

Jane Addams and the U.S. in World War I



Written by Frank Romano and Juan Navarro, produced by the Jane Addams Papers Project at Ramapo College of New Jersey, and made possible by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities

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File > Make a Copy > Entire Presentation

The Student Worksheets linked on slide 3 will also require you to make a copy to edit.

For Teachers:

Time: One 45 minute class period

Objectives and Standards as set forth by the college board for AP U.S. History

Unit 7: Learning Objective A Explain the context in which America grew into its role as a world power.

Historical Developments:

KC-7.3.II World War I and its aftermath intensified ongoing debates about the nation's role in the world and how best to achieve national security and pursue American interests.

KC-7.3.II.C Despite Wilson's deep involvement in postwar negotiations, the U.S. Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles or join the League of Nations.

Suggested Skill:

Sourcing and Situation 2.C Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.

For Teachers:

Student Worksheets:

Worksheet 1 - Structure: (a) Prompt (b) Documents (c) Breakdown of prompt for students to organize their ideas.

Worksheet 2 - Structure: (d) Graphic Organizer to guide students in their analysis of documents

How this lesson meets the AP objectives:

KC-7.3.II World War I and its aftermath intensified ongoing debates about the nation's role in the world and how best to achieve national security and pursue American interests.

KC-7.3.II.C Despite Wilson's deep involvement in postwar negotiations, the U.S. Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles or join the League of Nations.

2.C Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.

Sourcing and Situation 2.C - Worksheet is based around determining the purpose, audience, perspective, and historical context of the documents provided.

For Teachers:

This lesson can be completed in a variety of ways:

- (1) Go through this presentation and analyze the documents as a class including historical context, audience, purpose, and point of view.
- (2) Review background information on Slide 7 with students (5-10 minutes). Then have students complete the DBQ worksheet individually or in groups (30-40 minutes). If appropriate - assign last page of worksheet for homework
- (3) Review background information on Slide 7 with students. Then complete the DBQ worksheet as a jigsaw
 - (a) Put students into 6 groups, assigning each group a single document to read and analyze together using the graphic organizer found on the student worksheet. (About 10 minutes)
 - (b) Put students into different groups with a member from each document represented.
 - (c) Students take turns explaining their document including the Historical context, audience, purpose, and point of view. (About 25 minutes)
 - (d) Answer questions on the final page of the worksheet (help students understand how they would formulate a real response to the DBQ prompt). The questions can be answered either individually, within their group, or for homework. (About 10 minutes)



For more lesson plans and to access
documents visit

<https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/>

“WARRING NATIONS IN MOOD FOR PEACE,” REPORTS JANE ADDAMS, BACK FROM EUROPE

[Lansing State Journal, 7/5/1915](#)

Jane Addams and A Nation at War

- Prominent Pacifist as World War I raged in Europe and engulfed the United States
- Conflict between Jane Addams' stance and the goals of her peace movement arose as the nation began to clamor to aid the Allies against the Central Powers
- U.S. enters the war April 6, 1917, after such provocations as:
 - Sinking of the *Lusitania* (1915; 128 Americans die)
 - “Zimmerman Telegram” (1917)
 - Unrestricted Submarine Warfare (1917)
- Did Jane Addams mis-read the American mood regarding WWI and its immediate aftermath as the US continued its development of its role in the world? Or did US leadership miss an opportunity for peace?

Use the Documents on the DBQ to learn more about Jane Addams and debates about the role of the U.S. in the world circa 1918.

Use the Documents to answer the Following Prompt:

How did Jane Addams reflect or differ from the mood of the United States around the era of World War I ?

Document 1: <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/10272>

Source: Jane Addams, "Hearing before the Committee on Military Affairs," (Washington D.C.: Washington Government Printing Office, 1916)

I speak not only for the members of our organization, but for many women in all parts of the country, who feel that the talk so general throughout the country, urging a very marked increase of the Navy and the Army, is simply the result of what is happening in Europe; that the sentiment of the United States is unconsciously affected by the conditions on the other side of the Atlantic.

Our war contagion is a good deal like the case of a man living in the middle of Kansas who, hearing that there were a great many burglaries in New York City, thereupon immediately armed himself against the advent of burglars, although there were none in Kansas. His panic would be purely subjective and the result of what he read was happening elsewhere.

Mr. Chairman, there are two lines of presentation I would like to put forward in support of our contention. The first is that among many experienced people in England and in Germany and in other countries there is the belief that one of the results of this war will be a proportional reduction of armaments. Even before the war Germany and England were beginning to consider the increases in their navies in relation to maintaining a certain proportion. If such a thing as that could be done before the war started, when the finances of all the nations were in a good condition, it certainly would be easier to do such a thing after the war, when most of the nations now engaged in war are going to be bankrupt and we hope more or less convinced of the folly of attempting to settle any international difficulties through warfare...

..Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, at the close of this war we will have arrived at a turning point in the world's history. The nations must decide whether the world is going through another lengthy series of years of armed peace, or whether the world is going to make a sharp turn as a result of the lessons learned in this war, and evolve some kind of agreement for international adjudication.

Document 1

Historical Context:

House Military Affairs Committee - a key Congressional committee for the determination of how much spending will take place to increase or decrease the nation

Audience:

US Congressmen and those following politics of the time.

Purpose:

To persuade the House Military Affairs Committee against increasing spending on the war

Point of View:

Addams is arguing that the nation was not in threat of war, and to increase our spending would make us seem hypocritical for the goal of overall reducing world-wide armaments and starting a "League of Nations"-type neutral nations agreement.

Document 2: [World War I and American Public Opinion 1914-1917](#)

Source: Hicks, Walter Edmund, "World War I and American public opinion, 1914-1917." (1949). Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 1973. p.78

“Following a meeting of the Cabinet, March 20, the Literary Digest reported that we changed from ‘armed neutrality’ to ‘a state of war.’ Commenting on the coming session of Congress, most of the American press seemed to feel the same way. ‘It will be the duty of Congress to recognize the fact of war and authorize the President’, stated the New York Times. The Boston Transcript felt that "Germany was at war with US, and we should be at war with Germany!’ The New York Tribune wanted to know ‘what we were going to do about it?’ and the Cleveland Press believed ‘war is inevitable’. The action of Congress, April 6, 1917, in declaring war against Germany found the American press united behind the call to arms. The Chicago Herald stated ‘If this, indeed, be not the voice of the nation, we are not fit to be a nation’ and the Courier-Journal remarked that it was the "most significant and momentous deliverance on the part of the American people since the Declaration of Independence.’ The Boston Transcript heard the voice of the people with the remark, ‘the president has heeded the mandate of the people.’ The pro-German press and the German-American press also fell into line. The Milwaukee Free-Press patriotically calling that ‘where the flag leads all America will follow’ and the New York Staats-Zeiung could see one goal and ‘but one duty -- America’.”

Document 2

Historical Context:

This is a secondary source published after the war analyzing the American opinion of 1914-1917, this excerpt specifically commenting on 1916 after the sinking of the Lusitania.

Audience:

General Public throughout the nation

Purpose: The newspaper headlines demonstrate the extent to which public opinion was shaped to be supportive of the war.

Point of View:

Newspaper headlines both hold reflections of the people of those times and also shape opinions as such.

Document 3: <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/14178>

Source: A mother begs Addams to do all she can to prevent war. Anonymous, "Anonymous (A Mother of Sons) to Jane Addams, March 30, 1917," *Jane Addams Digital Edition*

My dear Miss [Addams]

I have read so much about you and the good you have done in connection with the Peace League in our country. As a mother of sons I love and for all real mothers I urge you and all peace workers to do all you can towards keeping this country from war it seems mothers are perfectly helpless in that matter. We are supposed to hand over our sons [whenever] war agitators think we need some [page 2] blood shed to satisfy the greed and lust of men that if they were called first, the war agitation would now cease, it seems terrible that our young men the best in the country must needs be slain, like sheep led to the slaughter and the world war must have broken hearted mothers by the score never to be healed on earth [and] if this is to continue, future women ought to refuse to bear children. I hope and pray our country will keep out of war and not become a military nation. May God forbid. This is from a plain mother, but if [page 3] my few words would make any impression towards peace please send to the president or, Mrs Wilson.

Sincerely

from a mother of sons

Document 3

Historical Context:

With the war declaration imminent, an anonymous mother begs Ms. Addams to prevent the war to the greatest extent Ms. Addams can.

Audience:

Jane Addams

Purpose: Express the opinion of this mother (and likely many mothers) across the nation of their concern for the impending loss of American lives and its future impact.

Point of View:

Women, still lacking even voting rights in 1917, feeling “helpless” at the impending war, appeal to Ms. Addams to advocate for their cause.

Document 4: <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/15229>

Source: James Atkinson criticizes Addams's continued work for peace, claiming that the time has come to support the war effort. Atkinson, James A. J., "James A. J. Atkinson to Jane Addams, May 11, 1917," Jane Addams Digital Edition

Dear Miss [Addams].

Being the father of two Sons, who will be called on to defend the honor of our beloved Country, and being myself a [veteran] of the Civil War, I protest against a person of your prominence, engaging in proceedings calculated, and intended to embarrass our efforts for national defense. We have been attacked. What would you have us do. You have had the experience of trying out the Ford plan: It was a humiliating joke. Those "Sabre [rattlers]" who have attacked us, are not of the [pacifist] sort: They will yield only to Superior force. They began to spy on us when they betrayed the hospitality of our nation by sending the Emperor's brother, Prince-Henry, to spy out our internal transportation and defense lines. [Their] Diplomatic relations with us has proven to be a tissue of lies. [page 2]

They have, and are now, supporting a well organized system of espionage throughout the Country. The rank and file of them in this country, can and do communicate by Motion-Code and, as will be later shown, are betraying us on every hand. Is the United States your Country; do you intend still, to invoke the laws of this Country in your behalf. Would [you?] pretend that you and your co-workers have a larger vision of the real and [crystallizing] methods of Civilization, than the great mass of men and woman who must bear the burdens of the real work. For my part, I am in no mood for sidestepping: I am convinced that the great unit of American men and woman, have considered to the last Analysis, the Justice of our cause and the momentum of the movement to that end, cannot be [stopped].

I am truly, your friend,

James. Atkinson
Box 42, Kirkwood
Illinois

Document 4

Historical Context:

With various provocations occurring against the United States resulting in the loss of American citizens and threats to US relations with Mexico, citizens call for war.

Audience:

Jane Addams

Purpose:

To convince Ms. Addams to stop anti-war efforts.

Point of View:

There were citizens who felt the need for war and to establish America as a “liberator” exceeded the points of Ms. Addams and pacifists.

Document 5: <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/18627>

Source: Jane Addams informs President Wilson that the international congress of women urges the the powers of the Peace Congress to follow the steps to ensure peace. Addams, Jane, "Jane Addams to Woodrow Wilson, May 16, 1919," *Jane Addams Digital Edition*

..."This international congress of women regards the unemployment, famine and pestilence extending throughout great tracts of central and eastern Europe and through parts of Asia as a profound disgrace to civilization. This congress urges the governments of all the powers assembled at the Peace Congress to develop the [inter-allied] organization formed for purposes of war into an international organization for purposes of peace and urges that the following intermediate steps be taken; one that the blockade be immediately lifted, two that all resources of the world food, raw materials, finance, transport be organized immediately for the relief of the peoples from famine and pestilence; three that if there is an insufficiency either of food or of transport to supply all the demands luxuries shall not be given transport from one country to another until the necessaries of life are supplied to all and that the people of every country be rationed in order that all the starving shall be fed. We believe that only immediate international action of this kind can save humanity and bring about the permanent reconciliation and union of the peoples."

JANE ADDAMS, President,
Glockenhof, Zurich.

Document 5

Historical Context:

Participating in Peace Conferences after the war, Jane Addams summarizes the demand for the U.S. to join an international organization to promote peace especially for the impoverished of the world.

Audience:

President Woodrow Wilson

Purpose:

To request the U.S. join an international organization (such as the League of Nations)

Point of View:

Since the war was over, Addams looked to long-term peace, starting with fighting famine and poverty.

Document 6

Source: Chart of U.S. Senate Votes Rejecting the Treaty of Versailles,
<https://www.senate.gov/about/powers-procedures/treaties/senate-rejects-treaty-of-versailles.htm>

Date	▲ Treaty-making Country	Subject	Vote
Nov 19, 1919; Mar 19, 1920	Multilateral	Treaty of Versailles	Nov 19, 1919: Yeas=38; Nays=53 Mar 19, 1920: Yeas=49; Nays=35

Document 6

Historical Context:

Despite President Wilson's advocacy and the advocacy of Jane Addams, the U.S. Senate voted twice to reject the peace plan outlined in the Treaty of Versailles.

Audience:

U.S. citizens

Purpose:

To demonstrate the elected representatives of the United States Senate and their votes on this matter.

Point of View:

It can be inferred that the rejection of the Treaty by elected Senators returned the United States back to an isolationist nation, against the advocacy of Jane Addams and related peace advocates.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom



THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, ELECTED AT VIENNA 1921

Cor. Ramondt-Hirschmann, Gabrielle Duchêne, Lida Gustava Heymann, Yella Hertzka, Jane Addams,
Catherine Marshall, Gertrude Baer. In the back row Emily G. Balch, Thora Daugaard

A photograph of Addams and other women at an international meeting, likely the 1921 International Women's Congress.

Kadel & Herbert Pictorial News Service, "Photograph, July 1921," *Jane Addams Digital Edition*

<https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/23726>

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