



The Treaty of Versailles

What Next?

- When fighting ended in 1918, the Allied Powers were victorious, but all of Europe had suffered terrible destruction.
- One by one, the Central Powers signed treaties with the Allies.
- Germany's treaty was the last one to be signed, and it forced Germany to accept the blame for the war.
- The Treaty of Versailles was signed in Versailles, France on June 28, 1919 and officially ended WWI.

Punishment

- The Treaty of Versailles was mainly negotiated and written by the leaders of the Allies, with little input from Germany.
- France's Prime Minister, Georges Clemenceau, pushed for harsh punishment for Germany.
 - France had been devastated when Germany had invaded, and Clemenceau didn't want Germany to ever be strong enough to start another war.
- US President Woodrow Wilson and UK Prime Minister David Lloyd George were concerned a severe punishment would start another war, but the concerns were ignored.

Land

- In signing the treaty, Germany had to give up one million square miles of land, some of which had been seized by Germany prior to WWI.
- The majority of the land that was lost was rich in natural resources and could have been used to boost Germany's poor economy.
- Germany also lost all of its colonies.

Reparations

- In addition to accepting the blame for starting the war, Germany had to pay reparations to other countries for the damages they had suffered as a result of the war.
- Germany owed \$33 billion in reparations.
- This was difficult for Germany to pay because it also had to rebuild its own economy and infrastructure.

Military

- In order to keep Germany weak, the treaty forced Germany to limit its military and stop production of nearly all war materials.
- Germany was also prohibited from joining with Austria.

Resentment

- The majority of Germans strongly resented the harsh restrictions put in place by the Treaty of Versailles.
- As economic conditions throughout the country worsened, many Germans began protesting.
- Germany had become isolated and was distrusted by other countries.
- Even though the Treaty of Versailles ended World War I, the severe consequences given to Germany set events in motion that would eventually lead to World War II.

Excerpt from a German newspaper on the day the treaty was signed...

“Today in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles the disgraceful Treaty is being signed.

Do not forget it. The German people will press forward to reconquer the place among nations to which we deserve. Then will come revenge for the shame of 1919.”

League of Nations

- The Treaty of Versailles also created the League of Nations, a group of countries that promised to work together to make sure that another world war would not occur.
- Germany was not allowed to join until 1926.
- The US Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and never became a member of the League of Nations.
- The League had no enforcement powers and turned out to be too weak.



Worldwide Depression

Germany

- The war had left Germany almost bankrupt.
- As its people starved and the country lay in chaos, the Allies gave them a bill that they simply could not afford to pay.
- The Treaty of Versailles caused Germany to go through an economic depression.

Depression

- Germany wasn't the only country who suffered.
- Countries around the world fell into a worldwide depression following World War I.
- European economies were in terrible shape because they had suffered property damage and severe loss of life.
- These countries had borrowed money during the war, but now had no money to repay those debts.
- They also experienced inflation, a condition where prices rise and money loses purchasing power.

U.S.

- The United States suffered from the Great Depression beginning in October 1929 when the stock market crashed.
- Value of stocks began to drop so stockholders began to sell their stocks as fast as they could.
- Businesses could no longer sell their goods because people had less money to spend, so many had to close & workers lost their jobs.
- People couldn't repay their loans to the bank, so they lost everything (homes, farms, etc.).

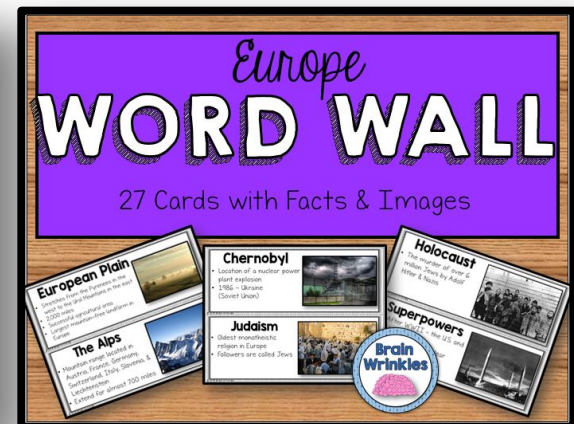
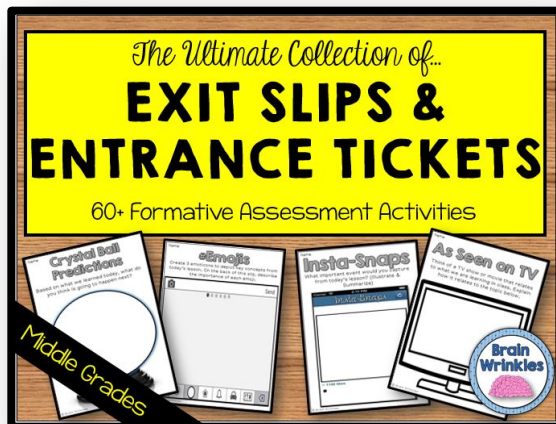
Worldwide

- Businesses around the world traded with the US.
- When the US stopped buying goods, it hurt businesses in other countries.
- When US banks closed, banks in other countries were hurt, too.
- Stockholders in other countries could no longer sell their stocks to American companies
- As businesses and factories around the world closed one by one, buying and selling almost stopped.

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