

WWI Begins Activity

Europe on the Eve of WWI

1. How long had it been since European nations had been at war with each other?
2. Efforts to outlaw _____ had been underway in Europe.
3. Why do you think these efforts were ineffective?

Dance of Alliances Chart

4. Look at the alliances that formed before WWI. Which one do you think might be more powerful?

Why? (ask me if you need help)

5. Before WWI began, some historians at the time said that this perfect balance of power would prevent a major war from ever beginning. Why do you think they were wrong?

6. Compare the alliances before WWI and during. Which nation switched sides?

7. What is surprising about the alliances during WWI?

Map of Europe before WWI

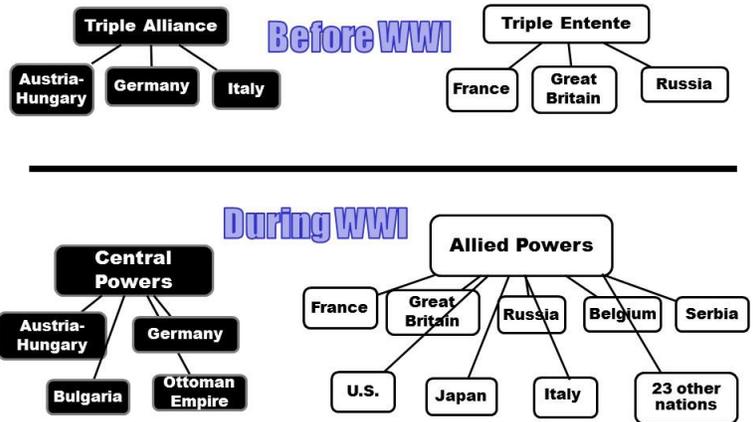
8. Get 2 colored pencils. Color the nations in the Triple Alliance one color and the Triple Entente another color.
9. What do you notice about the location of the Triple Alliance?
10. Look at Serbia and Austria-Hungary. Those two nations both claim rights to the regions called Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1908, Austria annexed, or took over, Bosnia and Herzegovina. These were areas with large Slavic populations. Serbian leaders, who had sought to rule these provinces, were outraged. In the years that followed, tensions between Serbia and Austria steadily rose. The Serbs continually vowed to take these regions away from Austria.

How might this cause tension in Europe?

Europe on the Eve of WWI

At the turn of the 20th century, the nations of Europe had been largely at peace with one another for nearly 30 years. This was no accident. Efforts to outlaw war and achieve a permanent peace had been gaining momentum in Europe since the middle of the 19th century. By 1900, hundreds of peace organizations were active. In addition, peace congresses convened regularly between 1843 and 1907. Some Europeans believed that progress had made war a thing of the past. Yet in a little more than a decade, a massive war would engulf Europe and spread across the globe.

Dance of Alliances in WWI



Immediate Cause of WWI

_____ assassinated by _____



July 23, 1914--Austria sent an _____ to Serbia



Serbia's response to the ultimatum: _____



Austria _____ Serbia's offer to the ultimatum



Russia _____ troops to help _____ Why?



August 1, Germany declares war on _____ and on _____ 2 days later



Germany moves toward _____ by invading neutral _____



_____ declares war on Germany.

Immediate Cause of WWI

Serbia and Austria-Hungary continued to struggle over their claims to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Into this poisoned atmosphere of mutual dislike and mistrust stepped the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and his wife, Sophie. On June 28, 1914, the couple paid a state visit to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. It would be their last. The royal pair was shot at point-blank range as they rode through the streets of Sarajevo in an open car. The killer was a Serbian and member of the Black Hand. The Black Hand was a secret society committed to ridding Bosnia of Austrian rule.

Because the assassin was a Serbian, Austria decided to use the murders as an excuse to punish Serbia. On July 23, Austria presented Serbia with an ultimatum containing numerous demands. Serbia knew that refusing the ultimatum would lead to war against the more powerful Austria. Therefore, Serbian leaders agreed to most of Austria's demands. They offered to have several others settled by an international conference. Austria, however, was in no mood to negotiate. The nation's leaders, it seemed, had already settled on war. On July 28, Austria rejected Serbia's offer and declared war. That same day, Russia, an ally of Serbia with its largely Slavic population, took action. Russian leaders ordered the mobilization of troops toward the Austrian border.

In response to Austria's declaration of war, Russia, Serbia's ally, began moving its army toward the Russian-Austrian border. Expecting Germany to join Austria, Russia also mobilized along the German border. To Germany, Russia's mobilization amounted to a declaration of war. On August 1, the German government declared war on Russia.

Russia looked to its ally France for help. Germany, however, did not even wait for France to react. Two days after declaring war on Russia, Germany also declared war on France. Germany moves toward France by invading neutral Belgium. Soon afterward, Great Britain declared war on Germany.

11. Go back to the alliances before WWI chart. How do you think those alliances impacted the beginning of WWI?

12. Do you think that WWI could have been avoided? Explain.

Fundamental Causes of WWI

A vertical chain of five circles connected by lines, with horizontal bars extending to the right from each circle, intended for student responses.