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WORLD WAR I STUDY GUIDE

Causes of World War I

1. A massive military buildup was needed to protect overseas colonies & IMPERIALISTIC powers. The size of armed forces & navies grew sharply, especially in Germany. Countries with militaries were ready to use them as soon as any trouble erupted. "Trigger - happy" is when a country is ready to fire at the least provocation, regardless of situation or consequences.

2. Countries allied to protect themselves against militarism from other countries. An example is the Triple Alliance which united Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. Another example is the Triple Entente which united Russia & France (which had already allied) with Great Britain. Alliances should keep war from starting because no country should want to start war with a different country and its allies as well. Alliance & entente are basically the same thing. Entente can mean more of a cooperation than an alliance.

3. Imperialism is the policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries, or of acquiring and holding colonies and dependencies. Germany, Germany, France, & Russia were all IMPERIAL nations. To keep imperial lands safe from conquest by other imperial countries, militarism grew.

4. Nationalism is a strong devotion to one's national group or culture. It began in late 1800s when new countries were formed, which caused power struggles. In the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe, areas with certain ethnic groups might wanted freedom from an empire or bigger country. Serbs had Serbia, but many lived outside its borders. Serbia wanted to expand its borders, but Austria-Hungary wouldn't let Serbia expand.

Early Battles

5. Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated on June 28, 1914 by a Serbian Nationalist. As a result, Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia after it does not agree to all terms of the ultimatum.

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6. Germany signed a treaty with Britain and France guaranteeing Belgian neutrality. Germany marched through Belgium to reach France as part of the Schleiffen Plan in August 1914.

7. The Central Powers (Bad Guys) were Austria-Hungary, Germany, & the Ottoman Empire. The Allies were Russia, France, Great Britain, & Italy and eventually the United States joined this side later.

8. In northern France, Germany built series of trenches as they retreated. The Allies built their own trenches also. This area became deadlocked (no one advanced) and was known as the Western Front (west of Germany).

Trench & Gas Warfare

9. Trench Warfare is a form of combat in which soldiers dug trenches, or deep ditches, to seek protection from enemy fire & to defend their positions. Soldiers lived very close to other soldiers and there was not much room. Trenches could be miserable sometimes. Rainstorms created muddy conditions. "Trench Foot" is when your feet get wet and stay wet for such a long time. There was also bad sanitation, lice & rats.

10. A new weapon used in the war was poison gas. There were different types that could blind, choke, or burn soldiers. Poison gas had limited value because the wind could blow back on your side. Gas masks could help soldiers through an attack.

Weapons of World War I

11. Rapid-fire machine guns were used in battles. Early machine guns were big & heavy and needed a crew of four to six people to operate. They lacked cooling mechanisms because they shot 400-600 small caliber rounds per minute.

12. Later machine guns were lighter & more portable. By 1918, guns for infantrymen now existed. They were lighter weight but lacked enough ammunition. By the end of war, guns had been added to tanks, warships, & aircraft.

13. Tanks were also known as landships. They were armored vehicles that could cross rough battlefield terrain such as no man's land. The first tank was called

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“ Little Willie ” and weighed 14 tons and had 12-foot long track frames. It had space for three men and had a maximum speed of 2 mph (on rough terrain). Tanks were first developed in Great Britain. Soon, France & the US became interested. They were not very reliable or useful at first but were used later in the war at the Battle of Cambrai.

14. Aircraft was used to observe enemy positions and was armed with machine guns & bombs. Planes were used to attack battlefields & cities and even enemy planes. These were called “dogfights.” Most countries had few planes at the start of war, but production of planes increased rapidly. Planes had to be easy to fly, which allowed generals to begin including planes in planning.

15. U-boats were submarines used by the Germans in WWI and WWII. They had a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, meaning any ship traveling in water around Great Britain was subject to attack. U-Boats were easy to attack without being seen. Merchant ship attacks cut off British supply lines. As a result, Great Britain developed convoys that helped against the threat of attack. The United States entered the war on the Allied side because Americans had been killed because of unrestricted submarine warfare.

16. The flamethrower came in different sizes for different circumstances. Grenades could be detonated two different ways: impact or time-fused. A bayonet had more of a psychological use and mortar could be fired from inside a trench.

Propaganda

17. Propaganda is information such as posters & pamphlets created by government to influence public opinion. Governments used propaganda to control public opinion and keep up spirits.

The U.S. Enters the War

18. Unrestricted submarine warfare was Germany's policy of attacking any ship that tried to get through its U-boat blockade of Great Britain. It was an effective way to keep Britain low on supplies and other necessary items. German U-boats sank The Lusitania, a British passenger liner, killing 1,200 people. This made trade with any nation difficult.

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19. The Zimmerman Telegram was sent from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmerman to the German Ambassador in Mexico City. The British intercepted the message. Promised Mexico that Germany would help recover land from the United States if they would join in war. Mexico was a bigger threat to the U.S. than Germany due to proximity.

20. American Propaganda was information designed to influence people's opinions published by the government. It portrayed Germans as bad, barbaric, dangerous, wicked, ape/gorilla, abuse of women, etc. It also caused Americans to become enraged at the Germans and ready to go to war.

21. Americans traded with Great Britain and France during the war. Britain's blockade made the U.S. unable to trade with Germany. The U.S. wanted to continue trading with Britain, but refused to trade with the British because it blockaded Germany – technically taking an act of war with Britain.

The End of the Fighting

22. In April 1917, the United States entered the war. Germany had to win the war in Europe before the United States was able to help the Allies.

A New German Offensive

23. Germany refocused efforts at the Western Front. Germany no longer had to worry about fighting Russia in the east. In March 1918, Germany started a major offensive. At the beginning, Germany gained a lot of land, about 40 miles. By June 1918, America had sent enough soldiers to help Europe and gave the Allies hope. Around 800,000 German soldiers had died by this time.

German Collapse

24. At the Second Battle of Marne, the Allies stopped the German soldiers. They had defeated the Germans at the same place in 1914. The Allies used tanks & aircraft to gain ground. Many Germans just gave up, as they knew they had been defeated.

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25. In October 1918, Allied forces broke through heavily defended Hindenburg Line. German leaders approached the Allied leaders, asking for a truce.

26. On November 11, 1918, an armistice was agreed to. This day has since become a holiday, called Veteran's Day. After the armistice was agreed to, the leaders had to come up with a treaty about the post-war world.

The Costs of War

27. There will always be costs to war. War is never free, speaking in monetary terms or otherwise. For instance, during the war 9 million soldiers died and around 21 million soldiers were wounded. And soldiers are not the only people who die during war. Around 13 million civilians died during the war. Also, events occurring at home can cause people to die. For instance, 70 million people died from the Spanish Flu Pandemic, which lasted only about a year.

28. Speaking in monetary terms, around \$332 billion was the total "cost of war". Because of where the majority of fighting was located during the war, economies in America & Japan prospered. In countries such as France, Belgium, and Russia, farmland & cities were destroyed by war, greatly affecting the countries' economies.

29. Governments also changed during the course of the war and shortly thereafter. Communism became the economic and political theory used in Russia. Monarchies in Austria-Hungary, Germany, & the Ottoman Empire were governmental systems that were overthrown at the end of the war. Similar to political changes, there was unrest in colonies controlled by European powers.

30. The Allied Powers had fought in the war partially to promote democracy, a political system colonists then expected to receive. However, colonies did not receive this type of government and their independence had to wait. As certain countries and empires were broken apart as a result of the Treaty of Versailles, 15 new nations/mandates were created before 1921. These countries were Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, East Prussia, Poland, Lebanon, Transjordan, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Syria, Iraq, & Palestine.

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Differing Allied Goals

31. All leaders of the Allied Powers wanted different things for the post-war world. America's leader, Woodrow Wilson, specifically came up with a plan for organizing the post-war world, called the Fourteen Points. This plan called for, among other things, reduction of weapons, rights of all people to choose their own governments, and an organization for world's nations to join to prevent future wars.

32. France's leader, George Clemeneau, wanted to punish Germany and make them pay for costs of war. Great Britain's leader, David Lloyd George, also wanted to punish Germany, but he didn't want to weaken the country. He wanted the country to help stop communism from spreading out of Russia. Vittorio Orlando, Italy's leader, wanted to gain territory. Orland was essentially ignored during collaboration.

Treaty of Versailles

33. Finally, the Allies compromised on their goals. The resulting treaty, the Treaty of Versailles, was closer to Clemeneau's goals than Wilson's. Germany had not been part of the discussion about the terms of the treaty. Germany had to accept the terms of the treaty. Germany was forced to do many things, as the treaty ordered:

- 1) Pay reparations
- 2) Take responsibility for conflict
- 3) Return conquered land to France & Russia
- 4) Give land for formation of Poland
- 5) Give colonies around the world to various world powers
- 6) Limit size of military

34. On June 28, 1919, Germany finally signed the treaty. Wilson did get something he had outlined in his Fourteen Points: a worldwide organization, called the League of Nations. It was an international body of nations to prevent future wars. Germany was not asked to be a member of this organization. And, despite the idea of such an organization was Wilson's, the United States did not join the league.

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Other Treaties

35. Because the Treaty of Versailles focused on the goals of the Allied Powers, other treaties were needed to determine what to do with the Central Powers. Austria-Hungary and Ottoman Empire were broken apart as a result of treaties. They became other nations or mandates, territories that the League of Nations gave to other European powers to rule after the war.

36. For instance, France controlled Syria & Lebanon while Great Britain controlled Palestine & Iraq. In the Balfour Declaration, British foreign minister wanted to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Eventually, Transjordan was created from this country. Mandates were supposed to be territories until they were able to govern themselves.

Russian Revolution

37. The Bolsheviks were a small Marxist group who wanted to change life in Russia. The leader was Vladimir Lenin. Their goal was to overthrow the czar. If the czar was overthrown, industrial workers could govern Russia. Czar Nicholas II hoped war would unite Russia & stop talk of revolution. Patriotism increased rapidly, but Russia was not ready for war. Russia lacked factories/supplies, transportation system, modern equipment, and competent military leaders.

38. In 1915, Nicholas II took command of Russian military. If Russia failed in WWI, so would Nicholas II. Food & other goods grew scarce and peasants grew desperate. Nicholas II went to war and left Alexandra in charge (unpopular). Alexandra took advice from Rasputin (corrupt/immoral).

39. On March 8, 1917, in Petrograd, Russia unhappy citizens marched. Police & soldiers were sympathetic to the marchers. The Duma (Russia's legislature) defied Nicholas II and on March 15, 1917 Nicholas II forced to abdicate.

40. The Duma established a temporary government with Aleksandr Kerensky as the leader. Many Russians didn't like this government. The Bolsheviks wanted basic changes. Lenin was still the leader. In mid-1917, Kerensky's government was still fighting Central Powers in WWI. The Russian army was weak & collapsed.

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41. In November 1917, the Bolshevik Red Guard attacked Kerensky's government. Kerensky's government didn't put up much of a fight. Lenin established a radical communist program that made private ownership illegal. Land was redistributed to peasants.

42. Lenin wanted to end Russia's involvement in war. Leon Trotsky was sent to negotiate with the Central Powers. Russia lost much land to Central Powers because of lack of strong military. Some Russians disliked the negotiations & their results. The opponents of Bolsheviks were the White Army including army leaders, political opponents, and wealthy Russians.

43. France & United States supported the White Army. The fighting & famine of the Russian revolution cost millions of lives. By late 1920, the Bolsheviks triumphed. In 1921, a New Economic Policy was introduced permitting some capitalist activity and by 1922, the economy began to improve. Russia reunited with neighboring lands that had belonged to Russian Empire and became the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or (USSR) or Soviet Union.

Map:

Be able to locate the following nations:

1. Germany
2. Austria-Hungary
3. Ottoman Empire
4. France
5. Italy
6. Belgium
7. Russia
8. Great Britain