



Applying Past Knowledge

In Year 2, you learnt about the Crimean War and how Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole worked as nurses to help the soldiers. This learning about World War I will link to our learning next week about World War 2. We will also use primary and secondary sources to study trenches, memorials and cemeteries of places that we will visit in Ypres, Belgium.

1. When and why did WWI begin?

- Began in 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand.
- **The Triple Entente were:** Great Britain, France and Russia.
- **The Triple Alliance were:** Germany, Austria-Hungary and their allies.

2. What was the army like?

- **Lord Kitchener**, the secretary of State for War, realised Britain needed a larger army and encouraged boys to sign up.
- It was deemed 'honourable' or 'patriotic' to serve in the army.
- Only **men aged between 18 and 41** could become soldiers.
- Some children, **as young as 8**, lied and joined the army.
- Men were encouraged to join up with their friends. These groups were known as 'Pals Battalions'.
- Men **had to pass a medical check** before entering the army.
- Others had 'reserved occupations', like working in the coal mines, which meant they stayed in Britain.
- Conditions in training camps were **basic** and supplies were **limited**.
- Men were treated harshly, and made to train long hours.
- Women and children stayed at home and did not have contact with their loved ones. Often, they did not know if they were ever going to see their loved ones again.

3. What was life like in the trenches?

- The **trenches had poor conditions** for the soldiers; mud and water built up on the earth. The war did not stop in the harsh winds, storms and snow! This led to **Trench foot**.
- **Soldiers must carry out daily duties**, such as: filling sandbags, digging trenches further, or defending from or carrying out attacks.
- The little time soldiers had was **used to write letters to friends and families**.
- **Dogs were utilised in trenches**, to carry messages, supplies, to warn of incoming danger or attacks.

4. What was No Man's Land?

- Describes the **area of land between two enemy trench systems**, not controlled by either side, "**a deadly region between two opposing armies on the field of battle.**"
- It had **very little protection** and often had **unexploded shells** that had been thrown over the top.
- **The Christmas Truce:** British and German soldiers met in No Man's Land and exchanged gifts, took photographs and some played impromptu games of football.

Vocabulary:

invade: to enter a country or region to occupy it; **conquer:** to overcome and take control of a place or people; **Nazi:** a member of the National Socialist German Party, led by Adolf Hitler; **assassinate:** the murder of important people/leaders for political or religious reasons.

5. How did the Treaty of Versailles lead to WW2?

- This was a peace treaty between the six nations: France, Germany, Britain, Austria-Hungary, Japan and the United States after World War I.
- Germany had the choice between signing it or facing the occupation of Germany being taken over by Allied troops: this angered the German people as they believed that they did not start the war.
- Germany had to abide by certain rules which they deemed harsh and unfair.
- The chancellor of Germany (Hitler) invaded Poland in September 1939 which drove Great Britain and France to declare war on Germany.

