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## Treaty of Versailles...prelude to war?.

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Time Allotment:** 2-3 class periods

**Overview:** The purpose of a peace treaty should be to establish an understanding between two warring parties, with the hope that the fighting will stop. However, at the end of World War I, instead of establishing a peace, the Treaty of Versailles laid the ground work for a sequel, nearly identical, war thirty years later. This lesson is designed to analyze the terms of the treaty. We will also analyze current world situations to see if history is repeating itself.

**Subject Matter:** World and American History

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Know/Discuss terms of Treaty of Versailles
- Construct map of Europe before and after treaty
- Rewrite selected articles of the treaty so as to possibly change the outcome

### **Standards:**

These are Montana state standards, and can be found at:  
HYPERLINK "<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/Standards/ContStds-SocSt.pdf>"  
[www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/Standards/ContStds-SocSt.pdf](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/Standards/ContStds-SocSt.pdf)

Standard 1: Students access, synthesize and evaluate information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations.

Standard 2: Students analyze how people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance to understand the operation of government and to demonstrate civic responsibility.

Standard 3: Students apply geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., location, place, human/environment interactions, movement, and regions).

### **Media Components:**

Video:

Volume 1 The Century: America's Time-Shell Shock  
ABC News Presents/The History Channel

Internet:

<http://www.dean.usma.edu/history/dhistorymaps/WW1Pages/WWIs2.htm>

This site has the map of pre-WWI Europe.

<http://www.dean.usma.edu/history/dhistorymaps/WW1Pages/WWIL51.htm>

This site is a map of post-WWI Europe.

<http://lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/versailles.html>

This site has exact text of the Treaty of Versailles. Use this to construct an overhead of the selected articles.

### **Materials:**

- Overhead of selected articles from the Treaty of Versailles
- Outline map of Europe
- Colored Pencils
- Paper and Writing Utensils

### **Prep for Teachers:**

Prior to the lesson I uploaded the video clips I wanted to use onto the school's laptop computer (using Dazzle software). If this is unavailable use the VHS tape and cue the it to the segment you are using. Bookmark the websites for this lesson on each computer you will be using. You could also use Portaportal.com or Trackstar.com for easy use.

### **Introductory Activity: Setting the Stage**

Step 1) Ask students what the purpose of a treaty is. (*Answers will vary, but should include: to end a war/conflict, to set conditions for the loser in a conflict, to reestablish peace.*) Tell students that that is what a treaty is supposed to do. However, the treaty following World War I did not reestablish peace.

Step 2) Hand out the outline map of Europe prior to World War I (This map could have just the outline of the continent, or you could have outlines of all the countries. This is at your discretion based on amount of time and knowledge level of your particular class.) Tell the students that they will be going to a map website to give them an understanding of European borders prior to WWI.

<http://dean.usma.edu/history/dhistorymaps/WW1Pages/WWIs2.htm>

Give your students a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, by telling them to use this website to fill out their map outline. Their maps should include all of the countries on the webpage, and they should use colors to distinguish between the countries (they should NOT use yellow). When they are finished they should hand it in.

### **Learning Activities:**

Step 1) Tell the students that you will be taking a brief look at some of the problems with the Treaty of Versailles by watching *The Century: America's Time*. Give students a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them “How did the English and French people greet Wilson? Why? PLAY video clip from *The Century: America's Time—Shell Shock* (start video at 1:50:00 When the narrator says, “Into this chaos, traveling to a post-war peace conference in the French town of Versailles, came president Woodrow Wilson,” with a picture of a line of cars driving through crowds of people.) PAUSE after the narrator says, “...for he represented the hope of democracy.” Ask a student to answer the question. (*Answers should include: with enthusiasm, excitement, many saw him as the hope of democracy for all the countries involved.*)

Step 2) Give the students a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, by asking them, “Why were the British and French negotiators not interested in peace?” PLAY the tape again, and PAUSE when the narrator says, “Sowing the seeds of future discord, Britain and France added colonies, by carving up the Middle East.” Ask for an answer to the question (*Answers should include: they were more interested in revenge, they hated what Germany had done and wanted them to pay for it*), and continue the discussion by asking the students, “What was one way, in this portion of the video, that the Allied Powers helped to bring about war in just a few decades?” (*Answers should include: they actually added colonies while taking away all of Germany's colonies.*)

Step 3) Give students a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, by asking them, “Why did the historian say that the 9 million men died in vain?” PLAY the tape again, and STOP it after the narrator says, “Within 30 years, these same nations would all fight again, over precisely the same ground.” Ask for an answer to the question. (*Answers should include: a nearly identical war would be fought just 30 years later.*)

Step 4) Tell the students they are going to get back on the internet, this time to look at how the boundaries changed in Europe after the treaty.

<http://www.dean.usma.edu/history/dhistorymaps/WW1Pages/WWIL51.htm>

Give the students a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, by telling them to

complete their outline map based on the new boundaries in Europe. They should again put all countries on their map, and color them to distinguish. This time though, all of the land that Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire lost should be colored in yellow. When they are finished, they should hand it in.

### **Culminating Activity:**

Step 1) Display selected articles from the Treaty of Versailles on overhead projector, or computer projector. Give students a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them which point was probably the most harsh, and caused the most long term damage to Germany. Read through the articles and explain them as best you can. *Answers should focus in on Article 231, because it put all responsibility on Germany for starting the war, therefore they must pay all reparations for damage done.*

Step 2) Following the discussion on the articles, have students choose two (more if you desire) articles and rewrite them to try to word them in a way that would still punish Germany, but could possibly prevent Germany from feeling so bitter (this could be done as individuals or in small groups) This is due the following day.

Step 3) Assign a current event search for students to look for any current world leaders that are using their country's poor economic, political or social situation to gain or keep power. This could lead into a study on how leaders like Hitler and Mussolini gained power.

### **Cross-Curricular Extensions:**

Economics: spend time discussing why a loss of so much land could/would have an economic impact on Germany

### **Community Connections:**

\*Visit a local museum to view any WWI paraphernalia they may have.

\*Research at the local library the names and families of men who fought in WWI.

### **Student Materials:**

Notebook, colored pencils.