

I. The Eastern Front

A. 1914

1. Schlieffen Plan had been for Germany to avoid fighting on two fronts
2. Plan failed, and Russia mobilized faster than expected
3. Russia lost twice against the Germans in September, which boosted German moral
 - a) The defeats also forced Russia out of Germany
4. Russia's position worsened considerably when Turkey entered the war because they could cut Russia's main supply rout through the Dardanelles.

B. 1915

1. Russians defeated by the Germans again (captured Warsaw in August)
2. Combined Austro-German forces mean loss of most of Russia's gains made in 1914
3. Russians had to establish a new defensive line from Riga (Baltic Sea to Romania in Balkans)
 - a) 1/3 of the Russian forces didn't have arms
4. The line soon became known as 600 miles of mud and horror

C. 1916-1917

1. 1916 was the greatest success of Russia in the war
2. Determined War effort moral on home front, Russia's army became better equipped as well.
3. Offensive was originally very successful, but when the Germans started to help the Austrians, it went downhill and came to a halt
4. When the Tzar was forced to advocate, Russia's war efforts went even further downhill.
5. The new Bolshevik government in Russia decided to pull out of the war effort.
6. The Majority of German forces could now move to fight in the west

II. Diversionary Fronts

A. The Balkan Front

1. Austria-Hungary failed to occupy Serbia in 1914, Bulgaria's entry on the side of the Central Powers allowed a successful joint Austro-German-Bulgarian offensive.
2. Romania decided to join the allies (as being encouraged by Russia's success), but was quickly overrun by forces of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria

B. The Italian Front

1. Joined the War in 1915 on the side of the Allies
 - a) were promised by Britain and France that they would have possession of Italian speaking provinces of Austria, as well as the territory along the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea.
2. This opened a front between Italy and Austria along the Isonzo River.
3. Mountains in the area however allowed for little headway
4. Italian forces put a heavy burden on Austria-Hungary during the war

C. Turkey and the Middle Eastern Fronts

1. Turkey joined Germany and Austria-Hungary in the war on 31 of October 1914 with the Intention of halting Russian expansionism around the Black Sea
2. Allies attacked Turkey with three campaigns
 - a) Gallipoli campaign was for British warships to sweep through Dardanelles to attack Constantinople and drive Turkey out of the war, opening a rout to Russian Front and to get supplies to Russia. It would also allow the Allies to march through the Balkans and attack Austria-Hungary.
 - b) The second campaign against the Turks involved operating to win control of oil supplies through an expedition to oil-rich Mesopotamia, but the Turks lead and supported by the German officers resisted fiercely primarily, but lost in the end.
 - c) The Third campaign involved the British, Anzac and Indian troops driving back Turks through Palestine towards Turkey itself. Guerrilla warfare also benefited the British from the Arabs, who were promised independence from Turkey after the war
 - d) Turks surrendered on 3 November

D. War in the colonial territories

1. Major powers fighting in the war had colonies, so fighting among them took place as well
2. Britain's control of the sea however meant that all of the attacks were by the Allies

3. Most of the colonies were captured with little to no difficulty, with the exception of German colonies in Africa
4. Britain, France and Germany also gained soldiers from their colonies
5. Japan also joined the war on the Allies side, and took the chance to capture and occupy Germany's islands in the Central Pacific
6. By the end of the year, Germany had lost its Asiatic colonies, whom Britain had promised to different conquerors.

III. How was World War I fought?

A. War on land – The Western Front

1. Fighting took place on several fronts throughout the four years, and the west remained important for the following reasons:
 - a) Because of its size and the length of time it remained an operational theatre of war. It was a continuous battlefield stretching for 320 km from the North Sea to the French-Swiss border in the south. The Allies and the Germans attacked each other continuously for four years without significantly breaking the position line.
 - b) Because of the key role it played in the outcome of the Great War. Many of the other conflicts in the war were 'diversionary fronts', which were created to break the deadlock on the Western Front.
 - c) Because the fighting on the Western Front was to have a significant impact on ideas about and attitudes towards war.

B. Why did trench warfare lead to a stalemate?

1. Trench warfare most affected the way war was fought on the western front
2. After the race of arms in the naval area, the conflict settled into a positional warfare
3. They started to hold positions to win the war instead of moving around
4. Trench warfare is deadlier for attackers than defenders, attackers suffered twice as many casualties during an assault on the enemy trench line
5. Because of the difficulties it took to capture enemy trenches, the eastern front became a stalemate with little change in positions of the front over all four years of the war

C. How did the development of weaponry lead to a change in tactics on the Western Front?

- a) Both sides used new weaponry to try to break the tides of the war.
2. Machine guns and grenades
 - a) Main weapon of the British soldiers was the .303 in, bolt-action Lee-Enfield rifle with a magazine that held ten rounds of ammunition; a bayonet that could be attached to the end of the rifle
 - b) The machine gun was far more lethal against mass targets.
 - c) Hand grenades were also used in the war
 - d) The submachine gun was another innovation of WWI, where it was lighter and hand held. The soldier could handle the recoil better, they became known as trench sweepers
3. Heavy artillery
 - a) The new artillery was the real killer in WWI
 - b) Commanders saw them as the key to winning WWI because they could overcome defenses
 - c) However, the artillery wasn't accurate enough to destroy the enemy trench system completely, unless a shell fell directly into a trench
 - d) Fire-control also became more widely used, increasing developments in ways to use artillery
4. Chemical Warfare
 - a) The first poison gas attack was made at Ypres by Germans in 1915.
 - b) The chlorine gas was carried by the wind and caused panic amongst the allied soldiers and disabled 6.5 km of the trenches. More lethal gases were soon developed such as phosgene gas which was 18 times stronger than chlorine gas
 - c) The gas however didn't play a large part in the war because it depended on wind distribution, and gas masks were soon developed which made the gas really useless
5. Tanks
 - a) Another attempt to break the stalemate, developed by the British and the French at the battle of Somme. The tank was able to go ahead of the infantry and crush the barbed wire and attack the enemy at the same time with machine guns and canon fire.

- b) The tanks however didn't play a large part in the war. they were slow and unreliable and were ineffective against artillery fire.
- 6. What impact did the technological advances during WWI have on the nature of the fighting?
 - a) None of the technological developments in weaponry or variations in tactics were ultimately used decisively during the fighting on the western fronts, however, they did allow for a change in tactics by the final campaigns on 1918.