Read the following article, “America Helps Win World War I” by Social Studies Weekly. Write an explanatory essay that explains how America assisted the Allies as they won World War I. Be sure to use evidence from the text and follow the conventions of standard written English.

**Food, Clothing and War Equipment Shortages**

With millions of farm workers taken from the farms and factories in Europe, there was a huge demand for food, clothing, machines, munitions, guns and supplies. This was a big boon to American business. Our nation prospered by supplying both sides in the war. When blockades began to prevent the United States from selling to Germany's supporters, the United States sold only to Britain and its supporters. This made Germany mad. It sent agents to America to get workers at munitions plants to strike. Agents and spies derailed trains in the United States that carried war supplies. And there were mysterious explosions at munitions plants and other acts of terrorism by German agents or spies.

**U-Boats**

Germany had the second-largest navy, but its ships were kept close to port due to England's blockade. Germany, however, did have its dangerous U-boat, or submarine. U-boats (short for "underwater boats") fanned out across the Atlantic and started sinking merchant ships in the waters off England and France. They almost brought merchant shipping to a standstill. Germany declared waters that were off the coasts of its enemies as war zones. In the spring of 1915, a British passenger ship, the Lusitania, left New York with almost 2,000 passengers and war goods. A U-boat caught the ship off the coast of Ireland and torpedoed it. Almost 1,200 on board died, including 100 Americans. By the end of the war, U-boats and other submarines had destroyed more than 4,800 ships.

**United States Declares War**

President Wilson protested the sinking of the Lusitania to the Germans, but was treated coldly. And then an intercepted telegram sent by Arthur Zimmermann, the German secretary of state for foreign affairs, set off a firestorm of concern in America. Zimmermann offered to help Mexico regain Texas, New Mexico and Arizona from the United States in exchange for Mexico allowing Germany to set up submarine bases on the Mexican coast. Mexico's president, Carranza, was angry with the United States and was willing to provide submarine bases. These actions made Americans very angry with Germany, a turn that led to the United States entering the war. Wilson approached Congress and said that enough is enough - our country should fight Germany "to make the world safe for democracy." On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. Congress passed the draft law and sent 2 million men overseas to serve in the Navy or the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). Another 2 million were drafted to serve at home.
Taxes went up to pay the war costs, and farms and factories quickened their output to support millions of Allied troops in Europe. After Germany began sinking other nations' ships, more countries declared war on Germany: Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. Canada sided with Britain early in the war and had been sending troops to Europe since 1914.

The Western Front

America's greatest contribution to ending the war was made along the Western Front, a 350-mile line from the Swiss Alps to the North Sea. Opposing forces dug miles and miles of trenches in which they took shelter from machine guns. Each side protected the trenches with barbed wire and land mines. The land between the two sides was called "no man's land," where thousands died. Fearing death in no man's land, the soldiers on both sides spent months in the stinking, rotten trenches, enduring lice, mud, rats, stench and death.

America Breaks Through the German Lines

In 1918, the Germans launched five massive offensives (attacks) against Allied troops. They tore a huge hole in Allied lines and tried to reach the English Channel and Paris. American troops helped stall both drives. For two months afterward, the Allied nations began a counterattack all along the Western Front. The fighting was bitter, and U.S. casualties (wounded and killed) grew quickly to 100,000. Finally, the Americans broke through the German lines and began advancing on them. All across the Western Front, Allied troops pushed the Germans and their supporting troops back. It was too much for the Central Powers. Bulgaria begged for peace on September 29, and the Ottoman Empire signed an armistice on October 30. Austria-Hungary surrendered to Italy on November 3. The Allied troops finally pushed Germany into surrendering and demanded that the German kaiser step down before a peace treaty (agreement between nations) could be signed.

The War Is Over

At 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918, the war ended. Troops climbed out of the trenches and couldn't believe that it was over. The Treaty of Versailles, drafted by England and France, laid out conditions that had to be agreed on before there would be peace: Germany would give up its colonies around the world, surrender most of its fleet, all of its artillery and heavy military equipment and pay for the damages they caused during the war. WWI led to the fall of four great dynasties: Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. It spawned (brought forth, started, generated) the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917 that led to the overthrow of the czar and gave rise to communism. It also destabilized Europe and laid the groundwork for the next great war, World War II.

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