

## There's More Online!

- ✓ **BIOGRAPHY** Henry Cabot Lodge
- ✓ **BIOGRAPHY** John Pershing
- ✓ **BIOGRAPHY** Eddie Rickenbacker
- ✓ **CHART/GRAPH** Military v. Civilian Dead
- ✓ **IMAGE** Trench Warfare
- ✓ **SLIDE SHOW** World War I Technology
- ✓ **VIDEO** A Bloody Conflict
- ✓ **INTERACTIVE SELF-CHECK QUIZ**



## LESSON 3

# A Bloody Conflict

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • *Why do nations go to war?*

## IT MATTERS BECAUSE

*New technology caused both sides to lose millions of lives during World War I. The arrival of American troops helped the Allies win, but the peace treaty set the stage for another war to come.*

## Combat in World War I

**GUIDING QUESTION** *How did new technologies increase the number of casualties compared with previous wars?*

By the spring of 1917, World War I had devastated Europe. Old-fashioned strategies and new technologies resulted in terrible destruction. Many Americans believed, however, that their troops would make a difference and quickly bring the war to an end.

### Trench Warfare

Early offensives demonstrated that warfare had changed. Powerful artillery guns placed far behind the front lines hurled huge explosive shells onto the battlefield. More people were killed by artillery fire than by any other weapon. As one American noted in his diary:

#### PRIMARY SOURCE

“Many dead Germans along the road. One heap on a manure pile. . . . Devastation everywhere. Our barrage has rooted up the entire territory like a plowed field. Dead horses galore, many of them have a hind quarter cut off—the [Germans] need food. Dead men here and there.”

—quoted in *The American Spirit*, November 3, 1918

To protect themselves from artillery, troops began digging trenches. On the Western Front—where German troops fought French, British, and Belgian forces—the troops dug a **network** of trenches that stretched from the English Channel to the Swiss border. Both sides used barbed wire and a new weapon, the machine gun, to guard against the enemy. Attacks usually began with a massive artillery barrage. Soldiers then raced across the rough landscape

## Reading HELPDESK



### Academic Vocabulary

- network
- resolve
- adequately

### Content Vocabulary

- **convoy**
- **armistice**
- **national self-determination**
- **reparations**

### TAKING NOTES:

#### Key Ideas and Details

**Organizing** As you read, complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by listing the kinds of warfare and technology used in the fighting.



toward enemy trenches. Troops used any weapon available to kill the enemy. The new style of fighting, which both sides eventually utilized, resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of men and a stalemate on the Western Front. Offensive and defensive moves by the Allies and the Germans failed to be particularly successful.

## New Technology

Breaking through enemy lines required new technologies. The Germans first used poison gas in 1915, and the Allies soon followed. Gas caused vomiting, blindness, and suffocation. Both sides developed gas masks to counter fumes. In 1916 the British introduced the armored tank, which could crush barbed wire and cross trenches. But there were still too few of the slow, unreliable machines to revolutionize warfare.

World War I also marked the first use of aircraft in war. Early in the war, the Germans used giant rigid balloons called zeppelins to drop bombs on British warships in the North Sea. At first, airplanes were used to spy on enemy troops and ships. Then the Allies equipped them with machine guns and rockets to attack the German zeppelin fleet. Other aircraft carried small bombs to drop on enemy lines. As technology advanced, airplanes shot down other airplanes in battles known as dogfights. But early military aircraft were difficult to fly and easy to destroy. A combat pilot had an average life expectancy of about two weeks.

### READING PROGRESS CHECK

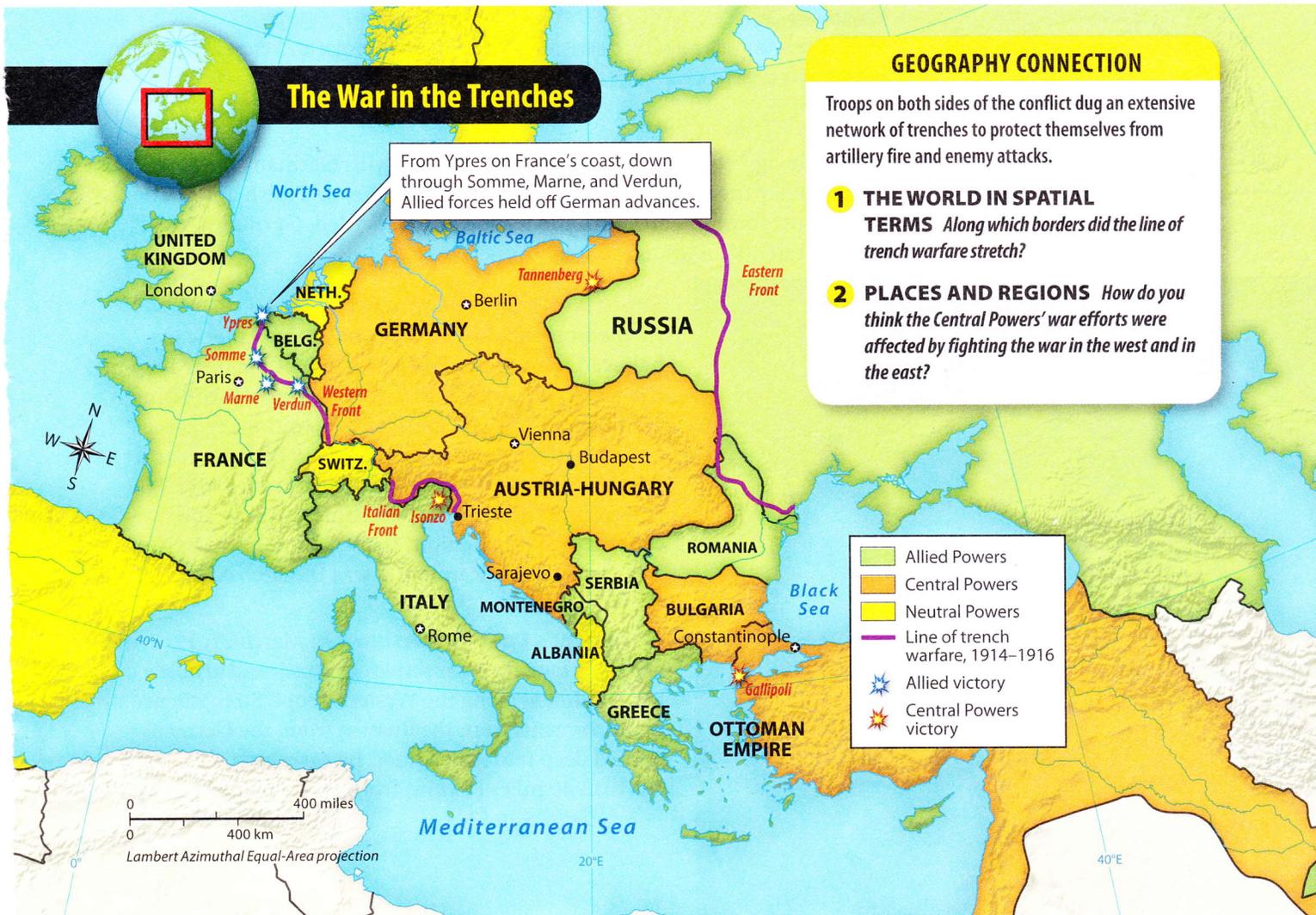
**Describing** What new technologies were introduced in World War I, and how did they impact the war?



To protect against poison gas attacks, troops carried gas masks similar to these masks worn by American soldiers in 1917.

**network** an interconnected system

PHOTO: Bettmann/CORBIS



### GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Troops on both sides of the conflict dug an extensive network of trenches to protect themselves from artillery fire and enemy attacks.

- 1 THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS** Along which borders did the line of trench warfare stretch?
- 2 PLACES AND REGIONS** How do you think the Central Powers' war efforts were affected by fighting the war in the west and in the east?

<span style="color: green;">■</span>	Allied Powers
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	Central Powers
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Neutral Powers
<span style="color: purple;">—</span>	Line of trench warfare, 1914–1916
<span style="color: blue;">★</span>	Allied victory
<span style="color: red;">★</span>	Central Powers victory

# The Americans Arrive

**GUIDING QUESTION** Why was the arrival of U.S. forces so important to the war effort?

Nearly two million American troops marched into the bloody stalemate in the Western Front. Although the American “doughboys” were inexperienced, they were fresh and eager to fight. As the Americans began to arrive, many in Germany concluded that the war was lost.

## Winning the War at Sea

American admiral William S. Sims proposed that merchant ships and troop transports travel in groups called **convoy**s. Small, maneuverable warships called destroyers protected convoys across the Atlantic. If a ship was sunk, other ships in the convoy could rescue survivors. Convoys greatly reduced shipping losses and ensured that American troops arrived safely in time to help the Allies on the Western Front.

## Russia Leaves the War

In March 1917, riots broke out in Russia. Czar Nicholas II, the leader of the Russian Empire, abdicated his throne, and the Russian Revolution began. A temporary government took command whose leaders wanted Russia to stay in the war. However, the government was unable to deal **adequately** with the problems afflicting the nation, so Vladimir Lenin’s Bolshevik Party seized power and established a Communist government in November 1917.

Germany’s military fortunes improved with the Bolshevik takeover. Lenin pulled Russia out of the war to concentrate on establishing a Communist state. He explained:

### PRIMARY SOURCE

“[I]t is necessary with particular thoroughness, persistence and patience to . . . prove without overthrowing capital it is impossible to end the war by a truly democratic peace.”

—from *The April Theses*, 1917

Lenin agreed to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany on March 3, 1918. Under this treaty, Russia gave up the Ukraine, its Polish and Baltic territories, and Finland. With the Eastern Front settled, Germany could concentrate its forces in the west.

## Americans Enter Combat

At the time World War I began, many Americans believed they owed the French a debt for their help in the American Revolution. General John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), arrived in Paris on July 4, 1917. British and French commanders wanted to integrate American troops into their armies. Pershing refused, and eventually only one unit, the 93rd Infantry Division—an African American unit—was transferred to the French.

**Germany’s Last Offensive** On March 21, 1918, the Germans launched a massive gas attack and artillery bombardment along the Western Front. Strengthened by reinforcements from the Russian front, the Germans pushed deep into Allied lines. By early June, they were less than 40 miles (64 km) from Paris. In late May, as the

**convoy** a group that travels with something, such as a ship, to protect it

**adequately** sufficiently; completed to its minimum requirements

Air battles first occurred during World War I. These early planes, however, were hard to fly and easy to destroy during dogfights.

### CRITICAL THINKING

**Making Generalizations** How did the use of aircraft change battle during World War I?





### Alvin York (1887–1964)

Alvin York grew up poor in the mountains of Tennessee. After being drafted, he tried to avoid military service as a conscientious objector due to his pacifist Christian beliefs. York later became convinced that he could fight for a just cause. During the Battle of the Argonne Forest, German machine guns on a fortified hill fired on York's platoon and killed nine men. York took command and charged the machine guns. He went on to kill several Germans, capture the machine guns, and take 132 prisoners. For his actions, he received the Medal of Honor and the French Croix de Guerre.

### ▶ CRITICAL THINKING

**Describing** How did York contribute to the American victory at the Argonne?

offensive continued, the Americans launched their first major attack, quickly capturing the village of Cantigny. On June 1, American and French troops blocked the German drive on Paris at the town of Château-Thierry. On July 15, the Germans launched one last massive attack in an attempt to take Paris, but American and French troops held their ground.

**The Battle of the Argonne Forest** With the German drive stalled, French marshal Ferdinand Foch, supreme commander of the Allied forces, ordered massive counterattacks. In mid-September American troops drove back German forces at the battle of Saint-Mihiel. On September 26, 1918, the most massive offensive for the American Expeditionary Force was launched in the region between the Meuse River and the Argonne Forest. Although the Germans inflicted heavy casualties, their positions slowly fell to the advancing American troops. By early November, the Americans had opened a hole on the eastern flank of the German lines. All across the Western Front, the Germans began to retreat.

### The War Ends

Meanwhile, a revolution had engulfed Austria-Hungary. In October 1918, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia declared independence. By early November, the governments of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire had surrendered to the Allies.

In late October, sailors in Kiel, the main base of the German fleet, mutinied. Within days, groups of workers and soldiers seized power in other German towns. The German emperor stepped down, and on November 9, Germany became a republic. Two days later, the government signed an **armistice**—an agreement to stop fighting. On November 11, 1918, the fighting stopped.

### ✔ READING PROGRESS CHECK

**Determining Cause and Effect** How did the arrival of American troops affect German attitudes about the war?

## A Flawed Peace

**GUIDING QUESTION** *Why did President Wilson's ideas for peace negotiations differ from those of French premier Clemenceau and British prime minister Lloyd George?*

Although the fighting had stopped, World War I was not over. In January 1919, delegates from 27 countries traveled to the peace conference at the Palace of Versailles, near Paris. The treaty with Germany that resulted came to be called the Treaty of Versailles. The conference also negotiated the Treaty of Saint-Germain, ending the war with Austria-Hungary. Negotiations on the Treaty of Versailles lasted five months. The most important participants were the so-called “Big Four”: President Wilson of the United States, British prime minister David Lloyd George, French premier Georges Clemenceau, and Italian prime minister Vittorio Orlando. Russian representatives were not invited to the conference because Allied leaders refused to recognize Lenin's government as legitimate.

### The Fourteen Points

President Wilson arrived in Paris in 1919 with a peace plan known as the Fourteen Points. It was based on “the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities.” In the first five points, Wilson proposed to eliminate the causes of the war through free trade, freedom of the seas, disarmament, an impartial adjustment of colonial claims, and open diplomacy.

**armistice** a temporary agreement to end fighting



### GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

European borders were redrawn as a result of World War I.

- 1 **PLACES AND REGIONS**  
*What was one unusual characteristic of the new state of Poland?*
- 2 **PLACES AND REGIONS**  
*How did the regions controlled by Russia change in 1919?*

The next eight points addressed the right of **national self-determination**, the idea that the borders of countries should be based on ethnicity and national identity. Supporters of this idea believed that when borders are not based on national identity, nations are more likely to go to war to **resolve** border disputes. This principle also meant that no nation should keep territory taken from another nation. This required the Central Powers to evacuate all invaded countries and Germany to restore the French territory of Alsace-Lorraine, taken in 1871.

The fourteenth point called for the creation of a League of Nations. The League's members would help preserve peace by pledging to respect and protect each other's territory and political independence. Wilson was willing to give up his other goals in exchange for support for the League.

### The Treaty of Versailles

Wilson's popularity in Europe put him in a strong negotiating position. The peace conference decided to use the Fourteen Points as the basis for negotiations. But not everyone was impressed by Wilson's ideas. Premier Clemenceau of France and British prime minister Lloyd George wanted to punish the Germans for the suffering they had inflicted on the rest of Europe. Additionally, Britain refused to give up its sizable naval advantage by agreeing to Wilson's call for freedom of the seas.

The Treaty of Versailles, reluctantly signed by Germany on June 28, 1919, included many terms designed to punish and weaken Germany. Germany's armed forces were greatly reduced and its troops were not allowed west of the Rhine River. The treaty also specifically blamed "the aggression of Germany" for the war. This allowed the Allies to demand that Germany pay **reparations**—monetary compensation for all of the war damages it had caused. A commission decided that Germany owed the Allies about \$33 billion. This sum far exceeded what Germany could pay all at once and was intended to keep its economy weak for a long time.

Wilson had somewhat better success in promoting national self-determination. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Russian Empire, the

**national self-determination** the free choice by the people of a nation of their own future political status

**resolve** to come to an agreement

**reparations** payment by the losing country in a war to the winner for the damages caused by the war

German Empire, and the Ottoman Empire were dismantled, and new nations created. In general, the majority of people in each new country were from one ethnic group. But both Poland and Czechoslovakia were given territory where the majority of the people were German, and Germany was split in two in order to give Poland access to the Baltic Sea. This arrangement helped set the stage for a new series of crises in the 1930s.

The Treaty of Versailles ignored freedom of the seas, free trade, and Wilson's goal of a fair settlement of colonial claims. No colonial people in Asia or Africa received independence. France and Britain took over colonial areas in Africa and the Middle East, and Japan assumed responsibility for colonies in East Asia. The treaty did, however, call for the creation of a League of Nations. League members promised to reduce armaments, to submit all disputes that endangered the peace to arbitration, and to aid any member who was threatened with aggression.

### The U.S. Senate Rejects the Treaty

President Wilson was confident the American people would support the Treaty of Versailles. But he had badly underestimated opposition to the League of Nations in the Senate. One group of senators, nicknamed the "Irreconcilables," assailed the League as the kind of "entangling alliance" that the Founders had warned against. A larger group of senators known as the "Reservationists" agreed to ratify the treaty if it was amended to say that any military action by the United States required the approval of Congress. Wilson refused, fearing the change would undermine the League's effectiveness.

Wilson decided to take his case directly to the American people. Starting in September 1919, he traveled some 8,000 miles and made more than 30 major speeches in three weeks. Soon afterward he suffered a stroke. Although bedridden, Wilson still refused to compromise on the treaty.

The Senate voted in November 1919 and in March 1920, but both times it refused to give its consent to the treaty. After Wilson left office in 1921, the United States negotiated separate peace treaties with each of the Central Powers. The League of Nations took shape without the United States.

#### ✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

**Comparing and Contrasting** How did Wilson's perspective on the best outcome of the peace process differ from those of European leaders?



The Belgian town of Ypres (shown above) was the site of some of the heaviest fighting of World War I. The war devastated Europe's people and places. The physical scars on the landscape and the millions of casualties affected Europe for years to come.

#### ► CRITICAL THINKING

**Predicting Consequences** How did the damage caused during World War I change Europe in later years?

PHOTO: Hulton Archive/Getty Images

## LESSON 3 REVIEW



### Reviewing Vocabulary

- 1. Contrasting** What is the difference between an armistice and a treaty?
- 2. Applying** How did ideas of national self-determination influence the Treaty of Versailles?

### Using Your Notes

- 3. Explaining** Review the notes you completed during the lesson and then write a paragraph explaining how new technology changed warfare during World War I.

### Answering the Guiding Questions

- 4. Identifying Cause and Effect** How did new technologies increase the number of casualties compared with previous wars?

- 5. Drawing Conclusions** Why was the arrival of American forces so important to the war effort?

- 6. Identifying Perspectives** Why did President Wilson's ideas for peace negotiations differ from those of French premier Clemenceau and British prime minister Lloyd George?

### Writing Activity

- 7. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY** Write a brief essay that explains the reasons the U.S. Senate refused to give its consent to the Treaty of Versailles.