



## World War I (1914 to 1918)

European nations colonized territories in Africa and Asia. Some countries formed alliances at that time. This created imperial rivalries between nations in competition for colonial expansion.

On 28th June 1914, a Serbian assassin called Gavrilo Princip killed Archduke (the son of the Emperor of Austria) Franz Ferdinand of Austria. The Archduke was heir to the throne

of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

After this event, international tensions grew and very soon World War I started. European powers supported the countries in their alliances. This was what decided the countries on each side of the war.

THE CENTRAL POWERS	THE ALLIED POWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● German Empire</li> <li>● Austro-Hungarian Empire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● British Empire</li> <li>● French Empire</li> <li>● Russian Empire</li> </ul>

The war eventually expanded to territories outside of Europe, because the countries at war asked their colonies and friends for help. The United States, for example, joined the war in 1917. That same year, Russia abandoned the war because there was a communist revolution (the October Revolution) in the Russian Empire.

*Austria-Hungary, often referred to as the **Austro-Hungarian Empire** or the **Dual Monarchy**, was a constitutional monarchy in Central and Eastern Europe between 1867 and 1918. Austria-Hungary was a multinational state and one of Europe's major powers at the time.*

## WORLD WAR II (1939 TO 1945)

The Allied Powers considered the Germans responsible for starting World War I. For that reason, they forced Germany to pay compensation for the damage. But the cost of the reparations were too great for Germany's economy. This caused social discontent in the country. It contributed to the triumph of the Nazi party, led by Adolf Hitler.

The leader of the Nazi party wanted to restore Germany to its former glory. He convinced the Germans to support him. Breaking international agreements, Hitler assembled a powerful army and finally invaded most of Europe. This led to World War II. There were again two groups of countries on each side.

The Nazi state persecuted Jews and other minorities. The mass murder of millions of people was one of the most brutal episodes in history.

The Axis Powers	The Allied Powers
Invaded other countries:	Defended the invaded countries:
Germany Italy Japan	<b><u>Democracies:</u></b> France The United Kingdom The United States  <b><u>Communist countries:</u></b> The Soviet Union The Republic of China

## THE COLD WAR ( 1947 TO 1991)

During World War II, the United States of America and the Soviet Union (USSR) fought as allies. But at the end of the war, they relationship between the two nations fell apart.

These two rival superpowers, with very different political ideologies, dominated international relations after World War II.

The USA was a capitalist (economic system based on private industry) democracy. The Soviet Union was a totalitarian (authoritarian) communist state.

In 1961, the Soviets built a wall in Berlin, dividing the city into East and West. The division of the German capital symbolized the separation between the two sides of the Cold War.

There was no conflict in the Cold War, but both superpowers exercised their influence over other countries. There was a constant threat of nuclear war.

The Cold War ended when the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991.

## **WEAPONS AND WARFARE**

### **WORLD WAR I**

There were important advances in weapons of war which changed the way enemy nations fought in combat. Weapons included pistols, rifles and more powerful machine guns, shells and grenades. Britain used tanks in battle for the first time in 1916. The soldiers lived in tunnels called trenches. These trenches served as protection and as a way of organizing surprise surprise attacks. Signallers sent secret messages in morse code.

### **WORLD WAR II**

Both the Axis and Allied Powers quickly developed better weapons. Aircraft became more advanced with the arrival of the first jet fighters. These targeted strategic sights such as weapons factories. Tanks were an important military force. The development of sonar helped detect the U-boat submarines of the enemy. The United States developed the first atomic bomb and dropped two of these bombs on Japan in 1945 marking the end of World War II.

### **THE COLD WAR**

During the Cold War, the most important weapon was propaganda. This war was not fought on the battlefield. It was a political and economic conflict. Both sides invested a lot of money in developing their nuclear arsenals, in an arms race between the superpowers. The world lived in fear of nuclear war for many years, but the war ended without the superpowers using their nuclear weapons.