



**World War I**  
**Lesson 11**  
**Sample Summary**

Although America did not enter World War I until 1917, the fighting had been going on in Europe for three years. Four hundred miles of trenches separated the British and French armies from the Germans on the Western Front. Casualties were enormous. Millions of soldiers had died and millions more were wounded. The situation was so bad that 54 divisions of the French Army mutinied in 1917. The Russians revolted that year too and overthrew Tsar Nicholas II. When the Bolsheviks took power, they took Russia out of the war. This left the Germans free to transfer their soldiers from the Eastern Front to the Western Front. Luckily for the British and French, the Americans had entered the war and were sending troops to Europe to help them. America had tried to stay out of the war, but the German policy of unrestricted submarine warfare had angered President Wilson. So did the sinking of the passenger ship *Lusitania* and the Zimmermann Telegram. The Zimmermann Telegram was a secret message from the German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Mexico City. It offered financial support to the Mexican government if it invaded America and conquered Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. This behind-the-back deal to capture sovereign U.S. territory outraged Americans. On April 16, 1917, President Wilson asked for and received a declaration of war from Congress. U.S. troops arrived in France just in time to stop a final German attack on Paris. World War I ended on November 11, 1918, when Germany surrendered to the Allies.