

Presidential Leadership and World War One

A Common Core study on US History (Strategy) during the Great War (1914-1918)

This lesson was created in response to Colonel Douglas V. Mastriano PhD of the Army War College presentation on President Woodrow Wilson's strategy during WWI at the Spring 2016 FPRI History Institute at Cantigny

Lesson Activity Overview

Museum: A building in which objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural interest are stored and exhibited.
http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/museum

The simple definition of a museum may turn many people off from experiencing them, because they are simply seen as a place to store and safeguard objects. What is missing from both the definition and the idea of a museum is that they should be place to experience history -- a place for learning about the past and making connections to the present and future. Even though a museum may contain knowledge about and proof of historical events, it should also be interactive, entertaining, and personalized so that the visitor to a museum is impressed with the importance of its exhibits and takes away a sense of empathy for the history and heritage of the theme presented in the exhibits. The objective of a museum should be to not just store and exhibit artifacts but to memorialize our shared histories for now and for the future.

The United States involvement in World War I is a shared history, which deserves more than just a museum, it should also be memorialized as there are many layers to the history of WWI than simply a box of artifacts, there are the stories behind the artifacts that should be told and experienced as well.

Students will be tasked with creating a proposed museum exhibit that will appropriately memorialize the involvement of US troops in WWI with a specific focus on Alvin York -- and in it create an exhibit that may be interactive, entertaining, and educating about the human experience of the war.

Lesson Objectives

Students will read primary and secondary sources that represent President Woodrow Wilson's strategy during World War I. The first document is an essay by Colonel Douglas V. Mastriano, PhD titled **Dithering, Dreaming, and Speechmaking: Wilson's strategy during the First World War** which outlines President Wilson's foreign policy specifically regarding the Great War. In reading this article students will be required to document their knowledge in preparation for the dissection of four primary source documents: **President Woodrow Wilson's Message on Neutrality August 20, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson's War Message to Congress April 02, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points January 8, 1918, and The American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) objective in the Meuse Argonne Campaign**

Students will then explore how the words and actions of a President impacted the military efforts in Europe and the over four million American's who participated and the one individual who is remembered as one of the greatest heroes of the war.

By creating their proposed museum exhibits students will examine, analyze, critique, and match various artifacts and personal stories of World War I and specifically Alvin York to tell the story of the war that will impart information about the war as well as personalize the experience for the future visitors to the museum.

Number of Class Periods

This activity is intended to be done throughout the WWI Unit, but it is *highly recommend* that you introduce this activity at the beginning of the unit so that students may think about what topics or information they may want to "shoebox" for later use in this activity.

5 class period (based on a 50 minute class).

This project will also require outside research time.

Grade Level

11

Standards:

Common Core:

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 -- Reading**

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2 -- Reading**

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3 -- Reading**

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4 -- Reading**

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5 -- Reading**

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6 -- Reading**

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7 -- Reading**

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8 -- Reading**

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9 -- Reading**

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.10 -- Reading**

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.1 -- Writing**

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.2 -- Writing**

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3 -- Writing**

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 -- Writing**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6 -- Writing**

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7 -- Writing**

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8 -- Writing**

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.9 -- Writing**

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1 -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.a-- Comprehension and Collaboration

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.b -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.d -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2 -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4 -- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5 -- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

California State Standards:

11.4 Students trace the rise of the United States to its role as a world power in the twentieth century

11.4.5 – Analyze the political, economic, and social ramifications of World War I on the home front.

Historical Context

Europe erupted the Summer of 1914 beginning what will later be known as World War I, and in the United States – President Woodrow Wilson, entering his second year of office addressed the Nation emphasizing the importance or remaining neutral. Wilson chose to focus his efforts, at this time, on his New Freedom program – to continue pursuing the Progressive ideals of breaking up trusts, tariff reform, and creating a Federal Reserve for financial stability. It won't be until the declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare and the attempt of alliance with Mexico by Germany that Wilson was pressured to consent to ask Congress for a declaration of war.

Materials:

- *This lesson, as written, is intended to be done entirely virtual, from introduction to finished product, using web based information, to Google Docs and Google Presentation.*
- Computers that have access to the internet and the capability to produce word processed documents and PowerPoint or similar program
- Handouts with instructions

Procedure

- **It is suggested to introduce this activity after the introduction of WWI and the declarations of war**
- The activity itself is scaffold with step-by-step instructions
- All sources are web-based and cited. Links provided directly where used
- Student instructions and activity follow:

Presidential Leadership and World War One
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Directions: Go to “File” and click on “make a copy” this will create **YOUR OWN** Google Document. Then complete the activity below and share it **BACK** to me when you finish, with the ability to “edit” -- *but before you do* --

RENAME IT: Period _____ American Strategy 1914-1918 Your last name, first initial

Part I -- Define the following words using Google's right click function **AND** then use the word in a sentence below the definition:

- strategy
- dithering
- posturing
- negotiate
- repudiate
- pontificate
- league
- encompass
- mobilize
- lambast
- insurgency
- campaign
- generalissimo
- amalgamation
- concession
- centennial

Part II -- Background Information -- go to the following link and read the background information about each conflict then fill out the rubric below:

American Strategy 1914-1918 by Colonel Douglas Mastriano, PhD

<http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/05/dithering-dreaming-speechmaking-wilsons-strategy-first-world-war/>

Events	Impact
Why did the United States remain neutral in 1914, 1915, 1916 and early 1917?	
Give at least two events that caused the United States to go to war in April 1917.	
Describe the end result of this war?	

What are the **five** most important points that are made by Col. Mastriano in his essay and why?

Col. Mastriano's argument	Explain why you believe it is important
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Part III -- Primary Source Documents -- read the following excerpts and follow the instructions that follow each one. Remember to answer in **COMPLETE SENTENCES!**

President Wilson's Message on Neutrality
August 20, 1914

Click on the link below which will take you to the transcript

<http://millercenter.org/president/wilson/speeches/speech-3791>

answer the following questions in **COMPLETE SENTENCES**

According to President Wilson, what will be the effect of the war in Europe on the US?	
According to President Wilson, why would Americans be sympathetic to what was happening in Europe?	
According to President Wilson, what would be fatal to Americans?	
According to President Wilson, what should Americans do in both thought and actions?	
According to President Wilson, what is the particular trial for our Nation?	
Did President Wilson make a logical argument for neutrality? Why or why not?	

President Woodrow Wilson's War Message to Congress
April 02, 1917

On the 3d of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the 1st day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meagre and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed. The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe-conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle....

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it, and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the governments now at war with Germany, and, as incident to that, the extension to those governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as possible be added to theirs. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war at least 500,000 men...

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war...

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations....

But... [the German Imperial Kaiser and his administration] played their part in serving to convince us at last that that Government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted a note to the German Minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence...

Source: Excerpt from President Woodrow Wilson's War Message to Congress, April 02, 1917. Available at the following source:
http://www.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson's_War_Message_to_Congress

Answer each question in complete sentences AND complete the task:

1. What is President Woodrow Wilson trying to persuade Congress to do? Change the **text color** of the **ONE** word that leads you to believe this.

2. **Highlight two reasons** (no more than **SIX WORDS each**) why President Wilson wants Congress to act. Which is the most critical reason? Why do you believe that to be true?
3. Underline the portion of this speech that serves as the reason why President Wilson believes war should be declared. Do you agree with his reason and thoroughly explain why or why not.
4. *Copy and paste* below the portion of the speech in which Wilson names another government. Explain in what context that government has been named.

President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points
8 January, 1918:

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secure once for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us.

I. 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.

II. 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.

III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

V. 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.

VI. 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.

VII. 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.

VIII. 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.

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. 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.

XI. Rumania, 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.

XII. 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, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which 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.

XIV. 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.

Source: President Woodrow Wilson Speech, "Wilson's Fourteen Points," Washington, D.C. January 8, 1918.
<http://millercenter.org/president/wilson/speeches/wilsons-fourteen-points>

Answer each question in complete sentences AND complete the task:

1. **Highlight four points.** (no more than TEN WORDS) What is President Wilson seeking in his fourteen points (what does he want?) – sum it up in ten words or less.
2. Underline the relationship this speech is directed against the former members of the Central Powers: Germany (*Prussia*), Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bulgaria (*Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro*), and the Ottoman Empire. Underline what needs to happen to French territory occupied by Germany in 1871.

Why was this important?

3. **Change the font color** where Wilson mentions territorial concessions.

Part IV -- Primary Source - The American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) objective in the Meuse Argonne Campaign. Open the link (pdf file). Read pages 128-130 of the book and answer the following questions: *This website is the US Army Center of Military History*
http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/023/23-14/CMH_Pub_23-14.pdf

Answer in **COMPLETE SENTENCES**

Describe the objective (mission) of the AEF in the Meuse Argonne Offensive?	
Outline the timeline laid out in this order on pages 128-130?	
Explain the relationship with the French Army in the area?	

Part V -- Common Core **GROUP** Activity about America's role in WWI and Sergeant Alvin York, America's most celebrated hero from 1918.

You and your group have been given the task of developing a proposed museum exhibit on Alvin York. Your proposal will have to meet specific requirements and will be presented as a PowerPoint. The museum is expecting a minimum of six part exhibit, each part will be **presented on at least two slides**, three maximum. Your **presentation must be informative and persuasive**. You will have to do RESEARCH!!

- Part #1 Introduction -- Who was Alvin York? (Excluding the specific dates below)
- Part #2 A summary of the United States military involvement.
- Part #3 Describe what happened to York after his father died in 1911?
- Part #4 Explain why his life changed in January 1915?
- Part #5 Describe what he did in combat on October 8, 1918 and why did it matter?
- Part #6 Sergeant York's Legacy and specific notation for the Sergeant York Discovery Expedition

Each part must have:

- a) An artifact (*for the proposal it may be a picture of one*) representing the topic of the slide
- b) A primary source on the exhibit topic
- c) An overview secondary source (cited on the slide) to explain the topic exhibit
- d) A proposed interactive element, in which the museum patrons can touch/feel/hold
- e) Three of the five above, for **EACH** slide, must come from the following websites:

Organizations:

Sergeant York Discovery Expedition (webpage of sources, photos and documents)

http://www.sgtorkdiscovery.com/Home_Page.php

Sergeant York News Broadcast (video - two minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA3O3Gxd9Bq>

Sergeant York 90th Anniversary News report (video - two minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8pCyieCTBk>

Sergeant York Battle Reenactment (movie segment – ten minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrBVBVIlFP8>

CSPAN Sergeant York Presentation (video)

<http://www.c-span.org/video/?325420-1/douglas-mastriano-alvin-york>

Pritzker Military Museum lecture on Sergeant York (video)

https://www.pritzkermilitary.org/whats_on/pritzker-military-presents/col-douglas-v-mastriano-alvin-york/

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

- Format requirements for **EACH** slide:
- Each slide **must** follow the 6x6 rule (*max 6 bullet points and max 6 words per bullet point per slide*)
- Each slide **must** have at least one picture, illustration, or graph.
- Each slide **must** have a citation to the source of the information presented on the slide.
- Presentation should be between 12-15 minute

Part VI -- EXTRA CREDIT

To earn 30 points extra credit, you and your group(s) will create a poster that celebrates America's most famous hero from World War 1, Sergeant Alvin C. York. Use at least one picture and as few words as possible to convey the heroism of Sergeant York on a full size poster that can be used during the centennial commemoration in 2018. The best designs will be sent to the Sergeant York Discovery Expedition to be displayed on their website. http://www.sqtyorkdiscovery.com/Home_Page.php