THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR I

LESSON 1

NATIONALISM

The system of nation-states led to competition as each state was guided by self-interest and most leaders saw war as an acceptable way to preserve power.

IMPERIALISM

The competition for lands abroad, especially in Africa, led to conflict and heightened the existing rivalries among European states.

MILITARISM

Most western countries had a military draft, called conscription, before 1914. Armies were growing, as was the influence of military leaders.

ALLIANCES

Europe’s great powers had been divided into two loose political alliances. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed the Triple Alliance in 1882. France, Great Britain, and Russia created the Triple Entente in 1907.

THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

LESSON 3

The Red Army was a well-disciplined fighting force.

The anti-Communist forces suffered from a lack of unity.

The presence of foreign armies on Russian soil allowed the Communists to appeal to the force of Russian patriotism.

The Cheka, a Red secret police, began a Red Terror that inspired fear in those who opposed the new regime.

The war communism policy ensured regular supplies for the Red Army.

FACTORS THAT HELPED THE COMMUNISTS WIN

THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

LESSON 4

The final peace settlement of Paris consisted of five separate treaties with defeated nations. The Treaty of Versailles with Germany was by far the most important. The Germans were unhappy with several parts of the settlement, but they accepted the treaty.

- The so-called War Guilt Clause declared that Germany (and Austria) were responsible for starting the war. It required that Germany pay financial compensation for all damages that Allied governments and their people sustained as a result of the war.
- Germany had to reduce its army to 100,000 men, cut back its navy, and eliminate its air force.
- Alsace and Lorraine, taken by the Germans from France in 1871, were returned.
- Sections of eastern Germany were awarded to a new Polish state.
- German land along the Rhine River became a demilitarized zone, stripped of all weapons and fortifications.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO WAR

LESSON 2

WESTERN FRONT

The Germans and the French became stuck in trench warfare on the Western Front when neither could dislodge each other from the trenches they had dug for shelter.

EASTERN FRONT

More movement on the Eastern Front resulted in the Germans defeating the Russians, which allowed them to move back to the offensive in the West.