

# Student activities

Test your knowledge of WWI by answering the questions below.

If you are accessing this quiz online, you can type your answers in the boxes below.

## 1. Quiz: *What do you know about WWI?*

1. Although not a direct cause of WWI, what event acted as a catalyst that set off a chain of events that led to war?
2. Where did this event take place?
3. What event caused Britain to declare war on Germany?
4. WWI began in the year \_\_\_\_\_ and ended in the year \_\_\_\_\_
5. At the beginning of the war the Central Powers included:
6. At the beginning of the war the Allies included:
7. Name three European countries that remained neutral throughout WWI.
8. Who were nicknamed the “bluebirds”?
9. Name the battle in which all four divisions of the Canadian Corps fought together for the first time in the war.
10. What was the Military Service Act of 1917?
11. What three groups in Canada were opposed to the war?
12. \_\_\_\_\_ million men fought in WWI. Nearly \_\_\_\_\_ of them were killed.

## ...Quiz 1: continued

13. WWI brought with it a new era of weapons of war. List three weapons that were introduced in WWI.
  
14. What caused the Halifax Explosion on December 6, 1917?
  
15. What did the 1917 Wartime Elections Act do?
  
16. In what year did the United States enter WWI?
  
17. What is the name of the treaty that marked the official end to WWI?
  
18. Why were Newfoundland soldiers not considered part of the Canadian Corps in WWI?
  
19. During an air battle, a pilot had to turn off the plane's engine from time to time so it would not stall when the plane turned quickly in the air. When a pilot restarted his engine midair, it made a sound like dogs barking. This was the origin of what term?
  
20. What is the name of the space between the front lines of two opposing armies?
  
21. The most famous Canadian mascot of WWI was a black bear cub named Winnipeg that travelled overseas from Canada. The unit decided to place Winnie in the London Zoo rather than subject it to the rigours of the front. The bear delighted thousands of visitors and later became the inspiration for what literary character?
  
22. First Peoples troops left a remarkable record of wartime accomplishment. At least 50 were decorated for bravery on the battlefield. Many acquired near-legendary status as scouts and snipers, drawing on pre-war hunting skills and wilderness experience. What was the name of the most decorated First Peoples soldier?
  
23. During WWI there were 171 Canadian air aces, pilots or gunners with five or more enemy aircraft or airships destroyed. What was the name of Canada's leading ace?
  
24. Men who didn't sign up to go to war were branded as

## 2. Who's Who of WWI

Below the chart is a list of names of people who played an important role in WWI. Match the name of each person with the information in Column B. Write each person's name in the corresponding place in Column A. If you are accessing this quiz online, you can use the drop down list to select your answers.

| COLUMN A | COLUMN B  |
|----------|---|
|          | British soldier who used poetry to express his horror of the war  |
|          | Newfoundlander who was the youngest soldier in the Commonwealth (at age 17) to receive the Victoria Cross                 |
|          | Corps Commander of Canadian troops  |
|          | Canadian who was one of the most famous snipers of WWI  |
|          | British prime minister during WWI   |
|          | Archduke Ferdinand's assassin   |
|          | German Kaiser during WWI  |
|          | Canada's wartime prime minister   |
|          | Canadian author of the poem In Flanders Fields  |
|          | Canadian WWI flying ace   |
|          | heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne   |
|          | Canada's Minister of Militia and Defence from 1911 to 1916  |
|          | general of British troops in France during WWI  |
|          | last Canadian WWI veteran   |
|          | most-decorated First Nations soldier  |
|          | led the French Canadian opposition to conscription  |
|          | his death set off a chain reaction leading to outbreak of WWI   |
|          | American president during WWI   |
|          | German who was the most successful flying ace of World War 1  |
|          | general and commander of the American Expeditionary Force   |
|          | Canadian Corps commander at Vimy Ridge  |
|          | only Black officer in the Canadian Expeditionary Force and therefore the first-ever Black officer in the British Military |
|          | King of the United Kingdom during WWI   |
|          | first Lord of the Admiralty of the United Kingdom, 1911-1915  |

Wilfred Owen  
Tommy Ricketts  
Sir Arthur Curry  
Henry Norwest  
David Lloyd George  
Gavrilo Princip

Wilhelm II  
Sir Robert Borden  
John McCrae  
Billy Bishop  
Archduke Franz Ferdinand  
Sir Sam Hughes

Gen. Douglas Haig  
John Babcock  
Francis Pegahmagabow  
Henri Bourassa  
Franz Ferdinand  
Woodrow Wilson

Manfred von Richthofen  
John Pershing  
Sir Julian Byng  
William Andrew White  
George V  
Winston Churchill

### 3. Causes of WWI

Historians are still debating the causes of WWI. Was it the desire for greater empire, wealth and territory? Was it a massive arms race? Was it the series of treaties that ensured that once one power went to war, all of Europe would quickly follow? Was it social turmoil and changing artistic sensibilities brought about by the Industrial Revolution? Or was it simply a miscalculation by rulers and generals in power?

*In your opinion, which of these was the main cause of WWI?*

### 4. Who caused WWI?

WWI resulted in the deaths of millions of people. At the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was blamed for the start of the war. What do you think? Was Germany really to blame?

In groups of three, discuss which of the following statements you think is the most accurate. Be prepared to give reasons for your answer.

- Germany was rightly blamed for starting the war.
- Germany was mainly responsible but other countries should accept some blame.
- All of the major powers helped to start the war. They should share the blame.
- War was inevitable. No one country should be completely blamed.

### 5. Enemy aliens

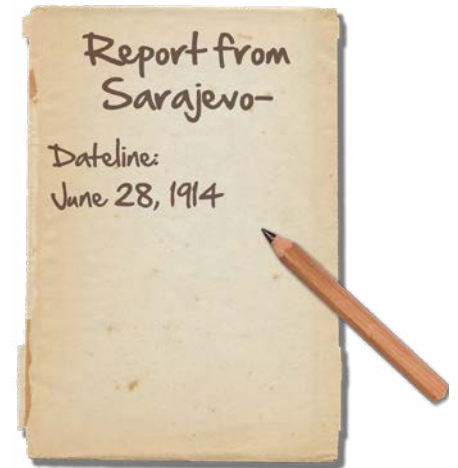
When war broke out, many Canadians were suspicious of people from enemy countries who were living in Canada. The fear was that these “enemy aliens” might return to their homeland to fight for their armies against Canada or sabotage the country from within. In 1914, all enemy aliens were ordered to register at a local office.

During the course of the war, 80,000 enemy aliens registered in Canada.

Research what happened to these “enemy aliens”.

## 6. On the scene report

Write a newspaper story about the death of Franz Ferdinand.  
Your article should give a detailed account of the assassination as well as the reasons for the action carried out by the terrorist group, the Black Hand.



## 7. WWI timeline

Prepare a timeline for WWI.  
Include important events from the war, starting with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and ending with the Paris Peace Conference.

## 8. Front-page news

Produce a mock newspaper front page on one of the following events:

- the death of Franz Ferdinand
- the Canadian success at Vimy Ridge
- the day following the armistice

Your front page should include headlines, a place for two photographs, and space for at least three stories.

Write the three headlines and one of the stories.

## 9. Landscapes of war

In your opinion, what physical feature of the landscapes had the greatest influence on the fighting conditions in WWI?



20th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery, taking ammunition to forward guns during the Battle of Vimy Ridge, April 1917.

GEORGE METCALF ARCHIVAL COLLECTION  
CWM 19920044-848  
O.1243  
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## 10. Animals in the war

Some military animals, like horses, dogs and pigeons, performed essential wartime services. Others may not have worked as hard but raised morale for their battalions as pets or mascots. Do some research to find out what animals played a role in WWI.

Write a brief account of what they did in the war.

## 11. The army by the numbers

The terms below are used to describe troop size.

Do research to find out about the number of soldiers in each of the following:

- Platoon
- Company
- Battalion
- Regiment
- Division

## 12. Military-standard clothing

Members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force were able to buy military-standard clothing, accessories and gear commercially, everything from khaki handkerchiefs to camel-hair-lined greatcoats. An advertisement from G.M. Holbrook Military Tailors of Ottawa gives an idea of the items and prices available – not cheap for rank-and-file soldiers earning \$1.10 a day.

To view this advertisement, visit the website below and click on the letter “K” and scroll down to find “KIT”.

<http://www.thestar.com/news/world/WWI/2014/world-war-1-encyclopedia.html>

What do you think of the prices? Discuss this with a classmate.

## 13. Medics in the trenches

Assume the role of a WWI medic in the trenches. At the end of an exhausting day of caring for the wounded, you sit down to write a letter back home. Describe your feelings and the hazards faced by soldiers, and comment on the medical supplies that you have to treat them.



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## 14. The battle of The Somme

In groups of three, read several accounts of the battle of The Somme. Which of the following statements reflects how you think we should remember the Battle of The Somme?

- a military disaster
- a great victory achieved at a terrible cost
- a crucial turning point in the war that led to the eventual defeat of Germany
- an example of soldiers who displayed great courage betrayed by incompetent leaders. It was sometimes expressed in terms of “lions led by donkeys”

Collect evidence to support each description. Decide which description you think is the most appropriate. As a group, write a newspaper editorial that expresses your collective opinion.



## 15. Propaganda

What is propaganda? Do some research to learn more about propaganda techniques.

Imagine that you have been assigned to write a report for Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden about how propaganda is being used in the war and the impact it is having.

Include in your report:

- aims of propaganda
- types of propaganda used and their effectiveness
- convince the PM that your propaganda is working

Conclude your report by recommending to the government what forms of propaganda it should be investing in more heavily.

## 16. A day in a soldier's life at the Western Front

Someone described trench life as long periods of boredom mixed with brief periods of terror. The threat of death kept soldiers constantly on edge, while poor living conditions and a lack of sleep wore away at their health and stamina. Soldiers did not spend all their time charging the enemy trenches. Typically a tour in the trench lasted six days followed by six more in immediate reserve, still within range of enemy fire. This was followed by 12 days “rest” in the rear areas. Use the Internet to get information to describe the day-to-day-tasks in a typical day in the life of a soldier on the Western Front. To view trench standing orders visit:

<https://wartimecanada.ca/sites/default/files/documents/CC%20Trench%20Standing%20Orders.pdf>

## 17. Deserters

Many soldiers in the French and German armies deserted.

In contrast, very few British or Canadian soldiers deserted their post or mutinied.

With conditions so terrible, why do you think most soldiers continued to follow orders and fight?

Some reasons were:

- patriotism
- discipline
- rewards such as medals
- comradeship
- sense of duty
- peer pressure

Which one of these reasons do you think was the most important reason so few soldiers in the Allied army deserted when conditions on the battlefield were so horrible?

## 18. Letters from the front

Letters to and from the soldiers at the front were the only way of passing information back and forth between loved ones at home.

Visit <http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com/transcripts/transcriptMain.asp?Type=L>

Here you will find a collection of letters written by soldiers serving at the Front. Some are letters written to newspapers while others are personal letters written to loved ones at home.

To view the letter, click on the date field beside the description. To view information about the soldier who wrote the letter, click on the name.

Read some of these letters to gain an understanding of what the soldiers were thinking.

Select a letter from the list.

Read the letter from the soldier and write a reply, pretending the letter was sent to you.



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## 19. Every picture tells a story

To view images of The Somme and group portraits of the Newfoundland Regiment click

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/information-for/educators/learning-modules/beauport-hamel/>

In a group of three, discuss the following questions:

1. How old do you think the soldiers in the group portraits are?  
Why do you think men so young might have signed up for service?
2. Look at the picture of the Newfoundland soldiers in the St. John's support trench at Beaumont-Hamel the morning of July 1, 1916.  
What do you think might have been going through their minds as they awaited the orders to "go over the top?"
3. Look at the pictures of the mud, shell holes and barbed wire at Beaumont-Hamel.  
What do you think it might have been like to live in trenches on the front lines for days and weeks on end?  
What do you think you would do if you were ordered to cross a battlefield in the face of machine-gun fire and exploding shells?

## 20. Women and the right to vote

In 1917, Canada's federal electoral law stipulated that idiots, madmen and criminals were not allowed to vote.

It didn't mention women, who were also excluded from voting in national elections.

Do some research to find out more about the women who led the suffragette movement in Canada.

## 21. Feminism 1917 style

Henri Bourassa, editor of *Le Devoir*, a Montreal newspaper, was opposed to women getting the right to vote. He feared for the sanctity of the family. The following quote concerning women's suffrage is attributed to him.

*"It is the introduction of feminism under its most noxious guise: the voter-woman, who will soon spawn the man-woman, that hybrid and repugnant monster who will kill the mother-woman and the wife-woman."*

In your own words what was Bourassa saying?

As a woman in 1917, write a letter to the editor reacting to Bourassa's words.

## 22. Women of WWI

To what extent did the role of women change during the course of the war?

What contributions did women make to the war effort?

In your opinion, how significant was their contribution?

Explain how women's support for the war effort helped them gain the right to vote.

Write a letter to a newspaper in 1918 explaining why women should receive credit for the role they played in the war.



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## 23. Post-traumatic stress disorder

Thousands of WWI soldiers suffered “shell shock,” or post-traumatic stress disorder due to the horrors of trench warfare. Shell-shocked men often couldn’t sleep, stopped speaking, whimpered for hours, and twitched uncontrollably. While some soldiers recovered, others suffered for the rest of their lives.

Do research to learn more about “shell shock.”

How does this form of post-traumatic stress disorder compare with PTSD suffered by members of the military today?



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## 24. Military Service Act

In 1917, the Military Service Act was passed, making all single male citizens between the ages of 20 and 45 subject to military service, if called, for the duration of the war.

The conscription debate nearly tore Canada apart. French-Canadians in Quebec, as well as many farmers, unionized workers and non-British immigrants were opposed to conscription.

Why were French-Canadians, as well as many farmers, unionized workers and non-British immigrants opposed to conscription? Provide your reasons in a chart like the one below

### GROUPS OBJECTING

### REASONS FOR OPPOSITION

French Canadians in Quebec

Farmers

Unionized workers

Non-British immigrants

## 25. Weapons for sale

Working with a partner, learn more about five weapons that were introduced during WWI. Prepare advertising copy for these weapons that might appear in a brochure or catalogue. For each item provide details such as:

- description
- use
- materials
- supplier
- cost
- other relevant information



## 26. War poets

Read some of the poetry produced by men who fought in the war, for example John McCrae, Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon or Isaac Rosenberg.

Do you think that they provide an accurate account of life on the Western Front?

Do you think that conditions on the Western Front were really as bad as the war poets make out?

## 27. How did WWI affect civilians?

List five ways that WWI affected civilians.

## 28. America enters the war

In what year did the United States enter WWI?

At what stage was the war when the Americans entered?

What role did the United States play in WWI?

How important were American troops to the Allied victory?

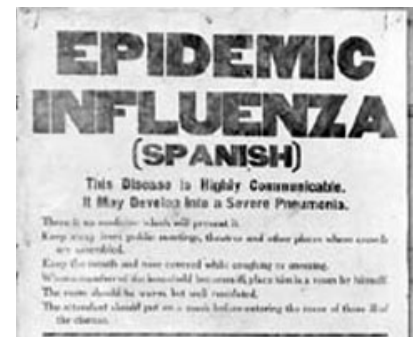
In your opinion, did the United States earn the right to largely define the terms of peace at the Paris Peace Conference?

Give reasons to support your answer.

## 29. The Spanish flu epidemic

The war ended with a raging influenza epidemic. It spread through Canada in part by infected soldiers returning from overseas. Canada's flu dead included soldiers who had survived the fighting overseas only to succumb to illness once back in Canada. Thousands of family members who welcomed them home died soon after their arrival. Though death estimates vary widely, the influenza pandemic — or Spanish flu — that swept the globe in the fall of 1918 and through the following winter killed between 40 million and 100 million people, significantly more than the 16 million soldiers and civilians who were claimed in WWI.

Do research to learn about the influenza pandemic.



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## 30. Treaty of Versailles

Use the Internet to research the Treaty of Versailles

What were the aims of each of Britain, France, and the United States at Versailles?

Why do you think the leaders of Britain, France and the United States found it difficult to agree on what to do?

Why do you think Germany was treated so harshly?

## 31. German reaction to the Treaty of Versailles

How did the people in Germany react to the Treaty of Versailles?

Write a letter to the editor of a German newspaper in 1919 on the day that the terms of the Treaty were announced.

## 32. Topics for discussion

- Was WWI inevitable?
- Was WWI a needless sacrifice of men by generals?
- Why was WWI so bloody?
- Women and men played an equal role in WWI.
- Although Germany may have forced the hand of the European powers in the summer of 1914, it did not cause war.
- The Treaty of Versailles punished Germans so harshly that it helped to cause WW2
- In what ways did WWI affect civilians?
- How did WWI affect the soldiers who fought in it?
- What was the effect on Canadian soldiers of profiteering by business?
- WWI is associated with trench warfare. No conflict, before or since, utilized trenches in the same way. Why did WWI come to be so closely associated with the use of trenches?
- What was the most crucial factor in the defeat of Germany: battles on the land, battles in the air, or battles at sea?

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