Lesson Question

Why did World War I begin?

Lesson Goals

Learn about the causes of World War I.

Describe the military and political alliances created between European powers.

Analyze the events that finally led to the declaration of war.
Words to Know

Write the letter of the definition next to the matching word as you work through the lesson. You may use the glossary to help you.

D. mobilize
F. ultimatum
E. ally
C. treaty
A. nationalist
B. escalate

A. a person who supports independence for his or her nation
B. to grow in severity or intensity
C. an official agreement between two or more countries
D. to organize and move troops and naval forces
E. a person or group who works with others in a particular activity
F. a final demand that will result in a threatened consequence if not met

Balance of Power

- Nationalism
- Imperialism
- Militarism
- Alliances

Rising tensions
Beginning in the 1800s, growing rivalries and distrust in Europe led to the creation of an alliance system.

- Each alliance was formed through the signing of treaties, or agreements between countries.
- In each alliance, the members agreed to defend each other in time of war.
The Formation of the Triple Alliance

- Germany and Austria-Hungary formed the Dual Alliance.
- In 1882, Italy joined to form the Triple Alliance.
The Formation of the Triple Entente

By 1905, the Triple Entente of Great Britain, France, and Russia was in place.

- Russia established an **alliance** with France.
- Each country promised to support the others in a time of **war**.
A Balance of Power

Many hoped that this system would create a balance of power within Europe.

Triple Alliance (1882)
- Germany
- Austria-Hungary
- Italy

Triple Entente (1905)
- Great Britain
- France
- Russia

The Road to Assassination

- Rising tensions in Europe
- Ottoman Empire
- The Balkans
- Austria-Hungary
- Serbia
World War I Begins

A Powder Keg

The Balkans were called the “powder keg” of Europe.

• They were pressured by powerful empires on many sides.

• The region had many countries with strong nationalist independence movements.

Circle the area on the map that shows the Balkans.

[Map of Europe with Balkans circled]
World War I Begins

A Powder Keg

The **Ottoman Empire** was in decline.
- The empire had not *industrialized* as quickly as other countries.
- Ethnic groups had been seeking and winning independence.

Austria-Hungary and Bosnia

**Austria-Hungary** caused further tension by annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Austria-Hungary wanted to:
- seize **Ottoman** territory.
- halt **Serbian** nationalism.

Circle the name of the area on the map that Austria-Hungary seized.
The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina increased the rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serbia</th>
<th>Austria-Hungary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vowed to take back Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
<td>Swore to stop any Serbian effort to undermine their power in the Balkans</td>
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**Archduke Franz Ferdinand (1863–1914)**

- Was the heir to the *Austro-Hungarian* throne
- Supported Austria-Hungary’s *growth* and *dominance* in the Balkans
- Was targeted by supporters of *independence* movements in the Balkans

**The Spark to Light the Keg**

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist.
The Beginning of the Domino Effect

Austria-Hungary used the assassination as an opportunity to **escalate**, or increase, conflict with Serbia.

They gave Serbia a long list of strict demands as an **ultimatum**, including:

- suppressing all **anti-Austrian** groups and publications.
- accepting **responsibility** for the assassination.

Declaration of War

Serbia **accepted** most of Austria-Hungary’s demands.

- Austria-Hungary **rejected** Serbia’s offer.
- On July 28, 1914, Austria-Hungary **declared war** on Serbia.

Russia’s Entry into the Conflict

Russia had a large **Slavic** population and was an **ally** of Serbia.

- Russia responded by **mobilizing**, or moving, forces along the Russian-German border.
Germany’s Entry into the Conflict

Germany was part of the Triple Alliance and an ally of Austria-Hungary.

• On August 1, 1914, Germany declared war on Russia and France.

• Germany would be fighting a two-front war.

The Schlieffen Plan

The Schlieffen Plan was a German strategy to fight a two-front war against France and Russia.

Germany planned to:

• use minimal forces to hold off Russia.

• invade France through Belgium and Luxembourg.
Britain’s Declaration of War on Germany

The German invasion of [Belgium] led to Great Britain joining the war.

- Britain had an [alliance] with Belgium.
- The British sent an ultimatum to Germany to [withdraw].
- Germany refused.
- Britain [declared war] on Germany.

The Domino Effect

### July 1914

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<td>[Austria] declared war on [Serbia]</td>
<td>[Russia] mobilized its forces.</td>
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<td>[Germany] declared war on [Russia and France]</td>
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<td>[Great Britain declared war on Germany]</td>
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Analyzing a Political Cartoon

Circle the figures in the cartoon that represent members of the Triple Alliance.

Timeline: World War I

- 1882 Creation of the Triple Alliance
- 1905 Formation of the Triple Entente
- 1898 Austrian annexation of Bosnia
- 1914–1918 World War I
- 1914 Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand
Beginning in the 1800s, growing rivalries and distrust in Europe led to the creation of an alliance system, in which members agreed to defend each other in time of war. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed the Triple Alliance; Russia, France, and Great Britain formed the Triple Entente. In 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist. This led to a domino effect. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and the existing system of alliances drew the other nations of Europe into war.
Use this space to write any questions or thoughts about this lesson.