

Paper 1 Section B Wider World Depth Study

Conflict and tension, 1894-1918

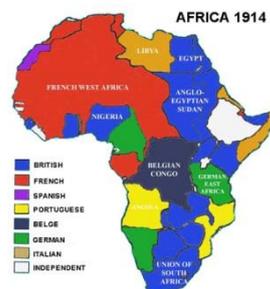
Summary Booklet

11. Causes first world war - background
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13. Failure of the Schlieffen Plan
14. Western Front 1 – tactics and conditions
15. Western front 2 – key battles
16. Gallipoli and war at sea
17. Ending the war



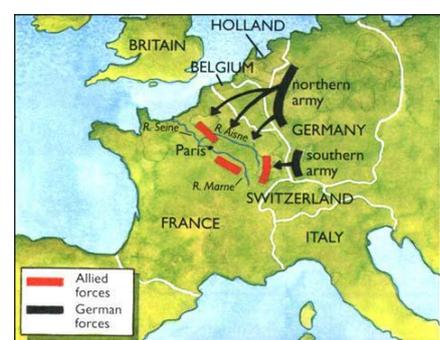
Revision sheet 11: Causes WW1: Background

- The Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed by 1882.
- The Triple Entente of Britain, France and Russia formed by 1907.
- The German leader, Kaiser Wilhelm II, wanted an overseas empire – her ‘place in the sun.’
- Many of the ethnic groups within Austria-Hungary wanted independence.
- Austria was particularly worried about her newly-independent neighbour Serbia and Russia.
- Britain was moving away from ‘splendid isolation’ as she was particularly worried about the German navy.
- Russians and Serbs were Slavs, with many other Slavs living in Austria-Hungary
- In the 1905-1906 Moroccan crisis Britain and France stood together, humiliating the Kaiser
- In 1908-1909 Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina and withstood Russian and Serbian protests as Germany promised support
- In 1911 France took over Morocco in spite of the Kaiser’s protest, including sending the gunboat Panzer to Agadir.



Revision sheet 12: Causes WW1: Outbreak

- Serbia emerged from a series of local wars in the Balkans, 1912-1913, as a powerful country and she was a close ally of Russia.
- Austria-Hungary considered the Slav culture of places including Serbia and Russia to be inferior.
- On 28 June 1914 the Austro-Hungarian heir, Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie were shot in Sarajevo, Bosnia.
- Austria-Hungary was looking for an excuse to crush Serbia, and felt confident of German support.
- Serbia accepted nine of the ten points of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum, but Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914.
- Russia mobilised her armies against Austria-Hungary and Germany on 30th July 1914.
- Germany had long planned for a war on two fronts, against Russia in the East and France in the west
- The Schlieffen plan was launched on 3 August 1914 with invasion of Belgium.
- The 1839 Treaty of London had guaranteed Belgian neutrality.
- Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914.



Revision sheet 13: Failure of Schlieffen Plan

- Germany had planned to get to Paris and defeat France within six weeks.
- Heroic Belgian resistance bought the British and French time to mobilise.
- The BEF led by Sir John French held the Germans up at Mons on 23 August 1914.
- The German Supreme Commander von Moltke withdrew 100,000 troops from the advance on Paris to deal with the Russian invasion in the east.
- German commander von Kluck advanced straight towards rather than swinging round Paris, with his weary, overstretched troops.
- British and French troops held up the Germans at the River Marne, pushed them back to the River Aisne, but could not drive them out of France completely.
- By 8 September 1914 both sides were digging trenches to protect themselves from snipers and shell fire.
- From 12 October 1914 the race to the sea began.
- Both sides tried to outflank the other as they realised they could not break through enemy lines.
- The British moved troops, usually by rail, to counter German efforts to outflank them.



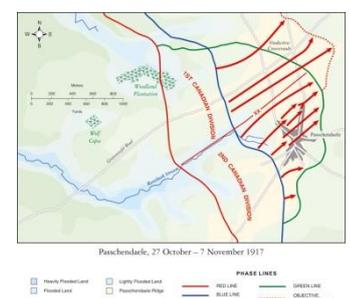
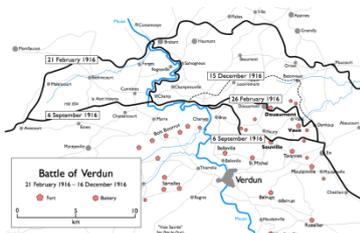
Revision sheet 14: Western Front 1 – Conditions and Tactics

- By November 1914 there was deadlock and stalemate lasted until 1918.
- A system of front-line, reserve and communication trenches developed, with no man's land between opposing lines.
- Generals ordered infantry charges 'over the top' after long artillery barrages.
- New weapons, protection and tactics were used as the war went on.
- Most of the work of soldiers in and around the trenches involved routines rather than fighting.
- Living conditions were awful – including rats, lice and trench foot.
- 346 British soldiers were executed after courts martial.
- More positive aspects of trench life included comradeship and good food rations.
- Artillery and machine guns were important throughout the war.
- New weapons and tactics developed during the war included poison gas, tanks and use of aircraft.



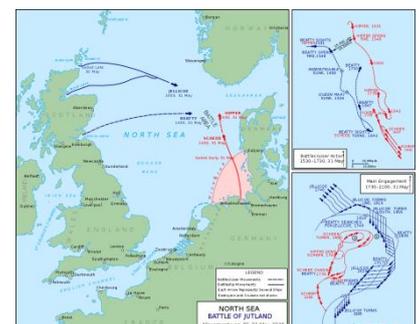
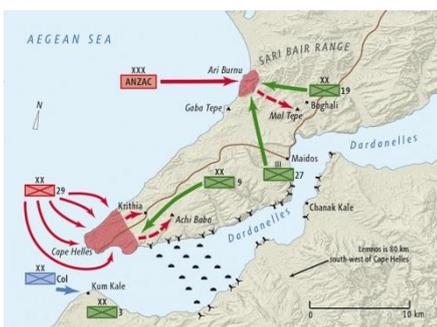
Revision sheet 15: Western Front 2 – Key battles

- In 1915 the French, British and Germans all tried and failed to break the deadlock.
- The French were unsuccessful at Champagne, the British suffered heavy losses at Neuve Chapelle and the Germans were driven back from Ypres.
- In February 1916 the Germans surrounded Verdun, with Falkenhayn planning to ‘bleed France white’.
- The French, led by Petain, held out, but both sides suffered huge losses.
- To relieve pressure at Verdun, the British, led by Haig, attacked at the Somme.
- On 1st July 1916 Britain suffered 57,000 casualties, including 20,000 deaths.
- They had failed to plan for the strength of German defences, in several places the barbed wire had not been cut and German machine guns had not been destroyed in the preceding 5 day bombardment.
- The fighting continued until November 1916, with combined losses of 1.25 million.
- In 1917 the Battle of Passchendaele (or Third Battle of Ypres) saw the British infantry unable to advance far because of terrible mud.
- At Cambrai in November 1917 350 British tanks made good progress but they were unable to hold the ground they captured.



Revision sheet 16: Gallipoli and war at sea

- Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, persuaded the British government to attack Germany's ally Turkey at the Dardanelles Strait.
- In March 1915 British warships bombarded forts that lined the Straits.
- Mines and shell fire from the forts led to the British then deciding on a land attack to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula.
- In April 1915 hastily-assembled British, French and Anzac troops attacked at Helles Beach.
- The Turks, supported by the Germans, had dug trenches and could not be removed from the peninsula.
- The Allies dug in, conditions for both sides were dreadful and a later attack at Suvla Bay was also unsuccessful.
- The Allies withdrew in December 1915 and Churchill was humiliated.
- There were no decisive sea battles during the war.
- In the 1916 Battle of Jutland Britain lost more ships than the the Germans but Admiral Scheer failed to destroy the British Grand Fleet, leaving Britain controlling the seas.
- The British eventually used convoys, anti-submarine nets and minefields to combat the considerable threat posed by German U-boats.



Revision sheet 17: Ending the war

- Germany resuming unrestricted submarine warfare and attempting to get Mexico to join the war led to America declaring war against her in April 1917.
- US destroyers helped escort convoys and they lent money to Britain whilst her troops were trained.
- By summer 1918 about 1 million US troops had landed in France.
- The Communist Revolution in November 1917 led to Russian withdrawal and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918.
- The Allied blockade was starving Germany of raw materials and food.
- In March 1918 German Commander Ludendorff launched the Spring Offensive.
- After early success, the Germans were held up, then pushed back by the Allies in the Hundred Days, from July-November 1918.
- On 9 November 1918 the Kaiser abdicated and Germany became a republic.
- On 11 November 1918 new German Chancellor, Friedrich Ebert, accepted the terms of the armistice which meant Germany could not re-start the war.
- Both Frenchman Ferdinand Foch, as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies, and Douglas Haig as British Commander played key roles in the Allied victory.

