INFOGRAPHHUB SERIES · 9 PARTS · AGES 11–16

World War I

Nine infographics on the war of 1914–1918: why it began, how it unfolded, who fought it and what it changed.

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Each part is one printable infographic. Work through them in order, or use the part you need. The quiz answers are printed upside down at the foot of the quiz. Sources for every part are listed on its page at infographhub.com.

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WORLD WAR I PART 1 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

WORLD WAR I EXPLAINED

The war of 1914–1918 in one page: when, who, where, how it was fought and why it changed the world.

When: 1914 to 1918

It began when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914. The guns stopped at 11am on 11 November 1918, and peace treaties followed in 1919–1920.

Who: two alliances

The Allies (France, the British Empire, Russia and others, later Italy and the USA) fought the Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria.

Where: many fronts

Western and Eastern Europe, Italy, the Balkans, Gallipoli, the Middle East and Africa, plus battles at sea and in the air.

How: trenches and new weapons

Machine guns and artillery forced armies to dig in. Poison gas, tanks, aircraft and submarines were used on a large scale for the first time.

People from every continent

Over 65 million men were mobilised, including about 1.5 million in the Indian Army. More than 2 million Africans served as soldiers, porters and labourers.

Total war at home

Factories, farms and families were organised for war. Women took on new jobs, food grew scarce, and civilians faced blockade, occupation and air raids.

Why it still matters

About 16 million soldiers and civilians died. Four empires fell, new countries were created, and the peace settlement helped shape the road to the Second World War.

Two dates to remember

The Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28 June 1919, exactly five years after the assassination in Sarajevo that set the war in motion on 28 June 1914.

NEXT IN THE SERIES
2. Causes of World War I

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WORLD WAR I PART 2 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

CAUSES OF WORLD WAR I

Four long-term causes, remembered as MAIN, built up tension for years. A murder in Sarajevo set it off.

Militarism

Great powers built huge conscript armies and planned for a quick war. Britain launched HMS Dreadnought in 1906, and a naval race with Germany followed.

Alliances

Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance. France and Russia allied, and Britain's deals with them in 1904 and 1907 made the Triple Entente.

Imperialism

Britain and France ruled vast empires. Germany, united only in 1871, wanted colonies too, and crises over Morocco in 1905 and 1911 deepened the rivalry.

Nationalism

Serbia hoped to unite the South Slavs, which threatened Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia in 1908 angered Serbs.

The trigger: Sarajevo, 28 June 1914

Gavrilo Princip, a 19-year-old Bosnian Serb nationalist, shot Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to Austria-Hungary's throne, and his wife Sophie.

The July Crisis

Germany promised support on 5 July. Austria-Hungary sent Serbia an ultimatum on 23 July and declared war on 28 July. Russia mobilised to back Serbia.

Belgium and Britain

Germany declared war on Russia and France and invaded neutral Belgium. Britain, a guarantor of Belgium since 1839, declared war on 4 August.

Not an accident

No single cause made war certain, and earlier crises had been settled peacefully. Leaders in several capitals made choices in 1914. Historians still debate how far each one was to blame.

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3. World War I Timeline

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WORLD WAR I | PART 3 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

WORLD WAR I TIMELINE

Nine turning points, from the July Crisis of 1914 to the peace signed at Versailles in 1919.

Jul 1914

The July Crisis

After the Sarajevo assassination, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July. By 4 August Germany, Russia, France and Britain were at war.

Sept 1914

Battle of the Marne

French and British troops stopped the German advance on Paris. Both sides dug in, and trenches soon ran from the Channel coast to Switzerland.

25 Apr 1915

Landings at Gallipoli

British, French, Australian and New Zealand troops landed in Ottoman Turkey. Ottoman forces held firm, and the last Allied troops left on 9 January 1916.

1916

Verdun and the Somme

Germany attacked Verdun on 21 February; Britain and France attacked on the Somme on 1 July. Both battles lasted months and cost hundreds of thousands of lives.

6 Apr 1917

The USA enters the war

Unrestricted German submarine warfare and the Zimmermann Telegram led the United States to declare war on Germany.

1917–1918

Russia leaves the war

Revolutions in March and November 1917 ended the Tsar's rule and put Lenin's Bolsheviks in power. They made peace at Brest-Litovsk on 3 March 1918.

8 Aug 1918

The Hundred Days begin

After Germany's spring offensives stalled, the Allies attacked at Amiens and kept advancing, pushing German forces back to the battlefields of 1914.

11 Nov 1918

The Armistice

Germany signed an armistice and the guns fell silent at 11am. Bulgaria, the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary had already stopped fighting.

28 Jun 1919

Treaty of Versailles

Germany signed the main peace treaty at Versailles, near Paris, five years to the day after Franz Ferdinand was killed.

Russia's calendar

Russia used an older calendar until 1918, 13 days behind Western Europe. So the 'February' Revolution happened in March 1917 and the 'October' Revolution on 7 November.

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4. The Allies vs the Central Powers

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WORLD WAR I PART 4 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

THE ALLIES VS THE CENTRAL POWERS

The two sides of World War I compared: members, alliances, geography, sea power, empires and how their war ended.

The Allies	The Central Powers
MAIN MEMBERS	
France, the British Empire, Russia, Serbia, Belgium and Japan in 1914; Italy from 1915; the USA from 1917	Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1914, the Ottoman Empire from late 1914 and Bulgaria from October 1915
BEFORE THE WAR	
France and Russia allied in the 1890s. Britain's agreements with France (1904) and Russia (1907) formed a looser Triple Entente	Germany and Austria-Hungary allied in 1879. Italy joined them in 1882 but stayed out in 1914 and switched sides in 1915
GEOGRAPHY	
Spread around the edges of Europe and across the world, linked by sea routes	One block of land from the North Sea to the Middle East, but fighting on several fronts at once
AT SEA	
The Royal Navy kept control of the seas, and its blockade cut the food and materials reaching Germany	U-boats sank merchant ships. Unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917 helped bring the USA into the war
PEOPLE FROM EMPIRES	
About 1.5 million men in the Indian Army, African and Asian troops in the French army, and forces from the Dominions	Ottoman armies fought at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia and in Palestine; Germany was cut off from its colonies by sea
HOW IT ENDED	
Victory, though Russia made peace in March 1918. The Treaty of Versailles names 27 Allied and Associated Powers	Bulgaria, the Ottomans and Austria-Hungary stopped fighting in autumn 1918; Germany signed the Armistice on 11 November

Sides could change

Italy switched sides in 1915, Russia left in 1918, and the USA fought as an 'associated power' rather than a full ally. Each country followed its own interests.

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5. World War I by the Numbers

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WORLD WAR I PART 5 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

WORLD WAR I BY THE NUMBERS

The scale of the war in eight figures. Most are estimates, so each one names its source.

65 million+

men were mobilised to fight in the war

Volunteers and conscripts in mass citizen armies (IWM).

30+

nations declared war between 1914 and 1918

Most joined the Allies; four formed the Central Powers (IWM).

1,567

days from the first declaration of war to the Armistice

From 28 July 1914 to 11 November 1918: just over four years and three months.

~700 km

was the length of the Western Front

Sources give 400 to 475 miles (about 640–765 km), from the Channel coast to Switzerland.

9 million+

soldiers, sailors and airmen died

National WWI Museum figure. Exact totals are unknown, and sources differ.

~16 million

soldiers and civilians died in all

IWM estimate. Civilian deaths from hunger, disease and violence are the hardest to count.

1.5 million

men served in the Indian Army

They fought in France, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine (IWM).

2 million+

Africans were drawn into the war

As soldiers, porters and labourers (National WWI Museum).

Why the numbers disagree

Records were lost, borders changed and many deaths came from disease. Even two IWM pages on Verdun give different totals, because they count different things. Always say 'about' and name your source.

NEXT IN THE SERIES
6. Life in the Trenches in World War I

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WORLD WAR I PART 6 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

LIFE IN THE TRENCHES

What everyday life was like for soldiers on the Western Front, from dawn stand-to to letters home.

Stand-to at dawn and dusk

Every man manned the fire step at first light and at dusk, the likeliest times for an attack. In between came weapon cleaning, sentry duty and sleep.

A few days at a time

Most soldiers spent an average of four days in the front line, then moved back to support, reserve and rest, where they could bathe and sleep.

Busy nights

Darkness hid men from the enemy, so night was for work: repairing trench walls and barbed wire, and patrolling no man's land.

Tinned food and hard biscuits

Much front-line food came in tins, like 'Maconochie' stew, often eaten cold. Army biscuits were so hard they had to be soaked first.

Water in petrol cans

Drinking water was carried up in old petrol cans and treated with chemicals. Most of it was drunk as tea, which also hid the taste.

Rats and lice

Rats fed on food waste. Lice lived in clothing seams and spread trench fever; soldiers crushed them by hand or burnt them out with candles.

Trench foot

Days in cold water and mud made feet swell and go numb. Dry socks, whale oil and foot inspections helped prevent it.

Letters home

Around 2 billion letters passed through the British Army Postal Service. Officers censored them, so they did not always tell the full story.

Not only the Western Front

At Gallipoli soldiers faced heat, flies and disease; in the Middle East and East Africa, malaria. Illness, not weapons, caused most British casualties at Gallipoli.

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7. Key People of World War I

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WORLD WAR I PART 7 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

KEY PEOPLE OF WORLD WAR I

Eight people from seven countries and empires whose decisions, actions or fate shaped the war.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Austria-Hungary. Heir to the throne. His assassination in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914 set off the July Crisis.

Kaiser Wilhelm II

Germany. Emperor from 1888. He backed Austria-Hungary in July 1914 and abdicated on 9 November 1918, going into exile.

Tsar Nicholas II

Russia. Emperor who took personal command of the army in 1915. He was forced to abdicate in March 1917.

Vladimir Lenin

Russia. Bolshevik leader who seized power in November 1917 and took Russia out of the war at Brest-Litovsk in 1918.

Mustafa Kemal

Ottoman Empire. Officer who rose to fame defending Gallipoli in 1915. Later, as Atatürk, he founded the Republic of Turkey.

Khudadad Khan

India. Machine gunner who kept firing at Hollebeke, Belgium, on 31 October 1914; the first Indian-born soldier awarded the Victoria Cross.

Woodrow Wilson

USA. President who took his country to war in April 1917. His Fourteen Points of January 1918 proposed a League of Nations.

Georges Clemenceau

France. Prime Minister from November 1917. At the 1919 peace conference he pressed for terms that would keep Germany weak.

Look beyond the leaders

Millions of ordinary people also shaped the war: soldiers, nurses, factory workers and labourers from every continent, such as the 25,000 men of the South African Native Labour Corps.

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8. Consequences of World War I

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WORLD WAR I PART 8 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

CONSEQUENCES OF WORLD WAR I

How the war of 1914–1918 changed borders, governments and lives, and what it left behind for the next generation.

Four empires fall

The German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman empires collapsed. Germany became a republic, and Russia's revolution led to the Soviet Union in 1922.

The Treaty of Versailles

Signed on 28 June 1919. Germany accepted blame for the war, paid reparations, lost Alsace-Lorraine and was limited to an army of 100,000.

The League of Nations

Founded on 10 January 1920 to settle disputes peacefully. 41 states attended its first Assembly, but the USA never joined.

New countries in Europe

Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Finland, Estonia and Latvia emerged from the fallen empires. Border wars went on until 1923.

A new Middle East

Ottoman lands came under British and French control; Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon later emerged. Many borders ignored local peoples.

Calls for independence

Colonial soldiers and workers had served in huge numbers. In India and elsewhere, the war strengthened demands for self-government.

The 1918 flu pandemic

As the war ended, flu infected about a third of the world's people. At least 50 million died (CDC), possibly up to 100 million (IWM).

The road to another war

Resentment of Versailles in Germany helped the Nazi Party win support. On 1 September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, starting the Second World War.

Remembering the war

In the UK and elsewhere, a two-minute silence is held at 11am on 11 November, the moment the Armistice began. The red poppy, which grew on the battlefields, became a symbol of remembrance.

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9. World War I Quiz: Test Yourself

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WORLD WAR I · PART 9 OF 9 · AGES 11–16

WORLD WAR I QUIZ

Ten questions on the whole series. Answer them all, then turn the page round to check.

1 **On what date was Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated in Sarajevo?**

- A 28 June 1914
- B 28 July 1914
- C 4 August 1914
- D 11 November 1918

2 **The long-term causes are remembered as MAIN: militarism, alliances, imperialism and…?**

- A Neutrality
- B Navies
- C Nationalism
- D Negotiation

3 **Which of these countries was NOT one of the Central Powers?**

- A Germany
- B The Ottoman Empire
- C Italy
- D Bulgaria

4 **Where did Australian and New Zealand troops land on 25 April 1915?**

- A Verdun
- B The Somme
- C Amiens
- D The Gallipoli peninsula

5 **Roughly how long was the Western Front, from the Channel coast to Switzerland?**

- A About 70 km
- B About 700 km
- C About 7,000 km
- D About 70,000 km

6 **When did the United States enter the war?**

- A August 1914
- B May 1915
- C April 1917
- D November 1918

7 **Which treaty took Russia out of the war in March 1918?**

- A Versailles
- B Brest-Litovsk
- C London
- D Sèvres

8 **What was trench foot, and give one way soldiers tried to prevent it.**

.....

9 **Who became the first Indian-born soldier to win the Victoria Cross, in October 1914?**

- A Mustafa Kemal
- B Khudadad Khan
- C Gavrilo Princip
- D Ferdinand Foch

10 **Name the four empires that collapsed as a result of the war.**

.....

ANSWERS

1. A: 28 June 1914
2. C: Nationalism
3. C: Italy (it joined the Allies in 1915)
4. D: The Gallipoli peninsula
5. B: About 700 km
6. C: April 1917 (6 April)
7. B: Brest-Litovsk
8. Feet swelling and going numb from cold water and mud. Prevented by dry socks, whale oil or foot inspections.
9. B: Khudadad Khan
10. The German Empire, Austria-Hungary, the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire.

SERIES COMPLETE

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