

World War I**Lesson 2**

Europe Plunges into War

Key Terms and People

Central Powers Germany, Austria-Hungary, and other nations who fought on their side

Allies Great Britain, France, Russia, and other nations who fought on their side

Western Front region of northern France where much fighting took place

Schlieffen Plan Germany's plan for winning the war on two fronts

trench warfare fighting from trenches dug in the battlefield

Eastern Front region along German-Russian border where much fighting took place

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read how World War I began.

In this lesson, you will learn the details of this costly and tragic war.

As You Read

Use a chart to trace the cause-and-effect relationships that marked the beginning of World War I.

THE GREAT WAR BEGINS**How did so many nations become involved?**

The system of alliances turned the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia into a wider war. Russia moved against Austria-Hungary. It figured that Germany would support Austria-Hungary. So it moved troops against Germany as well. Germany declared war on Russia. Soon after, it also declared war on Russia's ally, France. Great Britain declared war on Germany.

Germany and Austria-Hungary were called the **Central Powers**. Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire joined Germany and Austria-Hungary. France, Britain,

and Russia were called the **Allies**. They were later joined by Italy, which broke with Germany and Austria-Hungary.

1. Who were the Allies and Central Powers?

A BLOODY STALEMATE**What kind of warfare was used?**

Germany had a plan for winning the war on two fronts. The first front would be in France: the **Western Front**. After defeating France, Germany planned to turn east to face Russia. This **Schlieffen**

Lesson 2, *continued*

Plan called for a rapid push through France, a quick defeat of that nation, and then an attack on Russia. After the German army moved almost to Paris, however, French defenses strengthened and stopped them in September 1914. Both sides became bogged down in a bloody stalemate. Soldiers dug deep trenches into the ground. **Trench warfare** began.

When soldiers left the trenches to storm enemy lines, they faced powerful new weapons. Machine guns, tanks, poison gas, and larger pieces of artillery killed hundreds of thousands of soldiers.

2. What was the war like on the Western Front?

THE BATTLE ON THE EASTERN FRONT

What happened on the Eastern Front?

The war on the **Eastern Front** showed more movement at first—but it was equally destructive. Russian armies attacked both Germany and Austria-Hungary. They had some early success but were driven back in both places. One reason was that Russia did not have a fully industrial economy. It could not keep troops supplied. Meanwhile, the other Allies were unable to ship supplies to Russian ports.

Still, Russia had a huge population and could send millions to war. The large Russian army provided a constant threat to Germany. This threat prevented Germany from putting its full resources against the Allies in the west.

3. What weaknesses and strengths did Russia have?

Lesson 2, *continued*

As you read this lesson, note the effects of each of the actions or situations (causes) listed below.

Causes	Effects
1. Russia mobilizes along the German border.	
2. Germany declares war on France.	
3. The Allies defeat the Germans in September 1914.	
4. Machine guns, tanks, poison gas, and large artillery pieces are used in battles along the Western Front.	
5. Russian forces attack both Austria and Germany.	
6. The Allies are unable to ship war supplies to Russia's ports.	