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## The Peace Settlement

### A. The End of World War I

1. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk enabled the Germans to transfer divisions from the east to help launch a great spring offensive.
2. Reinforced by newly arrived American troops, the British and French halted the German offensive.
3. Realizing that defeat was imminent, William II abdicated his throne and Germany became a republic. Two days later on November 11, 1918, World War I came to an end.

### B. The Fourteen Points

1. President Woodrow Wilson became the spokesman for a just and lasting peace.
2. Wilson's Fourteen Points included a call for the following:
  - Open diplomacy
  - Freedom of the seas
  - Reduction of national armaments
  - Return of Alsace-Lorraine to France
  - A free and independent Poland with access to the sea
  - National self-determination for oppressed minority groups
  - Creation of a "general association of nations to preserve the peace and security of its members"
3. Wilson's idealistic proposals were undermined by secret treaties and by a desire to punish Germany.

### C. The Paris Peace Conference

1. Although nearly 30 countries were represented, Great Britain, France, and the United States made the major decisions.
2. Germany and Austria-Hungary were not allowed to attend the conference.
3. Russia, which had suffered the greatest loss of life, was in the midst of a civil war and was not invited to attend the conference.

### D. The Treaty of Versailles

1. Germany lost 13 percent of its land, including Alsace-Lorraine.
2. Germany's territories in Africa and the Pacific were given as mandates to Britain, France, and Japan. A mandate was a territory that was administered on behalf of the League of Nations.

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3. Poland once again became an independent nation. The new Poland received a large strip of German land called the Polish Corridor. This strip cut off East Prussia from the rest of Germany and gave Poland access to the sea.
4. Germany's army was limited to 100,000 men and forbidden to have artillery, aircraft, or submarines.
5. The east bank of the Rhine River was to be demilitarized, and the Allies were to have the right to occupy the Rhineland for 15 years.
6. Germany was declared guilty of starting the war and forced to pay huge payments called reparations.
7. The Allies created a League of Nations to discuss and settle disputes without resorting to war.
8. The final signing ceremony took place in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, the same room in which Bismarck's German empire had been proclaimed in 1871.

### E. A New Map of Europe

1. Austria-Hungary was dissolved and the Habsburg monarchy eliminated. Austria and Hungary became separate states. In addition, territories from Austria-Hungary were given to the newly created states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.
2. The Serbs dominated Yugoslavia.
3. Finland and the three Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – emerged from the tsarist empire.

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### F. Making Comparisons: the Congress of Vienna and the Paris Peace Conference

1. The Congress of Vienna
  - Allowed defeated France to participate in peace conference negotiations
  - Established a framework for future international relations based on periodic meetings, or congresses, among the great powers
  - Restored a conservative order based upon the institutions of monarchy and aristocracy
  - Created a balance of power that lasted for over 50 years
2. The Paris Peace Conference
  - Refused to allow defeated Germany or Communist Russia to participate in peace conference negotiations

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- Established a framework for future international relations based on the League of Nations
- Witnessed the birth of a democratic order with the elimination of monarchies in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia
- Created a legacy of bitterness between both the victors and the defeated, which led to a second world war in just 20 years