


# WW1 1914-1918: Knowledge Organiser

## Long term causes of WW1

<b>Militarism</b>	An emphasis on military ideals and strength. Wanting your country to have a strong <b>Army and navy.</b>
<b>Alliances</b>	<p>A group of countries who promise to support and protect each other. Rival groups <b>Have rival alliances.</b> For a number of years tension between the main European powers has been increasing. In 1914 there were two main power blocks / alliances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Triple Entente</b>- Great Britain / France / Russia</li> <li>• <b>The Triple Alliance</b>- Germany / Italy and Austria-Hungary</li> </ul> <p>Each member promised to help its allies if they were attacked by a country belonging to another alliance.</p> 
<b>Imperialism</b>	The desire to conquer colonies, especially in Africa. This brought the powers into <b>Conflict: Germany wanted an empire. France and Britain already had empires.</b>
<b>Nationalism</b>	The belief that your country is better than others. This made nations assertive and aggressive

## Short term cause of WW1-The Assassination of Franz Ferdinand

**Cause:** In 1914 Austria owned Bosnia. Many Bosnians hated Austria and wanted to be free- known as **Nationalism**. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand was to become the next Emperor of Austria, so many Bosnians wanted to kill him. Many of these were part of the **Black Hand group.**

**Events:** Archduke Franz Ferdinand was inspecting the army in Sarajevo with his wife Sophie. Seven young Bosnian Serbs planned to assassinate Franz Ferdinand as he drove along the main road in Sarajevo. The first conspirator who tried to kill Franz Ferdinand threw a bomb at his car. He missed and was arrested. He decided to abandon the visit and return home via a different route to the one planned. No one had told the driver the route had changed. Unfortunately, the car stopped in front of Gavrilo Princip, one of the conspirators, who was on his way home thinking he had failed. Princip pulled out a gun and shot at Franz Ferdinand. Both he and his wife were killed.

**Consequences:** Austria-Hungary immediately blamed the Serbian government for the attack. On July 28, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and the fragile peace between Europe's great powers collapsed, beginning the devastating conflict now known as the First World War.

### Conscientious objectors

Conscientious objectors are people who refused to fight or be involved with war. There were over 16,000 conscientious objectors in Britain. These 'conchies' or 'had many different reasons for refusing to fight: Some were pacifists who were against war in general, some people felt the war was wrong or thought it went against their conscience or personal beliefs. Some were political objectors who did not consider the government of Germany to be their enemy, some were religious objectors who believed that war and fighting was against their religion. Groups in this section were the Quakers and Jehovah Witnesses.

## Recruitment and Propaganda

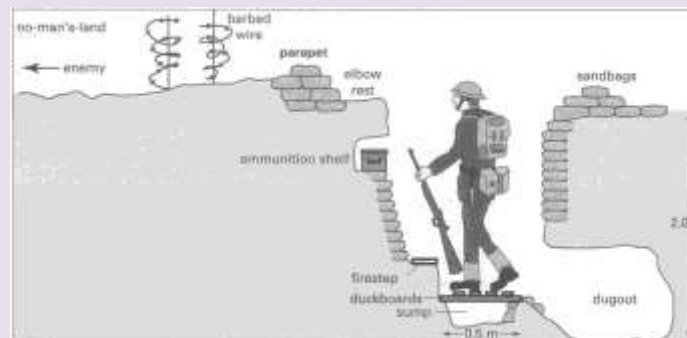
When war broke out, Britain had a small army of around 250,000 professional soldiers. Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War told the government that Britain needed at least one million men. The government began a massive recruitment drive. It set up recruitment offices in every town and city, it commissioned posters and pamphlets urging young men to join up. The campaign was hugely successful. There was a frenzy of enthusiasm. Football teams and bus depots joined up together entering the army in 'Pals Battalions'. No one, it seemed, wanted to be left out. In the first month over 500,000 men had signed up. By March 1916 over 2.5 million men had volunteered to join 'Kitchener's Army'.

### Why did men go to war?

- To fight alongside friends and family e.g. Pals battalion
- Duty to defend the King and Country
- To avenge the deeds of the enemy
- Fear of being seen as a coward
- For better money or wages.
- To learn a trade or skill

### Trenches:

Trenches were long, narrow ditches dug into the ground where soldiers lived all day and night. **Trenches were long, narrow ditches dug into the ground where soldiers lived all day and night.** In the middle, was **No Man's Land**, so-called because it did not belong to either army. Soldiers crossed No Man's Land when they wanted to attack the other side.



### Life in the trenches:

Soldiers in the trenches did not get much sleep. When they did, it was in the afternoon during daylight and at night only for an hour at a time. They were woken up at different times, either to complete one of their daily chores or to fight. During rest time, they wrote letters and sometimes played card games. The trenches could be very muddy and smelly. There were many dead bodies buried nearby and the latrines (toilets) sometimes overflowed into the trenches. Millions of rats infested the trenches and some grew as big as cats. There was also a big problem with lice that tormented the soldiers on a daily basis.

### Problems in the trenches:

- **Trench foot:** The wet and muddy conditions in the trenches caused feet to swell up and go black. The flesh would go rotten and the soldiers would be in terrible pain.
- **Lice:** The trenches did not have running water or showers, so soldiers found it very hard to keep clean. They soon became infected with lice that lived on all parts of their bodies.
- **Rats:** The dirty conditions and the lack of storage attracted rats to the trenches. The rats ate the soldiers' rations and crawled all over them when they slept. They carried diseases.
- **Toilets:** There was no running water or sewage pipes in the trenches. This meant that proper toilets could not be fitted.

## The Battle of the Somme

By December 1915 it was still a stalemate on the Western Front. Neither side had made any real progress towards victory. In February 1916 the Germans began an attack. They sent soldiers over the top to attack the French forts around the town of Verdun.

In response, the British planned an attack. At the end of June, a huge artillery bombardment took place for 5 days. On 1<sup>st</sup> July the order to "go over the top" was given. On the first day of the Battle almost 20,000 soldiers died and 40,000 more were injured. In total 1 million men were wounded or killed, making it one of the bloodiest battles in human history. By November when fighting ended. Only 6 miles of land had been gained by the allies.

## Shot at Dawn/Shell shock

Shot at dawn refers to many men who were killed due to desertion or cowardice during WW1. The British and Commonwealth military command executed 306 of its own men during World War One. Relatives and supporters of the executed men fought to win these soldiers a pardon. Their 'Shot at Dawn' campaign claimed the soldiers were not just cowards but were actually suffering from 'shell shock'.

**Shell shock** describes the type of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) many soldiers experienced during the war. It is a reaction to the bombardment and fighting that produced a helplessness appearing variously as panic and being scared, flight, or an inability to reason, sleep, walk or talk.

### The Home Front:

The Home Front during World War One refers to life in Britain during the war itself. The Home Front saw a massive change in the role of women, rationing, and the bombing of parts of Britain by the Germans (the first time civilians were targeted in war), conscientious objectors and strikes by discontented workers.



**Remembrance:** On the 11am of the 11th month 1918 (November 11<sup>th</sup>). This became known as Armistice Day – the day Germany signed an armistice (an agreement for peace) which caused the fighting to stop. The reason poppies are used to remember those who have given their lives in battle is because they are the flowers which grew on the battlefields after World War One ended.

