell students that as they compare Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles, decide which peace plan is harsher and how they are both alike. Ask the students, “Why do you think Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles were both rejected by the United States Congress?” |
| Step 4 | Show the rest of the PowerPoint presentation about the Treaty of Versailles. After viewing the PowerPoint , students will work in their groups to come up with two reasons people would have for not supporting the treaty. Groups will share their conclusions. |
| Step 5 | Project the letter from Thomas W. Gilmer to U.S. Senator Oscar Underwood. Allow students time to scan the letter. Ask the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When was this letter written?” • “Who is the author of the letter and to whom is he writing?” • “What are some Gilmer’s concerns?” • “What questions do you have after reading the letter?” Say, “In today’s lesson, we will concentrate on one of Gilmer’s concerns.” |
| Step 6 | Hand out the Analysis of Portion of Letter from Thomas W. Gilmer to Senator Oscar W. Underwood worksheet. Give students time to read the excerpt. Define difficult vocabulary and phrases. Allow time for students to complete the worksheet. |
| Step 7 | Download and print the following political cartoons to be used by the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Muzzled? The Dog of War” ○ “Interrupting the Ceremony” ○ “Seeing Things” ○ “The Lamb from the Slaughter” ○ “Take your Seats Gentlemen” Place students in five groups. Give each group one political cartoon to analyze using the Cartoon Analysis Worksheet. Allow students time to observe, discuss the cartoon, and complete the analysis sheet. |
| Step 8 | Each group will present its cartoon and share its analysis with the entire class. During the presentation students should predict who in 1919 would agree or disagree with the message of the cartoon. |
| Step 6 | Students will then work with partners or individually to create their own political cartoons expressing their opinions about the Treaty of Versailles. Before allowing the students to begin their cartoons, the teacher should give each student a rubric and explain expectations. |

Assessment Strategies:

- Evaluate the political cartoon using the attached rubric.
- Evaluate the Analysis of Portion of Letter from Thomas W. Gilmer to Senator Oscar W. Underwood worksheet for accuracy.

Extension:

- Have students research the creation of the United Nations to determine why its formation was supported by the United States Congress and the American people.

Remediation:

- Provide a hard copy of the [*PowerPoint*](#) to students to take home and review for remediation.

Accommodation:

- This lesson can be “chunked” into smaller, shorter, lessons for inclusion students. Assessment can be shortened by choosing either just the political cartoon or the worksheet.

Modification:

- Review Individualized Education Plans, 504 Plans, ELL or Gifted Plans for instructional and assessment modifications or accommodations.

Compare and Contrast

Wilson's Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read the summaries of Wilson's Fourteen Points and The Treaty of Versailles. Then use the chart below to compare and contrast the two documents.

| How Are They Alike? | How Are They Different? |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| | |

Which peace plan is harsher and why?

The Treaty of Versailles and Germany's Punishment

Punishments on Germany

1. Germany, by signing the treaty, will say it is responsible for starting the war.
2. Germany agrees to turn over the Kaiser and other national leaders as war criminals, to be held for trial.
3. The German Army will be cut to 100,000 men, with 1,000 officers as staff.
4. No Air Force
5. No Navy
6. The right bank of the Rhine will be a "De-militarized Zone" thirty miles deep.
7. Poland is given access to the sea.
8. Danzig is made a "Free City," and a strip of land is given to Poland, separating East Prussia from the rest of Germany, placing several hundred thousand Germans in Polish territory.
9. In the Rhineland, three Rhine River crossings will be occupied by French/ Allied troops: Cologne for five years, Koblenz for ten years, and Mainz for 15 years.
10. The Kiel Canal will be opened to all nations.
11. German rivers will be made international property for any nation to use.
12. Germany agrees to pay for all civilian damage suffered by Allied people in the war.
13. Civilian damage payments were still being worked out at the time of the signing but by May 1, 1921, a \$5 billion down payment had to be made.
14. When the Germans sign the treaty, they are signing a "blank check." (A final bill of \$36 billion is finally worked out but never collected.)
15. In the settlement, Germany loses all its colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Japan gets the Pacific Islands and England gets the African colonies.
16. The Saar basin, Germany's richest and major source of coal, is turned over to the control of France, as are the coal mines, for a period of 15 years.
17. Germany loses the valuable Silesian coal fields, which are given to Poland.
18. Alsace-Lorraine will be returned to France.

Punishments on the Central Powers

19. A League of Nations will be created, but Germany will not be allowed to join for nine years.
20. Germany will pull out of Russian territory.
21. German troops will pull out of Belgium and give back its freedom and independence.
22. The Austro-Hungarian Empire will pay the highest price and is totally torn apart.
23. Austria will lose all of its seaports on the Adriatic.
24. The Slavic populations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire are to be set free.
25. Poland once again will become a nation.
26. Finland will become a separate nation; and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will be given their independence.
27. Romania will be given the most land by getting Transylvania from Bulgaria and Hungary.
28. The Ottoman Empire will be broken apart.

Wilson's Fourteen Points

1. No more secret treaties and secret agreements; all discussions and agreements done in the open.
2. Freedom of the seas for all nations of the world.
3. Free trade throughout the world and no more trade barriers.
4. No more arms race; reduce military weapons among the world's nations.
5. All claims on colonies should be settled fairly and reasonably.
6. The Germans should pull out of conquered Russian territory; Russia must be allowed to decide its own national future.
7. Germany should pull out of Belgium.
8. Germany should pull out of French territory and return Alsace-Lorraine to France.
9. Austria should pull out of Italian land.
10. Create self-rule for the Slavic people of Austria-Hungary.
11. Germany should pull out of Romania, Serbia; Serbia given access to the sea.
12. Self-rule to minority people under Turkish rule, an international waterway for all.
13. A free and independent Poland with access to the sea.
14. The creation of a general friendship of nations, bound by covenants ("agreements"); the League of Nations.

Analysis of Portion of Letter from Thomas W. Gilmer to Senator Oscar W. Underwood

Student Name _____

This is not a time for strict adherence to precedent, and while it is the President's prerogative to negotiate treaties without reference to the Senate, it has always seemed to me that it would have been wise for Mr. Wilson, knowing when he left for Europe what radical proposals he would make, that he should have fathomed Senatorial opinion, not only of his own party, but of the Republicans, before embarking upon such uncharted seas. I think the Senate is right in dissecting the document, separating the League of Nations covenant (which if adopted it seems to me will become a constitution of a super-government) from the peace treaty, and acting on them separately. I think Mr. Wilson was disingenuous in insisting on combining them, and that his motive was to force the League upon the country, which savors too much of dictatorial impulses. I voted for Mr. Wilson twice, but I shall vote the Republican ticket in the next presidential election if he or any of his henchmen is the Democratic nominee. It is allegiance to the party and not to Mr. Wilson that has held the party together. As far as my observation goes he has done much towards splitting up the "solid South"; there are lots of thinking democrats who do not agree with him at all, and who are as strongly opposed to him as I am. In fact when he permitted expediency to change his front towards the federal prohibition and suffrage amendments, he discarded one of the principal tenets of our Democratic party.

Answer the following questions about this excerpt:

What mistake does Gilmer think Wilson made concerning the Senate?

What does Gilmer mean by "radical proposal"?

Which of the Fourteen Points, according to Gilmer, would create a "super government"?

How does Gilmer think that Wilson is forcing the League of Nations on the United States?

What does Gilmer say about his vote in the next election?

To what future amendments does Gilmer refer in the last part of the excerpt?

Treaty of Versailles

Political Cartoon Rubric

Student Name _____

Directions: You will create a political cartoon expressing your opinion about the Treaty of Versailles. Your cartoon must demonstrate your understanding of the Treaty of Versailles.

You must:

- Use 3 or more symbols in the cartoon; and
- Create an original title for the cartoon.

| CATEGORY | 4 points | 3 points | 2 points | 1 point | Score |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|---|-------|
| Content | Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the Treaty of Versailles. | Demonstrates a sufficient understanding of the Treaty of Versailles. | Demonstrates some understanding of the Treaty of Versailles. | Shows no understanding of the Treaty of Versailles. | |
| Use of Symbols | Shows appropriate use of symbols and includes 3 or more symbols. | Shows appropriate use of symbols and includes 2 symbols. | Shows appropriate use of symbols and includes 1 symbol. | No use of symbols or inappropriate use of symbols. | |
| Originality | Demonstrates a large amount of original thought . | Demonstrates some original thought. | Demonstrates a small amount of original thought. | Lacks originality. | |
| Title | Title is appropriate and original. | Title is appropriate but lacks originality. | Title contains spelling and/or grammar errors. | Title is not appropriate. | |
| Attractiveness | Exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness. | Attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness. | Acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy. | Distractingly messy or very poorly designed. | |