

Name:

Date:

Understanding Historical Context

Directions: Define each of the words listed below. Next, use the word in context as it pertains to World War I.

Word	Definition	World War I Context
Democracy		
Monarchy		
Autocracy		
Militarism		

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Understanding Historical Context- KEY

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Word	Definition	World War I Context
Democracy	A system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.	President Wilson believed that the United States of America should enter the Great War to make the world safe for <i>democracy</i> as many of the nations abroad were ruled by <i>autocratic</i> governments that did not support the will of the people.
Monarchy	A form of government with a monarch (member of the royal family) at the head.	While Britain and France were historically governed as <i>monarchies</i> , the United States formed an alliance with the two countries as America viewed them as functional <i>democracies</i> where the will of the people was honored through a parliamentary government as a <i>republic</i> in France and <i>constitutional monarchy</i> in Britain. Russia was a traditional <i>monarchy</i> until the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the abdication of the tsar.

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<p>Autocracy</p>	<p>A system of government for a country, state, or society governed by one person with absolute power through domineering rule or control.</p>	<p>German <i>autocracy</i> was feared in the lead up to World War I when Kaiser Wilhelm II maintained unprecedented rule over the social, political, and military aspects of his country with his government seeking to dominate the international power system.</p> <p>Prior to abdicating his power, Tsar Nicholas II was an <i>autocratic</i> leader.</p>
<p>Militarism</p>	<p>The belief or desire of a government or people that a country should maintain a strong military capability and be prepared to use it aggressively to defend or promote national interests.</p>	<p>As the United States debated formally entering the Great War, many Americans feared the build up of the nations armed forces and the formation of an increasingly <i>militarized</i> culture within the democratic country.</p> <p>In the early part of the twentieth century, the main cultural fear of many Americans was that the German government would replace liberal democracies and open societies with <i>militarized</i> dominance.</p>