

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Viewing Guide: The World Wars

### Episode #1: Trial By Fire

**Directions:** For each person, list personality characteristics that you observe from the episode. Additionally, record various facts, accomplishments, and actions taken by this person during the episode.

Person	Personality Characteristics	Facts, Accomplishments, Actions
Winston Churchill (Great Britain)	1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.
Franklin Delano Roosevelt (United States)	1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.
Adolf Hitler (Germany)	1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.
Joseph Stalin (Russia)	1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.
George Patton (United States)	1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.
Benito Mussolini (Italy)	1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.

## PRIMARY SOURCE ACTIVITY: THE ZIMMERMANN TELEGRAM

One of the motivators for the U.S. to enter World War I was a secret telegram from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to the German Minister to Mexico. This telegram was intercepted and deciphered by the British in January 1917. The following month, the British released the telegram to President Woodrow Wilson, and the contents were published widely in newspapers. Americans were shocked to learn that Zimmermann had tried to convince Mexico to join Germany in the war effort in return for U.S. territory Germany believed Mexico could seize from the U.S.

**WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM**

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to:

GERMAN LEGATION  
MEXICO CITY

via Galveston

130 13042 13401 8001 115 3028 416 17214 0491 11310  
18147 18222 21540 10247 11518 23877 13405 3494 14936  
96092 5905 11311 10390 10371 0308 21290 5161 39495  
13071 17504 11079 18274 18101 0317 0828 17694 4473  
13284 21200 19452 21589 07893 5509 13918 8958 12137  
1335 4725 4458 5905 17100 13851 4458 17149 14471 0708  
13850 12224 0529 14991 7382 10857 07893 14218 38477  
1870 17553 07032 5870 5454 18102 15217 22801 17134  
21001 17548 9456 03438 18222 0719 14331 15021 22845  
3516 23552 22096 21804 4797 9497 22471 20855 4377  
23410 18140 22290 5905 13345 20420 39489 13732 30467  
0929 5275 18507 52242 1340 22049 13339 11288 22295  
10439 14814 4178 0992 8784 7032 7357 0928 52282 11207  
21100 21272 9346 9559 22474 15874 18502 18500 15857  
2184 5376 7381 98092 16127 13486 9350 9220 76036 14219  
5144 2831 17020 11347 17142 11264 7667 7742 15099 9130  
10482 97556 3569 3670

SEPASTOFF.

Charge German Embassy.

### TRANSCRIPT OF ZIMMERMANN TELEGRAM (1917)

(Decoded message text of the Zimmermann Telegram)  
From 2nd from London # 5747.

"We intend to begin on the first of February unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavor in spite of this to keep the United States of America neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal or alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The settlement in detail is left to you. You will inform the President of the above most secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the United States of America is certain and add the suggestion that he should, on his own initiative, invite Japan to immediate adherence and at the same time mediate between Japan and ourselves. Please call the President's attention to the fact that the ruthless employment of our submarines now offers the prospect of compelling England in a few months to make peace."

Signed, ZIMMERMANN.

Citation: Zimmermann Telegram, 1917; Decimal File, 1910-1929, 862.20212/82A (1910-1929), and Decoded Zimmermann Telegram, 1917; Decimal File, 1910-1929, 862.20212/69, General Records of the Department of State; Record Group 59; National Archives. To view the telegram in digital format visit:

[www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=60](http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=60)

## DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

1. What does the telegram reveal about Germany's plans regarding submarine warfare?
2. What role does Zimmermann want Mexico to play in World War I?  
Do you think Mexico would have agreed to this plan if given the opportunity?
3. Why do you think the Zimmermann telegram provoked the U.S. to enter World War I?  
What were some of the other factors that contributed to the U.S. declaring war against Germany in April 1917?

### ANSWERS

**Directions:** Answer each of the 3 Document-Based Questions Above in complete sentences. Use evidence from the document and the movie to support your answer.

1.

2.

3.