

World War I

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What do you know about World War I?
2. Has your country ever been involved in a war?
If so, what were the reasons for its involvement?
3. Do you think you would make a good soldier?
Why or why not?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. varied | a) a special agreement |
| ___ 2. dispute | b) to kill (often for political reasons) |
| ___ 3. imperialism | c) a series of connected occurrences |
| ___ 4. assassinate | d) money that is owed |
| ___ 5. heir | e) the idea of expanding a country's power |
| ___ 6. chain of events | f) a low, narrow ditch in the ground |
| ___ 7. chaos | g) a death (often of a soldier) |
| ___ 8. alliance | h) to physically move downward in order to avoid something |
| ___ 9. erupt | i) mixed, diverse |
| ___ 10. trench | j) to begin violently, to explode |
| ___ 11. duck | k) someone who will inherit something |
| ___ 12. casualty | l) confusion |
| ___ 13. debt | m) an argument |

Reading

1. World War I was considered to be the first global war. It lasted from July 28, 1914, to November 11, 1918. Most of the fighting during this war took place in Europe. The reasons for the war were **varied** and complicated. Some of the factors were territorial **disputes, imperialism**, and nationalism.
2. Officially, the fighting began when Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was **assassinated** by Serbian nationalists. Ferdinand was the **heir** to the Austrian throne. The Serbians who took part in the assassination were afraid that their nation would be taken over by the Austria-Hungarian Empire.
3. Within only a few days, the assassination caused a **chain of events** that included other countries, creating **chaos** in Europe. First, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Then Russia got involved in order to defend Serbia, which caused Germany to also get involved to defend Austria. This, in turn, led France to declare war on Germany in order to protect Russia. As a result, Germany invaded Belgium in order to have access to France. France's ally, Britain, then declared war on Germany.
4. **Alliances** between countries played a huge part in the war. The Central Powers were made up of Italy, Germany, and Austria-Hungary. The Allied Powers were made up of Russia, France, and Britain. The Balkans consisted of Serbia and Bulgaria. There were also several Neutral Powers, including Switzerland, Belgium, and the countries of Scandinavia.
5. Not only did war **erupt** in Europe, but fighting also took place in the Middle East and Japan. At the same time, still more countries were fighting to take control of the lands left over after the fall of the Ottoman Empire.
6. The fighting in Europe was characterized by **trench** warfare on the Western Front, a geographical area stretching across Belgium, France, and the territory of Alsace. Soldiers hid in low, narrow ditches in the ground. They would rise up out of the trenches to shoot their guns and then **duck** down into the trenches so they would not be shot. The trenches were often muddy and full of disease. The area between the trenches was called No Man's Land.
7. The war finally ended when Germany signed a peace treaty prepared by France and Britain. Although World War I only lasted four years, there were a total of 17 million **casualties**, in addition to 20 million people wounded. Thirty-two countries participated in the war. It was known as the "Great War" or "The War to End All Wars" until World War II began. One of the results of the war was that many European countries were in **debt**, especially Germany. Many people believe that Germany's financial woes led to World War II.

The Great War

Although the word "great" is often considered a positive adjective, this is not always the case. Sometimes "great" means *impressive*, but with a negative connotation. Consider the following two sentences:

- I had a great time at the amusement park!
- There was a great explosion in the laboratory.

Although both sentences use the word "great," the word has a different meaning in each context.

Comprehension

A. Timeline

Place the following events in chronological order (1-9). Check your work with a partner. One item is not mentioned in the reading. Place a star beside it and guess where it belongs.

- _____ Russia joined the war to defend Serbia.
- _____ The day the war ended became known as Armistice Day.
- _____ Germany invaded Belgium.
- _____ France declared war on Germany to protect Russia.
- _____ Germany's financial problems contributed to the start of World War II.
- _____ Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated.
- _____ Britain declared war on Germany.
- _____ Germany joined the war to defend Austria.
- _____ Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

B. Quiz Your Partner

Create your own comprehension questions about the reading using the following question words. Try to include some of the **bold** words from page 2 in your questions. Quiz your partner.

1. Who?

2. What?

3. Where?

4. When?

5. Why?

6. How?

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.

1. I saw a selection of bands at the festival with _____ musical styles.
2. Most British tea is grown in India, due to _____.
3. If you walk across a tennis court, you might have to _____ to avoid flying balls.
4. The rumor set off a dramatic _____, which eventually caused the politician to resign.
5. That criminal plans to _____ the king! He must be stopped.
6. The soldier was afraid of becoming just another _____.

B. Choose the Correct Word

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. When the sale was announced, there was <u>chaos</u> in the shop.</p> <p>a) danger
b) happiness
c) confusion</p> | <p>3. The <u>alliance</u> between the two countries offered them both protection.</p> <p>a) border security
b) trouble
c) agreement</p> | <p>5. If you go camping in the forest, there won't be a bathroom, so you might have to dig a <u>trench</u>.</p> <p>a) tree
b) hole
c) fire</p> |
| <p>2. Because going to college in the United States is so expensive, many American students <u>are in debt</u> when they graduate.</p> <p>a) owe money
b) make money
c) sell their belongings</p> | <p>4. The wrestler almost got hit, but he <u>ducked</u> at the last minute.</p> <p>a) fell
b) moved out of the way
c) celebrated</p> | <p>6. The old millionaire had no <u>heirs</u>, so she adopted an orphan.</p> <p>a) children
b) money
c) values</p> |



Vocabulary Review cont.

B. Choose the Correct Word cont.

7. The volcano erupted, but luckily none of the citizens of the town were hurt.
- a) grew
b) left
c) exploded
8. The couple made an appointment with a therapist to settle their dispute.
- a) marriage
b) argument
c) finances
9. The lengths of the stories varied, but all of them were very interesting to read.
- a) were different
b) made sense
c) sounded fun

Grammar Review

THE PASSIVE VOICE

A. Introduction

In an active sentence, the subject is the **doer** of the verb (= *does* the action), and the object is the **recipient** of the verb (= *receives* the action). In a passive sentence, the subject and object switch places. The **recipient** of the action is now the main focus of the sentence. This is called the passive voice.

ACTIVE



PASSIVE



Grammar Review cont.

B. Use

We use the passive voice when we want the focus to be on the **recipient** of the action. We often use the passive voice when we don't know who did the action or when the doer isn't important. In fact, the doer is often dropped from the sentence!

- The archduke was assassinated by the Serbian nationalists.
- The archduke was assassinated.

C. Form

Pattern

Be + p.p.

The passive is formed with the Be verb and the past participle of the main verb. The doer of the verb is usually dropped from the sentence. To include it, we use the phrase *by + person/thing*.

D. Practice

Rewrite the following active sentences into passive sentences.

1. The assassination of the archduke set off a chain of events.

2. The event created chaos in Europe.



Grammar Review cont.

D. Practice cont.

3. France declared war on Germany.

4. Russia formed an alliance with France and Britain.

5. Soldiers built trenches on the Western Front.

Discussion

1. Can you think of a time when you did something that started a chain of events? What happened?
2. How has warfare changed since World War I?
3. Are there any disadvantages to forming alliances? What are they?
4. Has an important person from your country ever been assassinated? Who was it? Why were they killed?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students read about World War I. They learn and practice new vocabulary and review the passive voice.

LEVEL: Int – High Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: World War I, Europe, war, fighting, soldiers, history, passive

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Answers will vary.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. i | 3. e | 5. k | 7. l | 9. j | 11. h | 13. d |
| 2. m | 4. b | 6. c | 8. a | 10. f | 12. g | |

Comprehension

A. TIMELINE

- 3 Russia joined the war to defend Serbia.
- 8* The day the war ended became known as Armistice Day.
- 6 Germany invaded Belgium.
- 5 France declared war on Germany to protect Russia.
- 9 Germany's financial problems contributed to the start of World War II.
- 1 Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated.
- 7 Britain declared war on Germany.
- 4 Germany joined the war to defend Austria.
- 2 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

B. QUIZ YOUR PARTNER

Answers will vary.

Vocabulary Review

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. varied | 3. duck | 5. assassinate |
| 2. imperialism | 4. chain of events | 6. casualty |

B. CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. c | 3. c | 5. b | 7. c | 9. a |
| 2. a | 4. b | 6. a | 8. b | |

Grammar Review

D. PRACTICE

1. A chain of events was set off (by the assassination of the archduke).
2. Chaos in Europe was created (by the event).
3. War was declared on Germany (by France).
4. An alliance was formed with France and Britain (by Russia).
5. Trenches were built on the Western Front (by soldiers).

Discussion

Answers will vary.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Rumor*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Rumour*. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.