The Treaty of Versailles
Intro Notes
Palace of Versailles
The Paris Peace Conference

- On November 11, 1918 WWI ended and it was necessary to decide on what post-war Europe would look like.
- The Allies met to discuss the post-war world.
  - **Germany** and **Russia** were not allowed to attend the peace conference.
The Paris Peace Conference (continued)

- There were many questions that needed to be addressed after the war:
  - What should happen to the losing countries, Austria-Hungary and Germany?
  - Who should be held responsible for the war?
  - How would Europe pay for the costs of the war?
  - What should happen to the minority ethnic groups in Europe?
The Big Four

- 4 key leaders attended the conference

United States – President Wilson
United Kingdom – David Lloyd George
France – Georges Clemenceau
Italy – Vittorio Orlando
The Agenda of the Big Four (UNITED STATES)

- Each leader came to the conference with his own agenda:
  - President Wilson came prepared with the 14 Points—his plan for what post-war Europe should look like
    - His plan included the League of Nations, an international peacekeeping organization
David Lloyd George wanted:
- to build up Britain
- make it a major power again
- wanted to “make Germany pay”
Clemenceau wanted:

- to punish Germany so that it could never hurt France again
- Wanted land back from Germany
- French troops guarding the Rhineland (banks of the Rhine River that split the countries of France and Germany)
The Agenda of the Big Four

(ITALY)

Orlando wanted:

- the land he was promised for switching sides during the war
The Treaty of Versailles

- The Allies ordered Germany to sign the Treaty that *they* drew up (remember, Germany was *not invited* to the peace conference)
- The Treaty included the following provisions:
  - Germany had to take the blame for the war (the war guilt clause)
  - Germany had to pay heavy war reparations (in the amount of $30 billion)
The Treaty of Versailles (continued)

- The size of Germany’s military was severely limited
- The territory of Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France
- Germany lost its overseas colonies
- Finally...many new countries were created as the map of Europe changed significantly
The Treaty of Versailles (continued)

- Germany signed the Treaty since it was given no choice
What was Germany’s Reaction?

- Germany believed it was treated extremely unfairly by the Treaty of Versailles.
- This Treaty would later lead to WWII since Germany felt the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were too harsh.
Outcomes of the Peace Settlement

- **Self-determination**
  - New nations emerged as the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed and lands ruled by Germany and Russia sought self-rule
    - Poland was created
    - Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia became independent of Russia
    - Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Hungary were established as independent nations
Outcomes of the Peace Settlement (continued)

- The Mandate System
  - At the end of the war many colonial leaders hoped that peace meant freedom
  - Instead of colonies achieving freedom, the Allies maintained and expanded their overseas empires through mandates
The League of Nations

- More than 40 nations joined the League of Nations after WWI
  - Although it was President Wilson’s idea, the U.S. never joined the League, which led the organization to be very weak