

Directions:

Read Program 158 called '1918: American and German Forces Meet on a Battlefield Near Paris.'

Define the key terms:

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|-----------|-------------------|
| Starvation | tomb | General | Twentieth Century |
| Bolshevik Revolution | Czar | Communism | Marines |

List in your own words three important details from the audio/reading:

Answer the following critical thinking question:

Program 158: The American soldiers reached the European continent and marched in a _____.

The people of Paris treated the Americans with _____. They threw _____ and _____ the American soldiers.

Describe in two sentences what happened at the Battle of Belleau Woods in early 1918? At the Battle of Belleau Woods, _____.

_____.

Read Program 159 called 'Technology Helps the Allied Forces Win World War One'

Define the key terms:

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Enemy | artillery | tanks | foreign |
| barbed wire | negotiate | Revolutionaries | proposals |

Answer the following critical thinking question

1918 was the _____ year of the war. Select one below.

A) First B) Second c) Third D) Final

When did Germany's effort become easier _____?

What became known as the "eyes in the sky?" _____

List three important details about the Argonne Forest. _____

Give two reasons why German negotiators accepted President Wilson's terms for peace?

1

2

Why do you think this peace agreement could cause anger in the German people?

Program 158: 1918: American and German Forces Meet on a Battlefield Near Paris

In 1917, Europe was at war. It was the conflict known as World War One. After three years of fighting, Europe's lands were filled with the sights and sounds of death. But still, the armies of the Allies and the Central Powers continued to fight.

The United States had tried to keep out of the European conflict. It declared its neutrality. In the end, however, neutrality was impossible.

Germany was facing starvation because of a British naval blockade. To break the blockade, German submarines attacked any ship that sailed to Europe. That included ships from neutral nations like the United States. The German submarines sank several American ships. Many innocent people were killed. German submarine attacks finally forced the United States into the war. It joined the Allies: Britain, France, and Russia.

Like most Americans, President Wilson did not want war. But he had no choice. Sadly, he asked Congress for a declaration of war. Congress approved the declaration on April 6, 1917.

It was not long before American soldiers reached the European continent. They marched in a parade through the streets of Paris. The people of France gave them a wild welcome. They cheered the young Americans. They threw flowers at the soldiers and kissed them. The Americans marched to the burial place of the Marquis de Lafayette. Lafayette was the French military leader who had come to America's aid during its war of independence from Britain. The United States wanted to repay France for its help more than a hundred years earlier.

An American Army officer made a speech at the tomb. He said: "Lafayette, we are here!" And so the Americans were there. They were ready to fight in the bloodiest war the world had ever known. Week by week, more American troops arrived. By October 1917, the American army in Europe totaled one hundred thousand men. The leader of that army was General John J. Pershing.

Pershing's forces were not sent directly into battle. Instead, they spent time training, building bases, and preparing supplies. Then a small group was sent to the border between Switzerland and Germany. The Americans fought a short but bitter battle there against German forces.

The Germans knew the American soldiers had not fought before. They tried to frighten the Americans by waving their knives and guns in a fierce attack. The Americans surprised the Germans. They stood and fought

back successfully. Full American participation in the fighting did not come for several months. It came only after another event took place. That event changed the war...and the history of the Twentieth Century. It was the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Its leader was Vladimir Lenin.

The Russian Revolution began in the spring of 1917. The people of that country were tired of fighting Germany. And they were tired of their ruler, Czar Nicholas. The Czar was overthrown. A temporary government was established. It was headed by Alexander Kerenski.

President Woodrow Wilson sent a team of American officials to Russia to help Kerenski's new government. The officials urged Russia to remain in the war. Under Kerenski, Russia did keep fighting. But it continued to suffer terrible losses. Many Russians demanded an end to the war.

Lenin saw this opposition as a way to gain control of the government. So, he went to the city of Petrograd. There, he led the opposition to the war and to Kerenski. Night after night, he spoke to big crowds. "What do you get from war." He shouted. "Only wounds, hunger, and death!"

Lenin promised peace under Bolshevik Communism. Within a few months, he won control of the Petrograd Soviet. That was an organization of workers and soldiers. Another Bolshevik Communist, Leon Trotsky, controlled the Soviet in Moscow. Kerenski's government continued to do badly in the war. More and more Russian soldiers lost hope. Many fled the army. Others stayed. But they refused to fight.

The end came in November 1917. Soldiers in Petrograd turned against Kerenski. Lenin ordered them to rebel. And he took control of the government within forty-eight hours. Russia was now a Communist nation.

As promised, Lenin called for peace. So, Russia signed its own peace treaty with Germany. The treaty forced Russia to pay a high price for its part in the war. It had to give up a third of its farmland, half of its industry, and ninety percent of its coal mines. It also lost a third of its population. Still, it did not have real peace with Germany. The treaty between Russia and Germany had a powerful influence on the military situation in the rest of Europe. Now, Germany no longer had to fight an enemy on two fronts. Its eastern border was quiet suddenly. It could aim all its forces against Britain, France, and the other Allies on its western border.

Germany had suffered terrible losses during four years of war. Many of its soldiers had been killed. And many of its civilians had come close to starving, because of the British naval blockade. Yet Germany's leaders still hoped to win. They decided to launch a major attack. They knew they had to act quickly, before the United States could send more troops to help the Allies. German military leaders decided to break through the long battle line that divided most of central Europe. They planned to strike first at the north end of the line. British troops held that area. The Germans would push the British off the continent and back across the English Channel. Then they would turn all their strength on France. When France was defeated, Germany would be victorious.

The campaign opened in March 1918. German forces attacked British soldiers near Amiens, France. The Germans had six thousand pieces of artillery. The British troops fought hard but could not stop the Germans. They were pushed back fifty kilometers. The attack stopped for about a week. Then the Germans struck again. This time, their target was Ypres, Belgium.

The second attack was so successful it seemed the Germans might push the British all the way back to the sea. The British commander, Field Marshal Douglas Haig, ordered his men not to withdraw. Haig said: "There is no other course open to us, but to fight it out."

The British fought hard and stopped the attack. Losses on both sides were extremely high. Yet the Germans continued with their plan. Their next attack was northeast of Paris in May. This time, they broke the Allied line easily and rushed toward Paris. The German Army chief, General Erich Ludendorff, tried to capture the French capital without waiting to strengthen his forces. He got close enough to shell the city.

The French government prepared to flee.

Allied military leaders rushed more troops to the area. The new force included two big groups of American marines. The heaviest fighting was outside Paris at a place called Belleau Wood. The American Marines were advised to prepare for a possible withdrawal. One Marine said: "Withdraw? We just got here!"

The Marines resisted as the Germans attacked Allied lines in Belleau Wood again and again. Then they attacked the German lines. The Battle for Belleau Wood lasted three weeks. It was the most serious German offensive of the war. The Germans lost.

Program 159: Technology Helps the Allied Forces Win World War One

Nineteen eighteen was the final year of the most terrible war the world had ever known. But World War One did not end quickly or easily. The German Army made a final effort to defeat the Allies. The United States had entered the conflict. And Germany wanted a victory before large numbers of American troops could get to Europe.

Germany's effort became easier after it signed a peace treaty with the new Bolshevik government in Russia. The treaty made it possible for Germany to use all its forces against the Allies on its western border. In the end, however, Germany's plan failed.

Allied troops pushed back the German attack in a series of bloody battles. The addition of American soldiers greatly increased Allied strength. The leader of American forces in Europe was General John J. Pershing. General Pershing used a weapon new to the world of war: air power.

Airplanes were used first simply as 'eyes in the sky'. They discovered enemy positions so ground artillery could fire at them. Then they were used as fighter planes. They carried guns to shoot down other planes. Finally, planes were built big enough to carry bombs.

General Pershing also used another new weapon of war: tanks. He put these inventions together for his battle plan against Germany. Pershing's target was the Argonne Forest. It was a tree-covered area Germany had held since 1914.

The forest was protected by barbed wire and by defensive positions built of steel and concrete. It was the strongest part of the German line. It also was the most important part. If Argonne fell, Germany's final lines of defense would fall.

The fighting in the Argonne Forest was fierce. Thousands of men died. Sometimes, troops got lost because the forest was so thick with trees. But day by day, the Allies pushed the Germans back. Germany's leaders were losing hope. In September 1918, they met with German ruler Kaiser Wilhelm. The army chief reported that the war was lost. Germany had no choice, he said. It must give back all the territory it had seized and try to negotiate a peace agreement.

Other officials told the Kaiser that the situation at home was bad, too. People were starving. Revolutionaries were plotting to overthrow the government.

Kaiser Wilhelm agreed it might be best to seek peace now. . . Before Germany was destroyed completely. He asked his foreign secretary to send a secret message to American President Woodrow Wilson. The message would propose immediate negotiations to end the war. President Wilson received it. He did not tell the other Allied leaders. Instead, he returned a message to Germany. Wilson asked if Germany was willing to accept the peace proposals, he had offered many months earlier.

Germany's Chancellor answered that his government did accept the proposals. However, the events of war ended the secret exchange of messages between Germany and the United States. German submarines had increased attacks on Allied shipping. Two passenger ships were sunk. Eight hundred twenty persons were killed. Many were women and children.

President Wilson was shocked. He told Germany there could be no peace negotiations with such an inhuman enemy. In late October 1918, Wilson sent a final message to Germany. He wanted a settlement that would make it impossible for Germany to fight again. Germany, Wilson said, must promise to withdraw its forces from all Allied territory. It also must close its weapons factories.

Wilson added that the Allies would negotiate only with a government that truly represented the people of Germany. . . not with military rulers.

The new German Chancellor was Maximilian, Prince of Baden. Prince Max received President Wilson's message. He succeeded in getting Kaiser Wilhelm to dismiss the man responsible for German military policy. But he failed to get the Kaiser himself to give up power. Not all allied leaders supported President Wilson's plan to end World War One. They could not agree on some parts of it.

Britain, for example, opposed the part about freedom of the seas. Britain said it would prevent the kind of naval blockade which had been so effective against Germany. France and Italy opposed the part about creating a new international organization. Wilson had called it a league of nations.

To solve these differences, Wilson sent his closest adviser to Europe to meet with Allied leaders. The discussions were long and sometimes bitter. Many of the Allies thought Wilson was being too kind to the defeated enemy. But in the end, they all agreed to accept the plan as a starting point for peace talks. By this time, in early November, the situation in Germany was growing worse. Communists and Socialists were calling for a rebellion. The navy was ordered to go to sea. Sailors refused and killed some officers. Reports told of rebellion in parts of the German army, too.

The nation's leaders had no choice. They would negotiate a peace treaty. On the morning of November eighth, a German delegation went to Allied military headquarters to discuss terms. The Germans were met by the Supreme Allied Commander, Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France. Foch greeted them coldly. And he did not offer peace terms until they officially asked for a ceasefire. Germany -- not the Allies -- had to put down its weapons first.

The Germans were shocked when they heard the terms. The list was severe.

Among other things, Germany must withdraw its forces from all occupied territories. It must give up Alsace-Lorraine, a part of France it had held for almost fifty years. It must give up most of its weapons including airplanes, submarines, and battleships. And it must turn over large numbers of trucks, railroad engines, and other supplies. The German delegation said it could not sign such an agreement. Germany, it said, was not surrendering. It was only asking for a ceasefire. The delegation said it could not accept the peace terms without communicating with the government in Berlin.

But the German government was falling apart. Kaiser Wilhelm had finally resigned and left the country. A new cabinet had been formed. And a new prime minister had declared a German republic. Yet the situation remained unsettled.

Because of this, the German delegation negotiating with the Allies had to decide for itself. After much argument, the men agreed to the Allied terms. They signed the peace treaty. A ceasefire began a few hours later. News that the shooting had stopped set off wild celebrations throughout the world. People danced in the streets. They cheered the end of the worst war in history.

There were celebrations along the battle lines, too. But these were quiet. Soldiers from both sides climbed out of long trenches dug in the ground. They met the men who, a short while earlier, had been their deadly enemy.

The bloody European conflict was over. The dispute, however, was not. Another fierce battle was ready to begin. This time, the battle would be among diplomats. The fight over the peace treaty officially ending World War One was about to begin.