



# The FIRST WORLD WAR

The First World War was the first major industrial war of the 20th Century. This unit, you will study the CAUSES and EVENTS of WW1.

## Military Causes

At the start of the 20th Century, there was a race to build the latest, biggest and most dangerous weapons.

The biggest example of this was the new DREADNOUGHT battleships. The 2 main countries involved were Britain v Germany. This competition was known as an ARMS RACE.



## The CAUSES of the First World War

The long term MAIN CAUSES and the ASSASSINATION that triggered the war.



## Alliances Causes

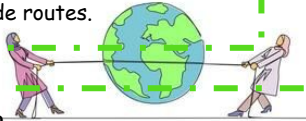
Before 1900, Europe had begun to split itself into 2 sides.

Triple Entente: Britain, France, Russia, Serbia  
Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Turkey.

These two sets of ALLIANCES raised the tensions across Europe. Any arguments between any of the competing countries could end up in a bigger war.

## Imperialism Cause

Imperialism was the rivalry over EMPIRES (Overseas Colonies / Land). Britain & France had spent the 19th century building the 2 largest EMPIRES in the World. They did not like new countries like Germany & Italy competing with them and eyeing up their land. Battleships were needed to protect their overseas lands and trade routes.



## Nationalism Cause

Nationalism was the RIVALRY between different countries.

Britain v Germany - competed over who was seen as the #1 top nation.  
France v Germany - Germany had defeated France in a war in 1871. France wanted revenge.  
Russia v Austria-Hungary competed over who controlled Eastern Europe. Argued over the Balkans area of Bosnia & Serbia.



## Assassination Cause

The Austrian Archduke, Franz Ferdinand was assassinated by the Serbian trained, Bosnian terrorist group, the Black Hand Gang. Austria-Hungary had spread its influence over Eastern Europe by taking over Bosnia in 1908. Bosnia had wanted to join Serbia in a united Slav country. Serbia helped train terrorists to get revenge against AUSTRIA in 1914. If a war started, they felt confident as they were supported by their Slav cousins, RUSSIA. AUSTRIA-HUNGARY warned RUSSIA not to get involved as they would call in their allies, GERMANY, if trouble started.

The Assassination would trigger a chain reaction of ALLIANCES across Europe.



## Joining Up - Why did men VOLUNTEER to fight in this war?

PATRIOTISM / NATIONALISM - Doing things for the love of your country.

PEER PRESSURE - Groups of friends joined in the Pals' Battalions.

SOCIAL PRESSURE - Women handed out 'white feathers' to men they thought were cowards for not joining.

ADVENTURE - Most men would never have left their local towns in their life.

Travelling abroad and "It'll be all over by Christmas" added to the sense of an adventure holiday.

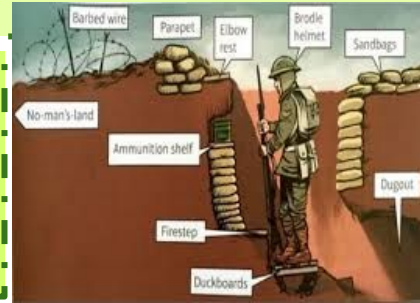
## Trench Life & Conditions

Trenches - long ditches (6-8 feet high) dug into the ground to protect soldiers.

Mud & rain water; DUG OUTS

Pests & Diseases - conditions attracted rats & lice; Trench Foot; Shell-shock (PTSD).

Diet - Bread, Biscuits & Bully Beef.



Keywords:

CAUSES; EVENTS; CONSEQUENCES  
MILITARY; ARMS RACE; DREADNOUGHT  
ALLIANCES  
IMPERIALISM; EMPIRES; COLONIES  
NATIONALISM; RIVALRY  
ASSASSINATION; CHAIN REACTION

Keywords:

PATRIOTISM; VOLUNTEER  
PEER PRESSURE & SOCIAL PRESSURE  
TRENCHES; TRENCH FOOT; SHELL SHOCK  
DUG OUTS  
SOMME; ARTILLERY; WALKOVER;  
CASUALTIES  
CREEPING BARRAGE

## The Battle of the Somme (July - Nov 1916):

From disaster to victory

Poor British Tactics & Mistakes in first month.

1st day 68,000 casualties; 20,000 dead.

By November: 600,000 British & French casualties v 500,000 German casualties.

British volunteer army had gained hard experience.

German professional army destroyed.



## The End of the War: Why did the UK & its Allies win?

The German Spring Offensive (1918) - overstretched German Army.

New British Tactics:

Creeping Barrage, Tanks

Enter the USA: 1 Million new men & extra supplies.