

# Treaty Of Versailles Dbq Answer Key

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Treaty of Versailles DBQ:

### Historical Question: Was the treaty fair?

**Background:** The war ended on November 11, 1918, (with an armistice or ceasefire). It was only a few months before leaders from around the world would meet at Versailles in France to hammer out a treaty. The major players were Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau of France, Prime Minister David Lloyd George of England, and Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States. Germany was given no voice.

Woodrow Wilson wanted the treaty to guarantee independence for many of the national groups in Eastern Europe. He also wanted to create a League of Nations to settle future disputes (arguments) and avoid war. France had suffered terribly in the war. Georges Clemenceau wanted Germany to pay in gold, in land, in resources, and in reduced military strength. His goal was that Germany should never rise again to threaten France or the rest of Europe. David Lloyd George agreed with Clemenceau. However, one of the English representatives, John Maynard Keynes, argued that the terms imposed on Germany were impossible for her to meet and would lead to bitterness and future conflict. Wilson shared this thinking. In the end, Clemenceau and Lloyd George won out.

(from "The Treaty of Versailles" Introduction Essay by the OGB Project)

#### Document A

Source: Map created from various sources.



Treaty of Versailles DBQ Answer Key: The Treaty of Versailles, signed on June 28, 1919, marked the formal conclusion of World War I and laid down the terms that would shape the geopolitical landscape of Europe for decades. This pivotal document not only aimed to bring peace but also to impose punitive measures on Germany, the perceived aggressor of the war. The treaty's legacy is complex, influencing international relations, economic conditions, and national sentiments, leading to varied interpretations and scholarly debates. This article will explore the Treaty of Versailles, its key components, implications, and the reasons why it is a central topic in Document-Based Questions (DBQs) for students studying history.

## Understanding the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles is one of the most significant peace treaties in world history. It was negotiated at the Paris Peace Conference and involved representatives from the Allied Powers, including the United States, Britain, France, and Italy. The treaty's primary focus was to hold Germany accountable for the war and to prevent any future conflicts.

## The Main Objectives of the Treaty

The treaty had several key objectives, which included:

1. Punitive Measures Against Germany: The Allies aimed to impose reparations and territorial losses on Germany to ensure it would not threaten Europe again.
2. Establishment of the League of Nations: The treaty sought to create a new international

organization to promote peace and cooperation among countries.

3. Redrawing of National Boundaries: The agreement aimed to address ethnic and nationalistic aspirations by redrawing borders in Europe and the Middle East.

4. Disarmament: The treaty included provisions for the reduction of Germany's military capabilities to prevent future aggression.

## **Key Components of the Treaty**

The Treaty of Versailles consisted of several critical components that shaped its impact on Germany and the international community.

### **Territorial Clauses**

- Loss of Territory: Germany lost significant territories, including Alsace-Lorraine to France, and parts of Prussia to the newly formed Poland. This loss not only diminished Germany's size but also its industrial capabilities.
- Colonial Losses: Germany's overseas colonies were distributed among the Allies, with territories in Africa and the Pacific being turned over to various nations.

### **Military Restrictions**

- Army Limitations: The treaty limited the German army to 100,000 troops, forbidding conscription and the use of heavy artillery, tanks, and aircraft.
- Demilitarization of the Rhineland: The Rhineland was to be demilitarized, creating a buffer zone between Germany and France.

### **Reparations and Economic Consequences**

- Reparations Payments: Germany was required to pay reparations, which were later set at 132 billion gold marks (approximately \$33 billion at the time). These payments placed immense strain on Germany's economy.
- Hyperinflation: The burden of reparations contributed to hyperinflation in the early 1920s, leading to severe economic hardship and social unrest.

### **League of Nations**

- Formation of the League: One of the most ambitious aspects of the treaty was the creation of the League of Nations, aimed at fostering international cooperation and preventing future wars. However, the United States never joined, which undermined its effectiveness.

# Impact of the Treaty of Versailles

The implications of the Treaty of Versailles were far-reaching and complex, influencing subsequent historical events.

## Short-Term Effects

- Political Instability in Germany: The harsh terms led to widespread resentment in Germany, fostering a sense of humiliation and betrayal. This discontent contributed to the rise of extremist political movements, including the Nazi Party.
- Economic Hardship: The reparations and economic restrictions led to significant economic turmoil, including hyperinflation and high unemployment rates.

## Long-Term Consequences

- World War II: Many historians argue that the Treaty of Versailles sowed the seeds for World War II. The punitive measures and economic strain created an environment ripe for conflict.
- Shift in Global Power: The treaty marked the decline of European dominance in global affairs and the rise of the United States as a major world power.

## DBQ Analysis: Why the Treaty of Versailles is Frequently Discussed

The Treaty of Versailles is a central topic in DBQs for several reasons:

1. Complexity of Perspectives: The treaty's interpretation varies widely, making it a rich subject for analysis. Students can explore different viewpoints, from those who viewed it as a necessary measure to ensure peace, to those who criticized it for its harshness.
2. Connections to Modern History: Understanding the Treaty of Versailles helps students draw connections to contemporary global issues, including nationalism, international relations, and the consequences of punitive measures.
3. Critical Thinking Skills: Analyzing documents related to the treaty encourages students to develop critical thinking skills, as they must interpret varied sources, assess their reliability, and construct coherent arguments.

## Sample DBQ Questions

To help illustrate the potential focus of DBQs on the Treaty of Versailles, here are some sample questions:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Treaty of Versailles in achieving its goals. Were its punitive

measures justified?

2. Discuss the role of the Treaty of Versailles in shaping the political landscape of Europe in the interwar period.

3. Analyze the impact of the Treaty of Versailles on Germany's economy and society in the 1920s.

## **Conclusion**

The Treaty of Versailles DBQ Answer Key serves as a gateway for students to explore one of history's most consequential documents. Through its punitive measures, economic repercussions, and the establishment of the League of Nations, the treaty not only aimed to bring peace but inadvertently set the stage for future conflicts. Understanding the Treaty of Versailles is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of 20th-century history and its lasting implications on global politics. As students engage with this topic, they are encouraged to think critically about the complexities of peace negotiations and the balance of justice and reconciliation in international relations.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What was the main purpose of the Treaty of Versailles?**

The main purpose of the Treaty of Versailles was to officially end World War I and establish the terms of peace, primarily aimed at holding Germany responsible for the war.

### **What were some key provisions of the Treaty of Versailles?**

Key provisions included the reduction of the German military, the loss of territory, reparations payments, and the establishment of the League of Nations.

### **How did the Treaty of Versailles affect Germany economically?**

The Treaty imposed heavy reparations on Germany, leading to economic hardship, hyperinflation, and significant social unrest in the country.

### **What was the reaction of the United States to the Treaty of Versailles?**

The United States Senate rejected the Treaty, largely due to concerns over the League of Nations and its implications for U.S. sovereignty.

### **How did the Treaty of Versailles contribute to the rise of extremist political movements in Germany?**

The harsh terms and national humiliation caused by the Treaty fostered resentment and instability, which extremist political movements like the Nazis exploited to gain support.

## **What role did the League of Nations play in the Treaty of Versailles?**

The League of Nations was established as part of the Treaty to promote peace and prevent future conflicts, but it ultimately lacked enforcement power and failed to prevent World War II.

## **What were the long-term effects of the Treaty of Versailles on European politics?**

The Treaty created lasting animosity among nations, particularly between Germany and the Allies, and contributed to the political instability that led to World War II.

## **How did the Treaty of Versailles address the issues of colonial territories?**

The Treaty did not return colonies to their pre-war states but instead redistributed German colonies among the Allies as mandates, impacting global colonial dynamics.

## **What is a DBQ and how does it relate to the Treaty of Versailles?**

A DBQ, or Document-Based Question, is an essay prompt that asks students to analyze and synthesize historical documents related to a specific topic, such as the Treaty of Versailles, to formulate a coherent argument.

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