

World War One

Year 6

Key end points of the 'World War One' unit are:

- Prior to 1914, tension was mounting in Europe with secret alliances
 - The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand resulted in Austria-Hungary declaring war on Serbia.
 - Following the assassination, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia
 - Britain declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914, after Germany invaded Belgium
 - WWI was fought on land, at sea and in the air
 - On the Western Front, World War I was fought from trenches. Soldiers, who came from all over the world, faced terrible and dangerous living conditions in the trenches
 - The people on the 'Home Front', took up jobs in factories, farms, offices etc.
 - The war ended 11th November 1918 when Germany and the allies signed a ceasefire
 - The Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1919
 - Over 15 million people were believed to have been killed during the war and many more injured
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This unit builds on chronologically from children's learning in Year 5 and allows children to apply their knowledge of Britain before the war to develop a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences of World War I on Britain, and the wider world. This unit focuses on developing two key substantive concepts: **Empire** and **War**.

An understanding of the role that empire played in European politics at this time is essential to understanding the growing tension that eventually sparked the First World War. The children will begin this unit looking at the causes that led to the war. They will be able to use their existing knowledge of the British Empire to understand how the desire to create vast empires, and the growing conflict, distrust and dislike among European powers meant that the assassination of one person-Archduke Franz Ferdinand-was enough to spark a world war that took the lives of millions of people.

During this unit, the children will be able to apply their knowledge of previous wars, such as the Seven Years War, to look at the similarities and differences between wars fought in the past and World War I. Many historians have argued that World War I was the first truly modern war and the children will be able to explore and discuss the reasons behind this. They will be able to use their knowledge of industrialisation to look at how the role of new technology resulted in the introduction of new weapons such as armoured tanks. Children will continue to build upon their understanding of war tactics, such as trench warfare, and weaponry when they study World War II and the Cold War.

It is important that teachers stress that this war was a 'world' war; not just a European war. The European countries involved also ruled empires across the world that supported them with food, supplies and men during the war. Britain's colonies sent over two and a half million men to fight alongside the British.

While this unit analyses the political context of World War I-looking at the causes and consequences of the wartime is also dedicated to learning about what life was like for people at this time. Children will have access to oral history to learn about life on the Western Front. This includes accounts from British soldiers as well as an Indian soldier, recruited from the empire to fight for Britain.

In contrast, the children will learn about the lives of those on the Home Front and the important role that women, and even children, played in supporting the war effort. Vocabulary learned in this unit, such as 'rationing' and 'conscription', will be used again when the children study World War II later in the year. Teachers may wish to focus on local examples of how people locally supported the war effort. This could include oral accounts (e.g. letters, diaries), war memorials and any other war memorabilia.

At the end of the unit, the children will look at the consequences of World War I, both at home in Britain and in the wider world. The children will learn about the Treaty of Versailles, which they will revisit when they learn about the causes of World War II. The children will also learn about the 'Representation of People Act', which will be studied in more detail next half term when the children learn about the Suffragette movement.

Lesson sequencing:

The unit begins by looking at tensions in Europe before 1914, and what led to the start of World War I. The children will learn who was involved in the war and where it was fought. It is a common misconception that the war was only fought in Europe by Europeans- this needs to be addressed in this first lesson. In Lesson 2, the children apply their knowledge of the Industrial Revolution to look at how and why World War I was fought differently to wars they have studied before. This lesson explains to children that WW1 was fought on land, at sea and in the air. Lesson 3 goes into more depth around how battles were fought on land, looking closely at trench warfare, both in terms of what it was and what life was like for those living in the trenches. Lesson 4 takes the children back to Britain and focuses on life on the 'Home Front'. This provides a great opportunity for children to look at life in their local area at this time. The unit ends with the end of the war. Children will be introduced to the Treaty of Versailles, which will be studied in more depth later on in the 'Rise of Hitler' unit. They will also begin to look at some of the consequences of the war.

Key substantive concepts focused on in this unit are **society, empire, war, propaganda, imperialism, patriotism, nationalism, invasion** and **democracy**.

Key disciplinary concepts focused on are **causation** (e.g. alliances, assassination), **consequence** (e.g. Treaty of Versailles), **similarities and differences** (how the war was experienced differently by different people), **continuity and change** (how warfare changed with the first 'modern war') and **sources and evidence** (first-hand accounts from soldiers, diary entry from Amar Singh).