THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

Wilson and the Allied leaders from Europe attended a peace conference in Versailles, France (near Paris). The European leaders wanted a harsh treaty to punish Germany because they blamed **Germany** for starting the war. On the other hand, Woodrow Wilson’s main goal was peace and believed that all nations should abide by the terms of his Fourteen Points. However, to get what he wanted, he accepted the idea of blaming Germany so that in return, the European countries would support his idea of a **League of Nations**.

1. How were the European leaders’ views different than Wilson’s views? WHY?

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**Key Terms of the Treaty of Versailles**

- **Austria-Hungary** was divided into new, smaller nations. Austria and Hungary would be separated, and the new nations of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia would be created.

- **The Ottoman Empire** would no longer exist. That land would be divided into new, smaller territories under the control of Britain and France, later to become the nations of the modern Middle East.

- **Germany** would still exist, but in a completely new, smaller and weaker form. Germany would be blamed for the war and punished in the following ways:
  - Germany would have to give up much of its territory, losing land to France in the west and the new nation of Poland in the east.
  - Germany lost its navy, and could only keep a tiny army for security within the country (not to go to war).
  - Germany had to pay billions of dollars in **reparations** (payments for damages caused during the war) to the Allies.

- **League of Nations** was established – an association of nations formed after World War I with the goal of keeping peace in the future. It would be the responsibility of the League of Nations to make sure that the terms of the treaty were not being violated.

2. How do you think the **German** government and people felt about the terms of the Treaty of Versailles? Why?

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3. World War I is considered a long-term cause of World War II. Why do you think this is the case?

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**United States Reaction to the Treaty of Versailles**
The Allied leaders of Europe all signed the Treaty of Versailles, officially ending World War I. In order for the United States to be part of this treaty, President Wilson took the treaty back to the United States to have the Senate ratify (approve) it. But people at home, upset by the costs of war and the loss of lives, wanted to return back to a policy of isolationism. The U.S. Senate did not ratify the treaty because they did not approve of the **League of Nations**.

4. Even though President Wilson approved of the Treaty of Versailles – particularly the League of Nations – the United States DID NOT go along with this treaty because the ____________ rejected it. They rejected it mainly because it required the U.S. to join the ________________.

5. What arguments could be made in favor of the U.S. joining the League of Nations?

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6. What arguments do you think the Senate used against the U.S. joining the League of Nations?

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7. Explain what is happening in this cartoon and the artist’s main message.

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