**President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points**

President Woodrow Wilson gave an address to Congress on January 8, 1918. In this speech, he proposed a 14-point plan for a lasting world peace at the end of World War I.

It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace… shall be absolutely open and that they shall involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind. The day of conquest and *aggrandizement* is gone by; so is also the day of secret *covenants* entered into in the interest of particular governments and likely at some unlooked-for moment to upset the peace of the world…

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred… and made the life of our own people impossible… What we demand in this war… is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. The program of the world's peace, therefore, is our program; and… it is this:

**I.** Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

**II.** Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

**III.** The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

**IV.** Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

**V.** A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon... the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

**VI.** The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy…

**VII.** Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations...

**VIII.** All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted…

**IX.** A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

**X.** The peoples of Austria-Hungary…should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.

**XI.** Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea… and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

**XII.** The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty… and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

**XIII.** An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea…

**XIV.** A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the governments and peoples associated together against the Imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.

For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this program does remove. We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this program that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of pacific enterprise such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace- loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world, -- the new world in which we now live, -- instead of a place of mastery.

**Vocabulary:** *aggrandizement:*to increase in size; *covenant:* formal, legally binding agreement; *avow:* acknowledge

Source: <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp>

1. What does the word *henceforth* on line 5 tell us about the author’s structure of this  
 text? Why is this word important to notice? Use evidence to support your answer.   
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2. According to President Wilson, what are the causes of the Great War?  
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3. With a partner, divide the 14-Points in half. One partner will read and summarize   
 Points 1 – 7 and the other partner will read and summarize 8 – 14 in your own words.   
 When you have both finished your summaries share and record your answers on the   
 t-chart.

Point Summary

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4. The fourteenth point discusses the creation of what? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. What 3 word or phrases in lines 42-44 help you to better understand the meaning   
 of the word *rectifications* on line 42? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. In line 44, Wilson states, “We stand together until the end.” Using the final paragraph,  
 place [//] around the evidence that supports this statement

7. Using the entire text, what provocations (actions) to war does Wilson want removed   
 in order to achieve peace in Europe? Underline and annotate evidence in the text.

8. How does President Wilson want Germany to be treated in the peace process?  
 Provide evidence from the document to support your answer. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
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