

A MULTI-PANEL CARTOON

In 1914, Europe was at war. Britain, France, Russia, and Serbia faced off on one side, Germany and Austria-Hungary on the other. Across the ocean, Americans wanted to keep out of the European conflict.

But in the spring of 1915, the tide began to change. On May 7, a German U-boat, or submarine, slithered up from the deep, took aim at a British steamship off the coast of Ireland, and fired. Almost 1200 unarmed civilians went down with the *Lusitania*, more than 100 of them Americans.

President Woodrow Wilson sent a letter of protest to Germany. The German government answered that the attack was "just self-defense." Later, Germany said its sinking of unarmed ships without warning would stop, but in 1917 German U-boats once again began sinking unarmed merchant ships without warning. Several U.S. ships went down. Finally, in April, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war.

The cartoon on the other sheet of this lesson shows one view of how the U.S. entered the war. Like many cartoons today, this one uses a series of panels with pictures that tell a story. Study the details of the eight panels in order, starting with the caption at the top.

A. Identifying the Symbols. Check the best answer to complete each statement.

1. In this cartoon, the U.S. and Germany are symbolized by
 - a. children playing at the beach.
 - b. sailors on the shore.
 - c. peasants talking to their children.
2. The war is symbolized by

a. the beach.	b. the ocean.	c. a diving board.
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3. The German leader, or Kaiser, seems to

a. want to be left alone.	b. act like a bully.	c. be a fun playmate.
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B. Following the Action. Answer each question below.

4. In the third panel, the Kaiser hurls a rock at the U.S. Name one event that might be symbolized by the rock.
5. Describe the action of the last five panels.
6. According to this cartoonist, how did the U.S. get into the war?
7. Irony is the use of words or images which say the opposite of what they mean. What is ironic about the caption to this cartoon?

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The sinking of the Lusitania

5. Describe the action of the last five panels.

The Kaiser (Germany) chases, pulls, drags, and pushes the reluctant United States into the war, then tells the German people that the U.S. forced Germany into the war.

6. According to this cartoonist, how did the U.S. get into the war?

The U.S. didn't want to go to war, but was forced into it by Germany.

7. Irony is the use of words or images which say the opposite of what they mean. What is ironic about the caption to this cartoon?

"How We Forced Germany Into the War" is an ironic caption because the panels show that Germany pushed the U.S. into the war, not vice versa.

