World War I

Central Powers of Europe: Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire (Turkey).

Allied Powers: Great Britain, France and Russia

-These 2 powers went to war August 5, 1914.

- All of the powers involved had well-developed plans of attack. However, these plans did not go as they had expected. Something always went wrong because they did not take into account the unexpected.

-The Battle of the Marne:

- Took place on the Marne River in France, September 4, 1914.

- It was between the Germans and the French and British soldiers. The Allies were able to counter attack the Germans by shuttling fresh troops from Paris by way of taxis (sending large troops in through smaller areas – less chance for big attacks from the enemy). These troops were able to defeat the tiring Germans.

- This battle lasted 1 week (September 5-11) and was one of the biggest battles fought during the Great War.

* Soon into the war, it began spreading to other parts of the world besides just the European countries.
* Japan was the first non-European country to join the war.
* She had made an alliance with Britain in 1902 and now was called to honour that alliance.

The next non-European country to join was Turkey. Both the Britain’s and the German’s wanted Turkey on their side.

Turkey finally decided to join Germany and not Britain because Britain had failed to supply her with valuable battleships.

War at Sea

* In an effort to break British control of the seas, the Germans built a fleet of U-Boats which were underwater submarines. They sent their U-Boats to attack any ships bringing war supplies and materials to the Allies.
* A ship was in danger even if it belonged to a neutral nation, such as the United States.
* U-Boat attacks on American ships were an important reason why the United States finally declared war on Germany in April 1917.

New Weapons

Heavy Artillery:

* The big guns fire huge numbers of shells. They damage men’s brain and make their ears bleed. The noise and impact also give the men “shell shock” – they become partially deaf and their hearing, at times, does not return completely.
* The shells also turn up the land into a sea of muddy craters that make attacking the enemy trenches even more difficult.

WWI - 1917

America joins the War

* *The Lusitania* – British ship torpedoed by the Germans in 1915,.
* April 6, 1917 Britain, France and Russia were joined by a new ally: the United States of America. For a long time, President Woodrow Wilson kept America a neutral party in the war. But when the Germans began sinking the American ships with their U-boats in 1917, he no longer could remain this way and his patience was giving out.

The Zimmerman Telegram –

* This was the final straw in President Wilson’s decision to join the war.
* Arthur Zimmerman, Germany’s foreign minister, sent a telegram to one of his agents in Mexico suggesting that Mexico make an alliance with Germany. He suggested that the Mexicans could attack America’s southern states, Texas and Arizona. Wilson had no choice but to go to war.
* The Germans now began a race against time to win the war before the Americans arrived in Europe.

The Allied Victory

* The Allies, strengthened by fresh American troops, then launched an offensive against the Germans. They finally broke through the enemy’s defenses. Meanwhile, Allied troops in the Mediterranean region were forcing Turkey, Bulgaria, and Austria-Hungary to surrender. **On November 11, 1918, the German government agreed to an armistice (a ceasefire), and the war came to an end.**

How much did the War cost?

* World War I was the largest and most costly war mankind had suffered until that time. More than 65 million men went to war.

***PEACE***

**Paris Peace Conference – January 18, 1919**

- This is where the TREATY OF VERSAILLES was signed. This treaty was the symbol of the war being over. Germany had to sign it. They had to admit to their guilt in starting the war.

-The “Big Four” involved in the Paris Peace conference were:

1. Woodrow Wilson – United States
2. David Lloyd George – Great Britain
3. George Clemeneau – France
4. Vittorio Orlando – Italy

* Each of the Big Four were looking for something:

1. Wilson (US) – wanted the world to accept his document “Fourteen Points” – a general statement of humane and idealistic principles on how the peace settlement should be handled.
2. Lloyd George (Great Britain) – wanted to make Germany pay and to add to the British Empire.
3. Clemenceau (France) – wanted protection against future German attacks.
4. Orlando (Italy) – wanted land.

*Terms of the Treaty of Versailles*

*Article 51* – Alsace and Lorraine are returned to France.

*Article 231* – “Guilt Clause” - Germany accepts the responsibility for causing all the loss and damages done to the civilian population of the Allied Powers. It shall also pay for damages done to their property.

* Because the Germans were considered guilty for causing the war, they were ordered to pay 33 billion dollars to the Allied Forces.
* On June 28, 1919 – the Germans reluctantly signed the Treaty of Versailles.
* One of the major accomplishments of the Paris Peace Conference was the formation of the League of Nations. Its purpose was to promote international co-operation for improving health, education, labour, and basic well-being for all of the world’s people.