

Wilsons War Message Worksheet Answer Key

1. Below is an excerpt from President Woodrow Wilson's War Message to Congress, which preceded the nation's entrance into World War I.

"It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts -- for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

In a well composed essay, compare and contrast the style used by President Wilson, to the style used by Franklin Roosevelt. Be sure to include the following in your answer:

The overall argument presented by Wilson

At least two similarities/differences between the two speeches

Which one is more convincing in your eyes, and why?

2. Imagine that you are the President of the United States, delivering a speech in the wake of a recent national tragedy. Compose a speech similar in style to that of President Roosevelt, making use of realism, determinism and patriotism in your speech.

Be sure to include the following:

A short exposition on what happened

At least two ways in which the United States was attacked without provocation

What the nation's response must be in light of this

Wilson's War Message Worksheet Answer Key is a crucial tool for understanding President Woodrow Wilson's address to Congress on April 2, 1917, where he asked for a declaration of war against Germany. This address marked a significant turning point in American history, transitioning the United States from a position of neutrality to direct involvement in World War I. This article will delve into the context, significance, and content of Wilson's war message, while providing insights into the worksheet typically used to analyze this historical document.

Context of Wilson's War Message

In the years leading up to 1917, the United States maintained a stance of neutrality while European powers were embroiled in World War I. However, several factors contributed to a shift in public sentiment and government policy, ultimately leading to Wilson's dramatic request for war.

1. Unrestricted Submarine Warfare

One pivotal factor was Germany's policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, which threatened American

lives and commerce. The sinking of the Lusitania in 1915, which resulted in the deaths of 128 Americans, had already sparked outrage. By early 1917, Germany resumed this aggressive tactic, leading to further American casualties.

2. The Zimmermann Telegram

Another significant incident was the interception of the Zimmermann Telegram in January 1917. The telegram was a secret communication from the German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to Mexico, proposing a military alliance against the United States. The revelation of this plot galvanized public support for entering the war.

3. Economic Interests

Additionally, American economic interests were closely tied to the Allies. The U.S. had provided loans and supplies to Britain and France, and a victory for the Central Powers could jeopardize those investments. Thus, entering the war was seen as a way to protect American financial interests.

Key Themes of Wilson's War Message

Wilson's war message is rich with themes that highlight his vision for a post-war world. The following sections will break down the key themes present in his address.

1. Moral Justification

Wilson framed the war as a moral imperative, arguing that the United States had a duty to make the world "safe for democracy." He believed that the spread of autocratic governments was a threat not only to Europe but to the values of liberty and self-governance that America held dear.

2. International Cooperation

Another critical theme was the need for international cooperation. Wilson envisioned a post-war world order based on collective security, which would later influence his proposal for the League of Nations. He argued that nations should work together to resolve conflicts peacefully, rather than resorting to war.

3. American Exceptionalism

Wilson's message also reflected the idea of American exceptionalism, asserting that the U.S. had a unique role to play in promoting democracy and peace worldwide. He positioned America as a moral leader, capable of guiding other nations toward a brighter future.

Analyzing the Worksheet

The Wilson's War Message Worksheet is often used in educational settings to help students engage with the text of Wilson's address. The worksheet typically includes a series of questions and activities designed to deepen understanding of the speech's content and themes.

Common Components of the Worksheet

1. **Text Analysis:** Students are asked to read excerpts from Wilson's speech and analyze specific phrases or sentences. This may include identifying key vocabulary and understanding the emotional tone of the address.
2. **Contextual Questions:** Questions may focus on the historical context surrounding the speech. For example, students might be asked to describe the significance of the Lusitania or the Zimmermann Telegram.
3. **Theme Identification:** Students are encouraged to identify and elaborate on the central themes of the speech. This may involve discussing Wilson's vision for democracy and international cooperation.
4. **Reflection:** Finally, the worksheet may include prompts for personal reflection, asking students to consider the relevance of Wilson's message in today's world.

Sample Questions from the Worksheet

To illustrate how the worksheet functions, here are some sample questions that might be included:

- What specific events prompted Wilson to call for war against Germany?

- How does Wilson justify the moral grounds for entering the war?
- In what ways does Wilson's vision for a post-war world contrast with the realities of international politics today?
- What role does Wilson assign to the United States in promoting democracy worldwide?

Significance of Wilson's War Message

Wilson's war message not only marked America's entry into World War I but also had lasting implications for U.S. foreign policy and international relations.

1. Shift from Isolationism to Interventionism

The declaration of war represented a pivotal shift in American foreign policy from isolationism to interventionism. This change set a precedent for future U.S. involvement in global conflicts, including World War II, the Korean War, and beyond.

2. The League of Nations and Global Governance

Wilson's vision for international cooperation culminated in the creation of the League of Nations, although the U.S. Senate ultimately rejected joining. Despite this setback, the idea of collective security laid the groundwork for future international organizations, including the United Nations.

3. Legacy of American Idealism

Wilson's address also solidified the concept of American idealism in foreign policy, where the U.S. took on the role of a global moral leader. This idealism continues to influence American diplomacy and international relations, as policymakers often invoke the need to promote democracy and human rights.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Wilson's War Message Worksheet Answer Key serves as an essential resource for

understanding one of the most consequential moments in American history. President Wilson's address not only marked the United States' entry into World War I but also encapsulated themes of moral justification, international cooperation, and American exceptionalism. Through analyzing Wilson's message, students can gain insights into the complexities of war, diplomacy, and the evolving role of the United States on the world stage. The worksheet facilitates a deeper engagement with these themes, encouraging critical thinking about their relevance in contemporary global affairs.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of Wilson's War Message?

The purpose of Wilson's War Message was to justify the United States' entry into World War I and outline the principles for which the U.S. was fighting.

What key points did Wilson emphasize in his War Message?

Wilson emphasized the need to protect democracy, ensure global security, and make the world safe for democracy.

How does Wilson's War Message reflect American ideals?

Wilson's War Message reflects American ideals by promoting democracy, freedom, and the right of self-determination for all nations.

What historical context influenced Wilson's War Message?

The historical context included ongoing conflicts in Europe, the sinking of the Lusitania, and unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany.

What was the reaction to Wilson's War Message at the time?

The reaction was largely supportive among the public and Congress, leading to a declaration of war against Germany.

How did Wilson's War Message impact U.S. foreign policy?

It marked a shift towards more active U.S. involvement in international affairs and set the stage for future engagement in global issues.

What role did propaganda play in Wilson's War Message?

Propaganda played a role in shaping public opinion, portraying the war as a fight for democracy and justice, thereby rallying support for the war effort.

What are some criticisms of Wilson's War Message?

Critics argue that Wilson's message oversimplified the complexities of the war and that the U.S. had economic interests that influenced its decision to enter the conflict.

How is Wilson's War Message viewed in contemporary discussions about war?

It is often analyzed in contemporary discussions about the moral justification for war and the implications of American interventionism in global conflicts.

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Unlock the answers to the 'Wilson's War Message' worksheet with our comprehensive answer key. Discover how to enhance your understanding today!

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