New Jersey and World War I

Lesson Creator: New Jersey Center for Civic Education, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ

Grade level: 9-12

Timeframe: Five Days

Objectives

Students will be able to:
- identify major sites in New Jersey related to military and industrial war efforts and explain their role in the war.
- analyze the impact of World War I on individual rights
- evaluate how World War I opened economic opportunities in New Jersey
- consider whether the war met its stated objective of making the world safe for democracy.

NJ Social Studies Student Learning Standards

6.1.12.HistoryCC.6.b: Explore factors that promoted innovation, entrepreneurship, and industrialization and determine their impact on New Jersey (i.e. Paterson Silk Strike) and the United States during this period.
6.1.12.HistoryCC.6.c: Compare and contrast the foreign policies of American presidents during this time period (1890-1930) and analyze how these presidents contributed to the United States becoming a world power.
6.1.12.CivicsDP.7.a: Evaluate the impact of government policies designed to promote patriotism and to protect national security during times of war on individual rights (i.e., the Espionage Act and the Sedition Amendment).
6.1.12.EconNM.7.a: Assess the immediate and long-term impact of women and African Americans
entering the work force in large numbers during World War.

6.1.12.HistoryCC.7.a: Take a position based on evidence that evaluates the effectiveness of Woodrow Wilson's leadership during and immediately after WWI and compare it to another president's wartime leadership.

6.1.12.HistoryCA.7.a: Determine the extent to which propaganda, the media, and special interest groups shaped American public opinion and American foreign policy during World War I and compare those factors to contemporary American involvement in another country.

6.1.12.HistoryCA.7.b: Analyze the reasons for the policy of neutrality regarding World War I and explain why the United States eventually entered the war.


Essential Questions

1. How was New Jersey critical to the wartime effort?
2. How did opportunities provided by World War I for women and African Americans lead to social change after the war?
3. Was the government war effort at home consistent with American ideals and values?
4. Does the threat of sedition, sabotage and espionage, and the need to rally the nation behind the war effort, justify limitations on free speech and assembly?
5. Were the initial hopes ("make the world safe for democracy", "the war to end all wars") and eventual sacrifices justified, given the result of the war and the Versailles Treaty?

Supporting Questions

- It has been argued that geography is destiny. To what extent did New Jersey’s geography and resources make its contributions to the war effort critical?
- How did New Jersey military installations and civilian support facilities (e.g., Fort Monmouth, Picatinny Arsenal, Fort Dix) contribute to the end of World War I?
- What role did Hoboken play during the war and why was it important?
- How were appeals to American ideals, patriotism, and Americanism used to support the war effort?
- What was government policy towards resident aliens during the war? How should the government treat resident aliens from belligerent nations during a time of war?
- What impact did World War I have on the development of the pharmaceutical industry in New Jersey?

Key Terms

- Neutral rights
- Reparations
- Indemnity
- Sabotage
- Ideals
- Patriotism
- “Americanism”
- Propaganda
- Espionage
- Sedition
Background to World War I

World War I was one of the defining events of the twentieth century and the genesis of many of the conflicts that defined that century. Often overshadowed in the American imagination by the cataclysm of the Second World War, World War I set in motion some of the problems and the political turmoil that led to World War II.

The twentieth century had dawned with a sense of optimism and hope. A series of world fairs celebrated the triumph of science and technology as solutions to the problems confronting mankind. The nations of Europe were comfortable in their belief that balanced political alliances had rendered the prospect of war unlikely. Although each nation’s generals had created contingency plans in the event of war, Europe was confident that diplomacy, reason, scientific progress, and the alliance system would maintain peace.

This optimism was shattered with the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, by the Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip. This act of political violence triggered a series of events that revealed the weakness of the alliance system as Europe’s diplomats blundered into an ever-widening conflict. During the summer of 1914 each declaration of war against one nation led to the involvement of allies until almost all of Europe was engulfed in a war no one wanted. The contingency military plans operated on as a series of rigid timetables, limiting the time for a diplomatic solution. Instead, it became a war of attrition would kill millions, destroy the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires, and lead to a vindictive peace that created the conditions for the Second World War and many of the global conflicts that continue to the present.

World War I was a global conflict, but the primary theater was the Western Front in Europe, where the war had stalemated into trench warfare. Repeated assaults “over the top” resulted in massive causalities with little change in the battle lines. The extensive loss of life for little discernable gain destroyed the optimism and hope that characterized the years prior to the war. This had a profound effect on art, culture, philosophy, and politics. The world would never be the same.

Content behind an ocean barrier and focused on the economic development of a vast nation and its resources, Americans were eager to remain neutral. The American president, former New Jersey governor Woodrow Wilson, was dedicated to enacting a series of Progressive domestic reforms and would win re-election in 1916 with the slogan “He kept us out of war”. However, events would conspire to compel the United States to eventually join the conflict on the side of the Allies. The sinking of the *Lusitania*, with the loss of 128 American lives, enraged Americans. Germany’s desperate gamble on unrestricted submarine warfare violated American neutrality, although American economic activity tended to favor the Allies. The discovery of the Zimmerman telegram, promising Mexico territories it had lost to the United States in exchange for entry in the war on the side of Germany, further eroded American support for neutrality. On March 20, 1917 President Wilson met with his cabinet and reached the decision to enter the conflict on the side of the Allies. On April 2 he addressed Congress and asked for a declaration of war.

The American experience and perception of the war is different from that of Europe. Spared the previous three years of suffering, America entered the war on a crusade to “Make the World Safe for Democracy” and to fight the “War to End All Wars”. The intervention of the United States in the war was
decisive. American troops helped break the stalemate and thwarted a desperate German attack during the last months of the war. Americans fought heroically at Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, and in the Meuse-Argonne, turning the tide of battle in favor of the Allies. This idealism and sense of the New World rescuing the Old would also inspire President Wilson’s Fourteen Points and his hopes for the Versailles Peace Conference.

The war effort of the United States was not without challenges. The country needed to quickly marshal its vast resources and convert the economy to wartime production. The small peacetime military had to be dramatically expanded and raw recruits had to be quickly trained for deployment overseas.

The United States in 1917 had just experienced its largest increase in immigration and many citizens expressed a concern about the loyalty of the immigrant population and the need to establish an American identity. Support for the war was not unanimous, and government officials were concerned about sedition and sabotage, leading to the adoption of the Espionage and Sedition Acts. Life on the homefront was characterized by patriotic campaigns to sell Liberty Bonds and to foster “Americanism” and national unity, sometimes at the expense of civil liberties.

New Jersey, due to its diverse population (26% of the state’s population was foreign born in 1910), geographic location, and available resources would play a critical role in the national war effort. More than three million troops passed through Hoboken, New Jersey, the main point of embarkation (and return) for soldiers going across the Atlantic. Picatinny Arsenal was the major source of munitions for the United States and the Allies in World War I. Fort Monmouth provided training to the Signal Corps that did the essential communication during the war. Fort Dix offered basic training and a staging site for new recruits. The production of warships at the shipyards in Camden, of medical supplies by Johnson & Johnson and Squibb, and of food supplies from New Jersey were key components of wartime production.

**Review the vocabulary**

Ask your students what the following terms mean and have a class discussion to ensure that the students understand the terms:

- **What are “neutral rights”**? A neutral nation does nothing to assist or impede a belligerent (warring) power. Belligerents have the right to search for war matériel (military supplies, materials or equipment) on neutral shipping during time of war, but cannot deny the right of trade among neutrals.

- **What are “reparations”**? Making amends for a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged. The courts often require a convicted offender to make financial reparation to his victim. In international relations, it is the compensation for war damage paid by a defeated state.

- **What does “indemnify” mean**? To indemnify is to compensate someone for a hurt, loss or damage. The role of insurance companies is basically to “indemnify” people.

- **What does “sabotage” mean**? To sabotage is to deliberately destroy, damage, or obstruct (something), especially for political or military advantage.
• What are “ideals”? An ideal is a principle or value that one actively pursues as a goal, usually in the context of ethics. You might ask your students what they think are “American ideals”? They generally include consent of the governed, democracy, representative government, rule of law, due process, equal protection and freedom or liberty.

• What is “patriotism”? Devotion to and vigorous support for one's country. Patriotism is often seen as “national pride” or a sense of attachment to a homeland and alliance with other citizens who share the same sentiment. Patriotism is not the same as “nationalism”. The goal of nationalism is to secure more power and more prestige for one’s nation or group. The difference between patriotism and nationalism is that the patriot is proud of his country for what it does, and the nationalist is proud of his country no matter what it does.

• What is “Americanism”? Americanism is an attachment or allegiance to the traditions, institutions, and ideals of the United States. Americanism is a set of the United States patriotic values aimed at creating a collective American identity and can be defined as "an articulation of the nation's rightful place in the world, a set of traditions, a political language, and a cultural style imbued with political meaning".

Over the past two centuries, Americanism has been put to a variety of uses, some benign and democratic, others belligerent and demagogic. The idea of “Americanism” has its origins both in the need for a nation of immigrants to create a national identity rooted in a commitment to democratic values, as well as the concurrent fear of the “other” as a cultural threat to those very values and beliefs. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, it inspired the notion of Manifest Destiny, which attempted to legitimize the conquest of lands occupied by Native American tribes and Mexican citizens in the Southwest. It also animated, in the 1850s, the attempt by the new American Party (the Know-Nothings) to drive Irish immigrants from political power wherever the “papists” had established a foothold. As the U.S. grappled with a flood of immigrants 1890-1920, and especially during World War I and immediately afterwards, the most aggressive promoters of Americanism sought to limit free speech for fear of efforts to undermine U.S. democracy. By the late 1960s, ”Americanism” had become virtually the exclusive property of the cultural and political right.

• What is “propaganda”? Information that is biased or misleading and not objective and is used primarily to influence an audience and further an agenda, often by presenting facts selectively to encourage a particular synthesis or perception, or using loaded language to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information that is presented. Propaganda is often associated with material prepared by governments, but activist groups, companies, religious organizations and the media can also produce propaganda.

• What is “espionage”? Espionage is spying, the use of spies to convey information regarding a nation's plans, resources, and activities to another nation

• What is “sedition”? Sedition is conduct or speech inciting people to rebel against the government or interfering with the government’s war efforts during a time of war. Sedition raises the issue of free speech and First Amendment protections during times of war or national emergency.
What is “syndicalism”? A revolutionary doctrine by which workers seize control of the means of production and distribution by direct means (such as a general strike). The concept of syndicalism was originally developed in France by labor unions during the late 19th century and was at its most vigorous between 1900 and World War I.

What are “civil rights”? The rights belonging to an individual by virtue of citizenship. In the United States, the term refers especially to the fundamental freedoms and privileges guaranteed by the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and by subsequent acts of Congress. These include civil liberties, due process, equal protection of the laws, and freedom from discrimination.

New Jersey's unique position

New Jersey has a 130-mile coastline on the Atlantic Ocean, providing many ports for ships, troops and supplies. The coastline also offered an opportunity for infiltration. German Americans comprised over nine percent of the 1910 U.S. population, America’s largest immigrant community. Early twentieth-century German America had built a vibrant civil society, earned political clout, and established a niche deep enough to withstand local suspicion and prejudice during the early years of the war in Europe. Jacob Haussling, a German-American, was the mayor of New Jersey’s largest city—Newark—when the Great War started. At the same time, a German espionage network had begun conducting sabotage well before the U.S. entered the war.

Sabotage at Black Tom depot, Jersey City—July 1916

On July 30, 1916, there was a huge explosion at the “Black Tom” depot in Jersey City, an act of sabotage by German agents to destroy U.S.-made munitions that were to be supplied to the Allies in World War I. Black Tom was a small island off Jersey City that was being used as a major munitions depot, probably the single most important assembly and shipping center in America for munitions and gunpowder being sent to the Allies. Since the United States had not yet entered World War I and was officially neutral, American munitions dealers were legally able to sell to any of the warring nations. Most of the arms, however, were going to the Allies—Britain, France and Russia—because the British navy had blockaded Germany.

The first of the Black Tom explosions was felt at 2:08 a.m. followed half an hour later by a second blast. At least five people were killed, including a baby in Jersey City who was thrown from his crib. There was an estimated $20 million—the equivalent of some $500 million today—in property damage. Thirteen huge warehouses were leveled and six piers destroyed. Fires continued to burn through the remains and consume hundreds of railroads cars and barges tied to the docks. Shrapnel thrown from the explosions tore a hole in the nearby Statue of Liberty. The Black Tom explosion was so large it could be felt in Philadelphia, ninety miles away. The act of sabotage was the largest enemy attack on continental American soil prior to 9/11.

In the aftermath of the explosions, law-enforcement agents quickly arrested officials from the railroad, storage company and barge business who operated from the Black Tom site. However, investigators were unable to determine whether the disaster was the result of safety violations by any of these officials. The authorities initially thought that residents and citizens of foreign birth were involved, not foreign saboteurs. In the meantime, harassment of German Americans increased. It would take years for a persistent team of American lawyers to find sufficient evidence that showed that, in fact, the disaster had been plotted by the Germans. The lawyers sued Germany in the Mixed Claims Commission at The
Hague, and in 1939 won the case. Germany, under the rule of Hitler, failed to pay up and the settlement was renegotiated in the early 1950s. The last payment was made to Black Tom claimants in 1979.

Today, the remains of Black Tom are joined by landfill as part of Liberty State Park. Nearby at the Statue of Liberty, a legacy of the disaster remains: Due to the damage the statue sustained on July 30, 1916, its torch has been closed to the public for the last century.

**Activity 1:** Look at Handout 1: The impact of the Black Tom explosion; read and compare three accounts of the Black Tom explosion:

- What do you think should have been the U.S. response to the explosion?

**New Jersey's Contributions to World War I**

**Activity 2:** Provide the information below to your class. Then ask **Essential Question 1**: How was New Jersey critical to the wartime effort?

**Hope and Horror in Hoboken**

Although the United States did not enter the Great War until the spring of 1917, the conflict had an immediate impact on Hoboken, a port city with large immigrant communities. America’s trade with the Allies, especially in munitions, raised tensions internationally, and these tensions were felt locally. Before America’s entry in the war, several Germans from Hoboken were arrested on suspicion of
sabotage and related activities. A German citizen named Fritz Kolb was arrested in his room in the Commercial Hotel in Hoboken in March 1917 and convicted a month later for possession of explosives.

The (German) Hamburg American Line had used Hoboken as its American home port. German ships were interned in Hoboken shortly after the start of World War I in Europe and confiscated in 1917 when the U.S. entered the war. For example, the U.S.S. Leviathan was originally built as the S.S. Vaterland for the Hamburg American Line but was taken by the U.S. government and operated from the U.S. Army Transport piers in Hoboken 1917-1919. Show your students Handout 3: The Leviathan in 1919. The ship was decommissioned in October 1919, became the S.S. Leviathan and returned to service as an ocean liner in 1924. It was scrapped in 1938.

When America formally entered the war on April 6, 1917, Hoboken’s waterfront became central to the war effort as the port of embarkation (and return) for thousands of American troops. America’s involvement in the great conflict was launched from piers that have since been removed or turned into grassy parks where families can enjoy a peaceful afternoon. While the horrors of the war were experienced in faraway fields or in doomed ships on the open sea, bits and pieces of the conflict’s disruptive nature were felt in the docks, tenements, and streets of Hoboken. “Heaven, Hell, or Hoboken” became a slogan for troops hoping for a safe return home. Share with your students Handout 3: “Heaven, Hell or Hoboken” Postcard.
Picatinny Arsenal

Picatinny Arsenal is a unique facility that provides virtually all of the lethal mechanisms used in Army weapon systems and other military services. Located in the hills of Jefferson and Rockaway Township, Morris County, 35 miles from New York City, it began as Picatinny Powder Depot in 1880. The army’s first powder factory was constructed here. As its activities expanded, the post became Picatinny Arsenal. Before World War I, seven plants in the United States made propellant powers, five of them in New Jersey: DuPont’s three works in Carney’s Point, Haskell and Parlin; a Hercules plant in Kenvil, and the Army Powder Factory in Picatinny.

Supplies of war materials felt the impact of World War I before the U.S. entered the war: a second shift was added at Picatinny Arsenal in 1914. Show your students Handout 4: Making Bombs at Picatinny Arsenal. The most vital contribution from Picatinny Arsenal during the war was helping older plants to increase their output and aiding new plants in beginning production. Other work included adding TNT to high explosive shells, bombs and grenades. The powder factory’s laboratory expanded its mission from quality control to studying problems encountered in developing new powders, explosive and projectiles. The arsenal also provided a campground for the 42nd Infantry as it mobilized to go overseas.
Employees worked ten hours a day, six days a week. Many walked to work. Few automobiles existed and the roads were unimproved. Train service was poor. World War I brought more women into Picatinny’s ranks. Not only did more women join the already heavily female powder bag sewing room and clerical positions, it also brought four women into laboratory work as powder testers and chemists.

When World War II started, Picatinny Arsenal was the only plant in the United States capable of making ammunition larger than what was used in small arms. In an effort to streamline the acquisition process and deliver the armaments efficiently and economically, Picatinny Arsenal has established increasingly close partnerships with universities and industry partners, involving them in collaborative efforts early in the research and development process. Today, Picatinny Arsenal serves as the headquarters for the U.S. Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center and employs highly skilled technicians, scientists and engineers engaged in the full range of armament research and development.

**Fort Monmouth**

The Army established Fort Monmouth at the outbreak of World War I when it recognized that the Signal Corps--with its strength of 55 officers and 1,570 men--was insufficient to furnish communications for the tremendous Army that was needed for the war. The search for land for additional Signal training camps led the Army to Fort Leavenworth, Kans., Leon Springs, Texas, Presidio of Monterey, Calif., and to a site in New Jersey formerly home to the Monmouth Park Race Track and a luxury hotel. The Army originally called the installation "Camp Little Silver," based merely on its location. The camp was named "Camp Alfred Vail" in September 1917 to honor the New Jersey inventor who helped Samuel Morse develop commercial telegraphy (see “Innovations from New Jersey” lesson at [http://civiced.rutgers.edu/njlessons.html](http://civiced.rutgers.edu/njlessons.html)). By the end of 1918, some reportedly called it the "best equipped Signal Corps camp ever established anywhere." The camp ultimately prepared several battalions for war. About 1,000 officers and 9,000 enlisted men served at the post in 1918. Share with your students Handout 5: Ft. Monmouth.

![A view of Signal Corps Radio Laboratories, Camp Alfred Vail, Jan. 19, 1919, looking north. The camp later became known as Fort Monmouth. (Army File Photo)](image)

In addition to wartime training, the Army conducted research and development work at the radio laboratories and airfield. That included pioneering work on air-to-ground radios and direction finding by
radio. The Chief Signal Officer authorized the purchase of Camp Vail in 1919 for $115,300. The Signal Corps School relocated to Camp Vail from Fort Leavenworth in that year. The Signal Corps Board followed in 1924. The installation received permanent status and the name “Fort Monmouth” in August 1925. The designation honored the Soldiers of the American Revolution who died in the Battle of Monmouth Court House in 1778. The Signal Corps’ Electrical Laboratory of Washington, D.C., and the Signal Corps’ Research Laboratory of New York merged with the Radio Laboratories here in 1929 to form the consolidated “Signal Corps Laboratories.” The scientists of those labs developed the first U.S. aircraft detection radar, among many other things, between the wars.

Fort Monmouth began to change in the 1960s with the abolition of its technical services. During the Vietnam War, the majority of the Signal Corps’ enlisted personnel trained at the Southeastern Signal School at Fort Gordon, Ga., not at Fort Monmouth. As a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure law, the army command at Fort Monmouth was closed and relocated to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. By 2019, 74 percent of Fort Monmouth has been sold to a variety of private projects, ranging from a Child Development Center to Jersey Central Power and Light.

Fort Dix

When the U.S. entered World War I, the federal government created or enhanced 38 military installations in New Jersey, including Camp Dix, the training and staging facilities near Wrightstown, NJ, that became Fort Dix. It opened in July 1917 and the 78th Lightning Division was activated there in August 1917. Share with your students Handout 5: Trench Warfare Training at Camp Dix, 1918. The camp became a demobilization center after the war. Between the World Wars, Camp Dix was a reception, training and discharge center for the Civilian Conservation Corps. Camp Dix became Fort Dix on March 8, 1939, and the installation became a permanent Army post. During and after World War II the fort served the same purpose as in World War I—as a training and staging ground during the war and a demobilization center after the war.

Since Vietnam, Fort Dix has sent soldiers to Operation Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iran. Currently, as many as 15,000 troops train there on weekends, and the post has been a major mobilization point for reserve and National Guard troops since the September 11 attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C.
World War I was good for business in New Jersey

In addition to munition plants and training and staging grounds, the New York Shipbuilding Corporation, located at Camden waterfront, received orders for 30 destroyers between July and December 1917, as well as orders for major components for transport ships under construction elsewhere. Share with your students Handout 6: New York Shipyard in Camden, NJ. The first Battleship New Jersey served as a training vessel during World War I. The Second Battleship New Jersey is the more well-known World War II vessel moored at the Camden waterfront.

New Jersey also became the site for the manufacture of dyes, which had previously been imported from Germany, and pharmaceutical research, which had previously been done in Germany. Johnson & Johnson, the New-Brunswick-based pioneer of sterile surgical dressings, absorbent cotton and bandages, became the prime source of medical supplies for the Allies during the war. E.R. Squibb (now Bristol-Meyer Squibb), with production in New Jersey, supplied vaccines and other life-saving medicines to the Allies.

Military Service

Expecting around a million enlistees but receiving only 73,000 volunteers for military service, Congress and President Woodrow Wilson realized other methods were required to call up a large military force. On July 20, 1917, President Wilson signed the Selective Service Act of 1917, which required all men between the ages of 21 and 30 to register with locally administered draft boards for military conscription by national lottery. The age limits for the draft were later extended to include all men age 18 to 45. Unlike the Civil War’s conscription act of 1863, those who were drafted could neither purchase an exemption nor hire a substitute to take their place. In addition, local boards were charged with the registration, determination of order and serial numbers, and classification of draftees. Although the draft was canceled at the end of World War I in November 1918, the Selective Service System is still with us today, as every male over the age of 18 can attest. In recent years, as women have officially been allowed in combat roles, Congress has debated including women in Selective Service, but no official change has been made to date.
By the end of the war in November 1918, some 24 million men had registered under the Selective Service Act. Of the almost 4.8 million Americans who eventually served in the war, some 2.8 million had been drafted. New Jersey contributed 72,946 conscripts and 46,960 volunteers to the Great War. The 78th Lightning Division was activated at Camp Dix in August 1917 with men from New Jersey, New York and Delaware and transported to France in May and June 1918. The 78th was in three major campaigns during World War I – Meuse-Argonne, St. Mihiel, and Lorraine. It was the "point of the wedge" of the final offensive which knocked out Germany. Demobilization at the end of the war took place in June 1919.

**Activity 3:** Short research project. Use Handout 7 to explain the role of Fort Dix, Fort Monmouth, Picatinny Arsenal, Hoboken pier, shipbuilding, and military service during World War I and then draw conclusions. Here is a completed graphic organizer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute or Resource</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal protection</td>
<td>Entire coast of state—130 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ports</td>
<td>Camden, Hoboken, Newark, Jersey City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military training</td>
<td>Ft. Monmouth, Ft. Dix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ Troops</td>
<td>Four million Americans served in the U.S. military during World War I. More than 141,000 were from New Jersey, including more than 1000 women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building war ships</td>
<td>New York Shipyards, Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing war materials</td>
<td>Picatinny Arsenal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing medications and medical supplies</td>
<td>Johnson &amp; Johnson, Squibb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food—Army rations</td>
<td>Farms, Campbell Soup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
World War I brought women and African-Americans men into the military and the workforce

**Activity 4: Essential Question 2:** How did opportunities provided by World War I for women and African Americans lead to social change after the war?

American women participated in the war effort within the constraints of the gender roles of the era and also by taking on roles traditionally filled by men who were now absent at the front. New Jersey was the training site for the approximately 300 women who served in the Army Signal Corps as bilingual (French-English) long-distance operators. These women were chosen not only for their advanced linguistic skills, but also because tests showed that, on average, women were able to complete the calls on the early twentieth-century switchboards much faster than men were.

About 21,000 women served in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, which had been established in the first decade of the 1900s. To boost soldiers' morale and remind them of the stakes of victory, the American military formalized a recreation program that sent respectable young women, along with famous entertainers, overseas. Their role was to talk, sing, dance and listen. The American Red Cross also sent women to war areas, including some from New Jersey.

Women also worked in factories, especially those involved in wartime production. For example, an advertisement in the *Asbury Park Press* on August 23, 1917 read: “Announcement was made today by the Dupont Powder Co, that it will employ women munitions makers at ‘war’ plants at Carney’s point, N.J.” Women also worked on New Jersey’s farms, helping to boost essential food production needed for American and Allied soldiers.

![Image](image.png)

*Life Magazine, May 23, 1918*

The stated war aims of “making the world safe for democracy” reminded some women that they lacked the same rights as men. Even after the United States entered World War I suffragists, led by New Jersey’s Alice Paul, continued to picket the White House protesting the exclusion of women from voting.
Paul was arrested for blocking sidewalk traffic on October 20, 1917 and sentenced to seven months in prison, the longest sentence given to any suffragist. Many women, including suffragists, opposed U.S. entry into World War I, but muted their opposition in the hope of gaining the right to vote. On January 19, 1918, President Wilson gave public support to women’s suffrage, stating "We have made partners of the women in this war. Shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil and not to a partnership of privilege and right?" With the enactment of the 19th Amendment in 1920 woman finally gained the right to vote.

Two of the leading pacifists of the era were subsequently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize: Jane Addams in 1931 and Emily Greene Balch in 1946, the only American women to ever receive the international peace prize. For most women in New Jersey and elsewhere in the nation; however, the end of World War I meant returning to the world as it was before the war, with limited political or employment opportunities other than that of “homemaker”.

In 1917, although African-Americans were considered second-class citizens, many African American men were eager to show their patriotism and willingness to serve in the nation’s military. Within one week of Wilson’s declaration of war, the War Department had to stop accepting black volunteers because the quotas for African-Americans were filled. While still discriminatory, the Army was far more progressive in race relations than the other branches of the military. Blacks could not serve in the Marines, and could only serve limited and menial positions in the Navy and the Coast Guard. Although African-Americans were earning higher positions in the Army, that did not necessarily mean they were getting equal treatment. Black draftees were treated with extreme hostility when they arrived for training. White men refused to salute black officers and black officers were often barred from the officer’s clubs and quarters. The War Department rarely interceded, and discrimination was usually overlooked or sometimes condoned. Since many Southern civilians protested having blacks from other states live in nearby training camps, the War Department stipulated that no more than one-fourth of the trainees in any Army camp in the U.S. could be African-American.

The Army’s 369th Infantry regiment consisted of African-American combat troops, including many from New York and New Jersey. By the end of World War I, African Americans served in cavalry, infantry, signal, medical, engineer, and artillery units, as well as serving as chaplains, surveyors, truck drivers, chemists, and intelligence officers. More than 350,000 African Americans ultimately served—but in segregated units—and primarily as support troops. Several units saw action alongside French soldiers fighting the Germans and 171 African Americans were awarded the French Legion of Honor.

Wartime experience helped many black servicemen resist racial discrimination more aggressively on their return home. Some developed this attitude through training for combat duty. For others it came as part of a broadened worldview, acquired by simply leaving home and witnessing alternative living and work situations. For those who traveled to France, where black servicemen were generally treated with civility, racial bigotry on their return to the United States was probably more difficult to tolerate. Expecting to come home heroes, black soldiers received a rude awakening upon their return. Back home, many whites feared that African-Americans would return demanding equality and would try to attain it by employing their military training.

As the troops returned, there was an increase of racial tension. During the summer and fall of 1919, anti-black race riots erupted in twenty-six cities across America. The lynching of African-Americans also increased from fifty-eight in 1918 to seventy-seven in 1919. At least ten of those victims were war veterans, and some were lynched while in uniform. Despite this treatment, African-American men continued to enlist in the military, including veterans of World War I who came home to such violence
and ingratitude. They served their county in the brief period of peace after the World War I, and many went on to fight in World War II. It was not until the 1948 that President Harry S Truman issued an executive order to desegregate the military, although it took the Korean War to fully integrate the Army.

Perhaps the greatest effect of World War I on African-American life was that it triggered the first phase of the Great Migration—the unprecedented movement of southern blacks northward. During this phase, between 1915 and 1920 (the second phase was between 1920 and 1930), approximately 500,000 blacks trekked northward. New Jersey’s African-American population increased from approximately 89,000 in 1910 to nearly 208,000 by 1930 (Encyclopedia of New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 2004).

The Homefront

**Essential Question 3:** Was the government war effort at home consistent with American ideals and values?

**Liberty Bonds: “If you can’t enlist, invest!”**

The U.S. Government issued bonds to pay for World War I and named them "Liberty Bonds" in an attempt to appeal to people's patriotic duty. A sophisticated public relations campaign promoted the idea that buying a bond was helping to secure the country's liberty. The campaign was designed to appeal to people's patriotism and the Treasury swung the weight of Hollywood behind it. Huge rallies were organized, hosted by the stars of the day. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and Al Jolson were some of the film stars who publicized the idea of buying bonds to show patriotism. Charlie Chaplin even made a short film "The Bond" to support Liberty Bonds. In addition to the movie stars, the Liberty Bond campaign used posters designed by popular artists of the day.

In addition to rallies and posters there was a travelling airshow featuring elite pilots who performed aerial stunts for the crowds. A ride in one of the airplanes was the reward for those purchasing a bond. John Steinbeck recalled that his mother, Olive, was so affected by the death of one of their young neighbors that she declared her own war on Germany. Her weapons were war bonds. She bought a great many and on one occasion earned herself a ride in a plane. For the third Liberty Bond issue, there were approximately nine million posters and ten million button badges produced. The New Jersey Council of Defense, a civilian group attached to the governor’s office, helped coordinate the four major Liberty Loan campaigns in the Garden State.

War Savings Stamps, which cost as little as 25 cents, were sold to those with modest incomes. Once a person accumulated a designated number of so-called “thrift stamps,” they could trade them in for a Liberty Bond that would earn interest. Despite all the publicity, the appetite of the average American for Liberty Bonds was muted. The majority of bonds were bought by institutions rather than individuals. In all, the U.S. government raised around $17 billion for the war effort through the sale of Liberty Bonds. The total cost of World War I to the United States was approximately $32 billion, or 52 percent of gross national product at the time. Liberty bonds only raised a little more than half that amount.

Several of the posters supporting the war effort were produced by Charles Livingston Bull, a taxidermist and wildlife illustrator from Oradell, NJ. *Keep Him Free* (1917) depicts a bald eagle – America in animal form – guarding its nest. The nest is a bustling hangar from which the planes of the fledgling Army Air Service are unleashed on their mission to protect their home from an unseen aggressor. The poster implores the viewer to buy War Savings Stamps from the Treasury Department.
Activity 5: Have your student look closely at Handout 8: posters promoting the sale of Liberty Bonds during World War I, and have a class discussion about the following questions about each poster:

- Are there any symbols? If so, what are they?
- Does the poster try to persuade mainly through words, visuals, or both equally?
- Who do you think is the intended audience?
- Would you characterize the posters as “propaganda”? Why or why not?

Immigrants and the Committee on Public Information

The attempt to crowd out Independence Day with “Americanization” Day was launched in 1915 in response to nearly two decades of increasing immigration. World War I saw an increase in nationalism and the desire to foster "Americanism," as well as an upsurge in distrust of immigrants, especially immigrants from Germany and the Central Powers. Prewar, Germans had earned a positive reputation as an industrious minority racially and religiously close to native-born Americans. However, in order to build support for a war abroad, the federal government ostracized the German-American minority at home. A wave of wartime vigilantism swept the country, with thousands of Americans denouncing their immigrant neighbors and anyone else suspected of disloyalty. However, the vast majority of German-
Americans were patriots, and many fought for their country in 1918. “Americanization” Day did not become an institutionalized event, although the sponsoring organizations continued English classes and citizenship classes to help “Americanize” immigrants.

The day U.S. entry into World War I was declared, President Wilson issued a proclamation curtailing the liberties of Germans. The government evicted and barred enemy aliens from the District of Columbia and other zones near war plants and military bases. Attorney General Thomas Gregory advised the nation’s 8.6 million German immigrants and descendants to “Obey the law. Keep your mouth shut.” Enemy aliens could no longer bear weapons, use a radio, publicly criticize any U.S. policy, nor leave the country without permission. Home-front anti-Germanism escalated as the war progressed.

On April 13, 1917, President Wilson issued Ex. Order 2594 creating the Committee on Public Information to influence the American public to support the war effort. A publicity and propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information encouraged “one hundred percent Americanism” and strongly pressed Germans toward assimilation, including burning German books, banning German music, renaming German foods, ceasing German-language education, and intimidating German churches and civic organizations into closing.

Registration followed restrictions. On November 6, 1917, seven months after the declaration of war, President Wilson ordered all German alien males fourteen and older to register with the government. Austro-Hungarian men followed on December 11th, when Congress declared war on their homeland, and women from both countries faced registration beginning April 19, 1918. At first, internees were held in local jails and army bases; later, three major camps for men—Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; Fort McPherson, Georgia; and Fort Douglas, Utah—were established.

German merchant marine crews in the U.S. became the first internees, but they were soon joined by German labor radicals. On the pretext of performing disloyal acts or expressing too much homeland pride, the leaders of German-American politics, science, and the arts faced internment to force their communities to be quiet. Yet, many naturalized citizens served in the U.S. military.
Activity 6: Have the students look at Handout 9: National Americanization Day poster and answer the following questions: What is the goal of Americanization Day? How does the poster appeal to patriotism? American values? Americanism? Then have students examine Handout 10: Germans being deported and discuss “How should the government treat resident aliens from belligerent nations during a time of war?”

Activity 7: Give your students Handout 11, an article by Star Ledger sports writer Jerry Izenberg about his father, who as a recent immigrant to the United States fought in World War I, to read and summarize. How does this article show the patriotism and commitment to America of many immigrants, such as Jerry Izenberg’s grandfather?

Essential Questions 4: Does the threat of sedition, sabotage and espionage, and the need to rally the nation behind the war effort, justify limitations on free speech and assembly?

The war against free speech, 1917-1920

The Espionage Act of 1917

As America entered World War I, the U.S. government was concerned about espionage as well as those outspoken pacifists who did not support the war. An Espionage Act was passed on June 15, 1917. The Espionage Act of 1917 made it a crime to interfere with the war effort, disrupt military recruitment, or to attempt to aid a nation at war with the U.S. For those convicted of aiding the enemy, obstructing military recruitment, protesting conscription, or saying or doing anything to impede the war effort, the maximum fine was up to $10,000 (roughly $200,000 in current dollars) and 20 years in a federal prison. Those Americans who were drafted but refused to fight also faced prosecution under the Espionage Act. The Espionage Act empowered the U.S. Postmaster General to stop the dissemination and mailing of any publication deemed treasonous or insufficiently patriotic. Within the first year of the Espionage Act, 45 newspapers had their postal rights rescinded.
The Sedition Act of 1918

The first Sedition Act passed in the United States in 1798 criminalized the making of false statements that were critical of the government during the undeclared naval war with France from 1798 to 1800. It expired in 1801. The Sedition Act of 1918 was a series of amendments to strengthen the Espionage Act of 1917. Violence on the part of local groups of citizens, sometimes mobs or vigilantes, persuaded some lawmakers that the espionage law was inadequate. In their view, the country was witnessing instances of public disorder that represented the public's attempt to punish unpopular speech where the government was unable to do so because of the First Amendment. The solution was to enhance the government's authority under the Espionage Act.

Aimed at socialists, pacifists and other anti-war activists, the Sedition Act of 1918 made it a crime to "willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of the Government of the United States" or to "willfully urge, incite, or advocate any curtailment of the production" of the things "necessary or essential to the prosecution of the war". President Wilson and his Attorney General viewed the bill as a political compromise. They hoped to avoid hearings that would embarrass the administration for its failure to prosecute offensive speech. They also feared other proposals that would have withdrawn prosecutorial authority from the Justice Department and placed it in the War Department, creating a sort of civilian court-martial process of questionable constitutionality. The final vote for passage was 48 to 26 in the Senate and 293 to 1 in the House of Representatives.

Enacted May 16, 1918, the Sedition Act became law so late in the war--just a few months before Armistice Day--that the number of prosecutions under its provisions were limited. The most notable was Eugene Debs, head of the Socialist Party, who was arrested in June 1918 for violating the Sedition Act by undermining the government's conscription efforts and sentenced to ten years in prison. Debs appealed the decision, and the case eventually reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld his conviction. He was in prison until December 1921, when President Harding commuted his sentence to time served. In March 1919, President Wilson had released or reduced the sentences of some two hundred prisoners convicted under the Espionage Act or the Sedition Act. The Sedition Act was repealed by Congress in December 1920; however, major portions of the Espionage Act remain part of United States law to the present day.

Both acts were used to punishing effect in the years immediately following the war, during a period characterized by the fear of communist infiltration into American society that became known as the first Red Scare (a second would occur later, during the 1940s and 1950s, associated largely with Senator Joseph McCarthy). President Wilson's Attorney General, Mitchell Palmer, and his right-hand man, J. Edgar Hoover, used the Espionage and Sedition Acts from November 1919 to January 1920 to persecute anarchists, communists and radical left-wing political figures, many of whom were deported.

In Schenck v. United States (1919), the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Espionage Act as constitutional. During World War I, Charles T. Schenck had produced a pamphlet maintaining that the military draft was illegal. He was convicted under the Espionage Act of attempting to cause insubordination in the military and to obstruct recruiting. Schenck appealed on the grounds that the statute violated the First Amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court held that the Espionage Act did not violate the First Amendment and was an appropriate exercise of authority by Congress in wartime. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing for a unanimous court, concluded that the courts owed greater deference to the government during wartime, even regarding constitutional rights. The Court held that the First Amendment does not protect free speech that approaches creating a "clear and present danger" of a significant evil that Congress has the power to prevent. The court concluded that the widespread dissemination of leaflets
was sufficiently likely to disrupt the conscription process, comparing the leaflets to shouting “Fire” in a crowded theatre, which is not permitted under the First Amendment.

The U.S. Supreme Court also upheld the Sedition Act amendments to the Espionage Act in Abrams v. U.S. (1919) by concluding that leaflets calling for a general strike and the curtailment of munitions productions posed a sufficient danger to the war effort to meet the standard set in Schenck. In a dissenting opinion, Justice Holmes argued that the First Amendment protects the right to publicly disagree with the viewpoints and objectives of the government unless it creates a “clear and present danger” and concluded that the distribution of the two leaflets did not meet this test.

However, in Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969) the U.S. Supreme Court held that seditious speech—including speech that constitutes an incitement to violence—is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as long as it does not pose an "imminent" threat. Brandenburg, a leader in the Ku Klux Klan, made a speech at a Klan rally and was later convicted under an Ohio criminal syndicalism law. The law made it illegal to advocate "crime, sabotage, violence, or unlawful methods of terrorism as a means of accomplishing industrial or political reform," as well as assembling "with any society, group, or assemblage of persons formed to teach or advocate the doctrines of criminal syndicalism." The Court held that the Ohio law violated Brandenburg's right to free speech. The Court used a two-pronged test to evaluate speech acts: speech can be prohibited if it is (1) "directed at inciting or producing imminent lawless action" and (2) it is "likely to incite or produce such action." The criminal syndicalism act made illegal the advocacy and teaching of doctrines while ignoring whether or not that advocacy and teaching would actually incite imminent lawless action. The failure to make this distinction rendered the law overly broad and in violation of the Constitution.

Activity 8: Have your students read Handout 12: Summaries of Schenck, Abrams and Brandenburg and respond to the following questions as a class discussion or in written essays:

- Did the threat of sabotage and espionage, and the need to rally the nation behind the war effort, justify the government placing limitations on free speech and assembly?
- Do national security concerns ever justify the limitation of the rights of citizens?
- After considering the Supreme Court decisions in Schenck, Abrams and Brandenburg, do you think that the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act of 1918 were constitutional? Support your opinion.

New Jersey poet Joyce Kilmer

Of the more than 140,000 New Jerseyans who served in the Great War, more than 3000 lost their lives. Alfred Joyce Kilmer, a well-known journalist, literary critic, lecturer, editor and poet who was born in 1886 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, was one of them. Kilmer attended both Rutgers University and Columbia University and married his college sweetheart, Aline Murray shortly after graduating. They had five children. In 1912, Kilmer became a special writer for the New York Times Review of Books and the New York Times Sunday Magazine and was often engaged in lecturing. He moved to Mahwah, New Jersey, where he resided until World War I. His enduring short poem "Trees" (1913), was published in the collection Trees and Other Poems in 1914. Kilmer’s works celebrated the common beauty of the natural world as well as his Roman Catholic religious faith. He enlisted in the New York National Guard and was deployed to France with the 69th Infantry Regiment (the famous "Fighting 69th") in 1917. He was killed by a sniper's bullet at the Second Battle of the Marne in 1918 at the age of 31.
See Joyce Kilmer’s Poem, TREES” attached as Handout 13.

**The end of the war**

On January 18, 1918, President Wilson gave a speech to Congress that outlined Fourteen Points for peace and the end to World War I. He sought lasting peace and for World War I to be the “war to end all wars.” After an armistice was declared on November 11, 1918, troops as well as caskets began to return home. More than two million American soldiers had fought in Europe. Over 50,000 Americans died in combat, and thousands more died from disease. The first troops to return to America arrived in Hoboken on December 2, 1918. There were celebrations for the returning troops. On December 4, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson left from Hoboken for peace talks in Paris.

President Wilson’s return from Paris to Hoboken on July 8, 1919 was a time of celebration, as people crowded along Washington Street to wave American flags and watch the president pass in his motorcade.

**Activity 9:** Have your students read Handout 14: Dec. 5, 1918 New York Times article about President Wilson’s departure and determine whether the article was optimistic or pessimistic about his ability to achieve his war goal of a lasting peace.
General Pershing triumphantly returned to Hoboken aboard the USS George Washington on September 8, 1919. On November 13, 1919, the Lake Daroga docked in Hoboken, carrying the first transport of the bodies of fallen American soldiers. Although the Armistice took place in 1918, the United States did not formally end the war until 1921. President Warren G. Harding signed the congressional resolution that officially ended American involvement in World War I while golfing in Raritan, New Jersey.

The cost of the Great War was severe: the U.S. spent $52 billion and lost 116,000 troops. Yet it also marked the coming of age of the American military, which transformed itself almost overnight from a small army engaged in regional battles into a major military powerhouse. The U.S. had 130,000 troops when it entered World War I and four million by the end of the war. A total of nine million lives were lost altogether by all of the belligerents in the war. Over 141,000 New Jerseyans served, including more than 1,000 women. Eight New Jerseyans were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, two of them posthumously.
**Activity 10:** Have students look at Handout 16: President Harding honoring American war dead in World War I in Hoboken, NJ, on May 21, 1921, and write an essay responding to **Essential Question 5:** Were the initial hopes ("make the world safe for democracy", "the war to end all wars") and eventual sacrifices justified, given the result of the war and the Versailles Treaty?

**Extension:**

Many towns in New Jersey have memorial and monuments to those who fought and lost their lives during World War I. Find out where the memorial is in your town and take a field trip to visit it.

**Sources and for additional information:**

- New Jersey Archives at [https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php](https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php)
- [https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/edu-home/edu-curriculum.html](https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/edu-home/edu-curriculum.html)
- [https://visitnj.org/ww1](https://visitnj.org/ww1)
Handout 1: Black Tom wreckage

Wrecked warehouses and scattered debris at Black Tom (US Army Signal Corps / Getty Images)
THE RESPONSIBILITY.

The immensity of the explosions in New York Harbor might more deeply impress a people less used than we have become to destruction on an enormous scale. The shock in the small hours of Sunday morning caused panic twenty-five miles away from the scene, aroused feelings of apprehension, among people who were still awake, much further away. But since this young century was ushered in we have had the horrors of Martinique, the San Francisco and Messina earthquakes, the Titanic disaster, and the most awful of all the wars, which, if they have not dulled our sense of calamity, have assuredly put us in a mood to regard with reasonable calmness, though not with indifference, the destruction of not more than two or three human lives and property worth $18,000,000 or so. It is a pity, but it is true. The shock has passed, the nerves of the millions who heard the mighty blasts from afar have been quieted, the broken window panes will soon be replaced. In the neighborhood of Black Tom and the ruined warehouses, of course, havoc and worse than havoc still rules. Some days must elapse before we know all the details of the disaster.

But enough is known now to indicate that, except for a clear defiance of the law, it would not have occurred. The storing of high explosives overnight in Jersey City had been prohibited by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Orders had been given to remove quickly all cargoes of such explosives received there to Gravesend Bay to be transferred without delay to the ships that were to carry them away. Yet, after midnight, two barges laden with nitroglycerine were towed to the wharves where the disaster occurred, and where there were already stored many carloads of equally dangerous stuff. What caused the fire which led to the explosions is not at present a pressing question. Responsibility for the disaster must rest between the storage company and the towing company. One of these agencies may be more culpable than the other, but it seems now that both have disobeyed a just rule devised for the safeguarding of life and property.
Handout 3: Hoboken

U.S.S. Leviathan at the U.S. Army Transport piers, Hoboken, NJ, Aug. 9, 1919

“Heaven, Hell, or Hoboken” became a slogan for troops hoping for a safe return home.

WWI Postcard, Hoboken Historical Museum
Handout 4: Making bombs at Picatinny Arsenal

![Image of workers at Picatinny Arsenal](image-url)
Handout 5:

Fort Monmouth, January 19, 1919

Trench Warfare Training, Camp Dix 1918 https://history.army.mil
Launching at New York Shipbuilding Corp., Camden, NJ
From New York Shipbuilding Corporation: Photographic Impressions of the World’s Largest Shipyards
Courtesy of the New Jersey State Archives
Handout 7: What were New Jersey’s Contributions to World War I?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute or Resource</th>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal protection</td>
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<td>Ports</td>
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<td>Military training</td>
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<td>Number of Troops from New Jersey</td>
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<td>Building war ships</td>
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<td>Producing war materials</td>
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<td>Preparing medications and medical supplies</td>
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<td>Food—Army rations</td>
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</table>
Carefully look at the posters attempting to interest people in buying Liberty Bonds during World War I.

Would you call them “propaganda”? Why or why not?

Handout 9: Americanization

In the years immediately surrounding World War I, organizations like the New York National Americanization Day Committee hoped to use patriotic holidays such as the Fourth of July as a means to unify the country’s diverse populations. (Ryan Reft, Library of Congress Blog, September 26, 2017)

What was the goal of Americanization Day?

How does the poster appeal to patriotism? American values? Americanism?
Handout 10:

Germans who had been detained in internment camps being deported from Hoboken, September 25, 1919. Library of Congress

Discuss: “How should the government treat resident aliens from belligerent nations during a time of war?”
Handout 11: Jerry Izenberg article about experience of his immigrant father

(My father was an immigrant to whom the American Dream was more than a cliché. It was a beacon that brought his family here dirt poor, driven by nightmare memories from Eastern Europe that he later shared with me. It was why going off to war in 1917 for the country he loved was easy for him. It is why this annual remembrance appears once again on another Memorial Day.)

Harry Izenberg (Courtesy Jerry Izenberg)

The picture is older than the Great Depression by more than a decade and older than the day that Hollywood first put a voice to its motion pictures. Time has turned what once was its clearly defined black-and-white composition to a soft sepia setting that lends a kind of ironic warmth to a photo taken during the grimmest of man's ventures.

He is standing in front of a fortress-like wall in what the war correspondents of that day referred to as "somewhere in France." To a set of eyes riveted in a new millennium, the uniform he wears appears to be on leave from another world.

The boots are high and polished, the trousers tucked inside. The high-collared fatigue jacket is buttoned from waist to throat and tightly sculpted to his torso. Tilted ever so slightly on his head is the high-crowned, broad-brimmed campaign hat.

He was my father, and the day the picture was taken, his trench-mortar battalion was about to leave for what was known in World War I as "the front." He would return deaf in one ear.

As I do every Memorial Day, I take the picture down from the shelf next to my desk. The older I get, the more I understand its meaning.
The man in the photograph is perhaps no more than 24 hours removed from a date with the kind of timeless terror we still cannot eliminate 10 decades later. But the face in the picture has a gentleness that belies what awaited him. His irrepressible smile seems just a heartbeat away.

It was the smile the war could not kill, the Great Depression could not kill, the fumes in the dye house, where he sometimes worked as often as seven days a week, could not kill and the things he wanted to give his family, but couldn’t, could not alter.

The smile was his legacy to us, and even in the toughest of times, he also gave us the gift of laughter.

Ecclesiastes tells us of man and his seasons, of "a time to love and a time to hate, a time of war and a time of peace." That's what the picture is all about because he was a man who lived through war but never let war live in him.

One day, in one of those unplanned moments when fathers tell their sons things about which the sons never knew, he explained why he had enlisted the morning after World War I was declared.

He told me about a moment on the deck of a bucket-of-bolts ship bound for America cutting through the fog of a 19th century morning. He was only 8, then but he still remembered his father, Jacob, lifting him on his shoulders to see the outline of the Statue of Liberty through the haze. My father said Jacob told him, "Now you will go to school. Now there will be an end to pogroms and murder."

For him, his service in World War I was the repayment for a father’s promise on a ship crammed with immigrants. Years later, home from that war and until the day he died, he acknowledged that by hanging the American flag on every holiday... Memorial Day... Armistice Day... Flag Day... the Fourth of July. When I got married, his personal wedding gift was that same flag. Harry Izenberg was a man of many dimensions on his American journey. The way he told it, he became an American citizen not on the day his father got what was then called "papers" but in a schoolyard in Paterson, the first time he held a baseball bat in his hands.

He was a greenhorn in a foreign country who had never seen or played in a baseball game.

He couldn't speak the language.

But he discovered that day that he could hit a baseball.

Decades later, it was his view that he became an American then and there in that schoolyard.

Along the way much later on, he became a lot of things. There was a time before his marriage when he earned a nice but risky living as a bowling hustler. He was also a minor-league baseball player, finishing up in something called the Delaware-Lackawanna League that followed the railroad of the same name.

The teams were sponsored by the depots whose names were printed across their uniform shirts. As soon as they saw him hit, they offered him more money than he had ever made playing the game he loved.

"But you got to work for the railroad or you can't play," the manager said.

"Work as what?"

"We'll make you a tracer of missing box cars."
"I don't know how to find a missing box car."

"Don't worry. We've never lost one."

For the part of the journey that included my mother, my sister and me, he was a dyer of fur pelts. He would come home each night with dark, stained fingers that he would soak in vanilla to ease the smell of the dye. I am sure that the frequency of the heart attacks that finally killed him had something to do with the fumes he inhaled all those years.

When he died, I was left with the kind of memories that made me forever rich.

I remember the way he loved to sing and how he taught me to drop-kick a football, how to make the pivot at second base (which I never mastered) and how to finish a combination with a left hook.

I look at the picture and I remember that shortly before I left to board a troop ship during the Korean War as he had done on his way to France, I asked how he had felt about "his" war.

"I really believed," he said softly, "it was the war to end all wars."

And then he paused and he looked at me for what seemed an eternity before he said:

"Take care of yourself."

It's Memorial Day weekend.

I look at his picture and I am thankful for the memories, the sacrifices, the love and the things with which he willingly put up to try to get me on the right track.

Jerry Izenberg is Columnist Emeritus for The Star-Ledger. He can be reached at jizenberg@starledger.com.

Summarize the article and respond to the following question: How does this article show the patriotism and commitment to America of many immigrants, such as Jerry Izenberg’s grandfather?
Handout 12: Summary of Schenck, Abrams and Brandenburg cases

In Schenck v. United States (1919), the U.S. Supreme Court upheld that Espionage Act as constitutional. During World War I, Charles T. Schenck had produced a pamphlet maintaining that the military draft was illegal. He was convicted under the Espionage Act of attempting to cause insubordination in the military and to obstruct recruiting. Schenck appealed on the grounds that the statute violated the First Amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court held that the Espionage Act did not violate the First Amendment and was an appropriate exercise of authority by Congress in wartime. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing for a unanimous court, concluded that the courts owed greater deference to the government during wartime, even regarding constitutional rights. The Court held that the First Amendment does not protect free speech that approaches creating a “clear and present danger” of a significant evil that Congress has the power the prevent. The court concluded that the widespread dissemination of leaflets was sufficiently likely to disrupt the conscription process, comparing the leaflets to shouting “Fire” in a crowded theatre, which is not permitted under the First Amendment.

In Abrams v. U.S. (1919) the Supreme Court upheld the Sedition Act amendments to the Espionage Act by concluding that leaflets calling for a general strike and the curtailment of munitions of productions posed a sufficient danger to the war effort to meet the standard set in Schenck. In a dissenting opinion, Justice Holmes argued that the First Amendment protects the right to dissent from the government viewpoints and objectives unless it creates a “clear and present danger” and concluded that the distribution of the two leaflets did not meet this test.

In Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969) the U.S. Supreme Court held that seditious speech—including speech that constitutes an incitement to violence—is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as long as it does not indicate an "imminent" threat. Brandenburg, a leader in the Ku Klux Klan, made a speech at a Klan rally and was later convicted under an Ohio criminal syndicalism law. The law made it illegal to advocate "crime, sabotage, violence, or unlawful methods of terrorism as a means of accomplishing industrial or political reform," as well as assembling "with any society, group, or assemblage of persons formed to teach or advocate the doctrines of criminal syndicalism." The Court held that the Ohio law violated Brandenburg's right to free speech. The Court used a two-pronged test to evaluate speech acts: (1) speech can be prohibited if it is "directed at inciting or producing imminent lawless action" and (2) it is "likely to incite or produce such action." The criminal syndicalism act made illegal the advocacy and teaching of doctrines while ignoring whether or not that advocacy and teaching would actually incite imminent lawless action. The failure to make this distinction rendered the law overly broad and in violation of the Constitution.
Handout 13: Joyce Kilmer

Trees
BY JOYCE KILMER

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth’s sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.
Handout 14:

New York Times Editorial

December 5, 1918

Note: On December 4, 1918, President Wilson arrived in Hoboken to board the ship that would take him to the Versailles Peace Conference. He was greeted with pomp and adulation.

If Mr. Wilson were not well grounded in the philosophy of life, especially public life, he might have felt as he departed yesterday that the American people are capriciously mutable in their moods. Only a few days ago they were protesting against his decision to go to Paris, they scolded him for wanting to go at all. Yet as he sailed down the bay yesterday morning he was saluted by a more varied and tumultuous expression of good wishes than ever before fell upon the ears of a departing traveler. It was universal, genuine, hearty, unmistakable.

It means first of all that the people admire Mr. Wilson very much. They delight on all occasions to pay him the tribute his great achievements of leadership have deserved, they want to show their appreciation of the distinguished service he has rendered to the country and to civilization during four trying years. They admire his courage, too, and his resolution, even though his purposes sometimes run contrary to their wish. By going abroad he disregards an unbroken tradition, and though we give enthusiastic welcome to new things, we are great respecters of old custom. Yet firmness is so manly a trait that there must be multitudes who will entertain a secret admiration for Mr. Wilson’s courage, after he had on due deliberation made up his mind to go to Paris, in carrying out that design even against the popular wish.

But above all the emotions which inspired the people of the country to bid their President godspeed as he went away is the wish that he may accomplish two purposes which they have very much at heart. One is that he may exert upon the conference an influence in the unselfish spirit of the ideals he has so often declared, ideals growing out of his earnest hope that the peace to be attained will be enduring because based upon justice and righteousness. The other is that, by his personal presence and communion with the representative men of the nations that have fought with us for the triumph of right over wrong, he may promote good understanding, a firm and lasting friendship. Our people are profoundly and sincerely desirous of a close and friendly union with the peoples of Great Britain, France, and Italy in all good work for the world’s welfare. For the people of those nations they have a feeling of the warmest friendship, they want to be on the best of terms with them to the end that differences and misunderstandings may be avoided, or, if they should arise, that they may be promptly removed by measures of candor and conciliation. The country’s good wishes go with the President because it feels that he is its ambassador going beyond the seas not only to conclude a peace, but to establish relations of amity that will endure through all the coming years.

How would you characterize this article? Does it indicate that the public (or the New York Times) was hopeful or pessimistic about President Wilson’s ability to achieve the American war aims?
Handout 15: Troops returning home to a parade in Jersey City, May 20, 1919

President Wilson returning to Hoboken from the Peace Conference, July 8, 1919

Source: https://www.hobokenmuseum.org/explore-hoboken/historic-highlights/hoboken-in-wwi/
Concluding Class Discussion: Were the initial hopes ("make the world safe for democracy", "the war to end all wars") and sacrifices justified, given the eventual result of the war and the Versailles Treaty?