

1914-1918: WORLD WAR I



CFE 3201V

OPEN CAPTIONED
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

1992

Grade Levels: 10-13+

25 minutes

1 Instructional Graphic Enclosed

DESCRIPTION

The forces of nationalism, imperialism, and military alliances combine to throw a prosperous Europe into a long and bloody struggle. Archival footage illustrates the political forces and problems that lead to the outbreak of war, involving thirty nations and over seventy million uniformed troops. Economic forces play a major role in deciding the outcome of the war.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

- To analyze the forces and events that led to the outbreak of the war.
- To examine the tactics, strategies, and weapons used in the war.
- To describe the role of the United States during the war.
- To identify the importance of industry to war.
- To analyze the peace treaties that ended the fighting.
- To describe the changes World War I brought to Europe.

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Read the CAPTION SCRIPT to determine unfamiliar vocabulary and language concepts.
2. On a 1914 map of Europe, locate the countries, physical features that affected battles and tactics, and political boundaries of the nations.
3. On a world map from the same era, locate areas of conflict outside of Europe.
4. Make lists of nations comprising the rival alliances.
5. Distribute a prepared time line including the major events which occurred before, during, and immediately after World War I.

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Complete a time line of major events from the era.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Outline the events and forces that led to the outbreak of war.
2. Compare the weaponry and tactics used in the following:
 - a. Previous wars such as the American Civil War or the Crimean War
 - b. World War I
 - c. Modern times
3. Discuss the importance of trade and industry in supplying armies at war.
4. Describe the difficulties encountered in writing a treaty to end the war.
5. Discuss the three “ism’s” which led Europe into World War I: nationalism, imperialism, and militarism.
6. Comment on the significance of Edward Grey’s statement that “lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.”
7. How did the various European alliances contribute to an entire world at war?
8. Discuss how machine guns, poisonous gas, and submarines affected military tactics in World War I.
9. Why would France and Britain believe Germany to have been entirely responsible for the war?
10. Summarize the effect of the war on Europe.
Consider:
 - a. The spirit of nationalism
 - b. The end of monarchy
 - c. The emergence of new countries and spheres of influence

Applications and Activities

1. Design a poster and make presentations to persuade a person to support the country in time of war.
2. After visiting a museum or using reference materials, compare the “flashy” uniforms of World War I to today’s modern uniforms.
3. Identify “hot spots” that led to fighting in World War I and compare these to modern “hot spots.”
4. Examine the military plans and goals made by Germany and other nations prior to the outbreak of war.
5. Debate being a member nation of a military alliance.
6. On a map, locate the major battle fronts in World War I. Debate the strategic advantages and disadvantages of each country.
7. Summarize the struggle between Germany and Britain to limit the flow of goods and materials to the other.
8. Justify the neutral position of the United States toward the war prior to 1917.
9. Report on the events that caused the United States to enter the war.
10. Research the causes of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and evaluate the impact of the Russian Revolution upon the conduct of the war.
11. Decide how American troops helped the Allies to victory.
12. Identify the Big Four at the Versailles peace conference and the demands of each of them.
13. Research and summarize the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
14. Interpret the fairness of the Treaty of Versailles and the effectiveness of the treaty in bringing peace to Europe. Determine how the treaty led to World War II.
15. Make a political map of Europe showing the changes brought about by the war. Compare it to the political map of Europe in 1914.

16. Demonstrate the terror of trench warfare by completing a worksheet illustrating this war tactic. (See INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHICS.)

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Popular songs often indicate the mood of a nation, especially during hard times. Locate and analyze the lyrics and music to the following songs, imagining the mood of the nation:

- a. "I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be a Soldier" and "Over There" (featured in the video)
- b. Locate other popular songs from World War I, such as:
 - "It's a Long Way to Tipperary"
 - "I May Be Gone For a Long, Long Time"
 - "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning"
 - "Keep the Home Fires Burning"

INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHICS

One instructional graphic is included with this lesson guide. It may be enlarged and used to create transparencies or copies.

- TRENCH WARFARE

WEBSITES

Explore the Internet to discover sites related to this topic. Check the CFV website for related information (<http://www.cfv.org>).

SUMMARY

The increasing competition between European nations for power and prestige throughout the world develop deadly rivalries that erupt into the First World War. Nationalism, militarism, and imperialism are the driving forces that lead nations into the bloody conflict. Military alliances created to help nations defend themselves embolden countries to act more aggressively. The political instability on the Balkan Peninsula is the spark that lights the flames of war in

Europe. Following the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, and with the support of its ally, Germany, Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia. The military alliance system causes country after country to declare war, until all of Europe is mobilizing for war.

Germany, the dominant military power in Europe, faces the prospect of fighting a two-front war. Guided by the Schlieffen Plan, the Germans storm through Belgium in a move that bypasses France's Maginot line. The German plan to knock out France first, and attack Russia later, fails when the Russians are able to mobilize quicker than expected. Dividing its forces, Germany fights the war on two fronts. The Central Powers are able to contain their enemies on the Eastern and Southern Fronts, but the fighting in the west is the heaviest. New weapons of war revealed during the first year of the war include: long-range artillery, machine guns, airplanes, tanks, and poison gas. Coupled with trench warfare, the mighty armies of Britain, France, and Germany fight a war of attrition. The bloody stalemate drives these nations to fight what is later described as "Total War."

A battle for the Atlantic develops as the Germans use their submarines to try to break the British blockade of Europe. The use of submarines to sink merchant ships eventually leads the United States to enter the war on the side of the Allies.

Russian troops, starving and ill-equipped, are unable to defeat the Germans and Austrians that besiege their country. The Russian Revolution establishes the first major Communist government, which promptly withdraws Russia from the war. Now able to move troops from the Eastern Front to the west, Germany is hopeful it can turn the tide and win the war. In a last-ditch effort, the Germans start their last offensive of the war.

The United States, which declared war over the use of submarines against neutral shipping, is now racing to rush troops to help the British and French stop the Germans. The economic and industrial might of the

United States, along with a large supply of fresh troops, helps the Allies to win the war. Germany's dwindling supplies force it to surrender. The victorious Allies meet at Versailles, France, to draw up a treaty to end the war. The Allied leaders each have a list of demands to make on the defeated powers. The peace conference writes a harsh peace treaty that ultimately leads Europe back on the path to war.

TRENCH WARFARE--NO MAN'S LAND

DIRECTIONS: This diagram represents a cross section of two opposing lines in World War I. From what you have learned about the tactics and weapons used in World War I, place the weapons in their appropriate position on the battlefield, then write a paragraph describing the difficulties in going "over the top" and attacking an enemy.



Place the following weapons on the battlefield:

Machine guns



Artillery



Poison gas



Tanks



Land mines



Airplanes



Barbed wire

