

European Alliances

1879

The Dual Alliance

Germany and Austria-Hungary make an alliance to protect themselves from Russia.

1881

Austro-Serbian Alliance

Austria-Hungary makes an alliance with Serbia to prevent Russia gaining control of Serbia.

1882

The Triple Alliance

Germany and Austria-Hungary make an alliance with Italy to stop Italy taking sides with Russia.

1894

Franco-Russian Alliance

Russia allied with France to protect herself from Austria-Hungary and Germany.

1904

Entente Cordiale

This was an agreement but not a formal alliance between Britain and France

1907

The Anglo-Russian Entente

Britain and Russia ended their differences with this alliance.

1907

The Triple Entente

This alliance between Britain, France and Russia was made because of worsening relations between Germany and Russia and Germany and Britain

Causes of World War One

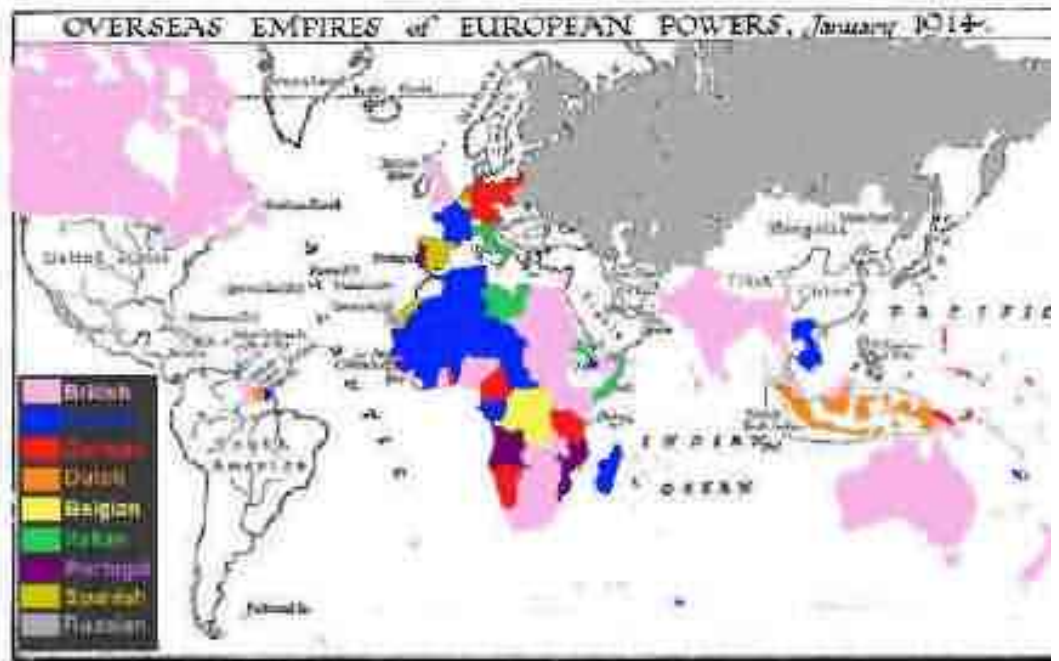
Although it was the assassination of the Austrian archduke, Franz Ferdinand that led to the outbreak of world war one in August 1914, the actual causes of the war were more complicated and not confined to a single cause.

Alliances

An alliance is an agreement made between two or more countries to give each other help if it is needed. When an alliance is signed, those countries become known as Allies. A number of alliances had been signed by countries between the years 1879 and 1914. These were important because they meant that some countries had no option but to declare war if one of their allies declared war first.

Imperialism

Imperialism is when a country takes over new lands or countries and makes them subject to their rule. By 1900 the British Empire extended over five continents and France had control of large areas of Africa. The amount of lands 'owned' by Britain and France increased the rivalry with Germany who had entered the scramble to acquire colonies late and only had small areas of Africa.



Pink = British

Blue = French

Red = German



Militarism

Militarism means that the army and military forces are given a high profile by the government. The growing European divide had led to an arms race between the main countries. The armies of both France and Germany had more than doubled between 1870 and 1914 and there was fierce competition between Britain and Germany for mastery of the seas. The British had introduced the 'Dreadnought', an effective battleship, in 1906. The Germans soon followed suit introducing their own battleships. The German, Von Schlieffen also drew up a plan of action that involved attacking France through Belgium if Russia made an attack on Germany.

Nationalism

Nationalism means being a strong supporter of the rights and interests of one's country. The Congress of Vienna, held after the Napoleonic wars left both Germany and Italy as divided states. It was nationalism the re-unification of Italy in 1861 and Germany in 1871. France was angry because the settlement at the end of the Franco-Prussian war had given Alsace-Lorraine to Germany. Large areas of both Austria-Hungary and Serbia were home to differing nationalist groups, all of whom wanted freedom from the states in which they lived.

Crises

The Moroccan Crisis - In 1904 Morocco had been given to France by Britain, but the Moroccans wanted independence and were supported by Germany. War was avoided, but in 1911, the Germans were again protesting against French possession of Morocco. Britain supported France and Germany was persuaded to back down for part of French Congo.

The Bosnian Crisis - In 1908, Austria-Hungary took over Bosnia. This angered Serbians who felt the province should be theirs. Serbia threatened Austria-Hungary with war, Russia, allied to Serbia, mobilised its forces. Germany, allied to Austria-Hungary mobilised its forces and prepared to threaten Russia. War was avoided when Russia backed down. In 1911 and 1912 there was war in the Balkans when the Balkan states drove Turkey out of the area. The states then fought each other over which area should belong to which state. Austria-Hungary intervened and forced Serbia to give up land. Tension between Serbia and Austria-Hungary was high.

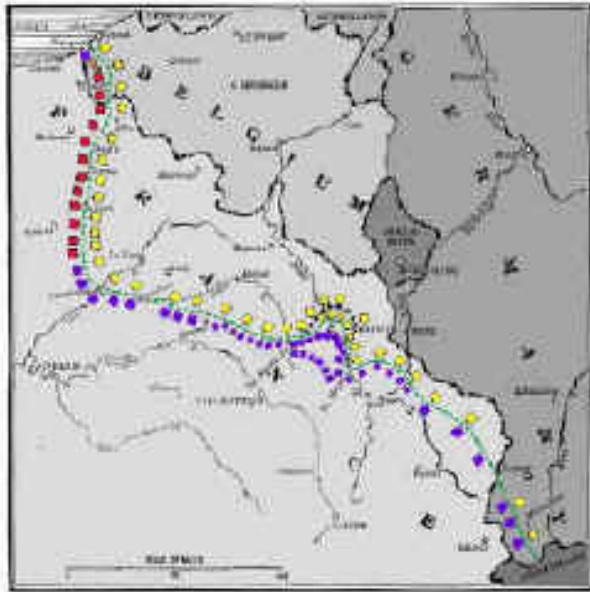
ACTIVITIES - CAUSES OF WORLD WAR I

Questions

1. What is meant by the term "alliance?"
2. Which countries were allied by the Triple Alliance?
3. Which countries were allied by the Triple Entente?
4. Why was Germany annoyed by Imperialism?
5. Which armies had increased in size between 1870 and 1914?
6. Which countries were bound to each other by which alliance?

Theatres of War

Although World War One was a world war, most of the fighting was confined to a few key areas. These areas are usually referred to as the theatres of war.



The Western Front

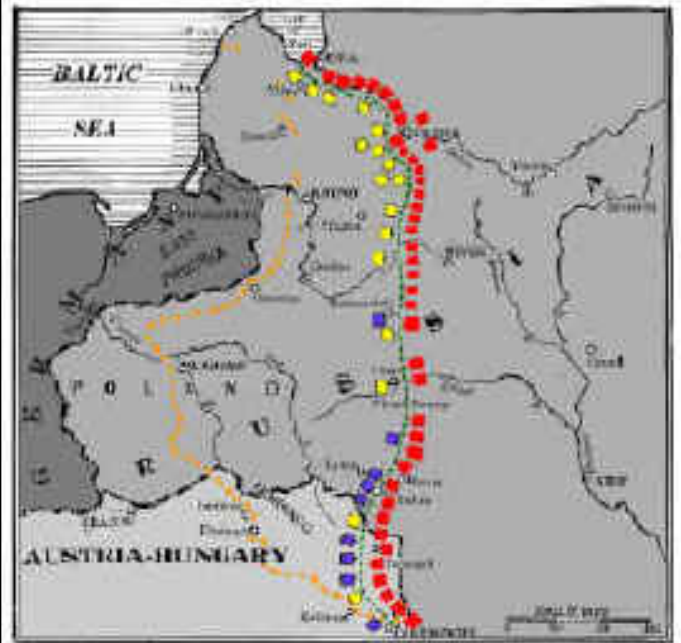
The German army crossed the Belgian border on August 3rd 1914. Britain and France declared war on Germany on August 4th. The Germans pushed through Belgium and entered France. The British and French armies marched to stop the German advance. The Battle of Marne 4th - 10th September stopped the Germans from marching on Paris.

To avoid losing the territory already gained in France, the Germans began digging trenches. The British and French, unable to break through the line of trenches, began to dig their own trenches. Throughout the entire war, neither side gained more than a few miles of ground along what became known as the western front.

Eastern Front

The line of fighting on the Eastern side of Europe between Russia and Germany and Austria-Hungary is known as the Eastern Front. Fighting began on the Eastern front when Russia invaded East Prussia on 17th August 1914. Germany immediately launched a counter-offensive and pushed Russia back. This pattern of attack and counter-attack continued for the first two years of the war and meant that the Eastern Front changed position as land was captured and lost by both sides.

By 1917, the Russian people were fed up with the huge number of Russian losses. The government and monarchy were overthrown and the new Bolshevik government signed the treaty of Brest Litovsk which took the Russians out of the war.



Italian Front

Before the outbreak of war in August 1914, Italy had sided with Germany and Austria-Hungary. However, tempted by offers of more land once the war was won, Italy entered the war in April 1915 on the side of the allies. The Italian front is the name given to the fighting that took place along the border between Italy and Austria. The Italians only managed to advance a short way into Austria. Between 1915 and 1917 there were twelve battles fought along the river Isonzo, just inside the Austrian border. After being defeated at the battle of Caporetto the Italians were pushed back.





Gallipoli

The Gallipoli peninsula is located in the south of Turkey. In 1915, the allied commanders decided to try to attack Germany by attacking her ally, Turkey. Allied soldiers, mainly from Australia and New Zealand, were sent to the Peninsula while British ships tried to force a way through the Dardanelles. The entire mission was a failure. The allies lost more than 50,000 men but gained hardly any land.

The War at Sea

Even before the war, Germany and Britain were involved in a naval race. Germany knew that she was unlikely to win a naval war against Britain and avoided naval conflict with Britain. Britain's main naval tactic was to keep German ships in German ports and to block supplies from reaching Germany. Germany's main naval tactic was to post u-boats (submarines) in the Atlantic ocean and to destroy ships taking supplies from America and other countries to Britain.

The Trenches

Look at diagrams A & B. Examine them and answer the following questions.

What links the front line and support trenches?

Why are blocks placed in trenches?

Why are machine-guns placed just behind the front line? Why are they so close to the bunkers?

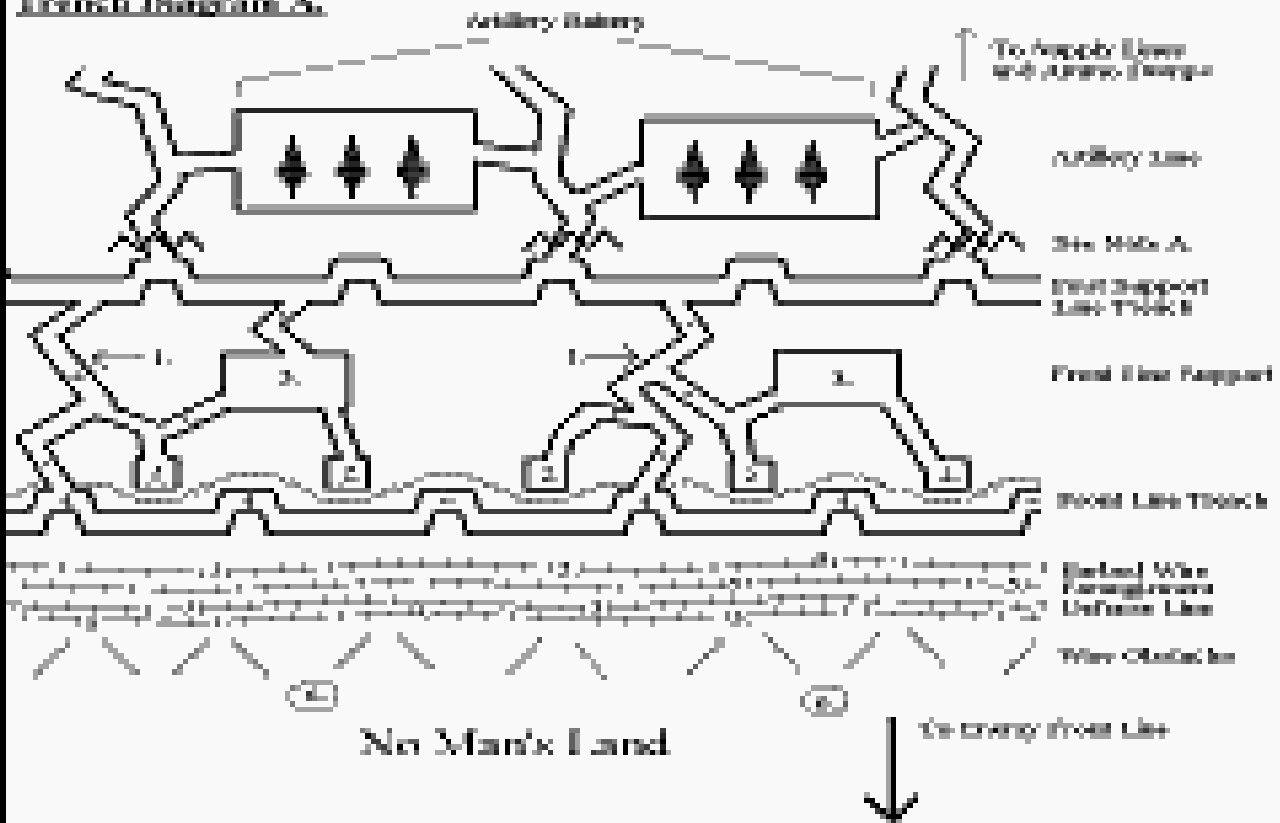
Why is there wire between the front trench

What prevents bullets striking a soldier's chest when he is on the trench board (fire step)?

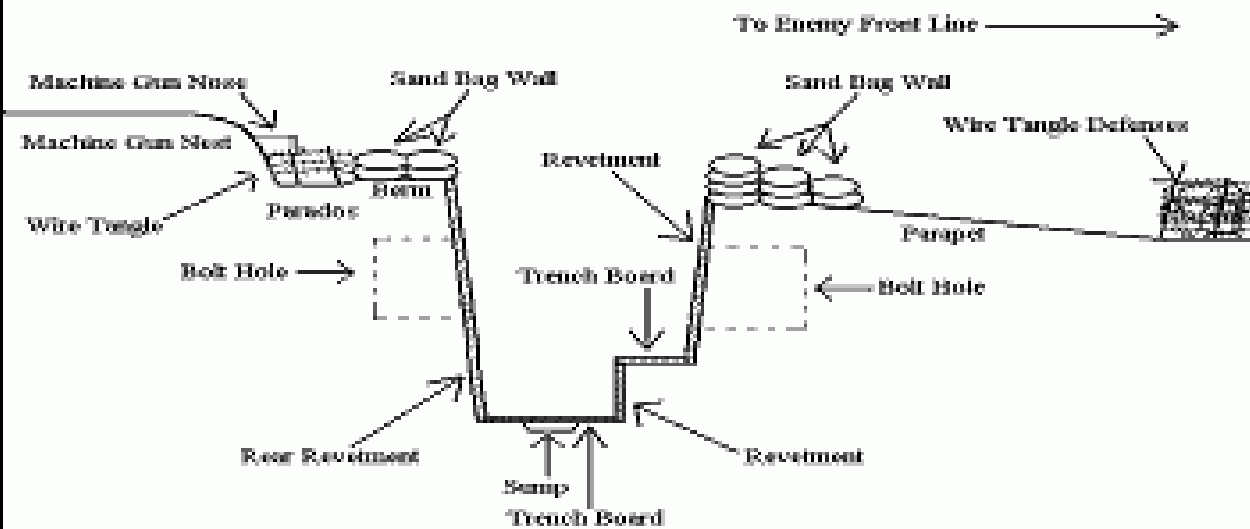
What is the purpose of the sump? What was normally placed over it?

Barbed wire entanglements were often 40 yards (36m) from the front trench. Considering the types of weapons used on the Western Front, what would be their main defensive function?

Trench Diagram A.

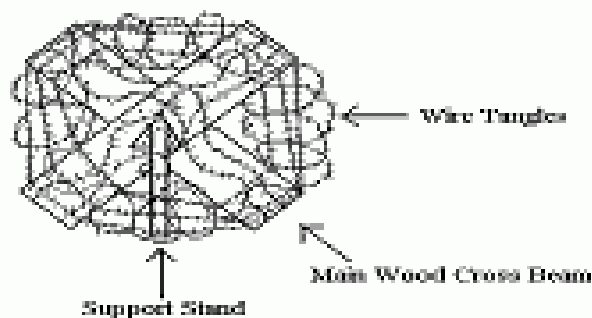


Trench Diagram B.



Trench Diagram C.

Typical Trenchblock



Life in the Trenches



The trench, when we reached it, was half full of mud and water. We set to work to try and drain it. Our efforts were hampered by the fact that the French, who had first occupied it, had buried their dead in the bottom and sides. Every stroke of the pick encountered a body. The smell was awful.

Private Pollard

No washing or shaving here, and the demands of nature answered as quickly as possible in the handiest and deepest shell-hole. *Guy Chapman*

The stench of the dead bodies now is awful as they have been exposed to the sun for several days, many have swollen and burst. The trench is full of other occupants, things with lots of legs, also swarms of rats. *Sergeant A Vine*

THE OTHER ONE SAID TO ME "CHAS, I AM GOING HOME TO MY WIFE AND KIDS. I'LL BE SOME USE TO THEM AS A CRIPPLE, BUT NONE AT ALL DEAD! I AM STARVING HERE, AND SO ARE THEY AT HOME, WE MAY AS WELL STARVE TOGETHER." WITH THAT HE FIRED A SHOT THROUGH HIS BOOT. WHEN THE MEDICS GOT HIS BOOT OFF, TWO OF HIS TOES AND A LOT OF HIS FOOT HAD GONE. BUT THE INJURING ONESELF TO GET OUT OF IT WAS QUITE COMMON. *CHARLES YOUNG*

The other soldiers in the hut took their shirts off after tea. They were catching lice. We had never seen a louse before, but they were here in droves. The men were killing them between their nails. *Henry Gregory*



All we lived on was tea and dog biscuits. If we got meat once a week we were lucky, but imagine trying to eat standing in a trench full of water with the smell of dead bodies nearby. *Richard Beasley*

If you have never had trench feet described to you. I will tell you. Your feet swell to two or three times their normal size and go completely dead. You could stick a bayonet into them and not feel a thing. If you are fortunate enough not to lose your feet and the swelling begins to go down. It is then that the intolerable, indescribable agony begins. I have heard men cry and even scream with the pain and many had to have their feet and legs amputated. *Sergeant Harry Roberts*

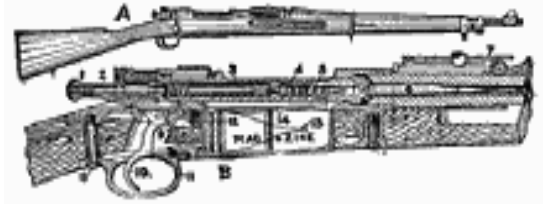
These feet have trench foot and frostbite caused by standing for hours in a freezing waterlogged trench. To avoid this condition soldiers were told to change their socks regularly, wear waterproof footwear or gumboots and cover their feet with whale oil.



First World War Weapons

During World War One, a wide variety of weapons were used:

The main weapon used by British soldiers in the trenches was the **bolt-action rifle**. 15 rounds could be fired in a minute and a person 1,400 metres away could be killed.



Machine guns needed 4-6 men to work them and had to be on a flat surface. They had the fire-power of 100 guns.

Large field guns (**artillery**) had a long range and could deliver devastating blows to the enemy but needed up to 12 men to work them. They fired **shells** which exploded on impact

The German army were the first to use **chlorine gas** at the battle of Ypres in 1915. Chlorine gas causes a burning sensation in the throat and chest pains. Death is painful – you suffocate! The problem with chlorine gas is that the weather must be right.

Mustard gas was the most deadly weapon used. It was fired into the trenches in shells. It is colourless and takes 12 hours to take effect. Effects include – blistering skin, vomiting, sore eyes, internal and external bleeding. Death can take up to 5 weeks.

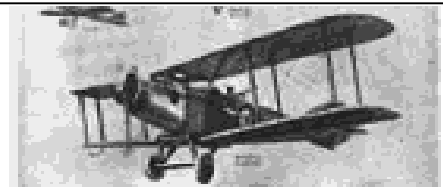
The **Zeppelin**, also known as blimp, was an airship that was used during the early part of the war in bombing raids by the Germans. They carried machine guns and bombs. However, they were abandoned because they were easy to shoot out of the sky.



Tanks were used for the first time in the First World War. They were developed to cope with the conditions on the Western Front. The first tank was called 'Little Willie' and needed a crew of 3. Its maximum speed was 3mph and it could not cross trenches.

The more modern tank was not developed until just before the end of the war. It could carry 10 men, had a revolving turret and could reach 4mph.

Planes were also used for the first time. At first they were used to deliver bombs and for spying work but became fighter aircraft armed with machine guns, bombs and some times canons. Fights between two planes in the sky became known as 'dogfights'



Torpedoes were used by submarines. The Germans used torpedoes to blow up ships carrying supplies from America to Britain.

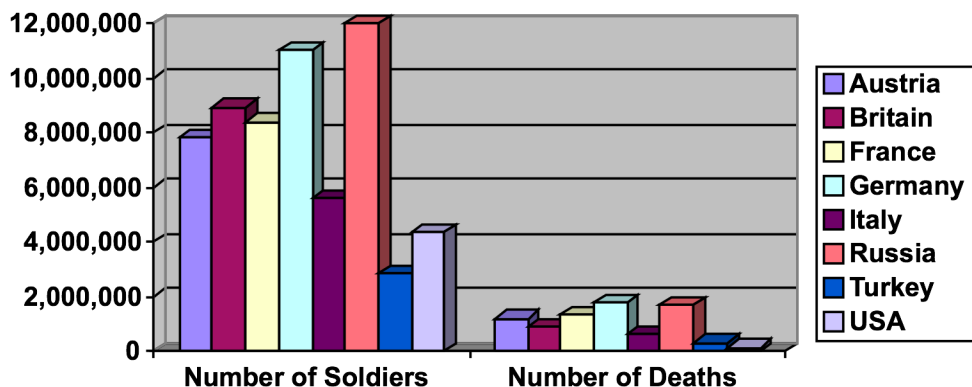
The Germans torpedoed the passenger liner Lusitania on May 1st 1915 which sank with a loss of 1,195 lives. Americans were outraged and joined the war in 1917 on the side of the allies.

Statistics related to the First World War

Nation	Total Number of servicemen engaged in the war.	Number of deaths.	Number of soldiers wounded.	Number of men taken prisoner or reported missing.
Austria	7,800,000	1,200,000	3,620,000	2,200,000
Britain (inc Empire)	8,904,467	908,371	2,090,212	191,652
France	8,410,000	1,357,800	4,266,000	537,000
Germany	11,000,000	1,773,700	4,216,058	1,152,800
Italy	5,615,000	650,000	947,000	600,000
Russia	12,000,000	1,700,000	4,950,000	2,500,000
Turkey	2,850,000	325,000	400,000	250,000
United States	4,355,000	126,000	234,300	4,500

Answer the following questions:

1. Which country had the most soldiers in World War One?
2. Which country had the least soldiers in World War One?
3. Which country had the highest number of deaths?
4. Which country had the least number of deaths?



The End of the War

Although America did not declare war on Germany until 1917, she had been involved in the war from the beginning supplying the allies with weapons and supplies.

On May 2nd 1915 the British passenger liner Lusitania was sunk by a torpedo from a German submarine. 1195 passengers, including 128 Americans, lost their lives. Americans were outraged and put pressure on the government to enter the war.

Woodrow Wilson (left) campaigned for a peaceful end to the war. He appealed to both sides to try to settle the war by diplomatic means but was unsuccessful.

In February 1917, the Germans announced an unrestricted submarine warfare campaign. They planned to sink any ship that approached Britain whether it was a military ship, supply ship or passenger ship.



On April 3rd 1917, Wilson made a speech declaring that America would enter the war and restore peace to Europe. The United States declared war on Germany on April 6th 1917. American troops joined the French and British in the summer of 1918. They were fresh and not war-weary and were invaluable in defeating the Germans. The allied victory in November 1918 was not solely due to American involvement. Rapid advancements in weapon technology meant that by 1918 tanks and planes were commonplace.



The German commander Erich Ludendorff (left) was a brilliant military commander and had won decisive victories over Russia in 1917 that led to the Russian withdrawal from the war.

In 1918 he announced that if Germany was to win the war then the allies had to be defeated on the Western Front before the arrival of American troops.

Although his offensive was initially successful the allies held ground and eventually pushed the Germans back

By 1918 there were strikes and demonstrations in Berlin and other cities protesting about the effects of the war on the population. The British naval blockade of German ports meant that thousands of people were starving. Socialists were waiting for the chance to seize Germany as they had in Russia.

In October 1918 Ludendorff resigned and the German navy mutinied. The end was near. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated on November 9th 1918

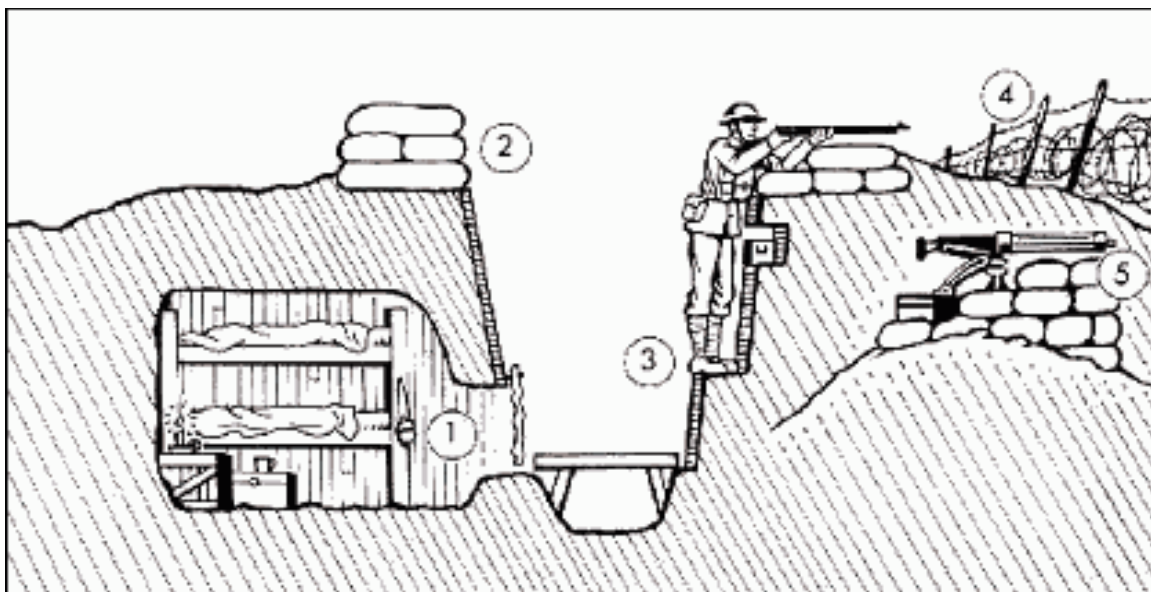
On 11th November the leaders of both sides held a meeting in Ferdinand Foch's railway carriage headquarters at Compiegne.

The Armistice was signed at 6am and came into force five hours later.



Trench Warfare

Source A



Q1. Study Source A. Complete the chart below to help you describe the key features of a First World War Trench.

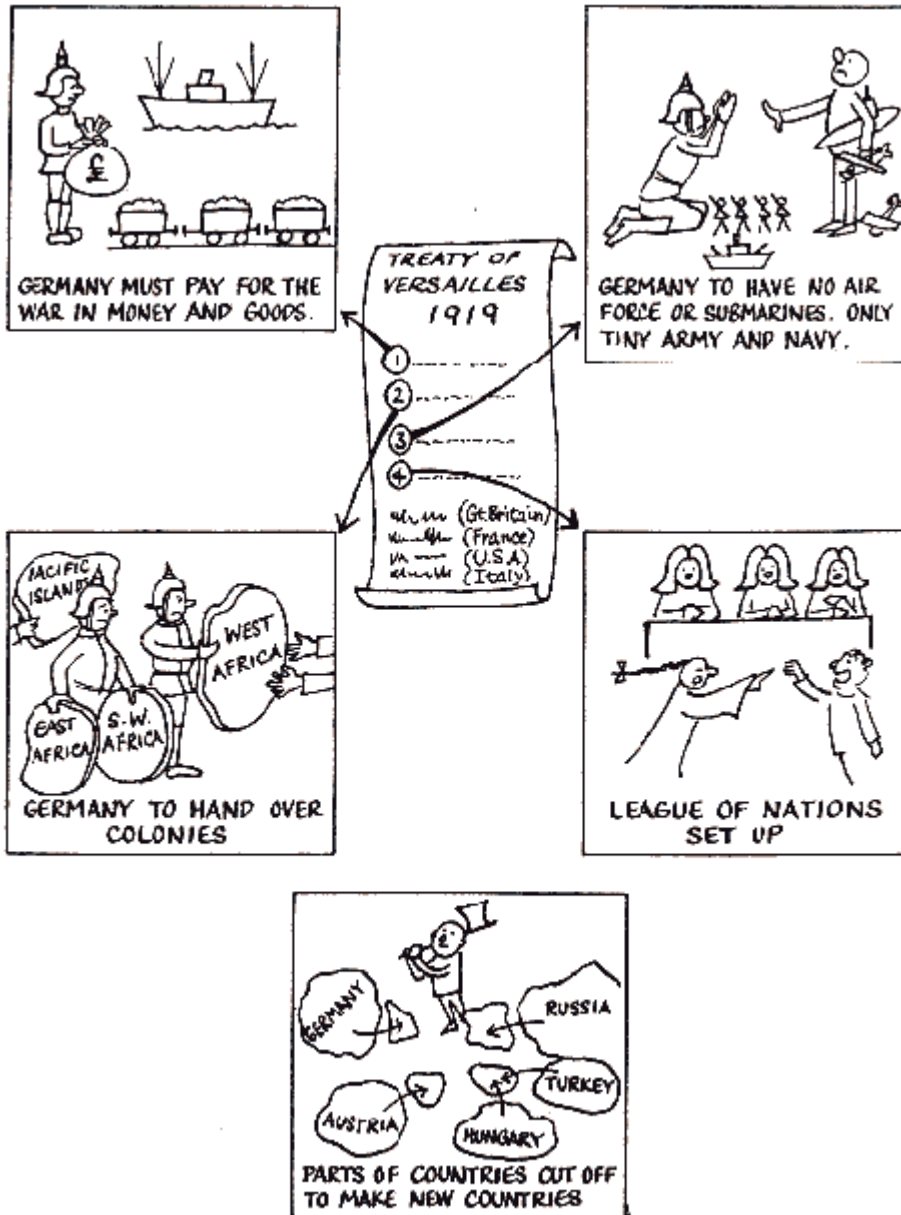
Name of object	Position in picture	What was it used for?
Barbed wire	4	
Dugout		
Fire step		
Sandbags		
Machine gun		

Q2. Looking at your chart can you spot a key feature of a trench that has not been mentioned?

Q3. Look at Source B. How did this soldier catch this disease?



Source C: The Treaty of Versailles, 1919



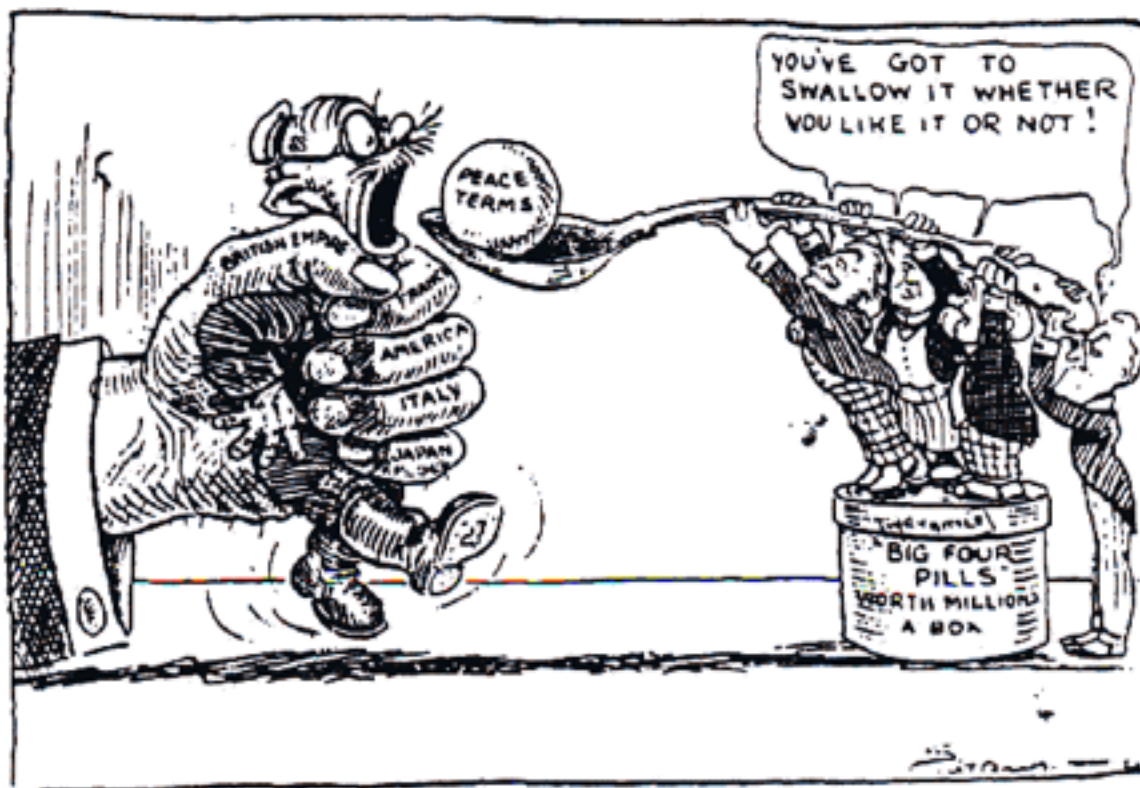
Q4. What was the name of the treaty that ended the First World War?

Q5. Name 5 countries that signed this peace treaty.

Q6. Using Source C, and the Internet, explain how the Treaty of Versailles was meant to stop another war from happening.

Impact of the First World War

Source D: A British Cartoon that appeared in a newspaper in 1919.



- Q7. Look at Source D. Which figure was supposed to be Germany?
- Q8. Using your own knowledge describe what is supposed to be happening to Germany in Source D.
- Q9. Read Sources E and F. Which part of the Treaty of Versailles caused the most problems for Germany? Why?

Source E: Lloyd George, British Prime Minister 1919.

‘We will squeeze Germany until the pips squeak.’

Source F: Clemenceau, French President, 1918.

‘Germany must be brought to book; We demand reparation and revenge’

Reparation = to pay for the damage.