

World War I & the Great Depression

World War I Basics

It was called “The Great War” and “The War to End All Wars.” World War I had many nicknames. It wasn’t officially known as World War I until World War II happened. It really doesn’t matter what we call the war. The impact it had on Europe and the world was immense. The war changed the way people thought about fighting, and about life, forever.

There were two major sides that fought against each other in World War I. One side was called the Allies. An **ally**¹ is someone who promises to come to your aid if something threatens you. The main Allies were Britain, Russia, France, and the United States. The Central Powers fought against the Allies. The Central Powers were Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. They were first called the Central Powers because Germany and Austria-Hungary are located in Central Europe.

Most of World War I was fought in Europe. The opposing armies lined up face to face and fought each other all along the Western Front and the Eastern Front.

Fighting began in 1914 when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. The fighting quickly spread. For three years, Europe was **entrenched**² in deadly warfare. It wasn’t until 1917 that the United States entered the war on the side of Britain, France, and Russia. In 1918 the Great War finally ended. Before World War I, no one would have believed that such destruction and **devastation**³ were possible.

¹ **ally** – someone who defends you against enemies; someone who is on your team

² **entrenched** – deeply involved

³ **devastation** – widespread damage and ruin

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What were the names of the two sides fighting in World War I?
 - a. the Central Powers and the United Powers
 - b. Europe and Russia
 - c. the Allies and the Central Powers
 - d. Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire

2. The author lists countries in this passage in order to
 - a. prove that the war was fought all over the world.
 - b. inform the reader who fought on which side.
 - c. explain why each country joined the war.
 - d. show how many countries were destroyed.

3. Why does the author most likely say “it doesn’t matter what we call the war?”
 - a. It is the only world war in history, so we know which war we are talking about.
 - b. What we call the war does not change how important and devastating it was.
 - c. We can come up with nicknames for it, but Europeans call the war something else.
 - d. The war goes by too many names so we should just say what years the war was.

4. Read the following sentence: “The **opposing** armies lined up face to face and fought each other all along the Western Front and the Eastern Front.”

The word **opposing** means

- a. evil or villainous
 - b. in conflict with each other
 - c. unprepared, not ready
 - d. very similar to each other
-
5. This passage is mostly about
 - a. why the United States entered the war.
 - b. how the war was different from previous wars.
 - c. how the war was fought and why it ended.
 - d. who was involved and when the war happened.