

# 1 Defeating the League of Nations

2 Excerpted from [www.ushistory.org](http://www.ushistory.org): The Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations

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4 **Please note:** The Treaty of Versailles ended WWI. There were many  
5 components of this treaty including the creation of the League of  
6 Nations. The United States was conflicted about joining the League of  
7 Nations due to Article X.  
8

9 Unfortunately for Wilson, he was met with stiff opposition. The  
10 Republican leader of the Senate, Henry Cabot Lodge, was very  
11 suspicious of Wilson and his treaty. Article X of the League of Nations  
12 required the United States to respect the territorial integrity of member  
13 states. Although there was no requirement compelling an American  
14 declaration of war, the United States might be bound to impose an  
15 economic embargo or to sever diplomatic relations. Lodge viewed the  
16 League as a supranational government that would limit the power of the  
17 American government from determining its own affairs. Others believed  
18 the League was the sort of entangling alliance the United States had  
19 avoided since George Washington's Farewell Address. Lodge sabotaged  
20 the League covenant by declaring the United States exempt from Article  
21 X. He attached reservations, or amendments, to the treaty to this effect.  
22 Wilson, bedridden from a debilitating stroke, was unable to accept these  
23 changes. He asked Senate Democrats to vote against the Treaty of  
24 Versailles unless the Lodge reservations were dropped. Neither side  
25 budged, and the treaty went down to defeat.

26 Why did the United States fail to ratify the Versailles Treaty and join the  
27 League of Nations? Personal enmity between Wilson and Lodge played  
28 a part. Wilson might have prudently invited a prominent Republican to  
29 accompany him to Paris to help ensure its later passage. Wilson's fading  
30 health eliminated the possibility of making a strong personal appeal on  
31 behalf of the treaty. Ethnic groups in the United States helped its defeat.  
32 German Americans felt their fatherland was being treated too harshly.  
33 Italian Americans felt more territory should have been awarded to Italy.  
34 Irish Americans criticized the treaty for failing to address the issue of  
35 Irish independence. Diehard American isolationists worried about a  
36 permanent global involvement. The stubbornness of President Wilson  
37 led him to ask his own party to scuttle the treaty. The final results of all  
38 these factors had mammoth long term consequences. Without the  
39 involvement of the world's newest superpower, the League of Nations  
40 was doomed to failure. Over the next two decades, the United States  
41 would sit on the sidelines as the unjust Treaty of Versailles and the  
42 ineffective League of Nations would set the stage for an even bloodier,  
43 more devastating clash  
44  
45  
46

trade ban/international  
relationships/ controlled by  
group of nations

agreement

shared hatred

individuals not wanting to be  
involved in world affairs  
to abandon/ withdraw from

# Teacher Guide

Name of Text: **Defeating the League of Nations**

First and Last Names of the Question Composers: **John Tierney, Sarah Flynn, Sue Davis, Caroline Hatcher**

Text Dependent Questions	Possible answers (words, phrases, sentences with line numbers) to be completed by <i>critiquing group</i> .
<p>What Type of writing is this document: Argumentative/opinion, informative, narrative? How do you know?</p>	<p>Informative. We know because it gives negative and positive perspectives of both Wilson and Lodge.</p>
<p>Why were Lodge and other suspicious of Article X in the League of Nations covenant?</p>	<p>10-11-The U.S. might be bound to impose an economic embargo or sever diplomatic relations. Lodge believed it would limit the power of the U.S. government. 11-12- Believe it would entangle alliances that U.s. had avoided since Washington</p>
<p>What words does the author use to show enmity between Wilson and Lodge?</p>	<p>6: Stiff opposition 7: suspicious of Wilson 14: Lodge sabotaged 17-18: Unable to accept changes 22: prudently invited 28: stubbornness of Wilson</p>

Text Dependent Questions

Possible answers (words, phrases, sentences with line numbers) to be completed by *critiquing group*.

<p>Besides Lodge, what other groups helped to defeat the Treaty of Versailles? What were their reasons?</p>	<p>25: German Americans because fatherland was being treated to harshly 26: Italian Americans felt more territory should have been awarded to Italy 27: Irish Americans criticized the treaty for failing to address the issue of Irish independence. 28: Die hard American Isolationist worried about a permanent global involvement.</p>
<p>What are the similar views of a “supranational government” and a “Diehard American Isolationist”?</p>	<p>11: Supranational view was America might be bound to impose economic embargo or sever diplomatic relations 28: Isolations view was entangling alliances should be avoided by U.S. Summary both agreed that the U.S. should avoid alliances with other nations.</p>
<p>What was the final outcome between the conflict between Lodge and Wilson over the Treaty of Versailles?</p>	<p>30-31: without the involvement of the U.S. the League of Nations was doomed to failure. 33-34: The ineffective League of nations would set the stage for an even bloodier clash, WWII.</p>

Please compose a clear writing prompt or question to follow this close analytic reading. Make sure that your writing prompt/question follows the CCSS writing standards (choose informational or argumentative) and that you use the terminology of the standards. The writing assignment can be a very formal essay or a fairly short piece, as long as it demonstrates that students have understood the document and can use evidence from it effectively.

**Write a paragraph explaining why the United States failed to ratify the Treaty of Versailles? In your paragraph, underline evidence from the text.**

In the space below, create a very specific checklist that helps teachers what exactly to identify in order to measure student success or difficulty with this particular writing assignment on this particular reading. Make sure to use your grade level's writing standards as a guide. Be clear!

Students' paragraph should have at least 3 of the following points:

- Republican leader, Henry Cabot Lodge, was suspicious of President Wilson and his treaty
- There was a personal enmity or hatred between Wilson and Lodge
- Article X of the treaty required the US to respect the territorial integrity of member states which could lead to American declaration of war, economic embargo, or sever diplomatic relations
- League might limit the power of the American government by not determining its own alliances with foreign nations
- It went against George Washington's farewell address stating avoid entangling alliances
- Ethnic groups in the US were against the Treaty of Versailles because Germans felt they were being treated too harshly, the Italian felt Italy should have been awarded more land, and the Irish though that Irish should receive their independence
- Isolationists were worried about a permanent global involvement