

# WILSON'S *FOURTEEN POINTS* AND THE *TREATY OF VERSAILLES*

**Objectives:** The student will

1. Analyze the meaning of Wilson's *Fourteen Points*
2. Compare the goals of France, Great Britain, and the United States at the end of World War I with Wilson's *Fourteen Points*
3. Create a treaty to end the war.
4. Compare student treaties to the official *Treaty of Versailles*.

**TEKS:** WH.10C; US.4F

**Materials Needed:** Copies of the worksheet for each student; sets of strips of Wilson's *Fourteen Points* and goal cards for each group; access to the *Treaty of Versailles*.

**Teaching Strategy:**

1. Divide the class into small groups of three or four and give each group a set of the *Fourteen Points* strips, the goal cards, and student handout. Go over the meaning of each of the three goals explained in part one of the student handout.
2. Explain to the students that they first are going to analyze the meaning of each provision of President Wilson's *Fourteen Points*. After they understand the meaning of each, they should categorize each point under the goal card that best represents its meaning.
3. After checking to see that they have adequately analyzed the meaning and goal of each of the *Fourteen Points*, explain that they are now going to analyze the reaction of France, Great Britain and the United States to Wilson's plan. Hand out the worksheet and have them decide which of the points they could support and which they would oppose, based on the goals of each country in the peace negotiations.
4. Begin with France and have each group explain the two points the French would support and the two they most oppose, along with their reasoning. Attempt to get the class to come to a consensus for France. Follow the same procedure for both Great Britain and the United States.
5. Using the final consensus of the class, let each group prepare a five point treaty for the Central powers to sign.
6. Debrief by asking the students the following questions:
  - What did you learn about negotiating a peace treaty between foreign countries?
  - How do you feel Germany is going to react to your treaty?
  - How is does your treaty compare to the official Treaty of Versailles?

Suggested answers to Goals on **Wilson's *Fourteen Points***:

1. Goal-A
2. Goal-A
3. Goal-A
4. Goal-C
5. Goal-B
6. Goal-B
7. Goal-B
8. Goal-B
9. Goal-A
10. Goal-A
11. Goal-A
12. Goal-A
13. Goal-A
14. Goal-A

**GOAL CARDS**

<b>Improved international relations</b>	<b>Restoration of territories</b>	<b>Restriction on military strength</b>
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## Wilson's *Fourteen Points*—STRIPS

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants
3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.
5. A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.
7. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.
8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.
9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.
11. Romania, Serbia and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.
12. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development. The Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.
13. An independent Polish state should be erected, which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations. They should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political, and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.
14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

## STUDENT HANDOUT

### Part One—Analysis of Wilson’s *Fourteen Points*

In a speech to the joint session of the United States Congress, January 8, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson summarized three major goals in his *Fourteen Points* for ending the war and attempting to attain lasting peace for not only Europe, but the world. The goals were as follows:

- A. Improved international relations**—Removal of international trade barriers, honor freedom of the seas, advocate open communication with no secret alliances in an international association of nations, and allow for self-rule of nationalities.
- B. Restoration of territories**—Returning to pre-war boundaries and making fair adjustments of all colonial claims.
- C. Restriction on military strength**—Military reductions for all nations, especially Germany with demilitarization along the Rhine River.

Instructions: Read President Wilson’s *Fourteen Points* and categorize which of his goals is best described by each of the points.

### Part Two—Analysis of the Paris Peace Conference

Study the goals of each of the major players at the peace conference:

Country	Leader	Goal(s)
France	Prime Minister Clemenceau	Revenge upon Germany for the heavy casualties and cost of the war  Secure French borders by permanently weakening Germany military capabilities
Great Britain	Prime Minister David Lloyd George	Maintain British naval supremacy and colonial empire  Reduce the threat of Germany’s military, but allow them to rebuild economically in order for them to be a strong trading partner

United States	President Woodrow Wilson	Lasting peace, especially where Europe is concerned; improved trading access (some Americans wanted to be isolated from future European affairs)
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- Identify which two of Wilson's *Fourteen Points* would be most acceptable to France and which two would be least acceptable. Be prepared to share the reasons for the choices.

Most acceptable:

Least acceptable:

- Identify which of the *Fourteen Points* would be the most acceptable to Great Britain and which two would least acceptable. Be prepared to share the reasons for the choices.

Most acceptable:

Least acceptable:

- Identify which of the *Fourteen Points* might be of concern to many American citizens. Explain the reason for the choice(s).

### Part Three—Creation of Treaty

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