

Do Now:

What reasons would justify going to war?

Underlying causes of World War I

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Why did the real Great War- World War I- the War to End All Wars- break out? Who can we blame?

At the end of World War I, the Treaty of Versailles was signed. ARTICLE 231 of the Treaty of Versailles, June 28, 1919 stated Germany was the cause of World War I and needed to accept blame. At the time, many Germans felt that the blame for the start of the war was unjustly placed upon them. The Germans were not alone in their belief; a number of others also believed that it was harsh and unfair.

Task: You will read a few short sources on the causes and start of World War I. Take a position on whether or not Germany should be blamed for the start of the war. You must argue why blame placed or not placed on Germany is the best decision. You must support your claim with evidence from *several* of the sources.

Here's a timeline for your consideration.

Date	Event
June 28, 1914	Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austro-Hungarian empire, in Sarajevo, Bosnia
July 28, 1914	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
July 29 - December 9, 1914	Austria-Hungary repeatedly invades Serbia but is repeatedly repulsed
August 1, 1914	Outbreak of war - Germany declares war on Russia
August 3, 1914	Germany declares war on France
August 4, 1914	Germany invades neutral Belgium
August 4, 1914	Britain declares war on Germany
August 4, 1914	US President Woodrow Wilson declares policy of US neutrality
September 5-10, 1914	First Battle of Marne, halts German advance, resulting in stalemate and trench warfare

As a group, using all of the documents, why could each of the following nations be blamed for the start of World War I?

Germany	
Austria	
Russia	
Great Britain	
France	
Serbia	

On a separate sheet of paper, state and defend your claim- was it the best decision to blame Germany for World War I?

Document 1

This chart provides information on the increasing amounts of money spent on armaments from 1870 through 1914.

Per Capita Expenditures of the Great Powers on Armaments

	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1914
Great Britain	\$3.54	\$3.46	\$3.84	\$12.60*	\$7.29	\$8.23
France	2.92	4.02	4.66	5.21	6.47	7.07
Russia	1.28	1.50	1.26	1.44	2.32	3.44
Germany	1.28	2.16	2.80	4.06	4.06	8.19
Austria-Hungary	1.08	1.70	1.50	1.46	1.68	3.10
Italy	1.38	1.74	2.52	2.34	3.36	3.16

* Boer War Costs

Source: From *Europe, 1815-1914*, by Gordon A. Craig, 1966.

Your thoughts?

Document 2

Source: <http://www.authentichistory.com/1914-1920/1-overview/1-origins/index.html>

“By the 1890s, the great land armies of France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia had no equals on earth except one another. Nicholas warned that ‘the accelerating arms race,’ which was producing larger armies, more powerful artillery, and bigger warships, was ‘transforming the armed peace into a crushing burden that weighs on all nations and, if prolonged, will lead to the very cataclysm it seeks to avert.’ Unfortunately, participation in the international court was voluntary. The next year, in an attempt to compensate for its small empire, Germany enacted the Second Naval Law, intending to build a navy capable of challenging the British Royal Navy in combat. The British responded. By 1906, keeping ahead of the Germans in modern battleships was a national priority. France, meanwhile, strove to match the German standing army of sixty million men, no small feat for a nation of forty million people.”

Your thoughts?

Document 3

Would not the end of war be the end of humanity? War is life itself. Nothing exists in nature, is born, grows or multiplies except by combat. We must eat and be eaten so that the world may live. It is only warlike nations which have prospered; a nation dies as soon as it disarms. War is the school of discipline, sacrifice and courage.

Source: Emile Zola, 1891 in James Joll, *The Origins of the First World War*, New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1992.

Your thoughts?

Document 4



Your thoughts?

Document 5

The Dual Alliance between Austria-Hungary and Germany - October 7, 1879

ARTICLE 1. Should, contrary to their hope, and against the loyal desire of the two High Contracting Parties, one of the two Empires be attacked by Russia, the High Contracting Parties are bound to come to the assistance one of the other with the whole war strength of their Empires, and accordingly only to conclude peace together and upon mutual agreement.

ARTICLE 2. Should one of the High Contracting Parties be attacked by another Power, the other High Contracting Party binds itself hereby, not only not to support the aggressor against its high Ally, but to observe at least a benevolent neutral attitude towards its fellow Contracting Party.

Your thoughts?

Document 6

Britain continued to be concerned about the rise of German naval power and feared German predominance on the Continent. The British, facing severe domestic unrest (an Irish rebellion and a miners' strike), remained uncommitted for most of the crisis, but the German invasion of Belgium forced them to enter the war.

In Germany, fear of growing isolation dominated. Austria-Hungary was Germany's last ally and thus seemed to deserve support at all cost (Italy was no longer committed to its alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary).

The Germans wanted Austria-Hungary to wage war on Serbia in order to prevent the breakdown of the Habsburg Empire. The Germans feared, moreover, that the modernization, population explosion, and industrial growth of Russia would transform their eastern neighbor into a superpower that would sooner or later crush Germany. This appeared all the more threatening to the German General Staff, since their only war plan would not work any more once the Russian railroads were completed.

Source (with modifications): <http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/germanresponsibility.htm>

Your thoughts?

Document 7

In his book, *Origins of the World War*, Sidney Bradshaw Fay stated his position on the causes of World War I.

Nevertheless, a European war broke out. Why? Because in each country [of Europe] political and military leaders did certain things which lead to the mobilization [of their armies for war] and [finally] to the declarations of war, or [these leaders] failed to do certain things which might have prevented [the war]. In this sense, all the European countries in greater or lesser degree were responsible [for the outbreak of World War I].

Your thoughts?

Document 8



This poster is a 1915 German propaganda poster related to German upset over the L'Entente Cordiale agreement of 1904 (between France & Britain).

Your thoughts?

Document 9

This is an excerpt from *The Century of Total War* by Raymond Aron (Doubleday & Co. 1954).

... The rise of Germany, whose supremacy France dreaded and whose navy menaced [or threatened] England, had created among [England and France] an alliance which claimed it was defensive in nature but was denounced by German propaganda as an attempt at [the] encirclement [of Germany]. The two armed camps alarmed each other, and each grew heavy with multiplied incidents, which spread East [with the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand], where Russia and Austria were advancing contradictory claims. ...

Your thoughts?

Document 10

The Germans were also furious about the various terms of the Treaty. They hated clause 231 - the 'War Guilt' clause - which stated that Germany had caused 'all the loss and damage' of the war. Firstly, the Germans did not think that they *had* caused the war (for the Germans, the war was a war of self-defense against Russia, which had mobilized 31 July 1914). During the 1920s, the Germans published all their secret documents from 1914, to prove they had tried to stop the war. Secondly, the Germans hated clause 231 because accepting it gave the Allies the moral right to *punish* Germany - it validated all the harsh terms of the Treaty.

Source: <http://www.johndclare.net/EA3.htm>

Your thoughts?

Document 11

In this excerpt from May 7, 1919, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, leader of the German delegation to the Versailles Peace Conference, protested.

It is demanded of us that we shall confess ourselves to be alone guilty of the war. Such a confession from my lips would be a lie. We are far from declining all responsibility for the fact that this great World War took place or that it was fought in the way that it was. . . . But we energetically deny that Germany and its people, who were convinced that they fought a war of defense, were alone guilty. No one would want to assert that the disaster began only at that disastrous moment when the successor of Austria-Hungary fell a victim to murderous hands. In the last fifty years, the imperialism of all European states has chronically poisoned international relations. Policies of retaliation, policies of expansion, and disregard for the right of peoples to determine their own destiny, have contributed to the European malady which came to a crisis in the World War. The mobilization of Russia deprived statesmen of the opportunity of curing the disease, and placed the issue in the hands of the military powers. ...

Your thoughts?

Document 12



Your thoughts?

Document 13

This is an excerpt from the Austro-Hungarian Red Book No. 7. It is the ultimatum that Austria-Hungary sent to Serbia on July 23, 1914.

... the Royal Serbian Government has done nothing to repress these movements. It has permitted the criminal machinations of various societies and associations directed against the Monarchy, and has tolerated unrestrained language on the part of the press, the glorification of the perpetrators of outrages and the participation of officers and functionaries in subversive agitation. ...

... [The] Royal Government see themselves compelled to demand from the Royal Serbian Government a formal assurance that they condemn this dangerous propaganda against the Monarchy.

...

... To accept the collaboration in Serbia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government for the suppression of the subversive movement...

Your thoughts?

Document 14

The Balkan Powder Keg

Serbia was the only Balkan nation to threaten a Great Power directly. Following a change of dynasties in 1903, the aggressive Serbian leader Nicholas Pashich adopted an openly anti-Austrian policy. At the same time, he promoted Pan-Slav nationalism--a vision that the Slavic peoples would one day be united under one nation. Additionally, the Serbians could or would do little to stop the activities of the anti-Austrian secret society, the Black Hand. To the Austrians, the rise of Pan-Slavic nationalism, and particularly Serbian aggression, was a direct threat to the future of the Austrian Empire. Serbia had become "a jackal snapping at the Austro-Hungarian Achilles heel."

Source: <http://www.authentichistory.com/1914-1920/1-overview/1-origins/index.html>

Your thoughts?

Document 15

The Hearing of Gavrilo Princip
12 October 1914
In the Afternoon

...Pr. [Prosecutor]: — Call Gavrilo Princip. (He is brought in.) Do you consider yourself guilty?

Acc. [Accused, Gavrilo Princip]: — I am not a criminal, because I destroyed that which was evil. I think that I am good....

Pr.: — What kind of ideas did you have?

Acc.: — I am a Yugoslav nationalist and I believe in the unification of all South Slavs in whatever form of state and that it be free of Austria.

Pr.: — That was your aspiration. How did you think to realize [accomplish] it?

Acc.: — By means of terror.

Pr.: — What does that signify?

Acc.: — That means in general to destroy from above, to do away with those who obstruct and do evil, who stand in the way of the idea of unification.

Pr.: — How did you think that you might realize your objectives?

Acc.: — Still another principal motive was revenge for all torments which Austria imposed upon the people....

Pr.: — What was the feeling about Austria in your circles?

Acc.: — It was the opinion that Austria behaved badly.

Your thoughts?

Document 16



Your thoughts?