

War Is Life Itself: The Causes of WWI

World War I

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Grade Level	10th – 11th Grade	**Time Frame**	125 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	3 class periods
Course	World History		

Essential Question

Is war between nations inevitable?

Summary

In this lesson, students analyze primary source documents, maps, and graphs to explore the underlying causes of World War I. Students extend their learning by evaluating a quote about war and summarize their learning by responding to the lesson's essential question.

Snapshot

Engage

Students examine a case file to discover the event that started World War I.

Explore

Students participate in a station activity and analyze a series of documents to determine the underlying causes of World War I.

Explain

Students categorize the documents analyzed into the acronym of M.A.I.N. to develop a deeper understanding of the causes of World War I.

Extend

Students participate in a four corners activity in response to a quote on war.

Evaluate

Students write a response to the question, "Was World War I inevitable for the nations involved to thrive and survive?"

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR402: Draw logical conclusions in somewhat challenging passages
REL403: Identify clear cause-effect relationships in somewhat challenging passages

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

D&S 401: Building and strengthening the argument. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Make use of clear reasoning and examples to arrive at an understanding of the issue and differing perspectives on it -Adequately convey reasons why the argument is worth considering -Extend ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective -Anticipate objections by qualifying the argument

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Modern World History)

MWH.C.6.1.A: Describe the complex and multiple causes of World War I (e.g., German militarism and arms race, nationalism, industrial and colonial competition) and examine Europe's alliances affected by the declining power of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.

Attachments

- Case File—War is Life Itself - Spanish.docx
- Case File—War is Life Itself - Spanish.pdf
- Case File—War is Life Itself.docx
- Case File—War is Life Itself.pdf
- Gallery Walk Documents—War is Life Itself - Spanish.docx
- Gallery Walk Documents—War is Life Itself - Spanish.pdf
- Gallery Walk Documents—War is Life Itself.docx
- Gallery Walk Documents—War is Life Itself.pdf
- Guided Questions—War is Life Itself - Spanish.docx
- Guided Questions—War is Life Itself - Spanish.pdf
- Guided Questions—War is Life Itself.docx
- Guided Questions—War is Life Itself.pdf
- Lesson Slides—War is Life Itself.pptx
- MAIN Graphic Organizer—War is Life Itself - Spanish.docx
- MAIN Graphic Organizer—War is Life Itself - Spanish.pdf
- MAIN Graphic Organizer—War is Life Itself.docx
- MAIN Graphic Organizer—War is Life Itself.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Case File handout (attached; one per pair)
- Gallery Walk Documents (attached)
- Guided Questions handout (attached; one per student)
- M.A.I.N. Graphic Organizer (attached; one per student)
- Highlighters

20 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Move through **slides 3–4** to review the essential question and lesson objective. Place students into partners and pass out the attached **Case File** handout to each pair of students. Display **slide 5** and introduce the Why-Lighting strategy. Tell students to pretend they are detectives trying to solve a case. Have students highlight the case information on the slide which includes the location of the murder, the victims, the murderer, his or her motive, and the aftermath. In the margin, next to where students highlight, they should write the explanation for highlighting.

After students review the handout, move to **slide 6**. Ask students to discuss the questions:

- Why was the Archduke assassinated?
- What happened afterward?

Teacher's Note: Sample Student Responses

- He was assassinated because some Slavs in Bosnia wanted independence from Austria-Hungary and to belong to a Slavic nation/empire with Serbia.
- After it happened, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and then Serbia got help from its Slavic ally, Russia, who declared war on Austria-Hungary. However, Austria-Hungary was in an alliance with Germany, who promised to protect Austria-Hungary if Russia attacked. Then, a whole bunch of other countries got involved because they were in alliances too.

Move to **slide 7** and have students discuss the questions on the slide:

- Is one person's murder enough to justify a world war?
- Is an alliance,
  the promise to have someone's back, enough to justify a world war?
  What other reasons might cause countries to engage in war?

After providing time for discussion, have several students share their thoughts.

30 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Before teaching the lesson, print the attached **Gallery Walk Documents**. Create 12 stations around the classroom, one station for each document.

Pass out the attached **Guided Questions** handout to each student. Move to **slide 8**. Divide up the class so that there are an equal number of students at each station. Tell students they are going to investigate the underlying causes of World War I by visiting the 12 stations.

Have students travel to each station and answer the questions on their handout.

Teacher's Note: Using a Timer

Consider displaying a timer and reset the timer as students progress to each station.

45 minutes

Explain

Have students return to their seats and pass out the attached **MAIN Graphic Organizer** handout to each student. Explain that the documents can be categorized into four areas, militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism, commonly referred to as M.A.I.N.. Move through **slides 9–12** and review the meaning of each concept. As you describe each concept, have students fill in the definitions for each one on the handout. Then, have students work in partners to complete the rest of the handout using the notes they took in the last activity.

Sample Student Responses

See an example of a completed MAIN Graphic Organizer below.

Militarism	Alliances	Imperialism	Nationalism
• All of the major European powers spent an increasing amount of money on their militaries form 1890–1914, but Germany spent a dramatic amount in 1914 (Document C) • Germany increased its military spending because it wanted to compete with other nations and be powerful, plus it felt threatened by the power of other nations (Doc. D &E)	• Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy were in an alliance called the Triple Alliance or Central Powers, while Great Britain, France, and Russia were in the Triple Entente (Document A) • Germany and Austria-Hungary were fearful of attack from Russia and promised to go to war to protect each other if Russia or one of Russia's allies attacked them (Document B)	• Britain had a huge empire (the biggest) (Documents F&G and this made Germany feel very threatened and inferior (Documents H & E)	• A lot of countries had pride/nationalism, shown in national anthems (Documents I & J) and in desire to be powerful, like Germany (Docs D&E) • Ethnic/national pride was important for Slavs, too—and this caused tension for Austria-Hungary because of the Slavs in Bosnia, which it controlled. This would eventually cause the Archduke's assassination and the outbreak of WWI (Docs K&L)

After providing time for students to complete the handout, review them as a class.

15 minutes

Extend

Move to **slide 13** and provide time for students to read the quote on the slide. Have students discuss what the quote means with an Elbow Partner. Ask for a few volunteers to share what they discussed.

Display **slide 14** and introduce students to the Four Corners strategy. Have students move to an area of the classroom based on their agreement with the quote. Ask each group to discuss their reasoning for their agreement and choose a spokesperson to present what they discussed.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Have students return to their seats and display **slide 15**. Ask students to write a response to the question on the slide: “Was World War I inevitable for the nations involved to survive and thrive?” Ask students to include the role of militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism in their response.

Collect the handouts to review and check for student understanding of the lesson content.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.) Elbow partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Four corners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/138
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128