

The Civil War

Instructional Guide: In order to complete this instructional activity, you may utilize the articles listed below and/or use available external resources.

Note to students: It is recommended that you don't complete the entire assignment in one sitting, rather work on your Social Studies assignment for 30-45 minutes a day. When assigned in its entirety this lesson should take approximately 3-5 days to complete.

Student Instructions:

1. Read the content summary.
2. Read the assigned articles highlighting key information.
3. Respond to the following questions in a 1-2-page reflection.
4. If prompted, complete the extension activities

Time: 3-5 days

Vocabulary:

- Confederacy
- Emancipation Proclamation
- Fort Sumter
- Gettysburg Address

Content Summary:

The Civil War was fought from 1861-1865. The war started because of differences in the North and South, the free states and the slave states. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected as the first Republican president on a platform promising to keep slavery out of the territories. His election prompted seven slave states in the south to secede from the Union and form the Confederate States of America. President Lincoln refused to recognize this secession. On April 12, 1861 the first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter. More states seceded and eventually the Confederacy included 11 southern states. The North was bigger and its economy was based on industry and manufacturing. The economy of the South depended primarily on slave labor. Robert E. Lee successfully led the Confederate troops until General Ulysses S. Grant was placed in charge of the Union armies. The Civil War remains the deadliest war in American history. More than 600,000 soldiers died in the conflict. On April 9, 1865, General Lee surrendered to General Grant at the Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

Questions (respond in a 1-2-page response):

1. Explain the causes that led to the outbreak of the Civil War.
2. Describe the significance of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.
3. Do you think it was inevitable that the North would win the Civil War?

Extension Activities (Optional):

- **Interview with President Lincoln:** Pretend you are a reporter during the Civil War. What 10 questions would you ask President Abraham Lincoln?
- **Newspaper Article:** Imagine you are a news reporter covering the Civil War. Write a newspaper article describing the impact of the war on the United States.

Primary Sources: Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation

By Original document from the public domain, adapted by Newsela staff on 06.22.16

Word Count **704**

Level **1220L**



"Abe Lincoln's Last Card" was a political cartoon by the Englishman John Tenniel, printed in the London Times on Oct. 18, 1862, along with an article that suggested that Lincoln had played his "last card" in issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. The cartoon was often reprinted by Lincoln's opponents. John Tenniel, Wikimedia Commons

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States. This proclamation contained, among other things, the following:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, this proclamation will take effect. All persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State which is in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free. The Executive Government of the United States, including its military and naval authority, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons. The Government will do no act to hinder such persons in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January 1863, by proclamation, name the States and parts of States, the people of which are in rebellion against the United States. Any State that is represented in the Congress of the United States on that day shall be deemed not to be in rebellion against the United States. In the absence of strong countervailing testimony, such evidence shall be sufficient. The State representative to Congress must have been elected thereto by a majority of the qualified voters of such State."

"A Fit And Necessary War Measure"

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, am Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy and as such, I am entrusted with the power to defeat armed rebellions against the authority and government of the United States. Such an armed rebellion is now taking place and therefore, as a fit and necessary war measure, I do name the States and parts of States which are in rebellion against the United States. On this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, I do proclaim the following, namely:

Arkansas, Texas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Mississippi are in rebellion against the United States. Louisiana is in rebellion except for the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans. The previously mentioned counties are exempt from this proclamation. Virginia is in rebellion except for the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia. The counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth are also exempt. These excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

"All Persons Held As Slaves ... Shall Be Free"

This proclamation is issued by virtue of the power, and for the purpose mentioned above. I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free. The Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons.

I hereby urge the people so declared to be free to refrain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense. I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States. Such persons will garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and man vessels of all sorts in said service.

Upon this act, I beseech the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God. This act is sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three. Year of the Independence of the United States of America the

eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

Defining battles of the Civil War

By National Geographic Society, adapted by Newsela staff on 05.13.19

Word Count **929**

Level **1050L**



Image 1. The northern cornfield in 2017 at Antietam, Maryland. In September 1862, General Robert E. Lee's invasion of the North during the Civil War was stopped in rural Maryland with more than 23,000 Americans killed in a single day. Photo: Andrew Lichtenstein/Corbis via Getty Images

The American Civil War was the bloodiest war in American history. During the four years it lasted, more than 50 major battles were fought. Below are five of the most significant battles, listed in chronological order.



First Bull Run (July 21, 1861)

The first Battle of Bull Run was the first major land battle of the Civil War. It is also known as the first Battle of Manassas.

The Union Army under General Irvin McDonnell marched from Washington, D.C., to seize the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia. Approximately 25 miles into the march, their path was blocked by the Confederate Army under the command of General P. G. T. Beauregard.

At first, it seemed as if the Union Army would prevail, but as the battle raged throughout the morning, the Confederates held their ground. Once the Confederate Army received reinforcements early that afternoon, their counterattack defeated the Union troops. Union forces then retreated to Washington, D.C.

Combined casualties were few in comparison with other battles — around 4,800. However, as a result of the battle, the North first realized it was in for a long, bitter war.

Shiloh (April 6-7, 1862)

By February 1862, the Union Army had achieved victories in central Kentucky and Tennessee. The army planned to move south and capture an important Confederate east-west railway hub in northern Mississippi. To defend the hub, Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston fortified the town of Corinth, Mississippi. The Union planned to unite two armies, under Ulysses S. Grant and Don Carlos Buell, and then take Corinth.

Grant's army arrived first and set up camp in the town of Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, near the Shiloh Meeting House. Johnston planned to strike Grant's army before Buell arrived, and at dawn on April 6, his forces attacked. Grant's forces were surprised but remained in the field after a day of fierce fighting. Buell's forces finally arrived overnight, and the combined Union force attacked at dawn. During the fighting, General Johnston was fatally wounded. The defeated Confederate forces — now under the command of Beauregard — withdrew.



The battle resulted in combined casualties of more than 23,000.

Antietam (September 17, 1862)

Confederate General Robert E. Lee had decided to take the war to the North. He devised a plan to split his army and take supplies in Maryland, move into Pennsylvania, and threaten Washington, D.C. His plans accidentally fell into Union hands, and the Union Army marched to confront the forces he commanded at Antietam Creek. However, Union General McClellan waited 18 hours before moving his troops. This gave the Confederates time to bring in reinforcements.

The day ended in a draw, with 23,000 men killed. However, the battle halted Lee's plans to invade the North for the time being. Nonetheless, President Abraham Lincoln was furious that McClellan had allowed Lee to escape.

Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863)

Although Antietam was a setback to Lee's plans, the Union failed to take advantage of the situation. Lincoln replaced McClellan, but his new generals lost decisively at Fredericksburg, Virginia (December 13, 1862), and Chancellorsville, Virginia (April 30 – May 4, 1863). These Confederate victories encouraged Lee to renew his plan to invade the North.

Lee moved the Army of Northern Virginia north, and the new Union General George Meade shadowed him to protect Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, D.C. The forces met at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on the morning of July 1.

Despite early successes, the Confederate forces were not able to drive the Union Army off of the heights. The following day, as reinforcements arrived for both sides, Lee again failed to defeat the Union Army.

July 3 saw one last push from the Confederates. Lee ordered what has become known as the Pickett's Charge — an assault of some 15,000 Confederate troops — up Cemetery Ridge. Although the charge broke through Union lines, the Confederates were unable to hold on to their gains and retreated.



Lee prepared for the counterattack he expected the next day, but it never came. He withdrew his forces on July 4, and the Union Army did not pursue. While Meade won the battle and stopped the invasion, he failed to destroy Lee's army and put an end to the rebellion.

Union casualties numbered around 23,000, while Confederate casualties numbered around 28,000.

Vicksburg (May 22–July 4, 1863)

Vicksburg, Mississippi, lies on the east bank of the Mississippi River about halfway between Memphis, Tennessee, to the north and New Orleans, Louisiana, to the south. Capturing it would give control of the entire Mississippi to the Union. However, the city, located on a bluff overlooking the river, was heavily defended with trenches, gun batteries, and a Confederate Army led by General John C. Pemberton.

In May, Union General Ulysses S. Grant led an army south on the west side of the Mississippi past Vicksburg, then crossed over and led his troops back north to lay siege to the city. By mid-June, the Confederates were running low on supplies. General Pemberton surrendered on July 4.

The victories — a day apart — at Gettysburg and Vicksburg marked the turning point of the Civil War.

These are just some of the war's major battles. The Civil War killed hundreds of thousands and scarred the countryside. Today, many battlefield sites contain monuments and plaques and have been set aside as national parks.

Why the Civil War took so long to officially be over

By History.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 09.15.19

Word Count **1,028**

Level **1060L**



Image 1. The surrender of General Robert E. Lee to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9, 1865. Reproduction of a painting titled "Peace in Union" by Thomas Nast, which was completed 30 years after the surrender. Image from the Granger Historical Picture Archive

On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee met with Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia. Lee surrendered his Confederate troops to the Union general. His surrender marked the beginning of the end of the four-year American Civil War. However, it would be more than 16 months before President Andrew Johnson would declare a formal end to the conflict in August 1866.

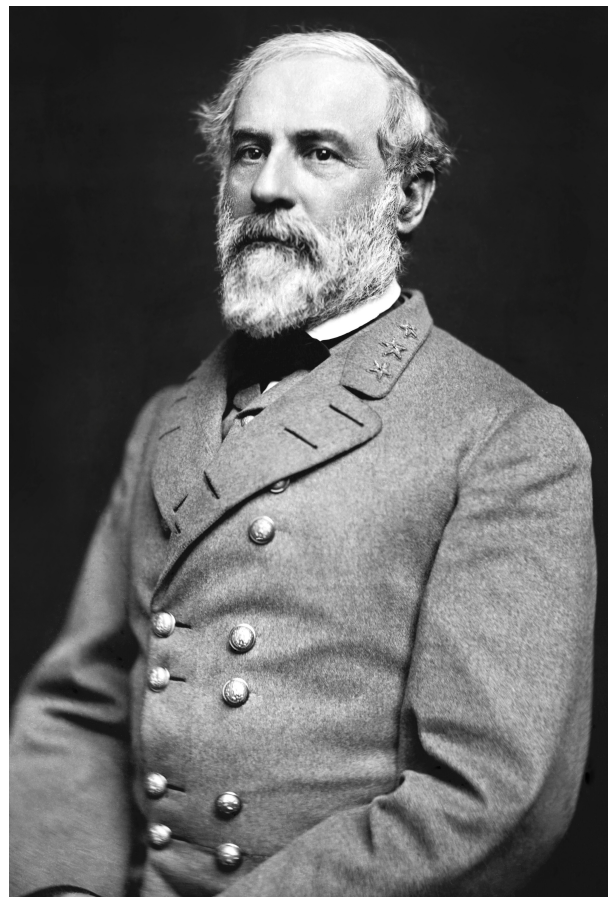
Appomattox was undoubtedly a crucial victory for the Union, and Grant's peace agreement with Lee would provide a blueprint for other generals around the country. Why, then, did it take so long for the war to officially end after that?

Lee Surrenders His Army

For one thing, Lee had surrendered only his Army of Northern Virginia to Grant. A number of other Confederate forces still remained active, including General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee. This group of soldiers was the second-largest Confederate army after Lee's.

On April 12 in North Carolina, Johnston and his men received news of Lee's surrender. The next day, General William T. Sherman's Union forces captured the city of Raleigh, pushing Johnston's forces westward. Under pressure from Sherman, Johnston reached out to discuss peace terms. At the time, Andrew Johnson had just been sworn in as president. After Johnson and his Cabinet rejected an initial agreement that gave generous political concessions to the South, Confederate President Jefferson Davis ordered Johnston to resume fighting. Johnston, knowing his back was to the wall, refused. On April 26, Sherman and Johnston signed a new surrender agreement, along the same lines as Grant and Lee's Appomattox agreement.

In the biggest surrender of the Civil War, Johnston gave up around 90,000 soldiers. They were almost all of the remaining Confederate troops in the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida. When news of Johnston's surrender reached Alabama, the next domino fell. Lieutenant General Richard Taylor, the commander of some 10,000 Confederate men, surrendered his army on May 4.

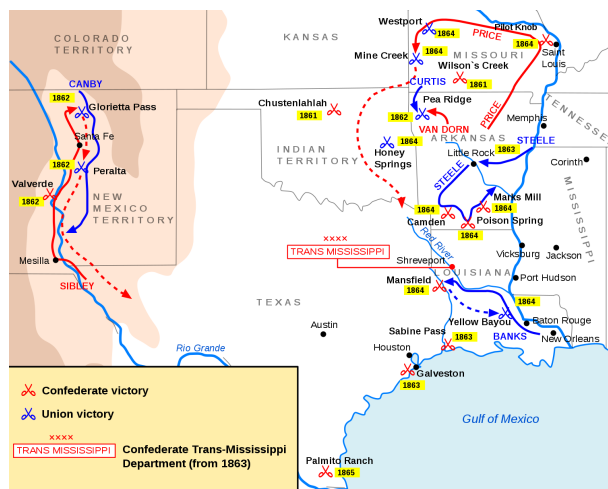


The South Was Not Done Yet

Several days later, Nathan Bedford Forrest gave up his cavalry corps at Gainesville, Alabama. "That we are beaten is a self-evident fact," he told his men. "Any further resistance on our part would justly be regarded as the very height of folly and rashness."

Still, the South wasn't quite done. Even after those surrenders, after Union troops captured the fugitive Davis in Georgia, fighting still continued west of the Mississippi River. The war continued even after President Johnson declared on May 10 that the South's armed resistance "may be regarded as virtually at an end."

Near Brownsville, Texas, on May 12, a force of 350 Confederates defeated 800 Union troops. The Battle of Palmito Ranch was the last land battle of the Civil War. "It's mainly Texans versus Texans," historian Charles D. Grear says. "It wasn't really that big of a fight, but it's still the last significant conflict of the Civil War."



By that time, Lieutenant General E. Kirby Smith's Army of the Trans-Mississippi was the last major Confederate force still in the field. The unit had begun to break up after news arrived about

Appomattox. By late May, Smith was "basically a general just in name, because he has no army," Grear says. On May 26, Smith surrendered his command at Galveston, Texas.

Lone Star State Holdout

In Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) was Stand Watie, the first Native American to serve as a Confederate general. He kept his troops in the field for nearly a month after Smith gave up the Trans-Mississippi Army. On June 23, Watie finally acknowledged defeat and surrendered his unit of Confederate Cherokee, Creek, Seminole and Osage troops. Watie was the last Confederate general to give up his command.

The CSS Shenandoah, a Confederate ship, continued terrorizing Union commercial ships in the Bering Sea long after the rebellion ended on land. Only in August 1865 did its skipper, James Waddell, get word that the war had definitively ended. The ship stowed its guns and made an escape to Liverpool, England.

On April 2, 1866, President Johnson issued a proclamation stating that the rebellion was over in all of the former Confederate states but Texas. The Lone Star State had not yet established a new state government. Once it did, the conflict would officially come to a close.

The Texas land and economy had been affected far less by the Civil War than the rest of the South. For this reason, many former Confederates from other states flocked there after the war. "The Texas economy is prime, and it becomes this beacon for the rest of the South," Grear explains. "People that are disgruntled throughout the South about their economic situation after the war — they're going to be flooding into Texas."

"Peace, Order, Tranquility, And Civil Authority Now Exist"

These waves of newly arrived white Southerners would clash head-on with another growing population in the state: formerly enslaved people. Texas's black population had also exploded during the Civil War since many Southern planters brought their slaves there to avoid them being captured by the Union Army. "Of course there's going to be blowback against the emancipation of slaves," Grear says. There was violence against newly freed slaves throughout Texas.

In June 1866, President Johnson accepted Texas' new constitution, which provided limited civil rights for blacks. Statewide elections were held that month. On August 9, James Webb Throckmorton was inaugurated as governor. However, he would be removed from office the following year due to his resistance to Reconstruction, the period of great change after the Civil War. During Reconstruction, Congress set up new governments in the South to protect the rights of formerly enslaved people.

On August 20, 1866, in recognition of Texas' new state government, Johnson was able to finally proclaim that the Civil War was over. "Peace, order, tranquility, and civil authority now exist in and throughout the whole United States of America," he said. However, the difficult process of Reconstruction was only beginning.

The Election of 1860

By History.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 06.18.19

Word Count 971

Level 1140L

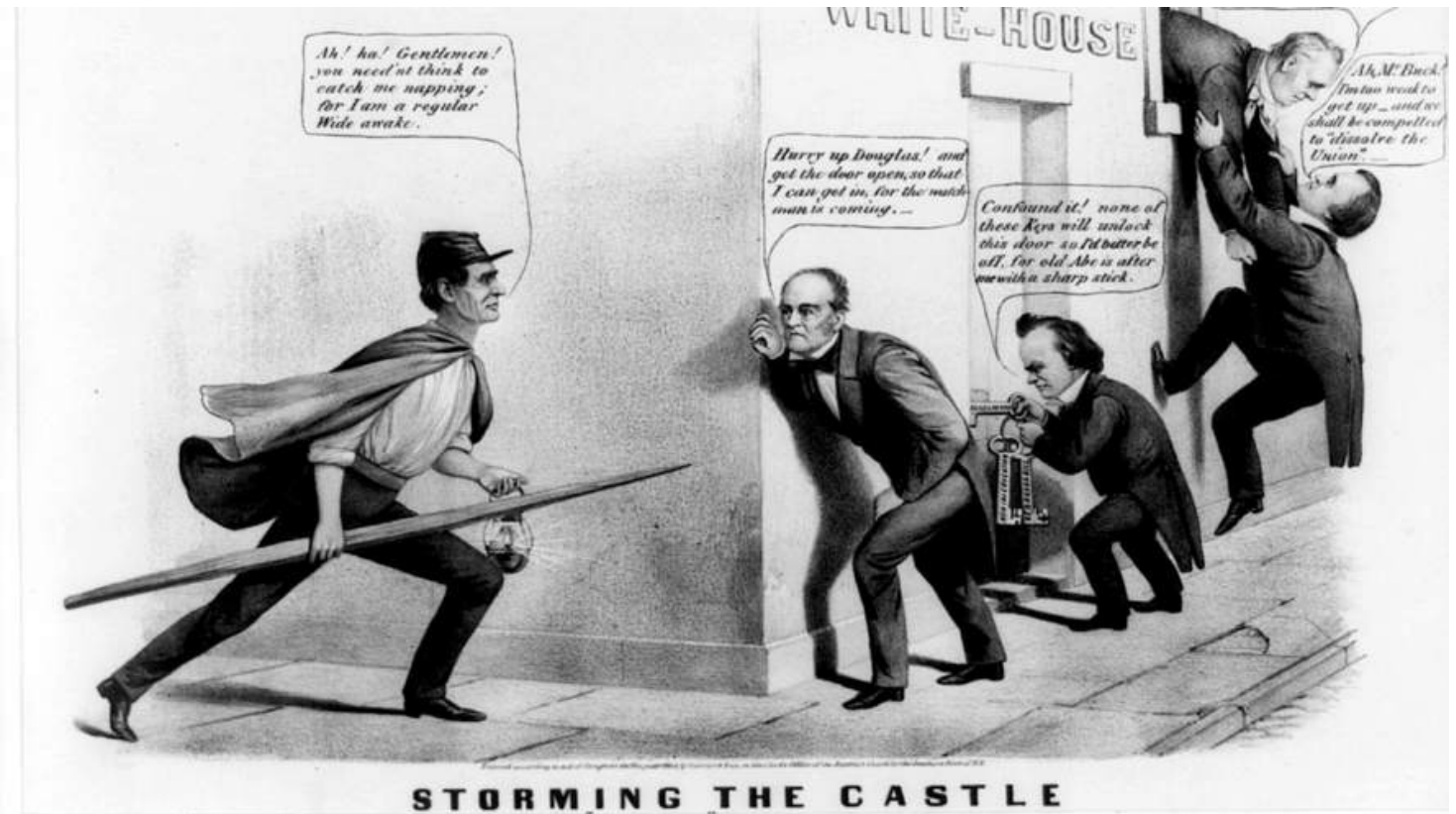


Image 1. During the 1860 election campaign, the "Wide Awakes," a marching club composed of young Republican men, appeared in cities throughout the North. They wore uniforms of visored caps and short capes, and carried lanterns. Here, Republican presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln (left) is dressed as a "Wide Awake," and carries a lantern and a spear-like wooden rail. He rounds the corner of the White House, foiling the attempts of three other candidates to enter surreptitiously. At far right, incumbent James Buchanan tries to haul John C. Breckinridge in through the window. Breckinridge despairs, "I'm too weak to get up — and we shall be compelled to dissolve the Union." His words reflect his and Buchanan's supposed alliance with secessionist interests of the South. Library of Congress

The election of 1860 was one of the most significant presidential elections in American history. It matched Republican nominee Abraham Lincoln against three other candidates: Democratic Party nominee Senator Stephen Douglas, Southern Democratic Party nominee John Breckinridge and Constitutional Union Party nominee John Bell. The main issues of the election were slavery and states' rights. Lincoln emerged victorious and became the 16th president of the United States. His victory came just as the nation was beginning to break apart, and the years to come would greatly test his leadership and resolve.

Lincoln's Political History

Abraham Lincoln's political career began in 1832 when, at the young age of 23, he ran for the Illinois House of Representatives. Lincoln lost that election. Two years later, as a member of the

Whig Party, he was elected to the state legislature, where he publicly announced his dislike of slavery.

In 1847, Lincoln was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where, on January 10, 1849, he introduced a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. The bill didn't pass, but it opened the door for later anti-slavery legislation.

In 1858, Lincoln ran for the Senate, this time as a Republican. His opponent was Illinois Democrat Stephen A. Douglas. Lincoln lost the election, but gained prominence for himself and the newly established Republican Party.

1860 Republican National Convention

The Republican Party held its second national convention on May 16, 1860, in Chicago, Illinois. The position it adopted on the issue of slavery was something of a compromise: It would not seek to end slavery in states where it was currently legal, but it would try to keep it from expanding into any new states or territories.

The two front-runners for the Republican presidential nomination were Lincoln and New York Senator William Seward. After three rounds of voting, Lincoln was nominated, with Hannibal Hamlin as his running mate.

Democrats Split Over Slavery

The Democratic Party was in disarray in 1860. It should have been the party of unity, but instead it was divided on the issue of slavery. Southern Democrats thought slavery should be expanded, but Northern Democrats opposed the idea.

States' rights were also hotly debated. Southern Democrats felt states had the right to govern themselves, while Northern Democrats supported the Union and a national government.

With such confusion among the ranks, it was unclear how the Democratic Party would ever nominate a candidate for the 1860 election. But on April 23, 1860, they met in Charleston, South Carolina, to decide their platform and identify a nominee.

Stephen Douglas was the front-runner, but Southern Democrats refused to support him because he wouldn't adopt a pro-slavery platform. Many walked out in protest, leaving the remaining delegates without the majority needed to nominate Douglas, and as a result, the convention ended without a nominee.

The Democrats met again two months later in Baltimore. Once again, many Southern delegates left in disgust, but enough remained to nominate Douglas as their presidential nominee, and former Georgia Governor Herschel Johnson as his running mate.

Southern Democrats nominated John Breckinridge, a supporter of slavery and states' rights, to represent them in the election. Oregon Senator Joseph Lane was picked as his running mate.

Constitutional Union Party

The Constitutional Union Party was mainly made up of disgruntled Democrats, Unionists and former Whigs. On May 9, 1860, the party held its first convention and nominated Tennessee

slaveholder John Bell as its presidential nominee. Former Harvard University President Edward Everett was selected as his running mate.

The Constitutional Union took no official position on slavery or states' rights, but promised to defend the Constitution and the Union.

Still, Bell offered his own plan for ending the nation's fight over slavery. He proposed extending the Missouri Compromise line across the United States and making slavery legal in new states to the south of the line and illegal in new states north of the line. With positions like this, the Constitutional Union Party hoped to sway voters who were upset with the divisiveness of the Democratic Party.

1860 Presidential Campaign

None of the 1860 presidential candidates did anywhere near the amount of campaigning seen in modern-day elections. In fact, except for Douglas, they mostly let well-known people campaign for them at rallies and parades. Faced with a divided voter base in the South, Douglas campaigned in both the North and South, and gave a series of campaign speeches in favor of the Union.

Election Results

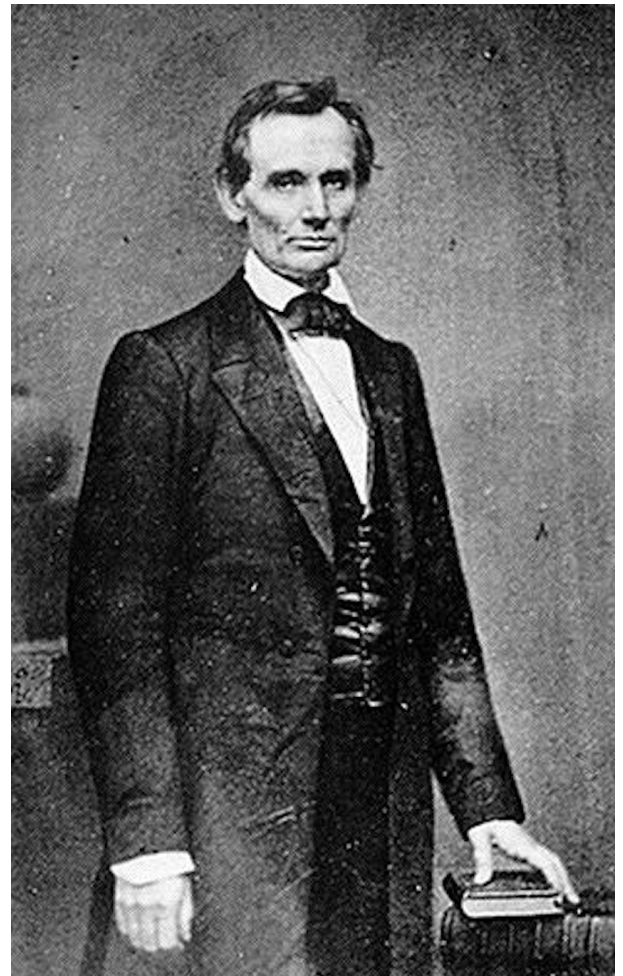
On November 6, 1860, voters went to the ballot box to cast their vote for president of the United States. Lincoln won the election in an Electoral College landslide with 180 electoral votes, although he secured less than 40 percent of the popular vote.

The North had many more people than the South, and therefore control of the electoral college. Lincoln dominated the Northern states, but didn't carry a single Southern state.

Douglas received some Northern support — 12 electoral votes — but not nearly enough to offer a serious challenge to Lincoln. The Southern vote was split between Breckenridge, who won 72 electoral votes, and Bell, who won 39 electoral votes.

The election of 1860 firmly established the Democratic and Republican parties as the majority parties in the United States. It also confirmed deep-seated divisions between the North and South over the issues of slavery and states' rights.

Before Lincoln's inauguration in March of 1861, 11 Southern states had seceded from the Union. Weeks after his swearing-in, the Confederate Army fired on Fort Sumter and started the Civil War.



The military background of Union, Confederate forces in the Civil War

By Encyclopedia Britannica, adapted by Newsela staff on 01.20.20

Word Count 1,214

Level 1240L



Image 1. Union Major General Philip Sheridan and his generals in front of his tent in 1864, photographer unknown. Photo: Library of Congress.

Comparing The North And South

At first glance, it seemed that the 23 states that remained in the Union after secession would easily trounce the 11 Southern states. Approximately 21 million people lived in the North, compared with some 9 million in the South. Additionally, 4 million of those 9 million in the South were enslaved. The North was also the site of more than 100,000 manufacturing plants, against 18,000 south of the Potomac River, and more than 70 percent of the railroads were in the Union. In sum, the Union could make more war supplies and transport them more easily. The Union also had a functioning government and a small, but efficient regular army and navy.

The Confederacy was not guaranteed to lose, however. The Southern armies had the advantage of being smaller and more mobile, and they had a great wealth of military experience prior to the Civil War. Moreover, the long Confederate coastline of 3,500 miles seemed to defy blockade,

meaning the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, could hope to receive foreign aid and intervention coming in from the Atlantic Ocean.

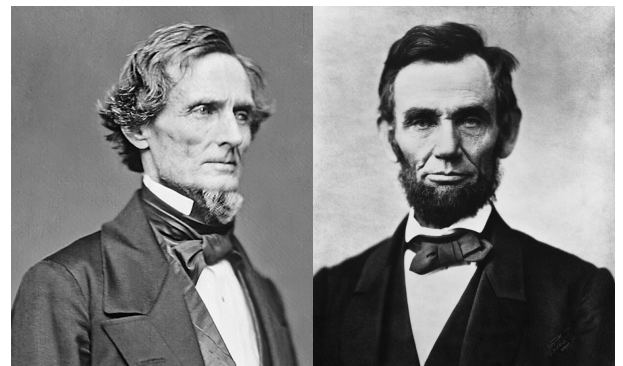
Confederate soldiers were fighting to achieve a separate and independent country. This country would be based on what they called "Southern institutions," the chief of which was the institution of slavery. Their attempt was not totally far-fetched. Indeed, other countries — most notably the United States in the American Revolution against Britain — had won independence against equally heavy odds.

Jefferson Davis Vs. Abraham Lincoln

Command, or leadership, problems plagued both sides. Of the two rival commanders in chief, most people in 1861 thought Jefferson Davis to be abler than Abraham Lincoln. Davis was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, a hero of the Mexican-American War, a capable secretary of war under President Franklin Pierce, and a U.S. representative and senator from Mississippi. Lincoln had only served in the Illinois state legislature and as an undistinguished one-term member of the U.S. House of Representatives. He could boast of only a brief period of military service in the Black Hawk War, in which he saw no action.

The South's Davis

As president and commander in chief of the Confederate forces, Davis revealed many fine qualities, including dignity, firmness, determination, and honesty. However, he was flawed by his excessive pride, hypersensitivity to criticism, poor political skills, and tendency to be too controlling. He would regularly get into small arguments with other leaders. He also suffered from ill health throughout the conflict. Davis' effectiveness was further hampered by a political system that limited him to a single six-year term, meaning once he was elected, everyone knew he would never be president again. Organized political parties were also looked down upon. The lack of political parties meant that Davis could not command loyalty from a broad group of people such as governors or political appointees when he came under heavy criticism.



To a large extent and by his own preference, Davis was his own secretary of war, although five men served in that post during the lifetime of the Confederacy. Davis himself also filled the position of general in chief of the Confederate armies until he named Robert E. Lee to that position on February 6, 1865, when the Confederacy was near collapse. In naval affairs — an area about which he knew little — the Confederate president seldom intervened directly, allowing the competent, or able, secretary of the navy, Stephen Mallory, to handle the Southern naval buildup and operations on the water. Although his position was difficult and quite likely could not have been filled as well by any other Southern political leader, Davis' overall performance in office left something to be desired.

The North's Lincoln

To the astonishment of many, Lincoln grew in stature with time and experience. By 1864, he had become a first-rate politician and war director. Lincoln matured into a remarkably effective president because of his great intelligence, communication skills, humility, sense of purpose, sense of humor, fundamentally moderate nature, and ability to remain focused on the big picture. But he had much to learn at first, especially in strategic and tactical matters and in his choices of army commanders. With an ineffective first secretary of war — Simon Cameron — Lincoln needed to be very involved in the planning of military movements.

Starting in 1864, and for the remainder of the war, Ulysses S. Grant led the Union as federal general in chief, and he did so effectively.

After the initial call by Lincoln and Davis for troops, and as the war lengthened, both sides turned to raising massive armies of volunteers. Powerful and wealthy citizens would organize regiments, or groups of soldiers, that were then organized into the service of the Union or Confederate governments. On each side, the presidents appointed so-called "political generals." These men had little or no military training or experience but had important political connections (for example, Northern Democrats) or had ties to immigrant communities. Although successful politically, most of these appointments did not yield happy military results. As the war dragged on, the two governments had to resort to conscription, or required service, to fill the ranks being so swiftly thinned by battle casualties.

Military Strategic Planning

In the area of grand strategy, Davis persistently adhered to the defensive. He permitted only occasional explorations or fighting into Northern territory. Perhaps the Confederates' best chance of winning would have been an early grand offensive into the Union states before the Lincoln administration could find its ablest generals and implement all its resources against the South. On the other hand, protecting the territory the Confederacy already controlled was of paramount importance. A defensive position allowed the rebels to use their resources somewhat better.

To crush the rebellion and reestablish the authority of the Federal government, Lincoln had to direct his blue-clad armies to invade, capture, and hold most of the vital areas of the Confederacy. His grand strategy was based on Winfield Scott's so-called Anaconda Plan. Scott was the Union's federal general in chief when Lincoln took office. He was a distinguished soldier whose mind was still keen, but he was physically incapacitated and had to be retired from the service in 1861. His Anaconda Plan called for a Union blockade of the Confederacy's coastline, cutting off the ports, as well as a decisive thrust down the Mississippi River. The idea was to cut off, encircle, and strangle the South by making use of federal land and naval forces. Ultimately, it worked. But it would take four years of



grim, unrelenting warfare and enormous casualties and devastation before the Confederates could be defeated and the Union preserved.

World War I

Instructional Guide: In order to complete this instructional activity, you may utilize the articles listed below and/or use available external resources.

Note to students: It is recommended that you don't complete the entire assignment in one sitting, rather work on your Social Studies assignment for 30-45 minutes a day. Consider breaking up the tasks into smaller chunks. When assigned in its entirety this lesson should take approximately 3-5 days to complete.

Student Instructions:

1. Read the content summary.
2. Read the assigned articles highlighting key information.
3. Respond to the following questions in 1 paragraph each.
4. Optional: Complete the extension activities

Time: 3-5 days

Vocabulary:

- Alliances
- Allies
- Central Powers
- Franz Ferdinand
- Imperialism
- Militarism
- Nationalism
- U-Boat

Content Summary:

World War I officially began in 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. In the years leading up to the war, European nations were fighting for power and making secret alliances. By the time of the assassination of the Archduke, most European nations had already picked a side. The war was fought between the Allied and the Central Powers. The Allied Powers included France, Russia, and Britain. Russia left the war in 1917 because of the Russian Revolution and the United States joined the Allied Powers that same year. The Central Powers included Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria.

World War I got off to an aggressive start due to Germany's military strategy called the Schlieffen Plan. In 1914, Germany began to fight on two fronts, invading France through Belgium in the West and Russia in the East. During the war, trenches were used as a type of defense. Opposing armies would dig trenches in order to protect soldiers from bullets and poison gas. When the war first broke out, the United States had a policy of neutrality. Many in the United States did not want to be involved in a foreign conflict. In 1915, Germany sunk a ship called the Lusitania, which had 159 Americans on board. This act enraged Americans and changed public sentiment toward the war. In 1917, Americans found out about the Zimmerman Telegram, which was a secret message from Germany to Mexico, proposing that

Mexico ally with Germany against the United States. The Zimmerman Telegram finally drew the United States into the war.

On April 6, 1917 the U.S. declared war on Germany. World War I was the world's first total war and changed the way wars were fought forever. New inventions like machine guns, submarines, poison gas, and planes, led to a conflict that was more deadly than any other in history. The entrance of the U.S. into the war changed the course of the war and led to the defeat of the Central Powers. World War I ended the age of empires and dramatically changed the geopolitical landscape of Europe. The Treaty of Versailles formally ended the war and harshly punished Germany, forcing them to downgrade their armed forces and pay massive reparations. This greatly embarrassed Germany and was later a rallying cry when Adolf Hitler rose to power.

Questions (respond in one paragraph each):

1. Identify the causes of World War I.
2. Explain the impact of new weapons and technology on World War I.
3. Describe the effects of the Treaty of Versailles.
4. Explain whether you believe Germany's punishment after WWI was fair?

Extension Activities (Optional):

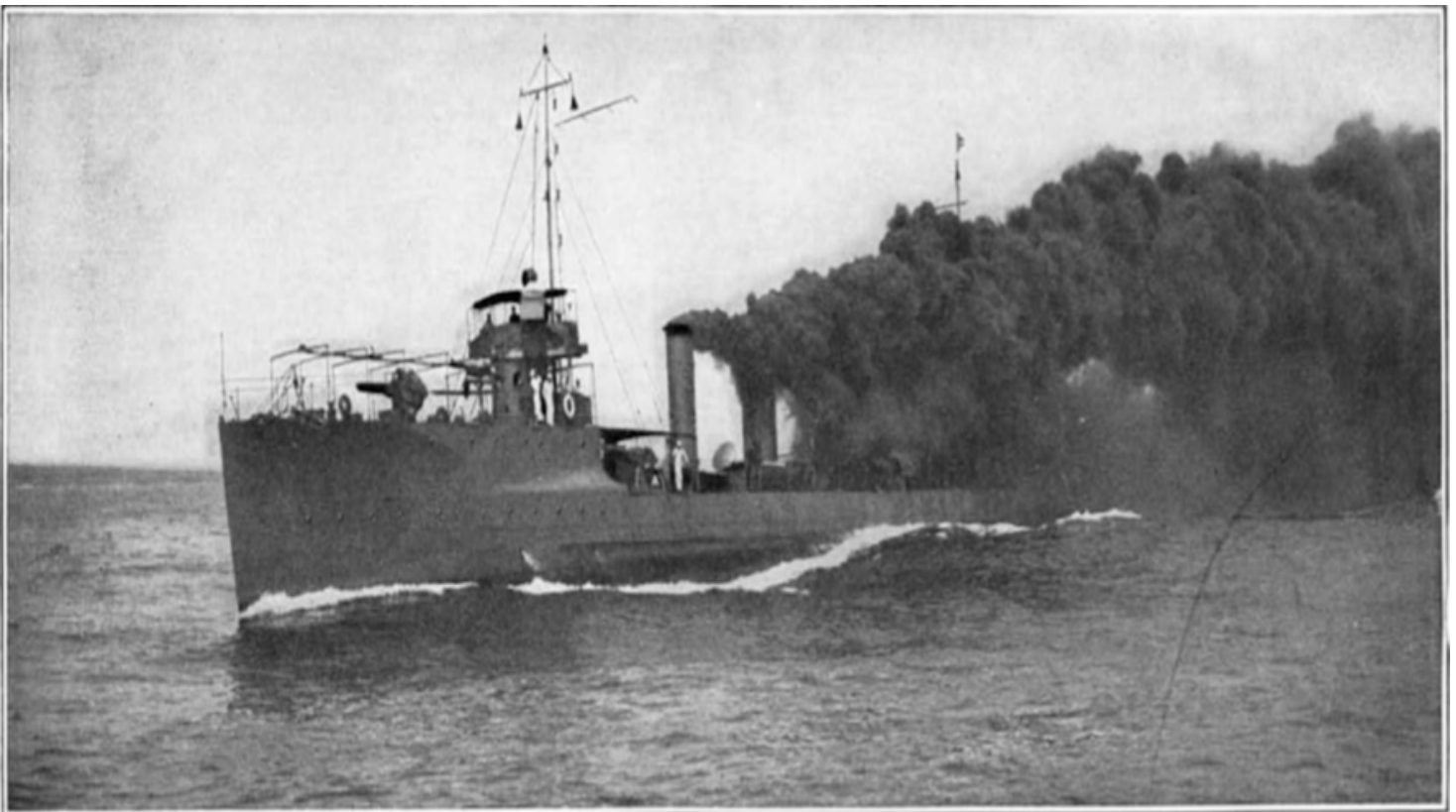
- **Letter Home:** Imagine you a soldier fighting in the trenches during World War I. Write a letter home detailing your experiences.
- **Visual:** Create a visual such as a drawing or diagram that illustrates the causes of World War I.

Time Machine (1917): The destroyer and the torpedo in WWI

By Scientific American, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.22.16

Word Count 1,182

Level 1210L



This destroyer, doing 30 knots, has choked off the draft so as to throw a screen of smoke and spoil the enemy's vision and gunfire. This maneuver was used in the battle of Jutland between Britain and Germany during World War I. Photo courtesy of Scientific American

Newsela Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the March 1917 issue of Scientific American. The United States entered World War I on April 2, 1917.

The torpedo is not, in the military sense, nearly so important a weapon of offense as it is popularly supposed to be. We say "in a military sense," for the enormous destruction of unarmed and helpless merchant shipping which the Germans have accomplished is not a military operation, but mere outlawed piracy. If Germany had obeyed those humanitarian laws of war, which are the outgrowth of many centuries of trying to protect the non-combatant from the cruelties and losses of war, there would have been a comparatively small toll of sunken ships to their credit.

All through the history of the development of torpedo warfare, the inventors in their plans have shown that they were trying to devise some means of sinking warships, unseen by the enemy. Inventors in this country, to say nothing of the French and Italian inventors, carried in their minds

as the object of attack only the warship. The merchant ship, they well knew, was not to be a target for a torpedo attack.

To Germany belongs, and will forever belong, the distinction of being the first naval power to break away from those safeguards of human life which have been in place for centuries. They have changed the torpedo from a weapon of war to an instrument for the wholesale murder of passengers and sailors upon the high seas.

Not That Effective In Battle

So having now changed our minds about the use of the torpedo, drawn from its misuse against helpless and unarmed ships, we shall be prepared to recognize a surprising fact. Against swift and well-guarded warships, the torpedo has shown itself, in the present war, to be a surprisingly poor weapon. Proof is found in the battle at the mouth of Germany's Elbe River. This is where it flows into the North Sea. Some 50 to 60 ships, all heavily armed with torpedoes, were engaged freely firing torpedoes for several hours. Not a single torpedo hit. Even more significant is the great battle of Jutland. In 1916, in the North Sea, off the coast of Denmark, more than 120 ships were engaged in battle for two days. The destroyers were exceedingly active, however only one torpedo hit was made on the whole of the British fleet. The battleship Marlborough was struck near the stern, or rear and started to list, or lean, rather heavily. She was able to bring herself back, however, to a level position and continued to take part in the fight.

High speed and quick turning power have proved to be the best defense against the torpedo. The fast battle cruisers and scouts are well able to take care of themselves, while the slower battleships are protected by numerous screens of destroyers. Each group of battleships is led by a fast light cruiser that carries heavy torpedo defense guns.

Blame Human Error For Weapon's Failures

The failure of the torpedo is not due to the inefficiency of the torpedo itself. It is indeed a wonderfully efficient weapon. Our latest 21-inch superheat torpedo will travel with marvelous accuracy for 10,000 yards at a speed of 40 knots, or 45 miles per hour. Target practice with these weapons, in time of peace, has proved that it will do this consistently. Target practice conditions, however, are with stationery or slow-moving ships. In a sea fight, the enemy ships move very quickly.

The failure of the torpedo against warships is not due to the weapon, but to the human element. The great difficulty is estimating the distance, speed and course of enemy ships. It is extremely difficult to hit a fast ship at a distance of 5,000 to 10,000 yards. A 700-foot battle cruiser going 30 knots will cover 700 feet in 14 seconds. However, it will take a torpedo at least eight minutes to reach a ship 10,000 yards away. A 30-knot ship moves at the rate of 50 feet per second. However, the torpedo officer can only estimate the speed of the enemy ship that is eight minutes away. If he estimates the ship is traveling 30 knots, when she is traveling only 25, his torpedo will reach the target too soon and it will pass ahead of the ship. If the estimate is 25 knots when she is really going 30, the torpedo will arrive too late. It will pass astern, or behind, the ship.

A Scattershot Approach To Attack

One ship can never be the target. The torpedoes, should the two fleets come within torpedo range, say 10,000 yards or less, would be discharged against the enemy's line as a whole. Some of the tor-

pedoes would pass between the ships, others would score a hit. The modern warship is around 700 feet long and the interval between the ships is about 1500 feet. So theoretically 2 out of 7 torpedoes should hit the mark.

Slower-moving merchant ships that are closer are not easy targets either. Many times during the past two years, officers and crew of such ships reported that torpedoes have passed ahead or behind them.

The 30- to 35-knot destroyer, carrying from eight to 12 torpedo tubes, is a most effective means for torpedo attack. The work is hazardous, of course, but a group of these ships, rushing down upon the enemy at 35 knots, protected by a smoke screen, could sink a battleship or two.

Sending Up A Smoke Screen For Protection

The smoke screen or smoke attack, which has been used so frequently and effectively in this war, was first used by the United States Navy. An American destroyer fleet commanded by Capt. Edward W. Eberle was the first. The writer well remembers being present when it was demonstrated off Block Island, Massachusetts, several years ago. Five groups of destroyers, 20 in all, crossed the head of a column of battleships, until they were in the windward position, and then, with the leading destroyers smoking heavily, swept down the line of the enemy at a distance of about 1,300 yards. The dense smoke rolled down toward the enemy and screened the destroyers from observation; but above the dense and low-lying bank of smoke could be seen the tops of the battleships; and, had the maneuver been an actual battle, some of the enemy ships would have been heavily torpedoed.

In the battle of Jutland, the German destroyers made use of this smoke screen as a protection to their own battleships, when they were being heavily hit by the battleship divisions under British Admiral John Jellicoe. A noticeable feature of that fight was the use of fast 30- to 35-knot light cruisers, armed with 6-inch guns, as leaders of the destroyer group. One well-placed shot from a 6-inch gun will usually cripple a destroyer, if indeed it does not sink her, and the object of these light cruisers is to lead the attack, break up the counterattack of the enemy, and bring her own destroyers within torpedo range.

Time Machine (1914): Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand starts WWI

By Washington Times, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.26.16

Word Count 841

Level 1030L



Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his wife, Sophie, emerge from the Sarajevo Town Hall to board their car, a few minutes before the assassination that sparked World War I. Photo: Karl Tröstl

Newsela Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the Sept. 23, 1914, edition of The Washington Times. Its tone of voice and style of multiple dispatches are typical of the newspapers of the time.

On June 28, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was shot and killed as he traveled by car through the streets of Sarajevo. The assassin, a young man named Gabriel Prinzip, was part of a group of Serbian political activists fighting for greater independence from Austria-Hungary.

Setting Off A War

By killing the archduke, Prinzip set in motion a war that now threatens to suck in all of Europe.

The assassination came after years of conflict between Austria-Hungary and the Serbian people. Some Serbians see Austria-Hungary as an oppressive foreign power and believe that Serbians

deserve more political freedom. The Archduke was a symbol of Austrian-Hungarian power and an heir to the throne.

According to Austria-Hungary, however, the Serbian government was at least partly to blame for the sudden act of violence. Twenty-five days after the assassination, Austria-Hungary sent a note of demands to Serbia. The note criticized the government for allowing hatred of Austria-Hungary to spread among Serbians, and it accused Serbia of collaborating with the assassins, claiming that the murder had been planned in the Serbian capital.

A List Of Demands

The note also claimed that officers in the Serbian army helped Prinzip, a Serbian high school boy, to get a revolver and ammunition with which to perform the deed. Additionally, it accused Serbian government officials of having helped Prinzip reach Sarajevo, where the killing took place.

Angry about the assassination, Austria-Hungary's leaders presented the Serbian government with several demands. First, they insisted that the government publicly come out against the anti-Austrian-Hungarian political movement. Second, they demanded that Serbia place limits on the freedom of press and the freedom of speech in Serbia in order to prohibit criticism of Austria-Hungary. Third, Austria-Hungary demanded changes to the Serbian education system to ensure that schools would not teach students to hate Austria-Hungary. Finally, Serbia was asked to fire certain army officials who, according to Austria-Hungary, supported the Serbian independence fighters.

Serbia was given just 48 hours to meet these demands. If Serbia was unwilling to meet the demands, Austria-Hungary would declare war.

Serbia To Russia: "Help!"

Such a war could draw in all of Europe due to the complicated alliances between European countries. Germany has pledged to defend Austria-Hungary, and Russia is an ally of Serbia. So, as Austria-Hungary and Serbia prepared to fight, so too did Germany and Russia. When Germany began gearing up for war, its rivals France and Great Britain did the same.

What started as a dispute over Serbian independence is now set to pull all of Europe into war. It is as if Europe had been resting on a battery of explosives, and Prinzip lit a match.

On the night of July 23, a few weeks after the assassination, statesmen in Russia received a cablegram from Serbia.

"Help!" it said.

Armies Ready To Fight

The Russian statesmen talked about the message for four hours. Russia was Serbia's ally, but taking their side in the conflict with Austria-Hungary meant risking war with Germany. The Russians reached a secret decision at 7 o'clock in the evening and dashed off in their automobiles to their various offices, each doing his part to prepare for what was coming.

Meanwhile, the armies of Europe were already getting ready to fight.

Serbia's 48 hours were up on July 26 at 6 in the evening. By that time, the Russian army was moving toward Germany, and the German army was moving toward Russia, and in a dozen other different directions.

Predicting The Worst War Ever

Prinzip's bullet set all that in motion. It ignited the explosives under Europe, and the fire about to break loose will probably kill a million men. This war may create more destruction than anything else that has ever happened to humanity.

Did Prinzip know what he was doing when he pulled the trigger? We cannot know for sure. According to the Serbian government, following the assassination, Prinzip said:

"I was not influenced by any other person or persons. The reading of anarchist literature made me believe that there could be nothing finer in the world than to be an assassin. When in Belgrade I read that the Archduke was going to Serajevo, and so I bought a revolver and went there."

A Long And Ancient Quarrel

What he said or thought matters little now, though. Europe is not fighting because Prinzip is a murderer. The real reasons for the war have to do with the long and ancient quarrel for "a place in the sun," a place for each nation to put its feet in the crowded land. This quarrel has suddenly been turned from a contest of words and into a war of nations.

Perhaps war was unavoidable. Some jolt would have set off the European explosion, at some time. It just happened that Prinzip's bullet did it.

In the Aftermath of World War I, Nations Were Forever Changed

By ThoughtCo.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 10.19.17

Word Count **1,087**

Level **1210L**



German Johannes Bell signs the Treaty of Versailles in France. He is shown sitting in the front chair. The treaty had been drafted by the Allied powers and was unfavorable and harsh for Germany. Image from the public domain

World War I was fought from 1914 to 1918 and saw slaughter on an unprecedented scale. It left Europe and the world greatly changed and set the stage for the violence and turmoil that marked many of the remaining years of the century.

A new great power

Before its entry into World War I, the United States was a nation of untapped military potential and growing economic might. The war changed this in two important ways. First, the U.S. military was turned into a large-scale fighting force with experience of modern war and was clearly equal to old European powers. Second, the balance of economic power started to switch from the drained nations of Europe to America.

However, U.S. politicians made significant decisions following the war. These caused the country to retreat from the world stage, initially limiting the impact of these changes. The country's growth in power would only truly bear fruit following World War II. This initial isolationism undermined

the League of Nations, which had been founded in 1919 to resolve disputes between countries, as well as the political order that emerged following World War I.

Socialism rises to the world stage

The collapse of Russia under the pressure of total warfare allowed communist revolutionaries to seize power there in 1917. The czar and his family were killed and a new communist government was set up. The communists did not want elite individuals to own factories and land as private property. Instead, they wanted workers to have more power and better working conditions. The new Russian government took over the farmlands to manage them as a form of public property. Still, the revolution did not spread globally, as Russian communist leader Vladimir Lenin hoped would happen.

The existence of a huge and potentially powerful communist nation changed the balance of world politics. Germany initially seemed to be headed in the direction of communism, but instead formed a new social democracy. Its new Weimar Republic combined democratic institutions with a less-extreme form of left-wing politics known as socialism.

Germany's new government would soon come under great pressure and it was eventually toppled by a right-wing assault. As Adolf Hitler and the far-right Nazi Party took over, the stage was set for World War II. Russia, meanwhile, became increasingly repressive and authoritarian.

The collapse of Central and Eastern European empires

The German, Russian, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires all fought in World War I. After, they were all swept away by defeat and revolution. The fall of the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary were probably not much of a surprise. Turkey, which was the heart of the Ottoman Empire, had long been regarded as the "sick man of Europe," and other European countries had been circling its territory like vultures for decades, waiting to take its land. Austria-Hungary appeared nearly as weak. Much more shocking was the fall of the young, powerful and growing German Empire, which came after people rose up in revolt and toppled Kaiser Wilhelm II from power.

In all these countries the old order was replaced by a series of new governments, ranging from democratic republics to socialist dictatorships.

Nationalism transforms and complicates Europe

Nationalism, the belief that people of the same culture have the right to their own independent, self-governing nation, had been growing in Europe for decades before World War I. However, the post-war period saw a major rise in new nations and independence movements. In part, this was



THE GAP IN THE BRIDGE.



an outgrowth of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's commitment to national "self-determination." Perhaps more essentially, the destabilization of old empires gave nationalists the chance to declare new countries.

European nationalism was strongest in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes all emerged as new countries, along with several other new nations.

However, the transition to nationhood was not a smooth process and did not occur everywhere. Nationalism contributed greatly to tensions in the region, as many countries were multi-ethnic, with different nationalities and ethnicities all living together within the same borders. Nationalism fueled the rise of sometimes violent independence movements, and at times made national minorities more loyal to a neighboring country than they were to their own.

The myths of victory and failure

At the end of World War I, German military commander Erich Ludendorff first called for a peace treaty and then demanded that Germany reject its terms, which he found to be much too harsh. Ludendorff claimed the army could and should fight on, but the new civilian government overruled him and declared the war over.



This decision gave Ludendorff and other military leaders someone to blame for Germany's loss. Thus began, at the very close of the war, the myth of the undefeated German army being "stabbed in the back" by liberals, socialists and Jews, who were blamed for the poor government of the time. This myth damaged the Weimar government and fueled the rise of Adolf Hitler.

Britain, despite emerging on the side of the victors, came to view World War I as a bloody catastrophe. This attitude affected Britain's response to international events during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1938, at the eve of World War II, it might have made Britain more willing to give in to Hitler's demands that Germany obtain large portions of Czechoslovakia. This policy, known as appeasement, was meant to preserve the tenuous peace for as long as possible.

A "lost generation"

Eight million people died during World War I, which was perhaps 1 in 8 combatants. Many other people were so physically or mentally damaged by the war that they took their own lives. In most of the Great Powers, it was hard to find someone who had not lost a loved one to the war.



The major alliances of World War I

By ThoughtCo.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 11.07.19

Word Count **922**

Level **1210L**





Image 1. U.S. Army soldiers leaving for the front in France. Photo from: U.S. National Archives.

Before World War I, Europe's six major powers were split into two alliances. Britain, France and Russia formed the Triple Entente, while Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy joined in the Triple Alliance. After the war began in 1914, the two alliances fought against each other. These alliances weren't the only cause of World War I, some historians have argued, but they did play an important role in speeding up the beginning of the conflict.

The Central Powers

Otto von Bismarck was the chancellor of Prussia, a large state in northern Germany. After a series of military victories from 1862 to 1871, Bismarck unified several small states to form the German Empire and became the leader of that empire. After unifying Germany, Bismarck feared that neighboring nations, particularly France

Who Fought in WWI

Allied Powers	Central Powers
 Great Britain	 Germany
 France	 Austria-Hungary
 Russia	 Bulgaria
 Italy	 Ottoman Empire
 Romania	
 Japan	
 United States	

Russia entered into an agreement with France in 1892, spelled out in the Franco-Russian Military Convention. The terms were loose but it required both nations to support each other in the event of war. This new agreement was intended to counter the Triple Alliance. Much of the diplomacy Bismarck had considered critical to Germany's survival had been undone in a few years, and the nation once again faced threats from many sides.

The Triple Entente

Meanwhile, Great Britain was searching for alliances of its own to help protect its colonies. Britain had not supported France in the Franco-Prussian War with Germany, but the two nations pledged military support for one another in the Entente Cordiale of 1904. Britain signed a similar agreement with Russia three years later, and in 1912, the Anglo-French Naval Convention tied Britain and France even closer. Together, the three nations formed a different alliance, the Triple Entente.

When Austria's ruler Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in 1914, the great powers of Europe reacted in a way that led to all-out war within weeks. The Triple Entente fought the Triple Alliance, although Italy soon switched sides. Both sides thought the war would be finished by Christmas of 1914. Instead, it dragged on for four long years, eventually bringing the United States into the conflict. By the time the Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1919, officially ending the Great War, more than 11 million soldiers and 7 million civilians were dead.

