

Chapter 18- The World at War

Lesson 2- The Great War

- I. The War Begins
 - A. In August of 1914, Germany had a plan to defeat France in six weeks by sending troops through Belgium.
 1. Generals soon realized the planning a war on map was much different than the realities of war.
 2. Instead of six week the war lasted for four long years.
 - B. The German forces came to a standstill against the British and French forces along the Western Front in France.
 - C. On the other side, or Eastern Front, Russia tried to push into Germany while fighting Austria- Hungary.
 - D. In November 1914, the Ottoman Empire joined the war on the side of Germany and Austria- Hungary, creating the Central Powers.
 1. In 1915, Italy joined Britain, France and Russia, an alliance of powers known as the Allied Powers.
- II. A New Kind of War
 - A. The Great War proved to be the deadliest war since any other earlier and the reason for the high number of casualties was a new group of weapons.
 1. This group of weapons included the machine gun, tanks, airplane and poison gas.
 - a) This was the first war in which the machine gun was widely used.
 - b) The tank, an armored vehicle that rolled on track instead of wheels, could roll over land the soldiers could not.
 - c) This was also the first war that the airplane was used the survey enemy territory, drop bombs and fire guns.
 - d) Finally, last in this new group, poison gas the most terrifying weapon killing and injuring thousands of soldiers.
 - (1) The use of poisonous gas resulted in soldiers wearing and carrying gas masks.
 2. Another reason for the high death rate was trench warfare.

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- a) Armies would build trench and string up barbed wire in front as shelter to protect themselves from their enemy.
 - b) Soldier would crawl towards waiting enemy soldiers.
 - c) “No Man’s Land,” was the area of land between the two enemies’ trenches.
- B. The two worst battles of the Great War took place along the Western Front in 1916, one at Verdun the other at the Somme River.
1. Germany launched an attack at Verdun in February 1916, lasting about a year and resulting in more than 500,000 French and German casualties.
 2. On July 1, 1916, British forces attacked the Germans at the Somme River, resulting in a small gain for the Allies.
 - a) More British soldiers were killed on this day than any other day in British history.
- III. Women’s War Work
- A. Women also served in the military including 75,000 women serving in the British Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps.
 - B. Women performed many supportive tasks, including,
 1. Teaching soldiers to use gas masks,
 2. Drive ambulances,
 3. Work in factories, and
 4. Grow crops.
 5. Women also served as nurses getting close to the front line.
 - C. German women also supported their men, by sewing uniforms and sheets, cooking and serving as nurses.
- IV. America Enters
- A. When the Great War broke out the United States adopted a policy of neutrality.
 1. If America was going to enter the war, they were going to need a good reason.
 - B. To defeat the British the German began to attack British ships with their u-boats or submarines.
 1. The British depended on ships for both military and civilian goods and a German blockade would hinder their supply of goods.

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2. The German u-boats were a powerful weapon, but would ultimately result in America's entry into the war.
- C. In May 1915, German u-boats sank the British passenger ship, the *Lusitania*, killing 1,200 people, 128 of which were American.
 1. The sinking of the *Lusitania*, along with other American ships, pushed the American public closer to war.
- D. In 1917, the Americans were pushed even closer to war after the British intercepted the Zimmerman Telegram.
 1. The telegram was sent by the German with the intended recipient being Mexico.
 2. They promised Mexico that they would help them to reclaim the territory they had lost to the Americans, if Mexico joined the Central Powers.
 3. As a result of the telegram, Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany, which they did on April 6, 1917.
- E. American troops began arriving at the Western Front in early 1918, but throughout the spring the German forces were still dominating.
 1. By the summer of 1918, 2 million fresh American troops had arrived and by the fall of the same year the German troops were exhausted.
- F. The Central Powers began falling one by one, beginning with the Ottoman Empire, then Austria-Hungary.
 1. On November 11, 1918, Germany agreed to sign an armistice and the fighting was finally over.
- V. The Russian Revolution
 - A. On the Eastern Front the Russian Army was suffering from a high number of casualties just as the British and French were in the Western Front, but the Russian Economy had also collapsed.
 1. The military was running low on supplies and food and fuel were limited across Russia.
 - B. In March 1917, the Russian Revolution had broken out.
 1. The people of Russia demanded an improvement of their living conditions, even soldiers joined the protesters.

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2. Czar Nicholas II was forced to give up the throne, but conditions did not improve.
 - C. The Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, who followed the economic and social system of communism, took control over Russia.
 1. They promised peace, bread and land for all Russians.
 2. The Soviets took control over the Russian government on November 7, 1917.
 - D. At this time Germany forced Russia to sign a treaty giving Germany a lot of Russian territory.
 - E. A bloody civil war then broke out between the communists and non-communists, lasting until 1920.
 1. The United States, Great Britain and Japan all sent aid to the non-communists during the civil war.
 2. In 1922, the communists leaders formed the Soviet Union.
- VI. Another Victory
- A. Women gained an important victory between 1917 and 1920- the right to vote in national elections.
 1. Women in the Soviet Union, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States among others were granted suffrage, or the right to vote.