

HISTORY



YEAR 6

WHY DID BRITAIN GO TO WAR?

The Big Picture

In the first half of the 20th Century, the world was completely reshaped by two catastrophic wars that tore across the globe. Empires were ripped apart, countries rose and fell, families were devastated. We will look at the wider reasons for war and how they effected the world and individuals by teaching about events on a global scale, but then focusing back in on Sheffield to find out how those events affected daily lives of normal people.



End Point Knowledge

The War to End All Wars (28th July 1914 – 11th November 1918)

- The Unification of Germany into the German Empire after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 led to a growing feeling of unease amongst the other nations of Europe. France formed an alliance with Russia. In response, Germany formed an alliance with the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy.
- The heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Serbian-backed terrorist on 28th June 1914. This led to war being declared between Austria-Hungary and Serbia which set off a domino effect. Soon, Russia, Germany and France had also joined the war. When Germany attempted to invade Belgium to avoid the heavy defences in Alsace–Lorraine, Britain declared war. Before long, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, the Ottoman Empire, the USA, China and many others were drawn into the war as well.
- Trench warfare along the Western front was bloody and futile. People died for inches of ground. Barbed wire, machine guns and powerful artillery made crossing open ground extremely difficult. Tank warfare and gas weapons were developed in this time.
- The Treaty of Versailles was signed after the war. It set out new borders, military restrictions and the German payment of reparations (to the sum of 132 billion gold marks or 100,000 tonnes of gold). That's £376,000,000,000 in modern terms! Germany finally paid this off in 2010.

World War II (1 September 1939 – 2 September 1945)

- There are many causes that led to the Second World War, including world-wide economic depression, bitterness in Germany about the Treaty of Versailles; Hitler appealing to the German people as a strong leader who wanted to restore pride and land to Germany; and a policy of appeasement from the Allied powers as Germany rearmed.
- Almost every country on every continent (but Antarctica) in the world participated in the war.
- **The Axis:** Nazi Germany, Japan, Italy, Russia (until 1941).
The Allies: Britain, China, USA. Russia switched sides to support the Allies in 1941.

Key Vocabulary

Empire, Alliance, assassinated, terrorist, nations, League of Nations, Treaty of Versailles, reparations, artillery, cavalry, Blitz, persecution, concentration camp, campaign, atomic bomb, propaganda