

## **Title: Why did the United States Enter World War I? A Webquest Lesson**

### **Historical Background:**

Since George Washington's Farewell Address in 1796, the United States had followed a foreign policy of non-interventionism. This policy ended with the United States entrance into World War I in 1917. The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson seemed to continue this non-interventionist policy when he declared a policy of neutrality to the nation in 1914 and then ran on and won election in 1916 on the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War." By 1917 all of this changed due to world events that convinced President Wilson that the United States must leave its policy of neutrality and enter the War. The effects of unrestricted submarine (U-Boat) warfare, economic ties to the Allies, the public outrage to the sinking of the Lusitania, the Sussex torpedoing, and the Zimmerman Telegram caused this change, and the United States entered an Allied Alliance and a World War for the first time in its history.

### **Correlation to the NN|YS Grade 7/8 Social Studies Core Curriculum:**

Unit Eight: The United States as an Independent Nation in an Increasingly Interdependent World.  
II. The United States Begins to take a Role in Global Politics.

**Suggested Timeframe:** One class period of approximately 40min.

### **Materials/Resources:**

- The United States and World War I Webquest Worksheet (attached)
- Computers with Internet access

**Student Objectives:** Students will be able to:

- Understand how World War One changes American Foreign policy.
- Analyze primary sources and gather data.
- Understand and evaluate the reasons for President Wilson's decision to have the United States enter World War One.

### **Teaching Strategies, Procedures and Methodologies:**

1. The Web Quest model is a inquiry teaching style that takes advantage of the Internet as a source for primary documents for learning. It creates an opportunity for students to learn at their own pace and to be guided by the questions of the web quest on their journey to learn the objectives and history required.
2. Each student should be given a copy of the questions along with the specific websites for which they are to explore, read, and arrive at the answers to the assigned questions.
3. The students will then use the information that they acquired through their Internet searches to answer the "Final Question" of the lesson.

### **Evaluation/Assessment:**

The success and final assessment of this lesson will be determined as the teacher reads the students' responses to the assigned questions on the worksheet and the student's response to the "final question."

### **About the Author:**

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## The United States and World War I Webquest Worksheet

**Directions:** Access the given website to answer each question.

1. When World War One started explain what the position of the United States under President Wilson was towards the War?

[http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President\\_Wilson%27s\\_Declaration\\_of\\_Neutrality](http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President_Wilson%27s_Declaration_of_Neutrality)

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2. What is a U-Boat and explain unrestricted submarine warfare?

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/sub.htm>

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3. Explain if the amount of exported goods and loans that the United States was providing the Allied and Central powers was equal or favored one side?

<http://www.albany.edu/faculty/gz580/his101/lect8.html>

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4. What message did the German Admiralty Declaration, 4 February 1915 send to the world? <http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/germanadmiraltydeclaration.htm>

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5. What was President Wilson's response to the German Admiralty Declaration? <http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/wilsonwarningfeb1915.htm>

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6. What happened to the Lusitania and what effect did it have on the United States? <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/rotogravures/rotolusit.html>

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7. What happened to the Sussex? What was the United States response, and what effect did it have on German submarine attacks? <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1098.html>

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8. What policy did Germany change on 31 January 1917 and what was President Wilson's response? [http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/uboaat\\_bernstorff.htm](http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/uboaat_bernstorff.htm)

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9. What was the Zimmerman Telegram( released to the press March 1<sup>st</sup> 1917) and what effect did it have on the United States?  
<http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/zimmermann.htm>

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10. Why does President Wilson ask for a special session of Congress on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1917, and what effect did this session have on the United States?  
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/wilsonwar.htm>

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