

# Was the Treaty of Versailles a 'Peace of Revenge'?

KS3 History- Lesson 2 of 4

Enquiry: What kind of Peace was made in 1919?

Ms Goult



# Was the Treaty of Versailles a 'Peace of Revenge'?

The **Treaty of Versailles** had been decided by the main winning countries of the First World War and was signed in June 1919.

Germany, the losing country, had no choice but to accept the **terms** of the Treaty. These terms damaged Germany **economically, militarily** and they damaged her **pride**.

Germany felt that the treaty was very unfair. This cartoon shows Clemenceau, the French president, as a vampire, sucking the life out of Germany.



# The Terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

A good way to remember the main terms of the treaty of Versailles is to remember to GARGLE.

**G**

**Guilt for the war.**

**A**

**Armed forces reduced.**

**R**

**Reparations.**

**G**

**Germany lost land.**

**L**

**League of Nations.**

**E**

**Extra terms.**



# The Terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

## **G** Guilt for the war.

**Article** 231 of the Treaty of Versailles said that Germany had to accept full responsibility for starting the war and had to accept all guilt for the war. This affected Germany's pride as many countries had been responsible for starting the war and Germany now had to accept all of the blame.

## **A** Armed forces reduced.

Germany was only allowed 100,000 men in the army, 6 battleships and was not allowed to have an air-force. This meant that she was much weaker than Britain and France, affecting her pride as well as her ability to defend herself from attack.



# The Terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

## **R** **Reparations.**

Germany had to pay £6.6 billion in **reparations**. These were payments to the winning countries to repay the damage caused in the war. This caused huge economic problems for Germany because she needed money to help her to recover from the war too.

## **G** **Germany lost land.**

All of Germany's **colonies** in Africa were taken from her. Most were given to the winning countries. Germany had to give Alsace-Lorraine, an area between France and Germany that they had argued over for many years, back to France. This affected Germany's pride as by losing colonies, she was becoming less powerful. It also affected her economy as the colonies had brought lots of money to Germany.



# The Terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

## **L** League of Nations.

A League of Nations was set up. It was a group of countries who had decided to solve problems through talking about them (**diplomacy**), instead of by fighting. This was supposed to help Europe to stay peaceful in the future. Germany was not allowed to join the League of Nations. This damaged Germany's pride as she was accepting all of the punishments for the war, but not allowed to take part in European **politics**.

## **E** Extra Terms.

Germany was not allowed to make any secret treaties, or to unite with Austria, the closest country to her. The union with Austria was called Anschluss. These terms damaged Germany's pride and would also damage her militarily if there was a war.



# What kind of peace was made in 1919?

<b>Self interested?</b>	<b>Vengeful (revenge)?</b>	<b>Doing the 'right thing'?</b>
<p>The '<b>Big Three</b>', and in particular Britain and France, wanted to protect themselves from future attack and gain as much as they could from the Treaty of Versailles. They were keen to take Germany's colonies and also to get as much money as possible in reparations. This made Germany feel that they were being punished more than they should be and that France in particular was being greedy.</p>	<p>Lots of the terms were designed to punish Germany and to make it hard for them to recover. The 'War Guilt', the reparations and the reduction of their armed forces made post-war life very hard for Germany. The fact that Germany was not allowed into the League of Nations also meant that they could not be involved in European politics.</p>	<p>The League of Nations was an example of a term which was trying to keep Europe peaceful in the future. It showed that Britain and France wanted to talk about problems instead of going to war.</p>



# Glossary

Article: A term of the Treaty of Versailles.

'Big Three': The three main winning countries at the end of the First World War (Britain/France/USA)

Colonies: Less powerful countries ruled over by more powerful countries.

Diplomacy: Countries solving problems by talking about them, instead of through war.

Economically: To do with the money in a country.

Militarily: To do with the army.

Politics: To do with the government.

Pride: Self-respect.

Reparations: The money that Germany had to pay to the winning countries of the First World War.

Terms: One of the agreements made in the Treaty of Versailles.

Treaty of Versailles: The agreement signed in 1919 which set out the terms of Germany's defeat.



# Comprehension Questions

1. What was signed in June 1919?
2. Which term damaged Germany's military the most?
3. In what way was the Treaty of Versailles an example of the Big Three trying to 'do the right thing'?
4. With which terms would France be the most satisfied?
5. To what extent was the Treaty of Versailles a 'peace of revenge'?



# Comprehension Questions

1. What was signed in June 1919?

Acceptable Answer: The Treaty of Versailles.

Good Answer: In June 1919, the Treaty of Versailles was signed. This treaty had been decided by the main winners of the First World War; Britain, France and the USA. It laid out all of the terms that Germany had no choice but to follow.



# Comprehension Questions

2. Which term damaged Germany's military the most?

Acceptable Answer: Reduction in the armed forces.

Good Answer: The term which damaged Germany's military the most was the reduction in armed forces. Germany was only allowed 100,000 men in the army, 6 battleships and no air-force. This made her much weaker militarily than Britain and France.



## Comprehension Questions

3. In what way was the Treaty of Versailles an example of the Big Three trying to 'do the right thing'?

Acceptable Answer: The League of Nations was to solve problems by talking instead of war.

Good Answer: One example of where the Treaty of Versailles showed the Big Three trying to do the 'right thing' was through the creation of the League of Nations. This was a group of European countries who would talk about issues and use diplomacy to solve problems, instead of war. This was to try and keep peace in Europe in the future.



# Comprehension Questions

4. With which terms of the Treaty of Versailles would France be the most satisfied?

Acceptable Answer: Reparations.

Good Answer: France wanted a harsh punishment for Germany, so would be pleased that Germany had lots of reparations (£6.6 billion) to pay. This would mean that France could start to rebuild their economy and could make sure that they were more powerful than Germany.



# Extension Question

5. To what extent was the Treaty of Versailles a 'peace of revenge'?  
*In answering this question, you need to weigh up both sides of the argument and come to a conclusion. Use the sentence-starters below to help.*

Sentence starters:	Key words
<p><i>The Treaty of Versailles was a 'peace of revenge' to some extent because...</i></p> <p><i>However, it was not only designed to get revenge; there is also evidence that it was also an example of the Big Three trying to 'do the right thing'...</i></p> <p><i>It is clear that...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Revenge</li><li>-Reparations</li><li>-Armed Forces</li><li>-Self-interest</li><li>-Colonies</li></ul>

