Treaty of Versailles 28 June 1919

THE BIG THREE
George Clemenceau (France)
• wanted a very harsh treaty as France had been invaded twice already by Germany
• clashed the most with Wilson
• demanded reparations and wanted a drastic reduction of the army

Woodrow Wilson (USA)
• Created ‘Wilson’s 14 points’ in January 1918 (containing the war aims of the USA) which Germany thought the treaty would be based on
• Supported national self determination [the right to rule themselves - proved very difficult in Europe as they were spread out everywhere therefore countries such as Austria-Hungary couldn’t rule themselves]
• League of Nations was his idea

David Lloyd George (UK)
• Feared the rise of communism therefore wanted to punish Germany but not so severely that they wouldn’t be able to recover economically
• Was referred to as the ‘middleman’ as he sat in the middle of the views of Wilson and Clemenceau
• Wanted to get rid of Germany as a naval threat and gain reparations therefore did not support ‘freedom of the seas’ outlined in Wilsons 14 points

The big three all had very different ideas about the war and the punishment for Germany. This made it extremely hard to decide on things. They ended up having to compromise a lot

Eg. Clemenceau wanted the German border pushed back to the Rhineland however Wilson did not want this and threatened to leave the peace conference therefore he did not allow this to happen and Clemenceau didn’t get what he wanted.

TERMS OF THE TREATY
Guilty for the war - article 231
Armied forces
Reparations
Gorman territorial losses
League of Nations

Guilty for the war - article 231
Germany was forced to admit full guilt for the war. This caused problems as the new Weimar government had just come into power therefore admitting the guilt for the war made them majorly lose support. People didn’t trust them and blamed them for the harshness of the treaty

Armed force reduction - army limited to 100,000 men - conscription banned - no airforce - no submarines - no armoured vehicles - limit of 6 battleships - Rhineland demilitarised
These military reductions were a source of German resentment towards the treaty as Germans felt it was unfair how they were no longer allowed to have a strong army. They felt vulnerable against these other large powers who had massive armies.

Reparations - $6.6 billion - ‘blank cheque’ - figure not announced until 1921
The $6.6 Billion sum of reparations was a source of German resentment as they felt as if it was not fully their fault. Other countries had also contributed and they shouldn’t have to pay this