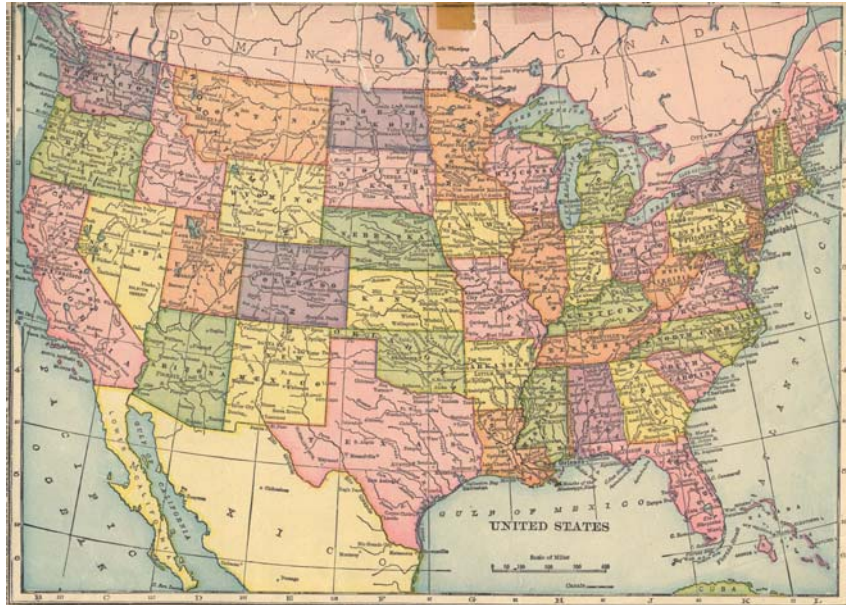




**THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1910)**



**Events that led the United States into WWI**

In Europe, World War I began in 1914, though the United States did not join in the war until 1917. President Woodrow Wilson worked hard to keep the US out of the war. Many Americans were against joining the war and wanted to help by working a peace deal between the two warring sides.

Many businessmen in the US saw the war in Europe—along with the opportunities in Asia—as a chance for the US to become more powerful in the world economy. Many saw the war as a struggle between democracy and bad government. Fairly quickly, people who did not want the US to go to war found themselves isolated; soon, most Americans supported the idea of going to war.

In 1915, a German U-Boat torpedoed the British ocean liner RMS *Lusitania*. The liner sank, killing 123 Americans. In the wake of this disaster, many Americans joined the military and public opinion started to support the war. Other incidents followed, including the January 16, 1917, interception of the Zimmerman Telegraph in which Germany attempted to persuade Mexico to create an alliance with them. It became apparent that the US could not stay out of the war for long. President Theodore Roosevelt demanded that the US prepare for war; he called for the build-up of the military.

In April 1917, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war against Germany so the world would “be made safe for democracy.” Four days later, Congress voted to declare war. By 1917, the war in Europe had already lasted 2-½ years and had become one of the worst conflicts in history. For example, by the time the war ended, half of the young men in France (20-32 years old) had died.

# World War I ..... UNITED STATES

## Mini-Simulation .....

President Wilson said that getting ready for war would need the help of citizens and businesses; he warned that any disloyalty would be dealt with firmly. Wilson raised income taxes and started a Liberty Bond campaign. Everyone was being pressured to buy bonds from the government to help pay for the war—not only to pay for getting ready for war but also to help the Allied Powers fight against Germany. The president also started a draft — the first since the civil war.

### Effects of WWI on the United States

Because the US joined the war 2-½ years after it had started, American dollar costs were not as high as they might have been. Because the US was a rich nation that had many natural resources, Americans contributed a great deal to the war effort before actually sending troops into the field.

Allied Powers	Cost in Dollars in 1914-18
United States	\$22,625,253,000
Total Allied Powers Costs	\$125,690,477,000

America was physically separate from Europe and the troubles “over there.” As such, there was no need for a large standing army as the US faced few threats to its own soil. Once it did join the war, American soldiers and sailors traveled to Europe, Africa, and the Middle East to join the war—although most went to Europe.

WWI Countries	Standing Armies & Reserves August 1914	Mobilized Forces 1914-18
United States	200,000	4,355,000

Allied Powers	Population in Millions	Military Deaths	Civilian Deaths	Total Deaths	Military Wounded
United States	92.0	116,708	757	117,465	205,690
Total (Allied Powers)	790.2	5,711,706	3,667,757	9,379,463	12,809,280

Part of what made WWI so horrible for the soldiers was the use of the WMD called mustard gas. This poison gas would kill anyone who did not get his gas mask on fast enough when ever a gas bomb exploded nearby. Also, mustard gas is heavier than air, so it sank down into the fox holes and other places the soldiers were hiding from the artillery shells and bombs. Many soldiers were injured or killed by mustard gas during WWI. In total, more than 1.2 million people were injured by poison gas attacks; almost 100,000 of them died.

**Effects of Mustard Gas**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Non-Fatal</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Total</b>
United States	71,345	1,462	72,807
Total	1,205,655	91,198	1,296,853

1918 saw the beginning of the great flu epidemic. It killed more American soldiers than the war itself. Approximately 57,000 American soldiers died from influenza while nearly 53,000 died in battle.

**Questions to prepare for simulation to represent the United States’ perspective**

1. Why did the United States eventually join the war “over there”?
2. How do you think the costs of war experienced by the United States would compare and differ from that of the European countries that had fought in the war? Why do you think the differences existed?
3. What arguments can be made for and against allowing the United States to have an equal voice in the peace conference to end the war?
4. As a representative of the United States government, what price would you ask that the US and other countries pay to end this war?