

World War I

To learn more about what happened during WWI, you will travel around to different tables and complete a task to help you better understand The War to End All Wars!

Events –

At this station, you will need to complete a timeline of the main events that happened during WWI.

Inventions –

During WWI, many new inventions were invented. Describe each invention and what it meant for countries fighting in The Great War.

Trench Warfare –

After learning about Trench Warfare, pretend you are a soldier fighting during WWI and are living in the trenches. Write a letter to someone describing life in the trenches.

Loses During WWI –

The Great War was the bloodiest war to date. Altogether over 10 million troops and 5 million civilians died. Almost every family in Europe lost a son, a husband, a father, or brother during WWI. Based on the number of casualties of each country, complete a bar graph representing this information. Remember to include a title and labels for the x and y-axis. Then answer the following questions.

1. Which country had the most deaths during WWI?
2. Which side (alliance) lost the most men?
3. Altogether, how many people died during WWI?



Important Dates:

On June 28, 1914, a member of the terrorist organization named the Black Hand assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary. The Black Hand wanted to unite all Serbs under one government. A month later on July 28, 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia because Serbia did not stop all Austria-Hungary feelings and did not think Austrian officials should handle the trials of the people responsible for the deaths of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife. Four days later on August 1, 1914, Germany declares war on France for being allies with Russia. On August 4, 1914, Germany marched through the neutral country of Belgium to attack France. This angered Great Britain so they declared war on Germany. Most of the fighting took place on the Western Front, the battle zone between France and Germany. In September 1914, France and Great Britain stopped German advancement. On December 25, 1914 fighting stopped and both sides played soccer with one another. Fighting proceeded the next day. On May 7, 1915, German U-boats sink the Lusitania killing 1,198 civilians including 128 Americans. Germans thought this vessel was carrying weapons for the British, even though the British and Americans denied it (we find out a few years later, the Germans were correct). On April 6, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson and the United States congress declared war on Germany because of the sinking of 6 United States U-Boats. On November 11, 1918, Germany signed an armistice, or a cease-fire that ended the Great War. On June 28, 1919, Germany and the Allies sign the Treaty of Versailles.

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Inventions During WWI

During WWI there were many new inventions in the form of weaponry. For example, automatic machine guns were invented and helped slow down the advancement of troops. Cannons, like "Big Bertha" could throw a 1,800 lb shell 9 miles. There were also two types of poisonous gas that were invented during this time. Chlorine gas would suffocate its victims and mustard gas would burn the skin and blind its victims. With poisonous gas came the first gas masks, however these didn't always work. Tanks were also used for the first time during WWI, however they were not effective until 1917. Germans used flamethrowers to fight off the tanks.

There were also new transportation devices that were invented during WWI. Airplanes were first used mainly for photographs and scouting purposes. Airplanes became more important toward the end of the war. The average life expectancy of a new pilot in WWI was 3-6 weeks. In fact, 77% of French pilots were killed. At this time, airplanes were known as "flaming coffins." The Germans also used a lot of U-Boats, or submarines for the first time. The Germans used U-Boats to sink many of the Allied Powers or Triple Entente's boats during this war causing great damage to the cost of the war.

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Trench Warfare

By 1915, the war on the Western Front, between Germany and France, had settled into "Trench Warfare." This is a system of elaborate tunnels where the men would fight, eat, sleep, and even die. The trenches stretched from the English Channel to the Swiss border. The area between the trenches was known as "no man's land" and contained rolls and rolls of barbed wire.



Fighting in the Trenches:

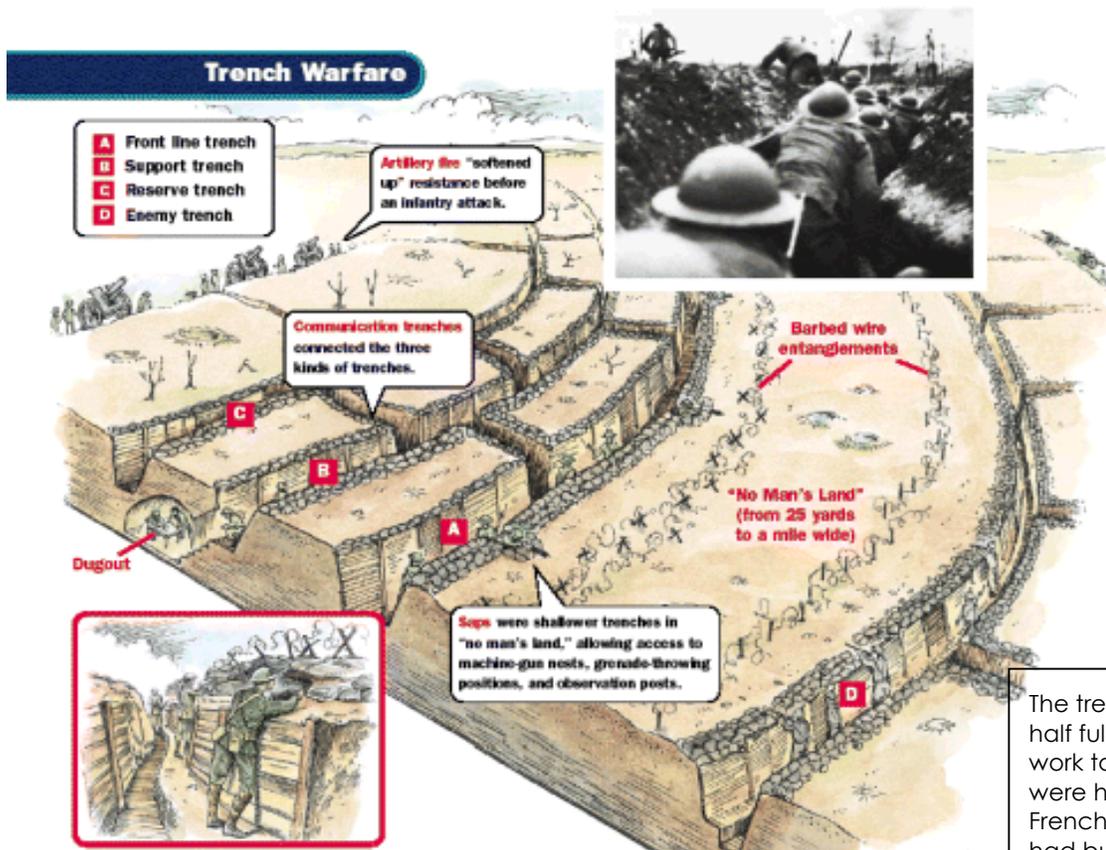
1. Stand on a fire step and shoot their machine guns at the enemy's trench.
2. Climb out of the trench and run toward the enemy trench.

This method was not very effective because there was little movement between the lines.

Conditions in the trenches:

The trenches were very wet, damp, and dirty. The food was not fresh and often stale. There were 6 major problems with this style of fighting.

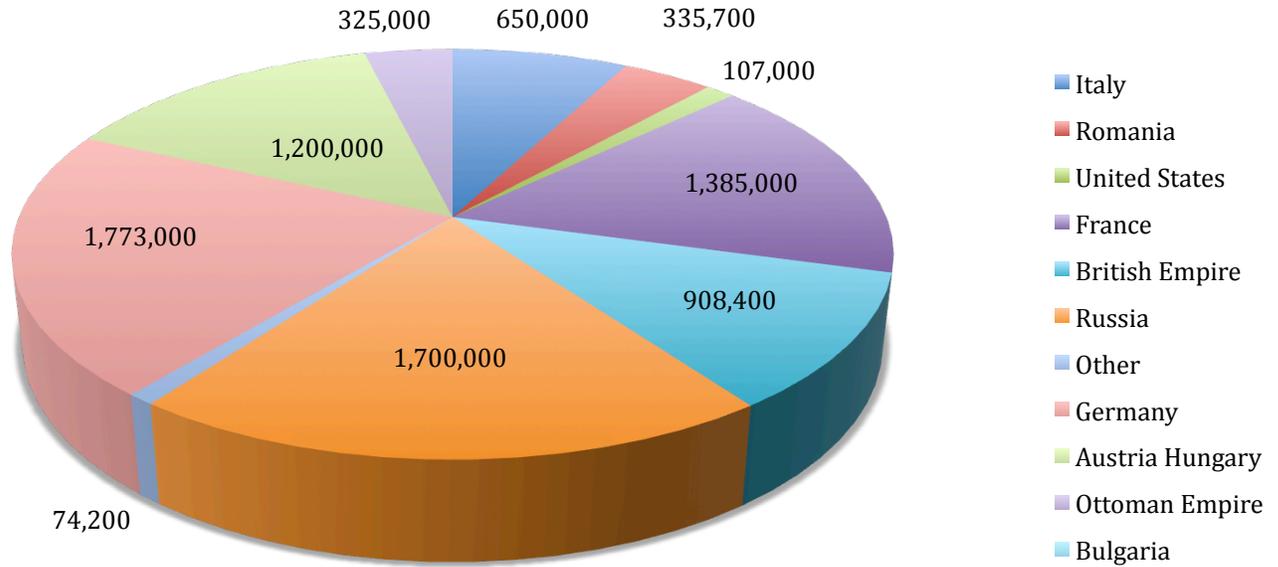
- Weather caused more rain and mud
- Trench foot
- Lice
- Black Rats
- Corpses
- Flies



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

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

World War I Military Deaths*



*Figures are approximate

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