

**PROTEST
REFORMATION: THIRTY
YEARS WAR AND THE
TREATY OF WESTPHALIA
(1648)**



PROTEST REFORMATION: THIRTY YEARS WAR AND THE TREATY OF WESTPHALIA (1648)

Description

Through the use of various primary and secondary sources students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to explain the basic story behind the Thirty Years War, why the war broke out and how the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) forever changed the history of Europe.

Subjects

European History, World History

Grade Level

11-12

Duration

90 minutes

Tour Links

- City of Peace, Muenster, Germany
- Hall of Peace, Muenster, Germany
- National Gallery, London, UK

Essential Questions

- What was the Thirty Years War? Why did it start? What were the main issues of the conflict?
- What was the Treaty of Westphalia (1648)? What were the main points of the treaty?
- How did the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) forever change the Germanic lands and Europe as a whole? Why is the treaty considered a watershed event in European and World History?

Academic Summary

Excerpts from the Treaty of Westphalia (1648)

In the name of the most holy and individual Trinity: Be it known to all, and every one whom it may concern, or to whom in any manner it may belong, That for many Years past, Discords and Civil Divisions being stir'd up in the Roman Empire, which increas'd to such a degree, that not only all Germany, but also the neighboring Kingdoms, and France particularly, have been involv'd in the Disorders of a long and cruel War: ... from whence ensu'd great Effusion of Christian Blood, and the Desolation of several Provinces. ... when all Christendom is imbroil'd, has not ceas'd to contribute its Counsels for the publick Welfare and Tranquillity; so that on the side, and the other, they have form'd Thoughts of an universal Peace. And for this purpose, by a mutual Agreement and Covenant of both Partys, in the year of our Lord 1641. the 25th of December, N.S. or the 15th O.S. it was resolv'd at Hamburgh, to hold an Assembly of Plenipotentiary Ambassadors, who should render themselves at Munster and Osnabrug in Westphalia the 11th of July, N.S. or the 1st of the said month O.S. in the year 1643. The Plenipotentiary Ambassadors on the one side, and the other, duly establish'd, appearing at the prefixt time, ... to the Glory of God, and the Benefit of the Christian World, the following Articles have been agreed on and consented to, and the same run thus.

I.

That there shall be a Christian and Universal Peace, and a perpetual, true, and sincere Amity, between his Sacred Imperial Majesty, and his most Christian Majesty; as also, between all and each of the Allies, and Adherents of his said Imperial Majesty, the House of Austria, and its Heirs, and Successors; but chiefly between the Electors, Princes, and States of the Empire on the one side; and all and each of the Allies of his said Christian Majesty, and all their Heirs and Successors, chiefly between the most Serene Queen and Kingdom of Swedeland, the Electors respectively, the Princes and States of the Empire, on the other part. That this Peace and Amity be observ'd and cultivated with such a Sincerity and Zeal, that each Party shall endeavor to procure the Benefit, Honour and Advantage of the other; that thus on all sides they may see this Peace and Friendship in the Roman Empire, and the Kingdom of France flourish, by entertaining a good and faithful Neighbourhood.

XXVIII.

That those of the Confession of Augsburg (lesson note -- Lutherans), and particularly the Inhabitants of Oppenheim, shall be put in possession again of their Churches, and Ecclesiastical Estates, as they were in the Year 1624. as also that all others of the said Confession of Augsburg, who shall demand it, shall have the free Exercise of their Religion, as well in publick Churches at the appointed Hours, as in private in their own Houses, or in others chosen for this purpose by their Ministers, or by those of their Neighbours, preaching the Word of God.

XLVI.

... Law and Justice shall be administer'd in Bohemia, and in all the other Hereditary Provinces of the Emperor, without any respect; as to the Catholicks, so also to the Subjects, Creditors, Heirs, or private Persons, who shall be of the Confession of Augsburg, if they have any Pretensions, and enter or prosecute any Actions to obtain Justice.

LXIV.

And to prevent for the future any Differences arising in the Politick State, all and every one of the Electors, Princes and States of the Roman Empire, are so establish'd and confirm'd in their antient Rights, Prerogatives, Libertys, Privileges, free exercise of Territorial Right, as well Ecclesiastick, as Politick Lordships, Regales, by virtue of this present Transaction: that they never can or ought to be molested therein by any whomsoever upon any manner of pretence.

LXXVII.

The most Christian King shall, nevertheless, be oblig'd to preserve in all and every one of these Countrys the Catholick Religion, as maintain'd under the Princes of Austria, and to abolish all Innovations crept in during the War.

CXII.

That the very Places, Citys, Towns, Boroughs, Villages, Castles, Fortresses and Forts which have been possess'd and retain'd, as well in the Kingdom of Bohemia, and other Countrys of the Empire and Hereditary Dominions of the House of Austria, as in the other Circles of the Empire, by one or the other Army, or have been surrender'd by Composition; shall be restor'd without delay to their former and lawful Possessors and Lords, whether they be mediately or immediately States of the Empire, Ecclesiastical or Secular, comprehending therein also the free Nobility of the Empire: and they shall be left at their own free disposal, either according to Right and Custom, or according to the Force this present Treaty ought to have, notwithstanding all Donations, Infeoffments, Concessions (except they have been made by the free-will of some State) Bonds for redeeming of Prisoners, or to prevent Burnings and Pillages, or such other like Titles acquir'd to the prejudice of the former and lawful Masters and Possessors. Let also all Contracts and Bargains, and all Exceptions contrary to the said Restitution cease, all which are to be esteem'd void; saving nevertheless such things as have been otherwise agreed on in the precedent Articles touching the Satisfaction to made to his most Christian Majesty, as also some Concessions and equivalent Compensations granted to the Electors and Princes of the Empire. That neither the Mention of the Catholick King, nor Quality of the Duke of Lorain given to Duke Charles in the Treaty between the Emperor and Swedeland, and much less the Title of Landgrave of Alsace, given to the Emperor, shall be any prejudice to the most Christian King. That also which has been agreed touching the Satisfaction to be made to the Swedish Troops, shall have no effect in respect to his Majesty.

CXXI.

That it never shall be alledg'd, allow'd, or admitted, that any Canonical or Civil Law, any general or particular Decrees of Councils, any Privileges, any

Indulgences, any Edicts, any Commissions, Inhibitions, Mandates, Decrees, Rescripts, Suspensions of Law, Judgments pronounc'd at any time, Adjudications, Capitulations of the Emperor, and other Rules and Exceptions of Religious Orders, past or future Protestations, Contradictions, Appeals, Investitures, Transactions, Oaths, Renunciations, Contracts, and much less the Edict of 1629. or the Transaction of Prague, with its Appendixes, or the Concordates with the Popes, or the Interims of the Year 1548. or any other politick Statutes, or Ecclesiastical Decrees, Dispensations, Absolutions, or any other Exceptions, under what pretence or colour they can be invented; shall take place against this Convention, or any of its Clauses and Articles neither shall any inhibitory or other Processes or Commissions be ever allow'd to the Plaintiff or Defendant.

CXXIII.

That nevertheless the concluded Peace shall remain in force, and all Partys in this Transaction shall be oblig'd to defend and protect all and every Article of this Peace against any one, without distinction of Religion; and if it happens any point shall be violated, the Offended shall before all things exhort the Offender not to come to any Hostility, submitting the Cause to a friendly Composition, or the ordinary Proceedings of Justice.

CXXIV.

Nevertheless, if for the space of three years the Difference cannot be terminated by any of those means, all and every one of those concern'd in this Transaction shall be oblig'd to join the injur'd Party, and assist him with Counsel and Force to repel the Injury, being first advertis'd by the injur'd that gentle Means and Justice prevail'd nothing; but without prejudice, nevertheless, to every one's Jurisdiction, and the Administration of Justice conformable to the Laws of each Prince and State: and it shall not be permitted to any State of the Empire to pursue his Right by Force and Arms; but if any difference has happen'd or happens for the future, every one shall try the means of ordinary Justice, and the Contravener shall be regarded as an Infringer of the Peace. That which has been determin'd by Sentence of the Judge, shall be put in execution, without distinction of Condition, as the Laws of the Empire enjoin touching the Execution of Arrests and Sentences.

Done, pass'd and concluded at Munster in Westphalia, the 24th Day of October, 1648.

It was the most destructive war in Europe's history up to that point. Estimates vary, but most historians agree that at least six million Europeans died, mostly in the Germanic lands. It started out as a local squabble, but soon morphed into a conflict that would engulf the entire continent. Nation-states battled back and forth for supremacy and power. When it was over, devastation had laid waste to what had once been an idyllic landscape ... and in the end there was no real winner. Exhausted from the bloodshed, the warring parties finally agreed to stop killing by declaring a draw. Nothing was solved. Looking back, the peace treaty they signed looks eerily similar to one that would end another conflict in 1918 ... but this was not 1918. This treaty was signed in

1648, and the representatives were not at Versailles, but rather in Westphalia. This was not the end of the Great War, but rather the end of the Thirty Years War.

The "Thirty Years War" was actually a series of different wars that were all settled by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. At their core, the conflicts were about religion.

For the first thousand years of Christianity, there had been only one church, generally called the "Christian" church by historians. The pope, leader of that church, lived in Rome and held immense power over the entire population in Europe. Over the centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire in 476, the church, called "Catholic" after the Great Schism with the Orthodox Church after 1054, flexed its control over monarchs and the nobility as well. By the high Middle Ages, the Catholic Church had developed an idea behind salvation that Christians had to earn their way into heaven. The first and primary part of this notion had to do with membership in the Catholic Church itself. Heretics, those who challenged church teachings, were also considered to be outside God, which in turn led to the excesses of the inquisition.

On 31 October 1517, Martin Luther, a German monk and scholar, wrote his now famous "95 Theses", a series of arguments against the excesses of the Catholic Church, and then (according to legend) nailed them to the Church door in the center of Wittenberg for all to see. His works, published in German on the new printing presses for all to read, led to an explosion of other reformers, and set the stage for the Protestant Reformation. In essence, Luther had opened the door for others to question the Church through different interpretations of scripture.

In 1536, almost twenty years after Luther's challenge, John Calvin, a French lawyer and theologian living in Geneva, Switzerland, published a book called Institutes of the Christian Religion. Originally published in Latin but subsequently translated into different European languages, Institutes outlined Calvin's basic philosophies on what has been called "predestination" as a prerequisite for salvation.

By the early 17th century, the European continent had split into two general camps. Protestants of various denominations (mostly Lutheran and Calvinist) dominated the Northern Germanic and Swiss lands while Roman Catholics maintained their hold on Southern Europe, France and Spain. The flashpoint was in the Holy Roman Empire, a loose collection of mostly Germanic independent kingdoms north of the Alps. That is where trouble started in 1618 when a local squabble erupted between Calvinists and Catholics in Prague. Sweden came to the defense of Northern Protestants against the Austrian Hapsburgs, a powerful Catholic family who controlled much of Southern Europe. France, a serious Catholic rival to Hapsburg rule in Europe (especially in the Netherlands), eventually got into the fray, ironically on the side of the Protestants. War raged year after year. Millions across the continent (mostly peasants) suffered terribly. Destruction was widespread as invading armies plundered and pillaged the Germanic lands.

By the early 1640s, most European leaders were broke and tired of war. Negotiations for peace began in 1641, but it would take over seven years before a treaty was finally hammered out. In the end, most of the provisions of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) dealt with land and money, but the most important points had to do with religion. Protestant princes and their lands were granted official recognition and the right to exist outside the Roman Catholic Church. The war was a draw ... or was it? Official

recognition forever broke the power of the pope to control monarchs across the continent (even in Catholic lands). It also was the first step towards the idea of freedom of religion, first for kingdoms / states and later for individuals, a concept westerners hold dear today. For historians and scholars, the Treaty of Westphalia marks the epochal division between the Medieval/Renaissance Age and the Modern Age of powerful independent states and the scientific revolution.

Through the use of various primary and secondary sources students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to explain the basic story behind the Thirty Years War, why the war broke out and how the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) forever changed the history of Europe.

Objectives

1. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain the basic story and facts behind the Thirty Years War 1618 - 1648.
2. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain why the war broke out between Catholics and Protestants in Europe.
3. Students will identify, analyze, understand and be able to explain how the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) forever changed the history of Europe.

Procedure

I. Anticipatory Set

- Writing / Question: What was the Protestant Reformation? How did it divide Europeans? (5 min)
- Handouts – Copies of the primary sources and readings from the websites listed. (5 min)

II. Body of Lesson

- Lecture / PPT – Thirty Years War and Treaty of Westphalia (20 min)
- Video – Thirty Years War and Treaty of Westphalia (20 min)
- Independent Activity – Students read the sources and articles on the Thirty Years War and the Treaty of Westphalia, taking notes as appropriate (20 min)
- Suggestion: AP/Advanced students should concentrate on primary sources.
- Group Activity – Socratic Discussion: Thirty Years War and the Treaty of Westphalia (20 min)

III. Closure

- Assessment – Essay / DBQ: Explain in detail the Thirty Years War, why the war broke out between Catholics and Protestants and how the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) forever changed the history of Europe.

Extension

On tour: City of Peace / Münster Town Hall, Münster, Germany

While on tour, students in Germany can visit Münster, a city in Westphalia (not far from the border of the Netherlands in Northwestern Germany – not to be confused with Munster, France). The Treaty of Westphalia (also known as the Treaty of Munster) was signed here in 1648. A memorial slab in the fireplace at the hall has the inscription “Anno 1648: Pax optima rerum, 24. Oct” (Peace is the Greatest Good). The Westphalia Peace Prize is also awarded in the town every two years to an individual committed to unity and peace in Europe.

Web Links

Lesson Plan Websites

- http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=3778
Peace Treaties of Westphalia October 14/24 1648 (primary source – long version) – from the German History in Documents and Images website. Highly recommended for AP / Advanced students.
- http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Doc.7-ENG-Heberle_en.pdf
Chronicle of the Era (primary sources) – from the German History in Documents and Images website.
- http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/westphal.asp
Treaty of Westphalia (primary source) – from the Avalon Project at Yale University
- <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/magde.html>
The Destruction of Magdeburg (primary source) – from the History Texts project at Hanover College (IN)
- www.historytoday.com/richard-cavendish/treaty-westphalia
The Treaty of Westphalia (website) – from the History Today Site (UK)
- www.historylearningsite.co.uk/30YW_western_europe.htm
Thirty Years War (website) – from the History Learning Site (UK)
- http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Doc.7-ENG-Heberle_en.pdf
Thirty Years War (website) – from the History Channel
- www.pptpalooza.net/PPTs/EHAP/WarsOfReligion.ppt
The Wars of Religion (PowerPoint) – from Susan Pojer, History teacher at Horace Greeley High (NY)
- www.mrgalusha.org/APEuroDocs/Unit%202/Thirty%20Years%20War.ppt
Thirty Years War (PowerPoint) – from Justin Galusha, history teacher at Weymouth High School (MA).
- www.teachingchannel.org/videos/choosing-primary-source-documents?fd=1
Reading Like a Historian: Primary Source Documents (video). Great 2-minute video on how to incorporate primary sources into the Common Core and history classes. From Shilpa Duvoor of Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, CA. Highly recommended for teachers.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jxqak1fBZdc
The Thirty Years War (video) – from John Dever, AP European History teacher at Mount Ararat High (ME). This video lecture with PowerPoint slides does a great job outlining the war and the subsequent treaty. Appropriate, and recommended for all students and classes.

Background Information

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_of_Westphalia
Peace of Westphalia – Wikipedia article
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westphalia>
Westphalia – Wikipedia article
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty_Years'_War
Thirty Years War – Wikipedia article

- [passports.com/group_leaders/on_the_road/switzerland/lucerne](https://www.passports.com/group_leaders/on_the_road/switzerland/lucerne)
On the Road: Lucerne – from Passports Educational Travel

Other Relevant Passports Lesson Plans

- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/sir-thomas-more
Reformation England – Sir Thomas More
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/english-reformation
Reformation England – An Overview
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/reformation-britain-pilgrimage-of-grace
Reformation England – Pilgrimage of Grace 1536-37
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/anne-of-cleves
Reformation England – Anne of Cleves: Henry's 4th Wife and Beloved Sister
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/france/protestant-reformation-french-huguenots
Protestant Reformation – French Huguenots
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/germany/martin-luther-95-theses
Protestant Reformation – Luther and the 95 Theses 1517
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/switzerland/john-calvin-and-predestination
Protestant Reformation – John Calvin and Predestination

Key Terms

- Catholic
- Germanic Lands
- Peasants
- Protestant
- Reformation
- Thirty Years War
- Treaty of Westphalia (1648)

