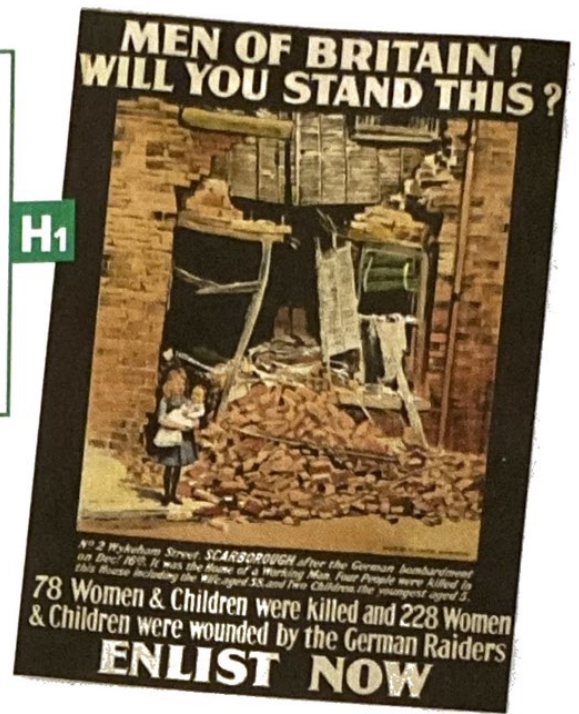


Those fighting for the Triple Entente were called the Allies. Italy joined them in 1915 after being promised part of Austro-Hungarian territory after the war. Germany and Austria-Hungary joined with the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria to form the Central Powers. Germany's plan to defeat France before Russia could mobilize failed. When Russia invaded Germany, the Germans were forced to move some troops eastward to thwart the attack. The Western Front became a bloody stalemate along hundreds of miles of trenches, with British and French forces on one side and German forces on the other.

### ✓ CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. IDENTIFYING CAUSES** What political circumstances in Europe led to World War I? **HSS HI.2**
- 2. EXPLAINING EFFECTS** What were the immediate effects of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand? **HSS HI.2**
- 3. SUMMARIZING** Before the United States entered the war, who were the Allies in World War I? Who were the Central Powers? **HSS HI.4**

H1



*During World War I, both Britain and Germany produced propaganda posters. German propaganda was mostly anti-Russian and did not appeal to Americans, however, while British propaganda did.*

**EVALUATING EVIDENCE** What message does this poster want to convince the viewer to believe? **ELA.RH.11-12**

## THE UNITED STATES ENTERS THE WAR

**GUIDING QUESTION** *What events motivated the United States to join the war?*

When World War I began, President Wilson was determined to keep the United States out of a European conflict. He immediately declared the United States to be neutral and asked all Americans “to be impartial in thought as well as in action.” Despite Wilson’s hopes for neutrality, events gradually drew the United States into the war on the side of the Allies.

### THE NEUTRALITY DEBATE

Despite the president’s plea, most Americans supported one side or the other. Many German Americans supported their homeland, and many Irish Americans harbored hostility toward Britain, but in general public opinion favored the Allies. Many Americans valued the heritage, language, and political ideals they shared with Britain. Others treasured America’s links with France, a great friend to America during the Revolutionary War.

For more than two years, the United States remained neutral. A debate began over whether the country should prepare for war. Supporters of the “preparedness” movement believed that preparing was the best way to make sure the United States was not forced into the conflict. In 1915, Carrie Chapman Catt and Jane Addams—leaders of the women’s suffrage movement—founded the Women’s Peace Party. This organization, along with others such as the League to Limit Armament, worked to keep America out of the war.

One select group of Americans was decidedly pro British: President Wilson’s cabinet. Only Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan favored neutrality. The other cabinet members argued forcefully on behalf of Britain. Many U.S. military leaders also backed Britain, believing an Allied victory was the only way to preserve the world’s balance of power.

H2

### ANALYZING KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

- 1. ANALYZING CENTRAL IDEAS** Summarize this section in two or three sentences, and explain how the central idea explains the section’s title, “The Neutrality Debate.” **ELA.RH.11-12.2, ELA.RI.11-12.2**
- 2. EVALUATING EVIDENCE** The text states that “many American banks invested heavily in an Allied victory.” What evidence is used in support of this statement? How strong do you think this evidence is? **ELA.RH.11-12.3**

## DETERMINING CAUSE AND EFFECT

Propaganda is a powerful force to influence opinion. In wartime, propaganda can be used to convince people to take sides or participate for a particular cause or reason. As a historian, how much do you think the British propaganda swayed the United States to support the Allies in World War I, or were other reasons, such as business, more of a deciding factor?

**DETERMINING MEANING** The word **contraband** is rooted in an Italian term that means “against the ban.” Explain why this makes sense. ELA.RH.11-12.4, ELA.RI.11-12.4

**H**

British officials worked diligently to win American support. One method they used was **propaganda**, or information designed to influence opinion. The British cut the transatlantic telegraph cable from Europe to the United States so most war news would be based on British reports. The American ambassador to Britain endorsed many of these reports, and American public opinion swayed in favor of the Allies. Companies in the United States also had strong ties to the Allies, and many American banks invested heavily in an Allied victory. By 1917, American loans to the Allies totaled over \$2 billion. Although other banks, particularly in the Midwest where pro-German feelings were strongest, lent some \$27 million to Germany, the country’s prosperity was intertwined with the Allies. If the Allies won, the investments would be paid back; if not, the money might never be repaid.

New Imperialism also played a part in driving the country toward war. The United States had built up a modern navy to cement its position as a world power, and America’s economy depended on expanding into new overseas markets. War, especially on the seas, threatened to entangle the United States.

## MOVING TOWARD WAR

**R**

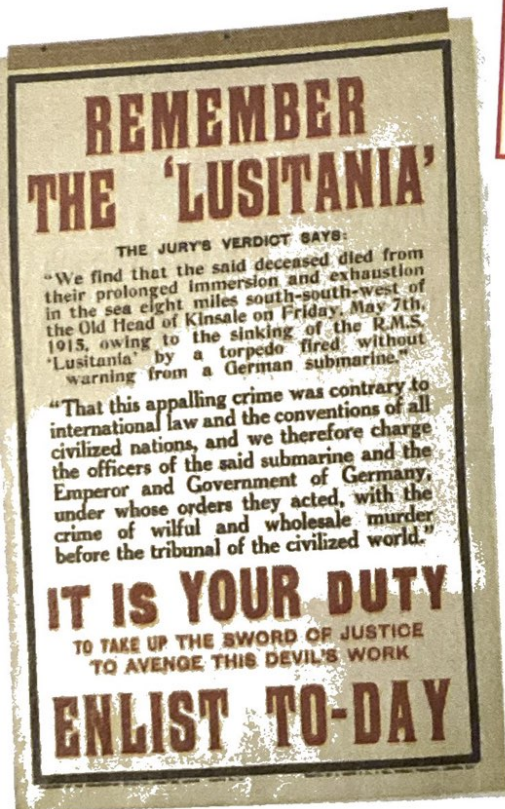
A series of events gradually **eroded** American neutrality and drew the United States into the war. Shortly after the war began, the British blockaded German ports. They forced neutral merchant ships sailing to Europe to land at British ports to be inspected for **contraband**, or goods prohibited from shipment to Germany and its allies. The U.S. government protested Britain’s decision because it interfered with American economic interests. However, the German response angered Americans even more. In February 1915, the Germans announced that they would use submarines called U-boats to sink without warning any ship they found in the waters around Britain. This decision violated an international treaty signed by Germany that banned attacks on civilian ships without warning.

On May 7, 1915, a U-boat sank the British passenger ship *Lusitania*, killing over 1,000 passengers—including 128 Americans. The attack gave credibility to British propaganda and changed American attitudes about the war. Wilson sent an official protest to Germany, but in March 1916, a U-boat torpedoed a French passenger ship. Wilson then decided to issue one last warning demanding that the German government abandon its methods or risk war with the United States.

Germany did not want to strengthen the Allies by drawing the United States into the war. It promised with certain conditions to stop sinking merchant ships without warning. President Wilson’s success played an important part in his reelection bid in 1916. His campaign slogan, “He kept us out of war,” helped him win a narrow victory.

## THE UNITED STATES DECLARES WAR

In January 1917, German official Arthur Zimmermann sent a telegram to the German ambassador in Mexico promising Mexico the return of its “lost territory” in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona if it allied with Germany. British intelligence intercepted the Zimmermann telegram, and it ran in American newspapers. Furious, many Americans concluded that war with Germany was



The sinking of the *Lusitania* angered many Americans and proved to be a turning point in the war.

**IDENTIFYING EFFECTS** What were two long-term effects of the sinking of the *Lusitania*? HSS.HI.2

necessary. The sinking of the *Lusitania* and the Zimmermann telegram also led to a surge of anti-German sentiment and violence against many German Americans.

Then, on February 1, 1917, Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare. German military leaders believed that they could starve Britain into submission if U-boats began sinking all ships on sight. They did not believe that the United States could raise an army and transport it to Europe in time if it decided to enter the war. Between February 3 and March 21, U-boats sank six American ships. Roused to action, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany on April 2, 1917:

**E** “It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war. . . . But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest to 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. . . .”

—quoted in the *Congressional Record*, 1917

Within days, the Senate and the House had voted for the resolution, and Wilson signed it. The United States was at war.

## ✓ CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. IDENTIFYING CAUSES** What events motivated the United States to join the war? **HSS HI.2**
- 2. EVALUATING** Do you think any one particular event was decisive in drawing the United States into war? Explain. **HSS CS.1**
- 3. PREDICTING** How do you think the American entry into the war will affect the conflict in Europe? **HSS HI.6**

**H**

## ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

What do you think Wilson means by saying it is a “fearful thing” to lead Americans into war?  
**ELA.RH.11.12.6, ELA.RI.11-12.6**

## LESSON 1 REVIEW

### Time and Place

- 1. ANALYZING CHANGE** Did World War I occur as a result of longstanding issues or of a series of rapid events, or both? Explain your answer. **HSS CS.2**

### Building History-Social Science Analysis Skills

- 2. IDENTIFYING CAUSES** Create a list of the fundamental causes of World War I. **HSS HI.2**
- 3. IDENTIFYING CAUSES** Create a list of the fundamental causes of the U.S. entry into World War I. **HSS HI.2**
- 4. EXPLAINING CAUSES** How did British propaganda influence American public opinion? **HSS HI.2**

### Writing About History

- 5. EXPLANATORY WRITING** Write a brief essay that explains why there was a “neutrality debate” in the United States before its entry into World War I. **ELA.WHST.11-12.2, ELA.W.11-12.2**

### Collaborating

- 6. PRESENTING** Work together in a group to discuss the main arguments for and against the entry of the United States into World War I. Take turns to propose one argument each. Arguments should be derived from lesson material, and reasonable conclusions should be taken from that material. The other students should listen to and write down each argument. Once all students have shared two arguments each, work together to prepare a short presentation that summarizes your group’s arguments for and against the United States joining the war, and present a conclusion giving your own judgment about whether the decision was right. **ELA.SL.11-12.1, ELA.SL.11-12.4**