

HISTORY · Y4–Y6

World War One

Knowledge Organiser — Y4–Y6

Key causes

1

Alliance system

Europe was divided into two armed groups: the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy) and the Triple Entente (France, Russia, Britain). A conflict between any two pulled all in.

2

Assassination

Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was shot in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914 by Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist. This triggered the alliance system.

3

Militarism

European powers had spent decades building up armies and navies. War was seen as inevitable, even glorious.

4

Imperialism

Rivalry over colonies in Africa and Asia created tensions between European powers.

5

Nationalism

Strong national identity and resentment — particularly in the Balkans — created instability.

Key vocabulary

1

Trench warfare

Fighting from long ditches dug into the ground. The Western Front stretched 700km.

2

No Man's Land

The deadly stretch of ground between opposing trenches.



3

Conscription

Compulsory military service introduced in Britain in 1916.

4

Armistice

Agreement to stop fighting. WW1 ended at 11am on 11 November 1918.

5

Somme

Battle of the Somme (1916) — one of the bloodiest battles in history; over 1 million casualties.

Key timeline

Major dates of WW1

- 28 June 1914: Assassination of Franz Ferdinand
- 4 August 1914: Britain declares war on Germany
- September 1914: Western Front established; trench warfare begins
- 1916: Battle of the Somme; Battle of Jutland
- April 1917: USA enters the war
- November 1917: Russian Revolution — Russia leaves the war
- 11 November 1918: Armistice — war ends
- 1919: Treaty of Versailles — Germany takes blame and pays reparations

