

How did WWI begin?

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| 1 | Who took part in WWI? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Europe was split into two alliance groups: the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance (Central Powers) The Triple Entente was made up of Britain, France and Russia; the Central Powers were Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. Although these were the main alliance groups each side had other allies, such as the Ottoman Empire who were allied to the Central Powers. |
| 2 | What problems between nations existed in 1917? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The four main areas that contributed to WWI were Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism and Nationalism. Many of the main powers were in competition with one another over the size of their armed forces and the amount of land they controlled. The system of alliances meant if two nations went to war then others would have to join to support their allies. |
| 3 | Why was the assassination of the Archduke important? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Archduke Franz Ferdinand ruled Austria-Hungary, part of which wanted to break off and form Yugoslavia. He visited Sarajevo in Bosnia but security was poor and a Serbian terrorist group successfully killed him. This meant Austria declared war on Serbia. Russia declared war on Austria in return and soon all the main powers were involved. |

How did WWI end?

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| 1 | Why was Germany defeated? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Britain and its allies cut off supplies to Germany after the Battle of Jutland as German ships could not get out of port. Many German people fell into poverty and blamed the War for this as they felt Germany was likely to lose anyway. Late in the war the USA joined on Britain’s side. It was hugely wealthy, had the best equipment, and one million men. |
| 2 | What was the Treaty of Versailles? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Treaty was signed in 1919 and aimed to work out what to do with a defeated Germany. The Treaty was bad for Germany. It removed lots of important land, limited their military and was humiliating. The worst consequence was blame for the war, which meant Germany had to pay £6.6bn in reparations which it could not possibly afford. This later destroyed the German economy. |
| 3 | How did people in Germany and elsewhere respond to the Treaty? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Many people in France felt it was too lenient and wanted Germany destroyed so it could never fight France again. People in Britain and the USA generally felt it was harsh and worried that Germany might resent it. Other countries such as Italy were angry as Britain, France and the League of Nations were the main beneficiaries. People in Germany hated the Treaty and Hitler eventually came to power, partly by promising to overturn it. |

What was it like to fight in WWI?

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| 1 | How were people recruited? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The government had to get people to join quickly as huge numbers of men were needed. One way they encouraged men to enlist was to allow Pals’ Battalions to form, where people could go to war alongside people from their community. The government later turned to conscription due to the need for men. |
| 2 | What was the actual fighting like? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Men dug trenches to live in at the Front to act as shelter from the enemy and from artillery shelling. Tactics were simple and huge casualties on both sides resulted from direct attacks on fortified enemy trenches. Fighting was terrifying, especially due to new weapons such as poison gas, tanks and flamethrowers. Men fought on because to be called a ‘coward’ was seen as shameful. |
| 3 | What were conditions like in the trenches? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conditions for ordinary soldiers were bad. Trenches were cold, wet, and full of rats and corpses causing disease. The horrible conditions and stress of battle often led to mental illness among soldiers, particularly ‘shell shock’. Generals tended to be careless with the lives of men and many soldiers lost the will to fight and disobeyed orders. This could lead to punishment or execution. |
| 4 | Who fought on Britain’s side? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> As well as its traditional allies many Commonwealth countries such as India, Canada, Australia and New Zealand sent troops. Sikh soldiers were particularly feared due to their appearance and fighting ability but were not always given the respect that they deserved by the British. |

What happened after WWI?

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| 1 | What was the impact of the Treaty of Versailles? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Germany’s economy was destroyed. People suffered greatly during the 1920s. Hitler was able to come to power in 1933 by promising to overturn the Treaty and restore German pride. |
| 2 | What attitude did Britain take towards Germany? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Many British people felt Hitler had a point about the Treaty and agreed that it was unfair. After the Wall Street Crash of 1929 the world fell into the Great Depression and poverty was common. Britain could not afford to fight a war and chose to use ‘appeasement’ to try and prevent Hitler starting one. |
| 3 | How did appeasement work? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Appeasement meant allowing Hitler to achieve his aims so that he did not start a war. It began with allowing him to re-arm and to break rules laid down in the Treaty. By 1938 Hitler wanted more land in the East and Britain and France allowed it to happen. Eventually Hitler’s plan to take over Poland became clear and Britain was forced to declare war when he invaded it in September 1939. |

Key word

Definition

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| Archduke | The heir to the Austrian throne who was killed in Sarajevo in 1914. |
| Assassination | An organised murder usually carried out for money or for political reasons. |
| Militarism | Competition between countries over the size and strength of armed forces. |
| Alliances | Agreements between countries to fight in each other’s defence. |
| Imperialism | Competition between countries to acquire different regions to rule over. |
| Nationalism | Belief that one’s own country is the strongest and best. |
| Enlistment | Joining the army voluntarily. |
| Conscription | Being made to join the army. |
| Pals’ Battalions | Sections of the army recruited from a single community or area. |
| Trench | A deep, fortified ditch dug for protection at the Front in WWI. |
| Court-martial | A court in charge of crime and punishment for soldiers in wartime. |
| Shell shock | A condition caused by stress that made sufferers act in unpredictable ways. |
| Sikh | A follower of the Sikh religion generally originating from North-West India. |
| Armistice | The peace agreement of 11 th November 1918 that ended WWI. |
| Treaty of Versailles | The formal agreement of 1919 that aimed to work out what to do with Germany after its defeat. |
| League of Nations | A multinational group formed after WWI with the aim of using international debate and co-operation to stop war being used to solve issues. |
| Appeasement | The practice of allowing Hitler to achieve his aims to avoid starting war. |

What were the key locations of the Second World War?

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| 1 | What happened in Western Europe? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In May 1940 Germany invaded Holland, Belgium and France. Germany won easily but many British and French soldiers were successfully evacuated from Dunkirk. Germany was unsuccessful in defeating Britain during the Battle of Britain. The D-Day landings of June 1944 were the beginning of the Allied invasion of Western Europe, and Germany was defeated in May 1945. |
| 2 | What happened in Eastern Europe? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Germany started the war by invading Poland in September 1939. Germany and the USSR became allies shortly before the war. Germany invaded the USSR in June 1941 but its armies were defeated at Stalingrad between August 1942 and February 1943. The USSR's army then invaded Germany and took Berlin in May 1945. |
| 3 | What happened elsewhere in the world? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Japan and China were at war from 1937 onwards and this continued until Japan's surrender to the Allies in August 1945. Japan's raid on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 led to war with the USA. Britain struggled against Japan from 1942 until 1944, but after the Battles of Imphal and Kohima successfully re-claimed Burma. The USA and Australia fought Japan in the Pacific War, which ended with the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. |

What were the key turning points of the Second World War?

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| 1 | How did events in Western Europe change the war? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hitler believed that Britain had been defeated at Dunkirk, but the British won the Battle of Britain and were able to continue the war after October 1940. The D-Day landings enabled British, US and Canadian troops to enter France and later invade Germany. |
| 2 | How did events in Eastern Europe change the war? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 started the war. The German defeat at Stalingrad meant that their wish to defeat the USSR was now impossible, and it led to the Soviet invasion of Germany during 1943-45. Germany surrendered in May 1945 soon after Hitler's suicide. |
| 3 | How did events elsewhere in the world change the war? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 led to war between Japan and the USA. The Battle of Midway in June 1942 damaged the Japanese navy so badly that it could no longer compete with the Allies in the Pacific. The Battles of Imphal and Kohima ended the Japanese desire to occupy India and eventually enabled Britain to expel the Japanese from Burma. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki persuaded Japan to surrender in August 1945, which meant the end of the Second World War. |

What were the key outcomes of the Second World War?

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| 1 | What were the key outcomes for Britain? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Britain was never invaded and kept its strong navy. Britain kept its empire for a short time but many nations sought independence and so the British Empire became weaker. Britain became a member of the UN's original Security Council. |
| 2 | What were the key outcomes for Germany? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Germany was defeated and suffered enormous destruction. The Nazi state was completely destroyed and many of its key individuals who had survived the war were tried and executed for war crimes, including perpetrating the Holocaust. |
| 3 | What were the key outcomes for Britain's allies? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The USA became the richest nation in the world and the key member of the UN Security Council. The USSR rapidly fell out with the USA and soon rejected its membership of the UN Security Council after Communist China was excluded from it in 1949. China became a member of the UN Security Council but after the Communists won the Chinese Civil War in 1949, it was excluded from the UN. |
| 4 | What were the key outcomes for Germany's allies? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Italy had swapped sides during the war and an Allied-friendly government had been set up. Japan was defeated and suffered terrible devastation. Japan's entire society was dismantled and the country was placed under US occupation until 1950, although the Japanese emperor kept his role as he had organised the surrender. |

What are the key misconceptions about the Second World War?

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| 1 | "Britain stood alone in 1940". | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Britain had a huge Empire of 500 million people and many of them played a hugely important role in the war. Britain had a much stronger air force and navy than Germany and was never in danger of losing the Battle of Britain. |
| 2 | "Britain won the war" | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Britain played a very important role in the war, both in Western Europe and in Asia. Britain had a huge Empire and powerful allies. The main decision-making powers were the USA and USSR. Germany's only real chance of winning the war was to do it quickly. Once both the USA and USSR had entered the war Germany stood almost no chance of victory. |
| 3 | The Nazi state had an "unstoppable war machine". | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Nazi state was very inefficient and many key commanders were incompetent, making terrible military decisions. Hitler was in charge of overall military strategy but he had no experience of command and little idea of what he was doing. Germany's armed forces suffered constantly from insufficient supplies (especially fuel) and equipment (especially winter clothing and equipment during the invasion of Russia). Germany's air force and navy were relatively weak. |

| Key word | Definition |
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| Capitalist | A system in which individuals make their own choices and work for themselves. |
| Communist | A system where the state controls all aspects of personal and economic life. |
| Isolationist | A belief that countries should focus on themselves and not get involved in global issues. |
| Interventionist | A belief that strong countries have a responsibility to become involved in global issues. |
| Empire | Worldwide territory controlled/ruled by a nation. |
| Operation Dynamo | The codename for the evacuation of Dunkirk. |
| Radar | Technology allowing the location of objects to be picked up by radio waves. |
| Luftwaffe | The German air force. |
| Neutrality | When a country refuses to take part in a war or show favour to any side in it. |
| Occupation | When a country temporarily takes control of another country. |
| Resources | Raw materials such as oil, coal, water. |
| Atomic Bomb | A bomb in which explosive power comes from nuclear reactions, not chemicals. |
| Operation Overlord | The codename for the D-Day landings. |
| D-Day | The codename for the invasion of Europe on 6 th June 1944. The 'D' does not stand for anything. |
| Casualties | The term for people killed, wounded or reported missing in battle. |
| United Nations | A multinational group formed after the Second World War which was intended to supervise world affairs and prevent war. |
| Security Council | The five key member states of the UN which were in charge of world peace, helped by ten other nations on a rotating basis. |