

## YEAR 9: THE CAUSES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

### SECTION 1 –KEYWORDS

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Alliance</b>                 | An agreement between countries to support each other   |
| <b>Allies</b>                   | Countries on the same side   |
| <b>Anglo-German naval race</b>  | Competition between Britain and France over who had the biggest and best navy                                      |
| <b>Archduke Franz Ferdinand</b> | The heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary who was killed on 28 <sup>th</sup> June 1914                             |
| <b>Assassination</b>            | The planned murder of an important person  |
| <b>Austro-Hungarian Empire</b>  | Large country in central Europe made up of many different nationalities  |
| <b>Balkans</b>                  | An unstable area in south-eastern Europe that was the cause of tension   |
| <b>Black Hand</b>               | Name of the gang of assassins who killed Franz Ferdinand. A Serb nationalist organisation                          |
| <b>Bosnia</b>                   | A country that became part of Austro-Hungarian empire in 1908. Many Bosnians did not want to be part of the empire |
| <b>Dreadnought</b>              | A new and improved type of warship   |
| <b>Empire</b>                   | A group of nations or people ruled over by an emperor, or other powerful government                                |
| <b>Ethnic Group</b>             | People who share same culture, race or nationality   |
| <b>Front</b>                    | An area where fighting takes place   |
| <b>Gavrillo Princip</b>         | Man responsible for the assassination of Franz Ferdinand   |
| <b>Independence</b>             | Term referring to countries ruling themselves and not being part of an empire                                      |
| <b>Kaiser Wilhelm II</b>        | Ruler of Germany   |
| <b>Militaristic</b>             | Having an aggressive foreign policy involving build up of weapons and armed forces                                 |
| <b>Mobilise</b>                 | Preparing and organising troops for war  |
| <b>Morocco</b>                  | North African country that was the cause of a pre-war crisis between the alliances                                 |
| <b>Nationalist</b>              | A person who strongly identifies with their nation and desires independence  |
| <b>Sarajevo</b>                 | Capital city of Bosnia where assassination took place  |
| <b>Serbia</b>                   | An independent country. Many Serbians wanted Bosnia to unite with their country                                    |
| <b>Schlieffen Plan</b>          | German war plan which involves the invasion of France through neutral Belgium                                      |
| <b>Slav</b>                     | An ethnic group of eastern and central Europe  |
| <b>Triple Alliance</b>          | Agreement between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy   |
| <b>Triple Entente</b>           | Agreement between Britain, France and Russia   |

### SECTION 2 - THE LONG TERM CAUSES OF TENSION IN EUROPE

**MILITARISM** Countries in Europe were involved in an arms race and were building up their armed forces in a bid to become bigger and stronger than the other. Huge amounts of money was being spent on this. An example of this is the Anglo-German naval race between Britain and Germany and the fact that every major European power, except Britain introduced conscription forcing men to join the army.

**ALLIANCES** By 1900 two armed alliances existed with Russia, Britain and France coming together in the Triple Entente and Germany, Austria Hungary and Italy in the Triple Alliance. Each alliance promised to support and protect their member countries in case of an attack. This meant that a conflict between two rival nations could result in all of the major European countries becoming involved in war.

**IMPERIALISM** In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the major countries of Europe were very imperialistic and sought to expand their influence and empires. Germany tried to gain more colonies which frightened France, Britain and Russia. The crisis over Morocco is a good example of this. In the area of the Balkans Russia was keen to extend her influence competing with Austria for power.

**NATIONALISM** Countries and groups of people in Europe were proud of their identities and in the Balkan's, growing hatred of Austro-Hungarian control was the cause of increasing problems. It was this situation that resulted in Serbian nationalist, Gavrilo Princip, killing the heir to the Austro-Hungarian in on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1914.

### World War One Alliances 1914



### USEFUL LINKS

#### Approach to War Clip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=H8bdLamOuDc&list=PL54cFFXWPkoGRfQSZXi11wzhYpqK0MOJaf>

#### BBC Bitesize facts and test

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4n4jxs/revision/1>

### SECTION 3 – TIMELINE

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|--|--|
| 1870                                   | French beaten by German forces in the Franco-Prussian war. Germany took to areas of land from France called Alsace and Lorraine  |
| 1888                                   | Kaiser Wilhelm II becomes ruler of Germany. He is determined for Germany to build an empire and increase the size of the German navy   |
| 1904                                   | Britain and France sign the 'Entente Cordiale'   |
| 1905-6                                 | First Moroccan Crisis – Germany challenges French ambitions over Morocco increasing tensions   |
| 1906                                   | Britain announced the creation of a new, improved type of warship called the Dreadnought. The Anglo-German naval race is underway  |
| 1907                                   | Britain, France and Russia become allies in the Triple Entente   |
| 1908-9                                 | The Balkan Crisis – Bosnia becomes part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Nearby Serbia is angered by this and calls on Russia for support   |
| 1911                                   | Second Moroccan Crisis – Morocco falls under French control  |
| 1912-1913                              | The Balkan Wars – Many Serbs living in Bosnia were determined to break free of Austro-Hungarian rule and join Serbia   |
| 28 June 1914                           | Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by members of the Black hand   |
| 28 July 1914                           | Austria-Hungary blames Serbia for killing the Archduke. It attacks Belgrade (capital of Serbia)  |
| 29 July 1914                           | Russia, who has promised to protect Serbia, gets its army ready to attack Austria-Hungary  |
| 1 August 1914                          | Germany, in support of Austria- Hungary, declares war on Russia. The French (ally of Russia) prepares its army for war   |
| 2 August                               | Germany begins the first part of the Schlieffen Plan and sends troops towards the Belgian border. Belgium refuses to allow Germany passage through to France                     |
| 3 August                               | Germany declares war on France and invades neutral Belgium. This brings Britain into the conflict as it signed at Treaty in 1839 promising to protect Belgium if it was invaded. |
| 4 August                               | German troops continue their invasion of Belgium. At 11pm Britain declares war on Germany  |
| 5 August                               | France declares war on Germany   |
| 6 August                               | Austria- Hungary declares war on Russia  |
| <b>THE FIRST WORLD WAR IS UNDERWAY</b> |  |

### SECTION 4: ANGLO – GERMAN RIVALRY

- Kaiser Wilhelm had a policy of Weltpolitik – an aggressive policy to gain more overseas colonies and increase the size of the navy. This was a direct challenge to Britain's imperial and naval supremacy.
- Anglo-German naval race – In 1906 Britain launched HMS Dreadnought (first new class of warship) Germany responded by building her own. Both countries spent millions building up size and power of their navy
- All countries in Europe were building up the size of their armies. It was argued that this was for defence, in case of an attack from opposing alliance. Viewed another way, there is the sense that countries were preparing for war and that because of this conflict was inevitable.

### SECTION 5: FRENCH – GERMAN RIVALRY

- In 1870 France had been at war with Germany and had lost Alsace and Lorraine. These two area were important economic areas rich in coal, steel and glass production. **The French people wanted revenge against Germany for this loss.**
- France and Germany shared a border and this made the French feel vulnerable about a future German attack therefore increasing the size of the French army and navy
- France and Germany came into conflict over their ambitions in Morocco in both 1905 and 1911. In 1905 the Kaiser gave a speech in support of Moroccan independence which was seen as a direct challenge to French ambitions. Although war was avoided the Moroccan crisis added to tension and rivalry between the two alliances.

### SECTION 6 – THE ASSASSINATION: THE SPARK THAT STARTED THE WAR

**Causes:** Slav nationalism – Bosnia resented being taken over by Austria-Hungary and wanted independence from an empire that treated the Slavic people as inferior. There was a desire within Bosnia and Serbia to unite to the two countries into Greater Serbia.

**Events:** 28<sup>th</sup> June 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia, Archduke Franz Ferdinand (heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne) was assassinated by Gavrillo Princip a member of the Black Hand a Serb nationalist group.

**Consequences:** Austria-Hungary blamed the Serbian government for the attack and believed Serbia must be dealt with. On 23<sup>rd</sup> July A-H issues Serbia with a 10 Point Ultimatum. As one point could not be agreed Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28<sup>th</sup> July bombing Belgrade.

### Section 7: The Schlieffen Plan

- This was a German Plan to avoid war on two fronts in the east and west
- Plan was to attack France first and to defeat within 6 weeks
- To achieve this the plan involved attacking France by going through neutral Belgium
- It was believed that Russia would take a long time to mobilise troops giving Germany plenty of time to attack France and move troops to the Russian border in the east
- This plan is the reason why Britain enters the war and declares war on Germany.

