

Why America Entered

Trace the pressures for war and the costs to civil liberties.

8.4b "International, economic, and military developments swayed opinion in favor of the United States siding with the Allies and entering World War I. Domestic responses to World War I limited civil liberties within the United States."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline evidence for three entry factors: economic ties, submarine warfare, and the Zimmermann Telegram. Circle evidence of restrictions on civil liberties.

Pressure at Home and Sea

- ① At the start of World War I in 1914, the United States declared neutrality. Yet American businesses sold food, supplies, and weapons to Britain and France, the Allied powers. United States banks also lent large sums of money to those nations. These economic ties made an Allied victory important to many Americans, because an Allied defeat could threaten trade and loan repayment. Trade with Germany was much smaller because the British navy blocked many German ports.
- ② German submarine warfare created a military danger at sea. In 1915, a German U-boat sank the British passenger ship *Lusitania*, killing 128 Americans. Germany later promised to limit such attacks, but in January 1917 it announced unrestricted submarine warfare, meaning its submarines would attack ships in the war zone without warning. In February, U.S. officials received the Zimmermann Telegram, a German proposal for an alliance with Mexico if the United States entered the war. These actions shifted more opinion toward war and helped lead President Wilson to ask Congress for a declaration of war in April 1917.
- ③ After the United States entered the war in April 1917, the government tried to build support and silence opposition. The Espionage Act of 1917 punished some interference with military operations, including efforts to obstruct recruiting. The Sedition Act of 1918 made it a crime to use disloyal, profane, or abusive language about the U.S. government, flag, or military. Officials used these laws against critics, limiting freedom of speech during wartime and making public dissent more risky.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did economic ties to Britain and France make an Allied victory important to many Americans?

2 How did Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare increase support for entering the war?

3 What did the Zimmermann Telegram ask Mexico to do?

4 How did the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act limit civil liberties during the war?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence explanation of why the United States moved toward war. Include two developments that increased support for joining the Allies and explain how one wartime law limited civil liberties.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline evidence for three entry factors: economic ties, submarine warfare, and the Zimmermann Telegram. Circle evidence of restrictions on civil liberties. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did economic ties to Britain and France make an Allied victory important to many Americans?	American trade and loans tied businesses and banks to the Allies. An Allied defeat could threaten trade and loan repayment.
2	How did Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare increase support for entering the war?	Germany announced that its submarines would attack ships in the war zone without warning, creating a danger at sea.
3	What did the Zimmermann Telegram ask Mexico to do?	It proposed that Mexico ally with Germany if the United States entered the war.
4	How did the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act limit civil liberties during the war?	The laws punished interference with military operations or recruiting and certain critical speech about the U.S. government, flag, or military, limiting freedom of speech.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Several developments pushed the United States toward the Allies. Economic ties made many Americans concerned about an Allied defeat. Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare threatened ships without warning. After entry, the Sedition Act limited civil liberties by punishing certain speech against the government, flag, or military.

Accept accurate explanations that use any two passage-based entry factors, including economic ties, unrestricted submarine warfare, or the Zimmermann Telegram. For the civil-liberties explanation, students should identify a restriction on speech, criticism, recruiting, or military operations and connect it to a named law.