

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT1- The causes of the First World War)

From the spec

- The Alliance System: the Triple Alliance; Franco-Russian Alliance; relations between the ‘Entente’ powers; the crises in Morocco (1905 and 1911) and the Balkans (1908–1909), and their effects on international relations.
- Anglo-German rivalry: Britain and challenges to Splendid Isolation; Kaiser Wilhelm’s aims in foreign policy, including Weltpolitik; colonial tensions; European rearmament, including the Anglo-German naval race.
- Outbreak of war: Slav nationalism and relations between Serbia and Austria-Hungary; the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo and its consequences; the July Crisis

Four main causes of the First World War:

- **Militarism** – the attempt to build up a strong army and navy to prepare for war.
- **Alliances** – creating agreements with other countries to promise to defend each another and go to war with one another.
- **Imperialism** – taking (*colonising*) land to increase power and influence across the globe
- **Nationalism** – the belief that your country and its ideas are better than others.

Imperialism

Kaiser Wilhelm saw himself as the heroic leader of Germany. He wanted to make Germany the greatest nation in the world. In the early 1900s Britain had a much larger empire than Germany. Germany was jealous of this and felt it needed a bigger Empire to become a much more powerful nation. Kaiser created a foreign policy to that set out to give Germany a ‘place in the sun.’

Three main aims of Weltpolitik (German Foreign Policy)

1.) Strong Navy 2.) Large Empire 3.) Strong European power to influence European politics

Splendid Isolation

Britain did not get involved in what happened in Europe. It thought this was the best option to protect its empire. It depended on the strength of the navy to protect itself.

Nationalism

Pan-Slavism - the belief that the Slavic peoples of eastern Europe should have their own nation.

Slavic nationalism was strongest in Serbia, Pan-Slavism was particularly opposed to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its control and influence over the region. Angry that Austria-Hungary had taken Bosnia and Herzegovina, young Serbs joined extreme (*radical*) nationalist groups like the ‘Black Hand’. These extreme groups hoped to drive Austria-Hungary from the Balkans and establish a ‘Greater Serbia’, a unified state for all Slavic people.

Pan Slavic nationalism that inspired the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in June 1914, an event that led directly to the outbreak of World War I.

Nationalism can also be seen in Germany with German foreign policy (*Weltpolitik*).

Austria believed that Slavs were *inferior* (weaker and less able) .

Militarism

Arms Race

- Germany felt threatened by the Entente Cordiale powers as they thought they were trying to surround them.
- The fears and crises that these alliances caused also led to countries building up their armies. They all believed that they needed to be prepared for a war.

Armies:

Germany – Best trained and most powerful. **Austria-Hungary** - Needed help from Germany. **Russia** – Badly equipped but huge. **France** – Large, well equipped.

Britain – Small but well trained force, could be ready for war (*mobilised*) quickly.

Naval Race

- The Kaiser announced his intention to build a powerful navy for Germany.
- Britain felt threatened by this because its power depended on its superiority at sea.
- In 1906, Britain raised the stakes and launched HMS **Dreadnought**, a new type of warship.
- Germany responded by building its own ‘Dreadnought’.

By 1914, Britain had 29 Dreadnoughts and Germany had 17. However, the naval race became less intense by 1911 as Germany shifted its focus to expanding their army.

Alliances

Two main alliances existed in Europe by 1914:

The **Triple Alliance** – Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy

The **Triple Entente** – France, Britain and Russia

Formation of the Triple Alliance:

In 1879, Bismarck was afraid that Russia would attack Germany and wanted to isolate France so he signed an alliance with Austria-Hungary.

They agreed that they would help each other if Russia attacked either one of them.

This was known as the Dual Alliance.

Italy joined the Dual Alliance in 1882, making it the Triple Alliance.

All three powers promised the fight if they were attacked by any other powers.

The Triple Entente formed as a result of three alliances/agreements:

- Entente Cordiale – 1903 – France and Britain – a friendly agreement
- Franco-Russian Alliance – 1893 – France and Russia
- Anglo-Russian Agreement – 1907 – Britain and Russia

Both France and Russia were worried about the alliances which had been made against them so they decided to form their own alliance in 1893: Franco-Russian Alliance.

Both France and Russia promised to help each other if they were attacked by either Germany or Austria-Hungary.

Although Britain was in **Splendid Isolation** it felt it needed to make allies to protect her homeland and, most importantly, her Empire.

1903-04 – the Entente Cordiale – a friendly agreement where France and Britain settled colonial disputes in Morocco and Egypt.

1907 – The Anglo-Russian Agreement – a friendly agreement which solved colonial disputes between Britain and Russia.

Germany perceived this as Britain leaving isolation and joining France and Russia. Germany felt threatened and that Britain, France and Russia had trapped it (*encirclement*).

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT1- The causes of the First World War)

The First Moroccan Crisis 1905-06

Background:

- There was tension in Europe – Germany wanted a ‘place in the sun’ and to build its empire (*imperialist ambition*).
- Morocco was important because of its *strategic* (tactical) position. Any country with a port in Morocco had good access to the Mediterranean sea.
- Morocco was weak and France hoped to conquer it.
- February 1905 – France demanded control over the Moroccan army and police. The Sultan refused.

Events:

March 1905 – The Kaiser visited Morocco. He said he wanted free trade for Germany in Morocco and promised to defend Morocco. The Kaiser believed this was an opportunity to increase Germany’s influence in Africa.

This was an international crisis – France and Germany threatened war.

Britain feared other countries might start questioning Britain’s empire, if Morocco successfully gained independence and encouraged France to not back down.

A conference was held at Algeiras (1906). Only Austria-Hungary (Germany’s ally) voted to support Germany’s demands and so Germany was forced to back down.

Consequences:

The Triple Entente (especially France and Britain’s relationship) strengthened this further and divided Europe into two sides.

France was angry with Germany – relations between the countries *deteriorated* (got worse).

Britain became more suspicious of Germany because of their imperialism, and building a Navy.

Germany had to stay out of Morocco and felt humiliated.

The Bosnian Crisis 1908

Causes:

- Serbia aimed to unite all the Slavs living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
- Austria-Hungary opposed this as it was worried about the break-up of its empire.

Events:

- Austria-Hungary *annexed* (took control of) Bosnia in 1908.
- Serbia was annoyed with Austria-Hungary *appealed* (asked for help) for help from Russia.
- Russia backed Serbia.
- Germany backed Austria-Hungary.
- Russia was forced to back down because it didn’t want to fight with Germany alone.

Consequences:

- Austria-Hungary felt it had the full support of Germany.
- Italy backed away from the Triple Alliance – it did not like how Austria-Hungary had behaved.
- Russia had been humiliated.
- It brought Britain, France and Russia closer together.
- Serbia was forced to accept the annexation of Bosnia but was now determined to oppose Austria-Hungary.

Map of the Austria Hungarian Empire highlighting the different nationalities within the empire.



The Second Moroccan/Agadir Crisis (1911)

Events:

- 1911 – A rebellion against the Sultan broke out in Fez (Moroccan Capital)
- The Sultan *appealed* to the French for help who sent an army.
- Germany opposed French action and sent a gunboat, **the Panther**, to Agadir to protect their interests in Morocco.
- The use of the gunboat was an over-reaction by Germany.
- The naval action (use of their Navy) led to Britain supporting France.
- Preparations for war were made by Britain, France and Germany.
- In the end, Germany backed down.

Consequences:

- Germany felt humiliated and was less likely to back down in future crises.
- The German people became increasingly annoyed with Britain and France so it increased support for war within Germany.
- Britain became more convinced that Germany wanted to dominate Europe.
- Britain reached a secret naval agreement with France. This strengthened the Triple Entente.
- Italy opposed Germany over Agadir which weakened the Triple Alliance. Germany became more reliant on Austria-Hungary.

The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Background:

- Serbia was the strongest country in the Balkans.
- Many Serbs were unhappy with the rule of Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary had annexed Bosnia in 1908.
- In 1911 the **Black Hand Gang** was formed in Serbia. The group aimed to *liberate* (free) all Serbs under foreign rule and unite all Serbs in the creation of a Serb kingdom. They believed the best way to achieve their goals was through violent methods.
- Three assassins planned to assassinate Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914.

Events:

- 28 June 1914: Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, visited Sarajevo (capital of Bosnia, and home to many Slavs).
- The first assassin threw a hand grenade at the Archduke’s car but it deflected, wounding 20 people.
- The car continued on the same route (rather than change the route following the assassination attempt).
- The car came to a halt in front of Princip who was coming out of a sandwich shop. He shot the Archduke and his wife Sophie, killing them both.

Consequences:

- Austria-Hungary felt they had to deal with Serbia as they were becoming a real threat to their empire.
- Ten point ultimatum sent to Serbia by Austria-Hungary. The ultimatum would have given Austria-Hungary considerable control over Serbia. Serbia refused to agree to the ultimatum (agreeing to 9 of the 10 points). This made Austria-Hungary look at war hungry and they lost sympathy.
- Germany gave Austria-Hungary a ‘blank cheque’ (unconditional support). This gave Austria-Hungary confidence to not withdraw their demands.
- Russia offered to support Serbia. Fearing Germany, Russia mobilised (got ready for war) but did not declare war.
- Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, triggering the alliance system.

Steps to war

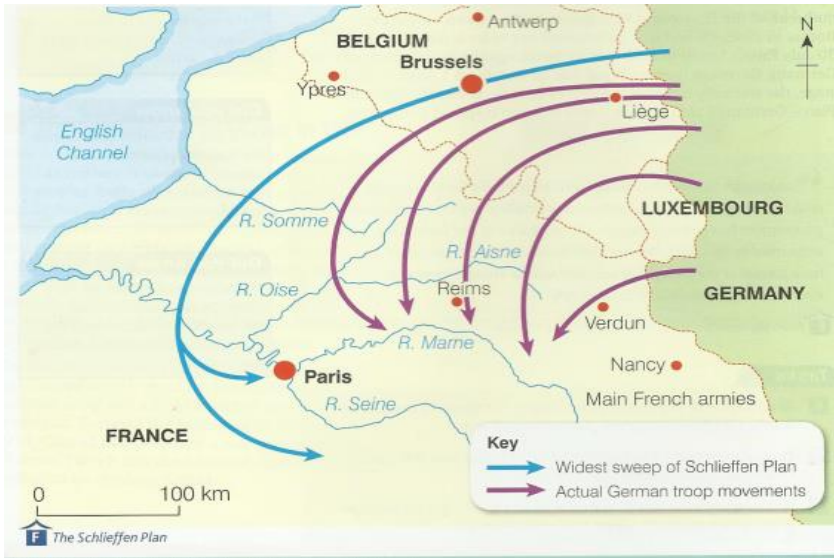
- 28 July – Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.
- 30 July – Russia begins to mobilise its forces.
- 1 August – Germany declares war on Russia.
- 3 August – Germany declares war on France; German troops enter Belgium.
- 4 August – Germany declares war on Belgium; Britain declares war on Germany.
- 5 August – France declares war on Germany.
- 6 August – Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia.

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT2 - Stalemate)

From the spec

- The Schlieffen Plan: the reasons for the plan, its failure, including the Battle of Marne and its contribution to the stalemate.

The Schlieffen plan



The reason for the Schlieffen Plan

- Germany wanted to avoid a war on two fronts – being attacked by France in the west and Russia in the east.
- The aim was to attack the French first and defeat them in six weeks by invading through neutral Belgium and the Netherlands.
- Schlieffen argued that Russia would take a long time to mobilise so the Germans could defeat the French quickly and then move its army to the east to defeat the Russians.
- A swift attack of France was the key to the success of the plan.

The Schlieffen Plan. What happened?

On the 4th August 1914 Germany, led by General Moltke, invaded Belgium. The Belgians put up a heroic resistance but it did not stop the German advance. Massive German artillery bombardments destroyed French forts and well equipped and well trained German infantry moved towards the French border. War had officially broken out on the Western Front.

Response of the other nations:

Belgium

The Germans were not expecting any resistance from Belgium, but the Belgian army fought bravely and managed to delay the German advance.

Members of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) arrived to help, and the Germans were held up at Mons.

The Belgians later prevented the Germans from taking the French channel ports by flooding much of their land.

Britain

Britain declared war on Germany in response to the invasion of Belgium.

Although the BEF consisted of only 125,000 men, they were well trained and equipped and ready for action within less than one week.

Having helped the Belgians hold the Germans up at Mons, the BEF then moved to support the French on the River Marne and prevent the Germans from reaching Paris.

Losses were heavy and by December 1914 more than half of the original BEF were dead.

France

France responded quickly to the German attack by launching an invasion of Alsace and Lorraine, but this failed.

Then they switched troops to the defence of Paris in a desperate attempt to hold the Germans up, which involved transporting troops to the front line in fleets of taxis.

The battle at the Marne was a turning-point; with the help of the remaining members of the BEF the German advance was not only halted but the Germans were also pushed back about 35 miles.

The British and French then moved to secure the Channel ports.

The reason for the failure of the Schlieffen Plan

- The Germans did not expect the British to intervene.
- The plan relied upon rapid movement. The resistance of the Belgians and the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) prevented this.
- Russia mobilised its troops quicker than expected. Within 10 days the Russians had invaded Germany, which meant that the Germans had to switch troops away from western Europe to hold up the Russian invasion.
- Both sides now had to secure the land that they held. Trenches were dug and machine-gun posts erected. The first exchanges of the war were over; from now until 1918, neither side would advance more than 10 miles forward or backwards from the positions they now held.

How did the Schlieffen Plan bring Britain into the war?

- Germany wanted to avoid a war on two fronts – being attacked by France in the west and Russia in the east.
- The aim was to attack the French first and defeat them in six weeks by invading through neutral Belgium and the Netherlands.
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The Battle of the Marne

Following the Schlieffen plan, the 1st Battle of the Marne (September 1914) broke out mainly between French soldiers with the support of the British and German soldiers. The French were fighting to save their country.

- The Germans continued to push towards Paris. This was part of the Schlieffen Plan.
- British and French troops retreated to positions south of the Seine and Marne rivers.
- French managed to save Paris. (Reinforcements were sent in taxi's from Paris).
- This marked the start of trench warfare as soldiers on both sides began to dig in.

The Race to the Sea

The Battle of Marne was the turning point. The German generals realised that they could not break through enemy lines. They tried to outflank (get round the back of) the French defensive lines. As the Germans tried to outflank, the French would block them by sending troops to wherever the Germans were about to break through next. This became known as the Race to the Sea. This led to both sides digging a 400-mile line of trenches from Switzerland to the English Channel.

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT2 - Stalemate)

From the spec

- The Western Front: military tactics and technology, including trench warfare; the war of attrition; key battles, including Verdun, the Somme and Passchendaele, the reasons for the events and significance of these battles.

War of attrition: A military strategy (tactic) in which one side attempts to win a **war** by wearing down its enemy to the point of collapse through continuous loss of men and resources (weapons etc.) The **war** was usually won by the side with the most men. This was the tactic used for the majority of the war and lead to the loss of many men on both sides.

Life in the Trenches

The trenches offered soldiers protection from the bullets and shrapnel of artillery fire. British soldiers were rotated through front line, reserve and communication trenches. This meant that they would typically only spend between 3 and 7 days a month in the front-line trenches.

Warfare: The mass infantry charge (soldiers would climb out of the trench and run at the enemy) was the main tactic of the generals early in the war. New weapons like the machine gun made it easier to defend than attack. Cavalry could not be used and at major battles like Verdun and the Somme, hundreds of thousands of men died from this tactic. Later in the war, generals did try to break the deadlock with the use of new weapons and tactics.

Rest: Soldiers in the trenches did not get much sleep. They were woken up at different times, either to complete one of their daily chores or to fight.

Trench Conditions: Much of the time the infantry were in a strict routine of hard work. This would include repairing the trenches, carrying supplies, conducting sentry duty (keeping watching) and cleaning their kit. In the summer the smell of the trenches was awful. Rotting flesh led to many flies and the threat of infection. In winter, the trenches were very cold and often water-logged. Trench foot became a major problem for soldiers in British trenches.

Leisure activities: Many soldiers had never left England before the war and were very excited to have the chance to travel abroad for the first time. Soldiers had a number of leisure activities available to them during the war. Officers arranged entertainment for the troops which would include music shows, comedy sketches etc. Soldiers would also have opportunities to go sightseeing in French towns. Sport was another huge part of the life of soldiers with football, cricket and other sports teams.

Comforts: The British army took great care of its soldiers. British soldiers were better fed and looked after than any other army during the war. For many, life at home had been hard and they had a better diet and regular pay, thanks to the army. The food was repetitive but filling. On average British soldiers gained 10lbs in weight soon after joining the army as they were getting so well fed. ‘Bully beef’ and jam were regular items in the diet of the soldiers. Soldiers received regular letters and parcels from home. The postal service was very *efficient* (on time) and this was a major factor in keeping the soldiers happy. For many, life at home had been hard and they had a better diet and regular pay thanks to the army. Chocolates, cigarettes and alcohol were provided as treats to keep the soldiers happy.

Discipline: Discipline in WWI was strict. If a soldier fell asleep on duty or deserted (ran away), he could be court-martialled and could be executed as punishment. In total 3,080 soldiers were given a death sentence. However, most were pardoned (not executed), 346 were actually killed.

Patriotism: The soldiers on both sides were generally patriotic. Whatever the horrors of war, most believed they were there to do a job for their country and that the job was worth doing well.



Technology of war

Tanks

Britain used tanks in battle for the first time in 1916 at the Battle of the Somme. By the summer of 1918 they were commonly used on the front line. Britain produced around 2,600 tanks during World War One. Not very successful at the start of the war as they were too slow. Germans developed bullets to pierce armour. However, it showed Britain was looking to adapt and improve their approach to warfare.

Aircraft

Aeroplanes were very recent inventions when World War One broke out. As aircraft technology developed, planes were used much more in the war. For example, France only had 140 aircraft when war began but by the end of it, they had used around 4,500. However, they did not have a big impact on the war. Aircraft was mainly used to observe (watch) and attack shipping.

Machine guns

Machine guns were very big and heavy and needed up to six people to operate them. They were placed all along the Western Front. Machine guns fired up to 600 bullets a minute and were very dangerous. Many soldiers dreaded the enemy soldiers who operated the machine guns more than anyone else. Machine guns forced commanders to adapt their tactics as it was an effective weapon against trench charges.

Artillery

Field guns fired shells that exploded when they hit something. They were the key weapon in WW1. The two main jobs were to destroy enemy positions and defences so they could be captured and to destroy enemy guns. They could fire shells as far as seven kilometres and had to be placed on a flat surface. Guns initially weren’t very accurate, and often destroyed their own forward trenches before they got the correct range. Early in the war, shells were often faulty or failed to destroy enemy defenses. By 1916, British artillery became more effective because British industry (staffed largely by women on the home front) was supplying enough shells and guns to be used effectively. By 1918, artillery tactics became much more sophisticated and a key weapon in the Great War. Artillery guns began using the ‘creeping barrage’, which involved guns working with troops from the trenches who would follow behind the shell fire, meaning they could access/enter enemy trenches hidden behind artillery fire.

Poison gas

Gas attacks were used by both sides with the intention of disabling the enemy so that your troops could be successful. This development in chemical warfare showed that WW1 was about new, modern types of warfare.

The first gas attack was in April 1915 by the Germans who fired 160 tonnes of Chlorine Gas onto Allied trenches in Ypres.

Later, scientists began developing gases used to blind, burn or kill enemy soldiers.

Gas, however, was difficult to control and relied on the direction of the wind and accuracy of the artillery shells. Scientists also developed effective gas masks which soldiers were instructed to keep with them all the time.

While only 6000 British soldiers died from gas attacks throughout the war, the fear of gas attacks were prominent amongst soldiers.

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT2 - Stalemate)

From the spec

- The Western Front: military tactics and technology, including trench warfare; the war of attrition; key battles, including Verdun, the Somme and Passchendaele, the reasons for the events and significance of these battles.

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Key Battles

Verdun

The Battle of Verdun stemmed from German General Erich von Falkenhayn’s belief that “he could bleed France white” by attacking the high valued French town of Verdun. He believed that the French would refuse to let it fall and so would continue to defend it, even if they lost many men. Falkenhayn calculated that the French would lose 5 men to every 2 Germans. German forces advanced quickly in February 1916, claiming Fort Douaumont and Fort Vaux after brutal fighting. Germans came within two miles of Verdun cathedral and victory, however, in mid July they were forced to withdraw men to fight the British at the Somme. Falkenhayn resigned in August after failing to take Verdun and the new command decided to suspend (stop) the offensive. The French retook their forts and pushed back the line, and by the time the German forces stopped attacking in December.

- The war lasted 303 days with an estimated 700,000 soldiers dead, wounded or missing.
- At the end of the bloodshed, France emerged as the victor, yet neither side had much to show in the way of military gains.
- Psychologically, it was very important for the French. Many believed the loss of Verdun would have led to the loss of the war.
- Verdun had triggered the Battle of the Somme as the British tried to draw the Germans away from the French.

The Somme

The Battle of the Somme, also known as the Somme Offensive, was one of the largest battles of the First World War. Fought between July 1 and November 1, 1916, near the Somme River in France, it was also one of the bloodiest military battles in history. By the end of the battle, in November 1916, the British had lost 420,000, the French lost nearly 200,000 men and the Germans 500,000. The Allied forces had advanced along a thirty-mile strip that was seven miles deep at its maximum. Before the battle there was a week long artillery bombardment of the German lines. 1,738,000 shells were fired at the Germans. The aim was to destroy the German trenches and barbed wire was placed in front of the trenches. Germans had deep dugouts for their men and all they had to do when the bombardment started was to move these men into the relative safety of the deep dugouts. When the bombardment stopped, the Germans would have known that this would have been the signal for an infantry advance so were ready. 100,000 British men went over the top on the first day and suffered more than 57,000 casualties. The battle lasted for a gruelling four months and was carried out in several phases. Some historians believe that with a few more weeks of favourable weather the Allies could have broken through German lines. Others argue the Allies never stood a chance. In any case, the British army inflicted heavy losses on the German Army. In March 1917, the Germans made a strategic retreat to the Hindenburg line, rather than face the resumption of the Battle of the Somme.

- In England the reality of war was made apparent.
- Germany has had to draw troops from the whole extent of her Western front to meet the threat.
- Allies maintained their superiority of numbers and of guns in the battle.
- Germany was been unable to move troops to meet the Russian offensive in the East.
- The German offensive on the Verdun front was abandoned.

Passchendaele

The Battle of Passchendaele is also known as the Third Battle of Ypres. It started in July 1917, and illustrates how new technology could become hopelessly outmanoeuvred by weather conditions. The British detonated huge mines at Messines which destroyed the German artillery positions and killed 10,000 German soldiers at a stroke. However, the infantry advance which followed became hopelessly bogged down when heavy rain created nightmare conditions, particularly around the ruined village of Passchendaele. Even when tanks were used at Cambrai in November 1917 it was the same story: 350 tanks made good progress but were unable to hold the ground they captured.

- The casualty figures for this battle are disputed, but there were nearly a quarter of a million casualties on the Allies side and even more on the German side.
- In a strategical sense, the Battle of Passchendaele contributed to the reasons which brought World War One to an end.
- The offensive in Flanders kept the Germans busy in the North for so long that they were unable to attack the French who were to the south, who were also defenceless and becoming mutinous.
- While they were occupied they were also unable to support the Belgian ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge that they had captured and where their submarines and destroyers were based.
- These were two of the reasons for Haig wanting to attack in Flanders so, in a way, some parts of his plan had succeeded. Also, the German industry could not replace the massive amount of equipment they had lost, and so no longer had the resources they needed to win the war.

War on other fronts

Gallipoli

The Gallipoli campaign, on the western shore of the Dardanelles had begun in April 1915, with the aim to capture Constantinople, relieve the Russians and remove Turkey from the war. Strongly advocated by Winston Churchill and supported by Lord Kitchener, *The Sphere* (a London magazine) described the campaign as, ‘one of the most daring military operations in history.’ But Allied naval forces had been turned back by enemy minefields, and when troops landed onto narrow beachheads, they faced a fierce Turkish resistance where ‘every yard of ground had to be won at the price of human lives.’ *The Sphere* noted the, ‘courage of the soldiers who have held doggedly to its apex for eight weary months,’ particularly Australian and New Zealand troops who formed a large proportion of the half a million casualties suffered during the disastrous campaign.

War at Sea

World War One was largely fought and won on land but this could not have taken place without the movement of ships. Command of the sea enabled the Allies to bring in the vital resources and manpower required to prevail on the Western Front and elsewhere. The British Navy’s main activity was to mount a blockade on German ports to stop essential supplies of food and war materials reaching Germany. By 1918, many Germans were starving and there was a mutiny in the German Navy. Germans inflicted damage on the British fleet, notably at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, the largest clash of big-gun battleships of all time. Yet the Germans were never near gaining command of the sea. British Blockade

Jutland

This was the only major sea battle of the war. The British lost 14 ships and 6,000 sailors. The Germans lost 13 ships and 2,500 sailors. After Jutland, the Germans never came to fight at sea again and remained trapped in port.

U-boats

U-boats were underwater boats used by the Germans to fight back against the British. However, the U–boat campaign also contributed to Germany losing the war. The Germans sank the *Lusitania*, an American passenger ship, helping to bring the USA into the war. Their U-boats, by their successful attacks on merchant ships, did come close to denying command of the sea to the Triple Alliance, especially in 1917, but, by bringing the United States into the war, this campaign only sealed Germany's fate.

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT3 – Ending the war)

From the spec

- Changes in the Allied Forces: consequences of the Bolshevik Revolution and the withdrawal of Russia on Germany strategy; the reasons for and impact of the entry of the USA into the war.
- Military developments in 1918 and their contribution to Germany's defeat: the evolution of tactics and technology; Ludendorff the German Spring Offensive; the Allied advance during The Hundred Days.
- Germany surrenders: impact of the blockade; abdication of the Kaiser; armistice; the contribution of Haig and Foch to Germany's defeat.

Reasons for Germany's defeat;

- Entry of USA into war
- Collapse of alliances - Bulgaria (Sept), Turkey (Oct), Austria (Oct)
- October: Naval mutinies at Kiel (fear of full-scale rebellion)
- Morale & conditions terrible: GB naval blockade
- Entente united under Foch
- Failure of Schlieffen Plan
- Spring Offensive - Kaiser abdicates, armistice signed

The Russian Revolution;

In 1917, two revolutions swept through Russia, ending centuries of imperial rule. In March, growing civil unrest, coupled with food shortages, erupted into open revolt, forcing the abdication of Nicholas II. Just months later, the newly installed provisional government was itself overthrown by the more radical Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin. The new government immediately declared that it wasn't going to fight and opened negotiations, which led to peace with Germany in March 1918.

The Germans could now transfer hundreds of thousands of troops back to the Western Front. The German armies therefore had the opportunity to attack on the Western Front before American troops and equipment had arrived in any decisive numbers.

The British Blockade

The population of Germany was suffering from the effects of acute food shortages. Although the German U-Boat campaign had led to food shortages in Britain, the British naval blockade that prevented supplies from getting into German ports hit Germany harder. An influenza epidemic hit the German cities causing large numbers of deaths amongst a people already weakened by food shortages. Strikes and demonstrations paralysed Berlin and in November, the socialists tried to seize control. After the failure of his offensive, Ludendorff resigned and then sailors in the German fleet mutinied.

America joins the war;

When World War I erupted in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson pledged neutrality for the United States, a position that the vast majority of Americans favoured. On May 7, the British owned *Lusitania* ocean liner was torpedoed without warning just off the coast of Ireland. Of the 1,959 passengers, 1,198 were killed, including 128 Americans. The German government maintained that the *Lusitania* was carrying munitions, but the U.S. demanded reparations and an end to German attacks. In late March, Germany sunk four more U.S. merchant ships, and on April 2 President Wilson appeared before Congress and called for a declaration of war against Germany. Four days later, his request was granted. On June 26, the first 14,000 U.S. infantry troops landed in France to begin training for combat.

The USA entering the war damaged Germany psychologically. The US Navy could protect merchant ships bringing supplies to Britain. The government were willing to lend money to Britain to buy war materials.

After four years of bloody stalemate along the western front, the entrance of America's well-supplied forces into the conflict marked a major turning point in the war and helped the Allies to victory. When the war finally ended, on November 11, 1918, more than two million American soldiers had served on the battlefields of Western Europe, and some 50,000 of them had lost their lives.

The Ludendorff/Spring Offensive;

The German commander Ludendorff knew that if Germany was to win the war he had to deliver a knockout blow to the Allies before American troops arrived. On 21st March 1918 he therefore launched the German Spring Offensive. Initially it was successful and the Germans advanced to the river Marne. However, the Allies just managed to hold their line. The Allies learned an important lesson from the Germans' success and now appointed a single commander for their armies, the French Marshall Foch.

The Hundred Days Campaign

Between May and August the Germans made no further progress and ran out of time and resources. The Germans by making the Spring Offensive had ended trench warfare but it was the Allies who benefitted from it. The Allied, supported by manpower and equipment from the USA, counter-attacked. By late September, the Allies reached the Hindenburg Line and the Germans were in full retreat.

General Ludendorff

Ludendorff became joint head of the German army with Hindenburg in 1916, following the dismissal of General Falkenhaym. He planned the Spring offensive against the Allies in 1918. However, when Allies counter attacked he tried to get favourable terms of surrender from the Americans. This led to his dismissal in October 1918. After the war blamed the Kaiser and the government for German defeat.

The Armistice;

After the Allies had halted the German advance in August 1918, Ludendorff informed the Kaiser 'We have nearly reached the limit of our powers of resistance. The war must be ended.' At the end of September 1918 Bulgaria made peace, and one month later Turkey was defeated. On 4th November, have been defeated by the Italians, Austria signed an armistice with the Allies. Germany was now fighting the Allies alone. On 9th November, the Kaiser abdicated and on 11st November, an armistice was agreed.

Sir Douglas Haig

Commanded the British armies from 1915 to the end of the war. His reputation was affected by the number of casualties Britain suffered under his leadership especially during the Somme. Stating at the time of the battle, "the nation should be taught to bear losses." However, Haig actively promoted new strategies and technologies, such as the tank which helped the Allied victory. In the final offensive led the British army in capturing 200,000 prisoners and 3,000 guns.

Marshall Ferdinand Foch:

Foch led French forces at the First Battle of the Marne, but was removed from command after the Battle of the Somme in 1916. In 1918, he was named Allied Supreme Commander, coordinating the war's final offensives. Foch was present at the armistice ending the war in November, 1918. His exact contribution is debated as there were several disputes between the government and military leaders of France at the time of the war.

Conflict and Tension: the First World War, 1894-1918 (HT3 – Ending the war)

Key Terms	
Alliance	A partnership between two countries to support each other if one is attacked.
Armistice	An agreement to stop fighting.
Arms Race	Competition between two or more countries to have greater numbers of armed forces, such as troops or weapons or battleships.
Artillery	Large heavy guns used in war, that fire shells and bombs onto the enemy.
Assassination	To kill someone significant or important.
Blockade	Sealing off a place to stop anything getting in or out.
Bombardment	A constant attack on the enemy using heavy artillery, bombs and other missiles.
Casualties	People in the army who have been killed or injured in battle.
Conscientious Objector	A person who objects to war because it goes against their conscience, e.g. for religious reasons.
Conscription	Requiring everyone over a certain age to serve in the military, rather than using volunteers.
Great Powers	The name given to the major, important and most powerful nations in the world.
Imperialism	Gaining power by taking over colonies or through the use of military force.
Militarism	Believing that the country should promote a strong military, using it to achieve its aims.
Mobilise	Preparing the military for war, but not actually going to war yet.
Nationalism	A form of extreme patriotism and love for their nation, often believing in independence and being superior to others.
No Mans Land	The area between the two trench lines which controlled by no one.
Parapet	A barrier at the front of the trench to protect the heads of people walking through.
Propaganda	Information that is usually biased or misleading, that is trying to persuade you to believe or support something.
Reparations	Making amends for doing something wrong, such as paying a compensation payment
Slav	An ethnic group, found mainly in Eastern Europe in places such as Bosnia, Serbia and Russia.
Stalemate	Where two opponents are unable to make any progress against each other, effectively resulting in a draw.
Trench	The area dug into the ground where the troops lived and fought, long and narrow and stretching for hundreds of miles.
Ultimatum	Making a demand and threatening consequences if it isn't agreed to.
War of Attrition	Aiming to defeat the enemy by killing more of them than they kill of you – 'bleeding the enemy dry'.

Key Dates	
1839	The Treaty of London promises to protect Belgium
1905	Moroccan Crisis
1908	Bosnian Crisis – Bosnia annexed by Austria-Hungary
28/6/14	Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to throne of Austria-Hungary, assassinated by Gavrilo Princip
5/7/14	Germany promises support to support Austria – the 'blank cheque'
28/7/14	Austria declared war on Serbia
1/8/14	Germany declared war on Russia
3/8/14	Germany declared war on France and began the 'Schlieffen Plan', and invaded Belgium
4/8/14	Great Britain declared war on Germany
Sept 1914	Trench warfare began to dominate the war
Dec 1914	The 'Christmas Truce' saw peace break out for one day in parts of France
April 1915	Poison gas used for the first time by the Germans
May 1915	An American ship, the Lusitania, was sunk by German u-boats
Jan 1916	Conscription introduced in Great Britain
May 1916	The Battle of Jutland – the only major sea battle of the war – ends without a clear winner
July 1916	The Battle of the Somme begins. Britain suffers 60,000 casualties in one day.
Sept 1916	Tanks used for the first time in warfare, during the Battle of the Somme
Nov 1916	The Battle of the Somme comes to an end. Over 1m people have died.
April 1917	USA declares war on Germany
Nov 1917	Russia begins plans to leave the war after a Communist Revolution
Spring 1918	100 Days Offensive begins – the Allies begin to push Germany back
Oct 1918	German Navy rebels and refuses to fight.
11/11/18	Armistice signed and fighting stops after German army is clearly defeated.
June 1919	The Treaty of Versailles signed to officially end the war and deal with Germany.