## What does evidence tell us about the human experience of war?

#### Key Knowledge

World War I (May 20th 1914 - November 11th 1918) was also known as The Great War, the War of the Nations, and The War to End All Wars. More than 65 million men from 30 countries fought. Nearly 10 million died. The Allies (The Entente Powers) lost about 6 million soldiers. The Central Powers lost about 4 million. Russia mobilised 12 million troops during WWI, making it the largest army in the war. More than three quarters were killed, wounded, or went missing in action.

The early years of the twentieth century were a time of great tension in Europe. Countries like **Great Britain** 

and Germany were seeking to consolidate and strengthen their empires while many other countries sought to dominate their rivals. Some empires, such as the Ottoman Empire, were in decline, creating power vacuums and regional conflicts as they squabbled for power. This led to countries forming deals or alliances with one another so that if one country was attacked, its allies or partners would come to their aid. The German Empire was partnered with the mighty Austro-Hungarian Empire while Britain was allied with France and Russia.

A Series of Alliances

What caused WW1?

In 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand was due to become ruler of Austria-Hungary

Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian-Serb member of the nationalist group The Black Hand, assassinated the Archduke and his wife in Sarajevo, causing Austria-Hungary to declare war on Serbia.

- Russia began to move their army in case they were needed
- Germany did not like Russia moving its army and so declared war on them and then on France
- Britain declared war on Germany to support Russia and France



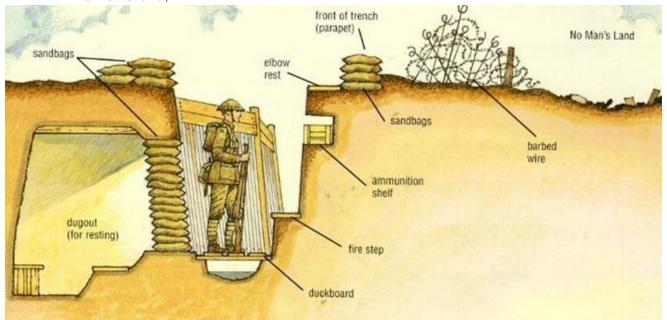
Who fought against who?

The Allies		The Central Powers	5
	Great Britain		German Empire
	France		Austro-Hungarian Empire
	Russia	<b>(</b> *	Ottoman Empire
	<b>U.S.A.</b> The U.S.A. was a major trading partner of Britain. In April 1917, they declared war against Germany for attacking their trading ships around Britain.		

The

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When not fighting, the soldiers rested, ate and slept in the trenches, which were often very cold and wet. The trenches flooded in the rain and froze in the winter. They were often rife with disease and filled with rats; they were very **muddy**, uncomfortable and the toilets overflowed. These conditions caused some soldiers to develop a problem called **trench foot** but they also suffered from **shell shock**, **trench fever** and **dysentery**. There were many lines of German trenches on one side and many lines of Allied trenches on the other. In the middle was **no man's land**, which soldiers crossed to attack the other side.



German trenches were in stark contrast to British trenches. German trenches were built to last and included bunk beds, furniture, cupboards, water tanks with faucets, electric lights, and doorbells!

The trench network of World War I stretched approximately 25,000 miles (40,200 km) from the English Channel to Switzerland. The area was known as the **Western Front**. British poet **Siegfried Sassoon** wrote, "When all is done and said, the war was mainly a matter of holes and ditches."

There were a series of developments in medicine during the early 20th century that enabled better treatment of the wounded on the Western Front during World War One. These included **aseptic surgery**, **X-rays** and **blood transfusions**.

**Joseph Lister's** use of **antiseptic surgery** was a turning point in the history of surgery. It led to the better removal of bacteria around wounds and on surgical instruments. This reduced the death rate from infection and was further pioneered during WW1 by Doctors **Alexis Carrel** and **Henry Dakin**.

All medical officers and men who cared for the wounded on the Western Front belonged to the **Royal Army Medical Corps** (RAMC). They included doctors, stretcher bearers and ambulance drivers. Women who travelled to the Western Front to care for the wounded joined the **First Aid Nursing Yeomanry** (FANY).

During WWI, British tanks were initially categorized into "males" and "females." Male tanks had cannons, while females had heavy machine guns. "Little Willie" was the first prototype tank in WWI. Built in 1915, it carried a crew of three and could travel as fast as 3 mph (4.8 km/h). Tanks were initially called "landships." However, in an attempt to disguise them as water storage tanks rather than as weapons, the British decided to code name them "tanks".

French Second Lieutenant Alfred Joubaire wrote in his diary about WWI just before he died that "Humanity is mad! It must be mad to do what it is doing. What a massacre. What scenes of horror and carnage! I cannot find words to translate my impressions. Hell cannot be so terrible! Men are mad!"

## Year 7 – History – Autumn 2023

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### Think Like a Historian - Big Ideas

#### Chronology

The order that events happen. This allows us to understand how and why events unfold in the way they do, and how they are related. For example, Franz Ferdinand's assassination in 1914 was the catalyst for Austro-Hungary to declare war on Serbia which in turn led to a chain of other countries all declaring war on one another.

#### **Significance**

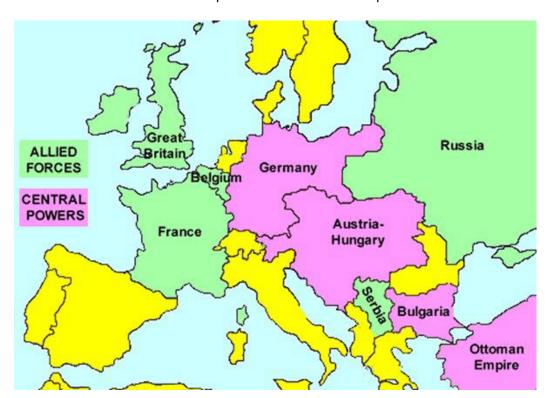
How an historical event, issue or person can be identified as significant if it affects many people at the time or in the future. One of the most significant events of WW1 was the Battle of the Somme in 1916, when the British suffered the greatest single loss of life in the history of the British army - 60,000 casualties in one day. More British men were killed in that one WWI battle than the U.S. lost from all of its armed forces and the National Guard combined.

#### Significance can be measured using:

- N Novelty
- A Applicability
- M Memory
- E Effects

#### Similarity and Difference

The complexity of people's lives, differing perspectives and relationships between different groups. In this module, the medical and scientific developments that led to improved conditions as well as the changing face of Europe as some countries like Russia and the USA rose to prominence while other empires fell.



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## Questions

Which group did the German Empire, the Austro- Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire belong to?	The Central Powers.	
Which group did Britain, France and Russia belong to?	The Allies	
When did WW1 start?	May 20 <sup>th</sup> 1914.	
When did WW1 end?	November 11 <sup>th</sup> 1918.	
Whose assassination is considered to have triggered WW1?	Archduke Franz Ferdinand.	
Which country mobilised the biggest army during WW1?	Russia.	
Which country broke its alliance with the Central Powers to join the Allies?	Italy.	
When did the USA join the First World War?	April 1917.	
Why did the USA join the conflict?	Germany was attacking American trading ships off the coast of Britain.	
As well as Trench Foot, which three conditions was it common for soldiers in the Trenches to suffer from?	Shell shock, trench fever and dysentery.	
Who wrote: "When all is done and said, the war was mainly a matter of holes and ditches."	British poet Siegfried Sassoon.	
Which doctors continued to develop Joseph Lister's pioneering use of antiseptic surgery during WW1?	Alexis Carrel and Henry Dakin.	
Name three medical advancements that were a result of treating wounded soldiers in WW1?	Aseptic surgery, X-rays and blood transfusions.	
What were tanks originally known as?	Landships.	
What is significant about the Battle of the Somme?	It was the greatest single loss of life in the history of the British Army.	