**Blood and Iron Name:**

**Date: Block:**

**Directions:**

1. READ the introduction and the story.
2. ANNOTATE while you read the introduction AND the story (circle unknown words, underline important phrases, “talk back” by writing your thoughts)
3. ANSWER the questions at the end of the reading.

Talk Back Below!

In the early 1800’s, Germany was not a unified nation. The German Confederation was made up of 39 separate states that shared a language and culture. These states included Austria and Prussia. In 1862, King Wilhelm I chose Otto von Bismarck to be Prussia’s prime minister. Bismarck became the leading force behind German unification. He declared that German unity would come by “blood and iron.” He built the Prussian army into a great war machine that could force Germany to unite. Bismarck first formed a military alliance with Austria against Denmark, provoking and winning a war and territory. He then persuaded France to remain neutral in a war with Austria. It only lasted 7 weeks, resulting in the joining together of the North German states. In this story, we learn that Prussia has just defeated France in a third war! The leaders of the two countries – Louis Napoleon (Napoleon III) of France and Otto von Bismarck of Prussia, meet after the final battle.

Ask yourself why Bismarck wanted Prussia to fight a war against France. What difference do you see in the personalities of Napoleon III and Bismarck? Why was German unification so important to Bismarck?

(Louis Napoleon thinks to himself before meeting Bismarck on the battlefield.) **Where did I go wrong? What a fool I was to let myself be dragged into war with Prussia! That Bismarck! He had only one thing on his mind: Prussia must win. Prussia must be all powerful, no matter what the cost! I didn’t understand what he meant by “iron and blood,” but now I do. Bismarck will stop at nothing. War and death are his tools. Whoever gets in his way is crushed!**

**I felt that he was pushing France into war, but how could I do anything about it? Was I supposed to look like a coward? I should have known that his telegram was a trick to force me to declare war against Prussia. That scoundrel cleverly changed the words around – we French thought that our ambassador had been insulted by the king of Prussia. At the very same time, the Prussians thought that the French had insulted their king! It’s all so clear now. We were used. The war against France brought all the German states rushing to Prussia’s side. Now I see that Bismarck used me to bring them together!**

**Now it’s done, and I’m the loser. How could I have been so stupid? My dreams of greatness are going down the drain! Where did I get the idea that I could build a great French empire? Why did I have to try to copy my uncle, Napoleon Bonaparte? I was a Napoleon, I thought, how could I fail? I thought failure was impossible. Today, France; tomorrow, the world!**

**I could have been the greatest leader of this century. I knew all the mistakes my uncle made, and I was going to avoid them. I made up my mind never to fight the strongest countries of Europe, just a weak country here, a soft on there. That way I built up our empire with West Africa, Asia, the South Pacific. It seemed so easy. …..Here comes Bismarck now. Look at that ridiculous uniform! I must pull myself together. I must not let him see that I am bitter, a loser. I will give him nothing! He’ll have to kill me first!**

(Bismarck thinks to himself before he meets Louis Napoleon.) **This has to be the greatest day of my life! Louis Napoleon and France have been crushed by my Prussian war machine. I have the backing of every German state. Now nothing stands in the way of the unification of Germany. It has taken me many years, but Germany will be a nation at last. The king of Prussia will be the king of all of Germany. And I did it!**

**To be honest, I did it with the help of Louis Napoleon. He’s a fool trying to act like an emperor. Yes, Germany owes Louis Napoleon a great deal. His greed and dreams of empire made him a pushover for me. I changed the telegram to make it read as though the Prussian king, Wilhelm, had snubbed the French ambassador. I knew that Louis Napoleon would have to uphold the honor of France. Weaklings are sensitive about their honor and fools are easily insulted. Yes, I used him, but I had to do it for the greater glory of a united Germany!**

**This is the end of the trip. The goal, a German nation, is in sight. It has taken me a long time to get to this point, and many soldiers’ lives. Iron and blood –that’s the way to do it! Now here comes Louis Napoleon, what a fool in that fancy uniform with all those medals. I’m going to make him pay.**

**“Ah, Prince Bismarck,” said Napoleon III, “you have never looked better. The situation is a little unpleasant, but I have very happy to see you.”**

**“Your excellency,” answered Bismarck, “it is a pleasure to see you. I have been looking forward to this meeting for quite some time!”**

Bismarck succeeded in unifying Germany and in dominating neighboring countries. However, at home, he was worried about the industrial workers who had recently been given the right to vote. Was it possible that they might replace him by voting for the Socialist Party? (Socialism is a system in which the government owns or controls much of the way that goods and services are produced). He decided to win them over by offering them health care and medical coverage for sickness and accidents, and pensions ($) in old age. He believed that a person who expected to receive an old age pension and other benefits would be a happier and more productive worker. By the 20th century, similar programs had been adopted by Great Britain, France, Belgium, and Italy.

**Understanding the Story: Write LN for each statement Louis Napoleon might have made and B for each statement Bismarck might have made.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_ I could have been the greatest leader of the century.

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_ Iron and blood are what I used to win.

3. \_\_\_\_\_\_ He is a fool trying to act like an emperor.

4. \_\_\_\_\_\_ It was a bloody war, but worth it.

5. \_\_\_\_\_\_ I was tricked, I’m such a loser.

**Questions for Review: Please answer the following on a separate sheet of paper**

1. What did Bismarck mean by “iron and blood”?
2. How did the telegram force Louis Napoleon into a war with Prussia?
3. Why did Bismarck want Prussia to fight a war against France?
4. Why was German unification so important to Bismarck?
5. What is socialism?

**Activities: Choose one of the following activities to complete:**

1. What do you think was said during the meeting between Bismarck and Louis Napoleon? Continue their conversation.
2. Imagine that you are Bismarck. Write a note to the King of Prussia. Tell him about your victory, what does this mean for German unification? Now pretend you are the King of Prussia and write a response to Bismarck’s note.
3. Many historians believe that Bismarck was a great leader. Make a list of the abilities you believe a great leader should have. Alongside each, indicate whether Bismarck met this requirement.