The World War I Era, 1900–1919

If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurables sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.

—Wilfred Owen, from “Dulce et Decorum Est”

British poet Wilfred Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum Est” is one of the most famous war poems of the twentieth century. Most of the poem describes the horrors of modern warfare, and the final lines of the excerpt, translated as “It is sweet and noble to die for one’s country,” he labels “the old Lie.” World War I, which lasted from 1914 to 1918, was known as the Great War, not because of its positive nature, but because of the immense scale of the fighting. No previous war had involved as many nations from different parts of the world and few had killed as many soldiers and civilians. However, World War I did more than create an enormous body count. It fundamentally weakened the Western European powers, thus encouraging the growth of nationalism and appeals for self-rule within European colonies in Asia and Africa. The treaties signed at the end of this war arguably set the stage for World War II. World War I was easily one of the most influential events of the twentieth century.

Immediate Causes of the Great War

The final straw in a series of events that led to World War I was Gavrilo Princip’s assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, on June 28, 1914. Princip, a Serbian nationalist, was a member of the Black Hand, a nationalist organization devoted to ending Austro-Hungarian presence in the Balkans. From the Austro-Hungarian perspective, the Black Hand was a terrorist group. Immediately following the assassinations, the Austro-Hungarian Empire sent an ultimatum to the Serbian government, demanding that it work to end all anti-Austrian agitation in Serbia. When the Serbian government rejected the ultimatum, the Austro-Hungarian Empire looked to
its ally Germany, a stronger nation with more firepower, for military assistance to punish Serbia. Serbia, populated by ethnic Slavs looked to other Slavic countries, particularly Russia, for help. Russia and Germany’s entrance into the conflict changed a minor issue into a large war in August 1914.

**Long-Term Causes of the Great War**

Princip’s actions were not the sole cause of World War I. Rather, tensions in Europe had been simmering for decades. One way to remember the sources of such tensions is with the acronym MAIN: militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism.

**Militarism** Defined as aggressive military preparedness, *militarism* celebrates war and the armed forces. European powers had been competing for dominance; one way to prove their strength was to invest in the military. Great Britain and Germany in particular spent a great deal of money on building up their armies and navies, heavily recruiting young men to join their armed forces, and buying more ships and other military hardware. A nation’s militaristic attitude influenced its public to view war as a festive competition, more similar to a game than to a gravely serious matter.

**Alliances** In their quest for power, European nations also formed *secret alliances*, groups whose members secretly agree to protect and help one another when attacked. When one member of an alliance was attacked in any way, the other members of the alliance were expected to stand up for that particular member. This system explains why Russia and Germany were ready to jump into the conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary.

Further, countries that were allied with particular countries were also sworn enemies of members of other alliances. For example, Britain and France were allies with Russia in the *Triple Entente*, but they also viewed Germany as a rival. France was bitter that Germany had taken French land during the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871). Britain competed with Germany for colonies in Africa. After the war began, the Triple Entente added the United States, China, and Japan. This diverse group became known as the *Allies* during World War I.

The Allies’ rival alliance before the war was known as the *Triple Alliance*, composed of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. However, when the war began, Italy remained neutral and then in 1915 switched its allegiance and joined the Allies. At the outbreak of the war, the Ottoman Empire joined the Triple Alliance, which was also called the *Central Powers*.

**Imperialism** The alliance system developed largely because Western European countries became bitter rivals for global domination. One of the most important ways these nations could assert their power and generate wealth was to own overseas colonies. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, for example, Western European countries scrambled for any available land in Africa to add to the colonies they already owned in South and Southeast Asia, in the Americas, and in the Pacific. Thus, imperialism was a driving force behind tensions in Europe leading up to the archduke’s assassination.
Nationalism  The assassination of the archduke in June 1914, the immediate cause of war, reflects the growth of nationalism, the final long-term cause of the Great War. On a basic level, nationalism originates from a feeling of pride in one’s identity. Multinational empires such as the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire had to contend with nationalist movements among their subject peoples. Serbs, such as Princip, were eager to rid their land of Austro-Hungarian conquerors, and Arabs tired of the limitations imposed upon them by the Ottoman Empire. Both groups were seeking self-determination—the idea that peoples of the same ethnicity, language, culture, and political ideals should be united and should have the right to form an independent nation state. Militant nationalists among Serbs and Arabs fought on the side of the Allies, thus extending the boundaries of the Great War.

Understanding the role of militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism during the years leading up to 1914 is essential to comprehension of this complicated conflict.

Changes in Warfare

Many modern-day films such as Saving Private Ryan, set during World War II, and Platoon, set during the Vietnam War, show that war is not a glorious experience, but most Europeans saw warfare differently during the first few months of World War I. Hundreds of thousands of teenage boys enthusiastically enlisted in the military, dreaming of heroism. Wartime assemblies sounded more like high school pep rallies, in which speakers naively predicted swift and easy victories in battles against supposedly inferior enemies. Leaders of some of the socialist parties were among the few Europeans who spoke out against the war. Even socialists were divided on the issue, however, as many supported the war effort of their nation.

At the time, few people actually understood how brutal twentieth-century warfare could be. Only over the years of fighting would the horrific effects of new advances in war technology and tactics, such as poison gas, machine guns, airplanes, submarines, tanks, and trench warfare become apparent.

- Poison gas was one of the most insidious weapons of the new style of warfare. Chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas were used during World War I. Soldiers were soon equipped with gas masks, which were effective when used in a timely fashion. Although fatalities were limited, the effects of a gas attack could be extremely painful and long-lasting. Many veterans suffered permanent damage to their lungs. After the war, international treaties outlawed the use of poison gas.

- Developed in the late 1800s, machine guns could fire more than 500 rounds of ammunition per minute, increasing the deadly impact of warfare. The weapon made it difficult for either side in a battle to gain new territory.

- Although submarines were used briefly in the American Civil War, they played a larger part in World War I, causing havoc on the shipping lanes of the Atlantic Ocean.
Airplanes in 1914 were still light and small and unable to carry many weapons. Therefore, they did not present much of a threat to troops or vehicles on the ground or ships at sea. Planes were used mainly to carry on reconnaissance (observation) of enemy lines.

**Tanks** allowed armies to move across vast areas of difficult terrain, even over trenches.

The defining experience for most soldiers in this war was the time spent in the trenches, long ditches dug in the ground with the excavated earth banked in front in order to defend against enemy fire. Trench warfare was not a glorious way to fight a war. Combatant nations dug hundreds of miles of trenches facing one another, and soldiers slept, ate, and fought in the trenches for months at a time. Trenches were often cold, wet, muddy, and rat-infested. Many soldiers died from disease caused by the unhygienic conditions. Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and the 1930 film based on it, give a vivid sense of a soldier's life in the trenches during World War I. Remarque himself was a young German soldier during the war.

With both the Central Powers and the Allies using brutal weapons and tactics, neither side could defeat the other. The result was a bloody four-year *stalemate* in which the suffering and death went on and on. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting warfare during World War I with the warfare before and during World War II. See pages 516 and 542–543.)

**United States Entrance into the War**

Economic ties between the United States and the Allies comprised one of the underlying reasons for U.S. entry into the war in 1917. In addition, many Americans believed that the Allied nations were more democratic than the Central Powers were. A third reason was growing resentment against the Germans, especially for *U-boat* (submarine) attacks on ships carrying civilians, including Americans. On May 7, 1915, a German submarine attacked and sank the *Lusitania*, an ocean liner carrying more than 100 U.S. citizens among its passengers. The event that finally pushed the United States into the war was the interception of the *Zimmermann Telegram* in January 1917. In this document, the German government offered to help Mexico reclaim territory it had lost to the United States in 1848 if Mexico allied with Germany in the war.

**The Russian Revolution**

The Great War made an already unstable Russia even more chaotic. Russian troops suffered a number of defeats with devastating numbers of casualties. Government mismanagement led to fuel and food shortages during the winter of 1916–1917, causing popular uprisings in St. Petersburg. In March 1917, revolutionary groups overthrew Tsar Nicholas II. The Romanov dynasty, after 300 years of rule, collapsed.
The monarchy was replaced by a provisional government that included socialists, liberals, and conservatives. Vying for political power outside of the Duma, the Russian parliament, were several soviets, groups of workers or soldiers led by socialists, which promised the Russian people reforms such as land redistribution and better opportunities for education. A few months after the fall of the tsar, Vladimir Lenin returned to Russia from exile in Switzerland. He was the leader of the Bolsheviks, a party of radical socialists that seized power in November 1917, promising “peace, land, and bread” to hungry, war-weary Russians. (Test Prep: Create a chart that compares the Russian and the Chinese Revolutions. See pages 557–558.)

Throughout the 1917 upheavals, Russian troops continued to suffer an astounding number of casualties on the Eastern Front of the war against the Central Powers. Four months after he took control of the Russian government, Lenin appealed for peace with Germany. In March 1918, the leaders of the new Soviet Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, ending Russia’s involvement in World War I. The treaty called for Russia to hand over to Germany an enormous amount of land, including most of Ukraine. But the treaty gave the new Bolshevik government time to concentrate on building a Communist state based on Marxist principles of common ownership of all property. The Bolshevik government also had to fight a civil war against anti-Communist forces that were supported by France, Britain, Japan, and the United States. In November 1920, the Russian government declared victory.

**Total War**

Combatant nations intensified the conflict in World War I by committing all of their resources to the war effort. This strategy, known as total war, meant that a nation’s domestic population, in addition to its military, was committed to winning the war. Thus, millions of civilians, particularly women, worked in factories producing war materials. Entire economies were centered on winning the war. Governments set up planning boards that set production quotas, price and wage controls, and rationing of food and other supplies. They censored the media and imprisoned many who spoke out against the war effort.

Propaganda was another component of total war. Propaganda is communication meant to influence the attitudes and opinions of a community around a particular subject by spreading inaccurate or slanted information. Governments invested heavily in army and navy recruitment campaigns and other wartime propaganda. Posters and articles in newspapers and magazines often depicted the enemy crudely or misrepresented the facts of the war completely. For example, American and British propaganda demonized the German army, exaggerating reports of atrocities against civilians. Likewise, German propaganda demonized the Americans and the British. The use of highly emotional and often misleading information fomented hatred and bitterness across borders, among civilians as well as soldiers.
Posters recruiting sailors and soldiers for World War I in the United States and Great Britain reflected how governments used art and media to appeal to nationalist feelings in the early twentieth century.

A Global War

World War I was fought in Europe, Asia, and Africa and in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Not since the Seven Years’ War of the late eighteenth century had there been such a global war. Most of the major combatants in World War I ruled colonies in Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the Pacific. Competition for these colonies was one major reason for war. Imperialism extended the boundaries of the war, and major battles were fought in North Africa and the Middle East. Japan entered the war on the side of the Allies so that it could take control of German colonies in the Pacific: the Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands, Palau, and the Carolines. Japan also occupied a German-held port in China: Qingdao.

The British seized most of Germany’s colonies in Africa, but the Germans held on to German East Africa, now Tanzania. The British also defended the Suez Canal from an attack by the Ottoman Empire.

Colonial troops reinforced their home countries’ forces in several battles. Australian and New Zealand troops formed a special corps known as ANZAC and fought in a bloody year-long campaign at Gallipoli, a peninsula in northwestern Turkey, that resulted in heavy Allied losses with little to show for the effort. Canadian troops fought in several European battles. Britain drafted Africans and Indians for combat roles in Europe. Some 200,000 Gurkha soldiers from Nepal, India, served in the British Army in Europe and Southwest
Asia. France used Algerian, Chinese, and Vietnamese forces in support roles behind the lines. Some colonial troops fought in hopes that their efforts would gain them recognition from their colonizers, who often promised the colonies self-rule (ability to establish own government) after the war ended.

Arabs, long under the rule of the multinational Ottoman Empire, fought with the Allies because the British promised self-rule after the war if they were victorious. Arab troops attacked Ottoman forts in Arabia and present-day Israel and helped the British take over the cities of Baghdad, Damascus, and Jerusalem.

World War I armies included soldiers from Senegal in West Africa (upper left), France in Western Europe (upper right), India in South Asia (lower left), and Japan in Eastern Asia (lower right).

Casualties of the War

After three years of a bloody stalemate, the United States entered the war in 1917, despite considerable popular protests in the United States against American involvement. By the summer of 1918, when U.S. forces were finally in place in Europe, U.S. actions helped push the war in the Allies’ favor. Allied advances against the Central Powers forced Germany to surrender on November 11, 1918, now known as Armistice Day.

Between 8 million and 9 million soldiers died in the Great War, with more than 21 million wounded. In France, Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, less than half of all young men who fought for their countries returned physically unharmed. Soldiers who did return often bore emotional scars.
World War I Casualties

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<th>Country</th>
<th>Alliance</th>
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<th>Wounded (in millions)</th>
<th>Imprisoned (in millions)</th>
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<td>Allies</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<td>Central Powers</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<td>Allies</td>
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<td>Less than 0.05</td>
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</table>

Atrocities  Civilian casualties were harder to record, but estimates range anywhere from 6 million to 13 million. This was one of the first modern wars where civilians were considered legitimate targets in battle. Although the Allies’ propaganda often exaggerated accounts of atrocities, reports of German soldiers raping women and killing families during their march through Belgium were quite common.

The most shocking example of such atrocities were the deaths of between 600,000 and 1.5 million Armenians in Turkey. This action has been called the twentieth century’s first genocide, the attempted killing of a group of people based on their race, religion, or ethnicity. The Ottoman government alleged that the Christian Armenians, a minority within the Ottoman Empire, were cooperating with the Russian army, the Ottoman’s enemy during World War I. As punishment for this cooperation, the Ottoman government deported Armenians from their homes between 1915 and 1917 and forced them south to camps in Syria and Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq. Many Armenians died because of starvation, disease, or exposure to the elements, and some were executed by Turkish troops. Armenians have argued that the deaths constituted genocide, a Turkish attempt to eliminate the Armenian people. The Turkish government has said the deaths were the result of actions of war, ethnic conflicts, and disease, not genocide. (Test Prep: Create a graphic organizer comparing the Armenian genocide with the Nazis’ extermination of millions of Jews. See page 542.)

Pandemic  War-related deaths continued past Armistice Day in the form of an influenza epidemic. Under peacetime circumstances, a virulent disease might devastate a concentrated group of people in a particular region. However, in 1918, millions of soldiers were returning home as the war ended. As they did, they had contact with loved ones and friends, thereby facilitating the spread of the flu. In 1919, the epidemic became a pandemic (a disease prevalent over a large area
or the entire world), killing 20 million people in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. India alone may have lost 7 million people to the disease.

The worldwide spread of the disease was another sign that while nationalism remained a powerful political force, improvements in transportation were creating a global culture that would create global challenges. Whether people could create effective international responses was unclear.

**Dismay and Fear** A more intangible casualty of the war was the loss of a sense of security and hopefulness. The term *Lost Generation*, first used to describe American expatriate writers living in Paris after the war, came to be used more broadly to describe those suffering from the shock of the war.

**Paris Peace Conference**

The war itself greatly damaged Europe. However, the treaty conference held in its wake would have even more profound effects on the entire world. The leaders of the victorious countries at the *Paris Peace Conference* became known as the *Big Four*: Woodrow Wilson (United States), David Lloyd George (Great Britain), Georges Clemenceau (France), and Vittorio Orlando (Italy). The Italians walked out of the peace conference in a rage because Italy would not get Fiume, a town they had been promised for joining the Allies. Soviet Russia, later called the *Soviet Union*, was not invited to the conference because it had undergone a Communist revolution. Western leaders shunned Russian leaders because they were terrified of the spread of Communist ideas.

The Big Four had different visions of how to settle the peace. President Wilson’s pledge to establish “peace without victory” reflected his belief that no one country should be severely punished or greatly rewarded. France’s Clemenceau rejected this view: he believed that France, out of all the Allies represented at the conference, had suffered the most and thus deserved special considerations to be protected from Germany. He also argued that the victorious powers should seek some sort of revenge on the Central Powers for starting the war. Clemenceau complained that Wilson was an unrealistic idealist who was naive about European relations, even though Wilson had a Ph.D. in history. David Lloyd George tended to support Clemenceau’s ideas, but he often acted as an intermediary between the two differing points of view.

**Fourteen Points** Despite Clemenceau’s protests, Wilson pushed for his principles, which he outlined in a document called the *Fourteen Points*. He particularly wanted to create a *League of Nations*, an organization in which all nations of the world would convene to discuss conflicts openly, as a way to avoid the simmering tensions that had caused World War I. Although the other nations agreed to establish the League, the U.S. Senate voted against joining it and against ratifying the *Treaty of Versailles*, the 1919 peace treaty with Germany.

Wilson also believed that conquered peoples under the defeated Central Powers deserved the right to self-determination. Instead of the colonies and territories of the Central Powers being snatched up by the Allies, conquered peoples should have the right to decide their own political fate. Quite a few
new nations were created or resurrected in Europe: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The last three of these were home to Slavic peoples.

The Treaty of Versailles Because Wilson failed to convince France and Britain not to punish Germany, the Treaty of Versailles treated Germany harshly. Most notably, Germany had to pay billions of dollars in reparations (payment of money for wrongs committed) for damage caused by the war, give up all of its colonies, and restrict the size of its armed forces. Germans took the entire blame for the war. Signing the treaty was humiliating for German leaders. Moreover, the terms of the treaty caused tremendous damage to the nation during the decade following World War I. The German economy suffered from sky-high inflation, partly due to the reparations the country was forced to pay. The German people were bitter in the immediate aftermath of the Paris Peace Conference. Resentment toward the Weimar Government, which had agreed to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, set the stage for an extreme and militaristic political party known as the Nazis to take power barely 15 years later.

Effects of the War

The effects of World War I were many and varied for different countries and areas of the world. For example, the United States experienced a tremendous surge in its economy because of all the war materials and agricultural products it sold to Britain and the other Allies. By contrast, the economies of those countries that experienced the greatest damage were devastated by the war.

Effects on Colonial Lands While nationalist movements had been brewing for decades in colonies in South Asia and West Africa, the war renewed the hopes of people in these regions for independence. African and Asian colonial troops contributed thousands of soldiers to the Allied war effort. In addition, this disastrous war showed colonial peoples that imperial powers such as Britain and France were not invincible or even formidable anymore. The colonized peoples thought that the principle of self-determination, as expressed in Wilson’s Fourteen Points, would get them closer to self-rule. Nationalists in Africa and Asia hoped that the blood they had shed for their “home countries” would earn them some respect from Western Europe and thus begin a decolonization process.

The peace conference’s Big Three—Lloyd George, Wilson, and Clemenceau—were not at all interested in freeing the colonies. Wilson even refused to meet with a young Vietnamese nationalist, Ho Chi Minh, who requested to speak with him about the independence of Vietnam from the French. This rejection only fueled stronger nationalist movements in colonies scattered across the southern rim of Asia and in parts of Africa. The seeds of African, Arab, and Asian, nationalism were sown largely in the aftermath of World War I. (and Test Prep: Write a brief paragraph connecting self-rule after World War I with later movements for independence. See pages 573–590.)
Mandate System Arab rebels of the former Ottoman Empire were especially insulted by the results of the peace conference. They had been promised self-rule if they fought with the Allies. Instead, the Allies forgot all of their promises and, through the League of Nations, established a mandate system to rule the colonies and territories of the Central Powers.

MANDATES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER WORLD WAR I

Article 22 of the League of Nations charter specifically stated that colonized people in Africa and Asia required “tutelage” from more “advanced” nations in order to survive. For example, Cameroon, which had been a German colony, was divided and transferred to France and Britain as separate mandates.

Southwest Asia experienced enormous upheaval because of the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and Iraq all became League of Nations mandates. These Arab states were not yet sovereign lands but virtual colonies of Great Britain and France. This infuriated the Arabs who lived in these lands and set the stage for a nationalist movement known as Pan-Arabism—an ideology that called for the unification of all lands in North Africa and Southwest Asia.

Another source of conflict arose in 1917, when the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, which stated that Palestine should become a permanent home for the Jews of Europe. Those who supported a Jewish homeland were known as Zionists. After the Allied victory in the Great War, European Jews moved in droves to Palestine, which was controlled by the British.
March First Movement in Korea Like its victorious European allies that seized power in the Middle East and Africa after World War I, Japan expected to expand its role in East Asia. Japan had been increasing its influence in Korea since the 1890s, taking control of the country in 1910. The prospect of European support for a stronger Japan, and the mysterious death of the Korean emperor, caused Korean resentment to explode. On March 1, 1919, Koreans began a series of protests that involved as many as 2 million Koreans out of a population of 17 million people. The occupying Japanese forces cracked down harshly, killing several thousand Koreans. But the March First Movement demonstrated the power of Korean nationalism.

May Fourth Movement in China After World War I, Japan claimed the right to Germany’s sphere of influence in the Shandong Peninsula in northeast China. However, China had also supported the Allies, and it wanted to reclaim Shandong. At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, Great Britain and France sided with Japan. Infuriated, Chinese intellectuals and workers staged anti-Japanese demonstrations beginning on May 4, 1919. The May Fourth Movement symbolized China’s growing nationalism and demand for democracy. Angered by Europe’s support for Japan, many Chinese rejected Western-style government. They turned toward the Marxist model of the Soviet Union. Several May Fourth leaders joined the Chinese Communist Party.

Global Trends The protest movements in Korea and China, and other anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa, reflected the growth of nationalism after World War I. They were part of the same global trend that included the breakup of empires in Europe, the success of Communism in Russia, and the spread of anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States. Nationalism would continue to shape events around the world throughout the twentieth century.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WAS THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE A SUCCESS?

The Paris Peace Conference, according to most scholars, was a major failure, but they have not agreed on what went wrong. British economist John Maynard Keynes was among the first critics with The Economic Consequences of the Peace (1919). As the title suggested, Keynes focused on the economic issues that emerged. In particular, he attacked the reparation policy, which he considered harsh and short-sighted. Partially due to the influence of Keynes’s opposition to the reparations policy, the U.S. Senate rejected the Versailles treaty, and the United States never joined the League of Nations.

Defending Internationalism During the conference, American journalist Ray Stannard Baker had served as Wilson’s press secretary, and afterwards he criticized those who blocked Wilson’s efforts to build a viable international organization. By 1941, Europe and East Asia were at war again, and Wilsonian internationalism looked even more
attractive to some. Among these was American historian Paul Bird'sall, whose book *Versailles Twenty Years After* was sympathetic to the efforts to unite the world against militaristic dictators.

**Legacy of Trouble** By 2003, when Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan completed *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*, other problems from the conference were evident. Conference members had redrawn borders in the Balkans and the Middle East. Wars in both of these regions during the 1990s suggested that the settlement after World War I had failed to create viable states.

**Comparing Post-War Settlements** Not every recent scholar has focused on the shortcomings of the Paris Peace Conference. In 1996, Boston University historian William Keylor called for reevaluating the event. For example, he suggested that in light of the settlement of World War II, the treaties ending World War I do not look as harsh.

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**KEY TERMS BY THEME**

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<td>Big Four</td>
<td>trench warfare</td>
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<td>Big Three</td>
<td>U-boat</td>
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<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>Influenza epidemic</td>
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<td>pandemic</td>
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<td>Weimar Government</td>
<td>SOCIAL STRUCTURE</td>
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<td>Pan-Arabism</td>
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<td>Bolsheviks</td>
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<td>Lost Generation</td>
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MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1.1 to 1.3 refer to the passage below.

“Article 119: Germany renounces in favor of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers all her rights and titles over her overseas possessions. 
Article 160: By a date which must not be later than March 31, 1920, the German Army must not comprise more than seven divisions of infantry and three divisions of cavalry.
Article 231: The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.
Article 233: The amount of the above damage for which compensation is to be made by Germany shall be determined by an Inter-Allied Commission, to be called the Reparation Commission. . . .”

Versailles Treaty, 1919

1.1 Which two of the above articles from the treaty would have most directly harmed the German economy in the years after World War I?
(A) Articles 119 and 231
(B) Articles 119 and 233
(C) Articles 160 and 231
(D) Articles 160 and 233

1.2 Which negotiator at Versailles would have felt most satisfied with the terms of the treaty as demonstrated in these articles?
(A) U.S. President Woodrow Wilson
(B) German President Friedrich Ebert
(C) Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin
(D) French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau

1.3 Article 119 of the treaty most directly addresses which of the original causes of World War I?
(A) the growth of militarism in several countries
(B) the conflicts resulting from imperialism by Europeans
(C) the formation of political alliances among governments
(D) the spread of nationalism around the world
Questions 2.1 and 2.2 refer to the images below.

Source: Library of Congress
The British Parliamentary Recruiting Committee published this poster in 1915, soon after the war began.

Source: Library of Congress
This photograph of an Allied trench during World War I is titled “Removing the Dead from the Trenches.” It was not published until September 1919, when the war was nearly over.

2.1 Comparing the World War I poster from Great Britain and the photo of the trenches supports the interpretation that the British government believed it
(A) needed to persuade civilians of the seriousness of the war
(B) could recruit soldiers by appealing to their fear of the enemy
(C) should emphasize the positive side of military service
(D) wanted to portray military service realistically and honestly

2.2 Which set of ideas that spread after World War I was most directly supported by images such as the photo above?
(A) the attitudes of the Lost Generation
(B) the decision to create a mandate system
(C) the fear of the influence of Bolsheviks
(D) the desire of Zionists to settle in Palestine
Questions 3.1 to 3.3 refer to the passage below.

"Article 1: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, for the one part, and Russia, for the other part, declare that the state of war between them has ceased.

Article 3: The territories lying to the west of the line agreed upon by the contracting parties which formerly belonged to Russia [including Finland, the Baltic states, and the Ukraine], will no longer be subject to Russian sovereignty . . . . Germany and Austria-Hungary purpose to determine the future status of these territories in agreement with their population.

Article 5: Russia will, without delay, carry out the full demobilization of her army inclusive of those units recently organized by the present Government.

Article 8: The prisoners of war of both parties will be released to return to their homeland.

Article 9: The contracting parties mutually renounce compensation for their war expenses."

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, 1918

3.1 One benefit for the Soviets from signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was that it allowed
(A) the government to prepare for an attack by the Allies
(B) the country to defeat internal counterrevolutionaries
(C) Tsar Nicholas II to hold off the Communist revolution
(D) the country to set up a provisional government

3.2 One disadvantage for the Soviets from signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was that it
(A) required the Soviets to release prisoners of war
(B) forced the Soviets to pay war reparations
(C) took away Soviet colonies in Africa
(D) took away enormous amounts of Soviet land

3.3 Which article of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk seems to support the principle of self-determination as expressed by Woodrow Wilson after the end of World War I?
(A) Article 3
(B) Article 5
(C) Article 8
(D) Article 9
Question 1 refers to the poem below.

“If you could hear at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.”
[“It is sweet and noble to die for one’s country.”]

Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est,” 1920

1. Answer parts A and B.
   A. Describe ONE group of writers that would most likely agree with the poem’s sentiments and ONE group of people that would most likely disagree.
   B. Explain ONE element of World War I that meant that many soldiers were risking death for the country that they lived under, even though it was not their nation.

2. Answer parts A and B.
   A. Provide ONE reason that European powers gave for why the settlements after World War I in the lands that had been colonies before the war would help these lands.
   B. Provide TWO reasons the settlements after World War I created instability in the lands that had been colonies before the war.
THINK AS A HISTORIAN: APPLY THE SKILL OF SYNTHESIS

Synthesis is the process by which two or more things are joined together to create a new whole. For example, a synthesis of ideas to explain how World War I began might combine information about how the growth of militarism, the spread of nationalism, and the impact of alliances. Information about the number of deaths in the war probably would not fit into the synthesis. Which THREE statements would be most useful in creating a synthesis to justify the name “The Great War” for the conflict now called World War I?

1. The war included soldiers from all over the globe, including many from Africa and Asia fighting on behalf of a European country.

2. The alliance system that led to the conflict grew out of the Congress of Vienna, which has kept Europe relatively peaceful for a century.

3. The number of people killed and wounded in the conflict made it one of the costliest wars in human history to that time.

4. The conflict was total war, which meant that civilians were involved as providers of supplies for soldiers as never before.

5. Propaganda in the conflict often depicted the enemy crudely, and with little regard for accuracy.

Which TWO statements would be most useful in creating a synthesis to explain why the mandate system was likely to fail.

6. People in lands in Asia and Africa that had been colonized by Europeans were becoming increasingly nationalistic.

7. Europeans viewed people in their colonies as less capable of participating in government than were Europeans.

8. The Germans, French, and British had all developed colonial empires before the start of World War I in 1914.

9. The mandates created in the Middle East included Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and Iraq.