

World War I (1914–1918)

World War I is often called ‘the Great War’, ‘the first modern war’ or ‘the war to end all wars’. It was the first war in which modern machine guns, chemical weapons, tanks, fighter aircraft and submarines were used to cause devastation on a global scale. Regardless of what it is called, the events of World War I destroyed entire cities and towns and took the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians.

At the end of World War I, the map of Europe was redrawn. Once powerful **empires** were broken up and new nations were created in their place. The war also tested Australia’s commitment to Great Britain. Although Australia displayed a strong sense of loyalty to Britain by committing troops and resources, the Australian public was divided over the issue of **conscription**.

Today, the sacrifice of those who fought and died in World War I is commemorated in many nations around the world – including Australia.



chapter 9

9A

What were the causes of World War I?

- 1 There were a number of short-term and long-term factors that led to the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Make some predictions about what some of these might have been.

9B

How and where was World War I fought?

- 1 During World War I, there were major developments in warfare and weaponry. Much of this new technology was blamed for extending the war. Why do you think this might have been?

9C

What impact did World War I have on Australia?

- 1 World War I had a significant impact on people at home in Australia, especially for women and people of German background. Explain why and how the war might have affected these two groups of people in particular.

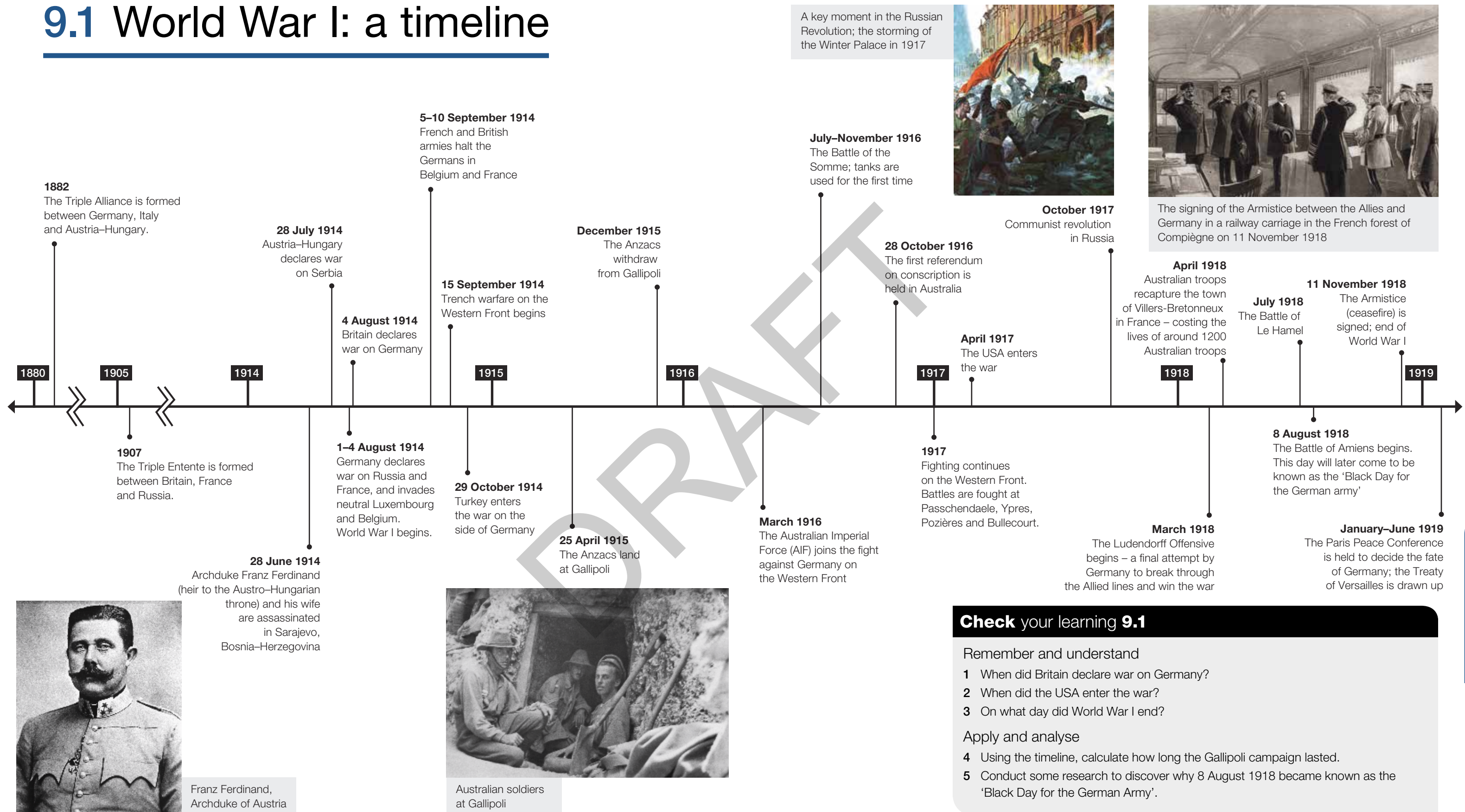
9D

How is World War I remembered and commemorated?

- 1 It has been argued that wars are essential to a nation’s development and sense of national identity. Do you believe this is true? Discuss your ideas as a class, making reference to the way in which World War I is commemorated each year

Source 1 Trench warfare was a major part of the fighting that took place across Europe during World War I. This photograph shows the remains of a fallen soldier photographed in the trenches during World War I. It illustrates the horror of daily life in the trenches for soldiers on both sides.

9.1 World War I: a timeline



Source 1 A timeline of key events leading up to, during and immediately after WWI.

9.2 Background to World War I

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 was the result of a complex interaction of tensions that had been building between countries in Europe for more than 20 years. National rivalries, jealousies over territory, competition over economic progress, competition over the size of armies and navies, and the race to colonise new parts of the world all contributed to the tension.

The last major war in Europe (the Franco–Prussian War) was fought between France and a number of independent German kingdoms. The war ended in 1871 when the French were defeated. As a result of their victory, the German states unified to form the German Empire (Germany). After unification, Germany attempted to limit France's power and secure its place in European politics by developing a system of alliances with other countries across Europe. This system changed the way in which many European countries interacted with each other and resulted in the development of two major alliances. All of the most powerful European countries belonged to one or the other of these alliances. These countries believed that their alliances would act as a deterrent to war because if a member of one alliance was attacked by a member of the other alliance, all the members of both alliances would have to become involved. This became known as 'balance of power' politics.

Europe in the lead-up to war

In 1901, the situation in Europe appeared peaceful. Queen Victoria had occupied the British throne for over 60 years and many of her relations and descendants had married into royal houses all over Europe (see Source 2). As a result, many of the royal families of Europe were closely related. Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King George V were all first cousins (see Source 3). The wife of Tsar Nicholas II was also one of Queen Victoria's granddaughters.



Source 1 An English recruitment poster from World War I

In the lead-up to World War I, it seemed unlikely that close relations would become involved in armed conflict – let alone fight on opposing sides.

Europe seemed prosperous during this time. The **Industrial Revolution** had transformed Western Europe, with new production methods and advances in technology affecting almost every sector of society. Governments had made improvements in health care, sanitation and assistance for the poor. Roads, canals and railways were making trade and transport cheaper and more accessible. Literacy levels were also rising. On the whole, members of the middle classes across Europe had fought for greater political rights and now enjoyed a higher standard of living. The working classes had also won some basic rights, such as the right to vote in Britain after 1867.

However, this prosperity masked both international and domestic tensions. Despite their close family ties and relationships, there were jealousies among many of the royal families in Europe. Issues such as the different rates of economic progress, the size of colonial empires and the development of weapons, armies and ships all caused rivalry between major European nations.

For example, the rate of economic progress and improvements in the standard of living was unevenly spread across Europe. The Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries led to many advances in Britain and Germany, but had little impact on the nations of Eastern Europe such as Austria–Hungary, the Balkan states and Russia. This contributed further to the rivalry between nations. Even in industrialised nations like Britain and Germany there was a huge gap between rich and poor.

Many working-class families lived in cramped, unsanitary conditions or in urban slums. Women were still not allowed to vote in Europe, and new political movements divided people along class and ethnic lines. Many governments and people were afraid of the rising influence of radical political movements like **socialism** and **anarchism**.

So although Europe seemed to be peaceful before World War I, these rivalries and tensions bubbled away beneath the surface.



Source 2 Queen Victoria (seated front centre) photographed with members of her extended family in 1894. Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany is seated front left.



Source 3 Tsar Nicholas II of Russia (left) with his cousin King George V of England (right) – their mothers were sisters.

Check your learning 9.2

Remember and understand

- 1 Which country was responsible for developing a system of alliances in the 1870s?
- 2 Why did European countries at the time believe that these alliances would help to prevent war?
- 3 Explain how it was that so many of Europe's royal families were related.

Apply and analyse

- 4 How would you summarise the social and political situation in Europe around 1900? Explain your answer.

Evaluate and create

- 5 Conduct some research into the meanings of socialism and anarchism. Why do you think governments in the early 1900s would have been afraid of the growing influence of these movements?

9.3 Causes of World War I

There were four main factors that contributed to the growing tensions between European countries in the lead-up, to World War I including:

- the alliance system
- nationalism
- imperialism
- militarism.

The alliance system

One of the key factors that led to the outbreak of World War I was the **alliance system**. From the 1870s onwards, Europe's leading nations grouped themselves into two alliances. Over time, these alliances became more formal and legally binding. In 1882, the **Triple Alliance** was formed between the countries of Germany, Austria–Hungary and Italy. In 1907, the **Triple Entente** was formed between the countries of Britain,

France and Russia (see Source 2). *Entente* is a French word meaning an 'understanding' or 'alliance'. By joining one of these alliances, each participating nation promised to provide military support if one of its members was attacked by a member of the opposing alliance.

Ironically, one of the main goals of the alliance system was actually to prevent the outbreak of war. It was assumed that no single country would go to war against another if there was a risk that a small conflict between two nations could easily build into a large conflict between many countries.

Unfortunately, the alliance system had the opposite effect (see Source 3) and over time these alliances increased the tension between Triple Alliance and Triple Entente countries.

In addition to the key countries shown in Source 1, many other countries, colonies and territories around the world were drawn into the alliance system (see

EUROPE: BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR I



Source 1 Source: Oxford University Press

EUROPE: DEVELOPMENT OF ALLIANCES 1879–1907



Source 2 Source: Oxford University Press



Source 3 This cartoon illustrates how World War I escalated as a result of the alliance system.

Source 2).

For example, all British colonies (such as India) and dominions (such as Australia and New Zealand) automatically became part of the Triple Entente. Japan had signed a treaty with Britain in 1902 that also meant that they could all be drawn into war if a conflict broke out in Europe. Bosnia–Herzegovina was also considered a member of the Triple Entente because Russia was a key supporter of Bosnia–Herzegovina's bid for independence from Austria–Hungary. A conflict between Bosnia–Herzegovina and Austria–Hungary would therefore become a conflict between all the countries that were

members of the two alliances.

Nationalism

Nationalism was another important factor that contributed to the outbreak of war in 1914. Put simply, nationalism is a sense of pride in, and a love of, one's nation. Nationalism grows out of an understanding of common goals and beliefs between the people of a nation – for example, a shared language, culture and history. In Europe, nationalism played an important role in the lead-up to World War I.

Nationalism can either unite or divide the people of a nation or region. For example, feelings of nationalism contributed to the unification of many small German kingdom states to form the German Empire (Germany) in 1871. A sense of nationalism also encouraged cooperation between Germany and Austria–

Hungary, because German-language speakers ruled both empires.

However, Austria–Hungary was not only made up of people who thought of themselves as Germans and spoke the German language; it was also made up of many other ethnic and language groups, such as Hungarians, Serbians and Bosnians.

From around 1900 onwards, a number of ethnic groups began fighting for independence from Austria–Hungary. One region attempting to assert its independence was Bosnia–Herzegovina, an area in south-eastern Europe known as the Balkans (see Source 15.14). In the years before World War I, Bosnia–Herzegovina was under the control of Austria–Hungary. However, Bosnia–Herzegovina was made up of many different ethnic groups, including Bosnians, Serbs and Croats, who did not see themselves as historically, ethnically or culturally linked to either Austria or Hungary. Instead, most of the people of Bosnia–Herzegovina wanted to join with Serbia to form their own nation.

Russia had been supporting moves by Bosnia–Herzegovina to become independent and unite with Serbia, so when a Serbian youth was accused of assassinating Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in 1914, Russia was drawn into the conflict that followed.

Imperialism

Another factor that led to tensions between European countries in the lead-up to World War I was **imperialism**. Imperialism is a policy by which a country increases its power by gaining control over new

territories to create an empire. This is usually carried out for financial and strategic reasons.

European powers, such as Britain, Spain, France and Portugal had been building empires around the world since the 15th century. Since that time they had claimed new territories and colonised much of North and South America, Australia and parts of Asia (see Source 4). By the late 19th century, European nations were engaged in a new wave of imperialism. This time, they competed to be the first to claim new territories across Africa. Historians often refer to this period as the ‘scramble for Africa’.

The main rivals in the race for new colonies in Africa were Britain, France and Germany. At this time, Britain had the largest empire, with **colonies** and **dominions** (such as Australia) all over the world. France also had many colonies around the world. Germany, however, had only been a unified nation since 1871 and was still trying to build a large colonial empire in order to compete with France and Britain. In 1905,

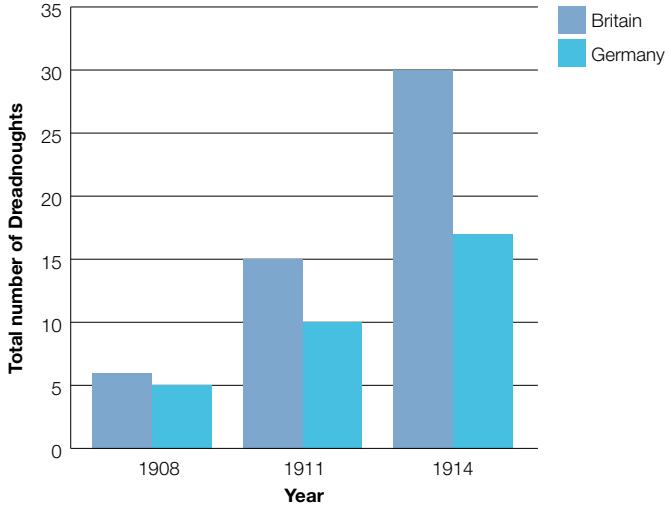
and again in 1911, Kaiser Wilhelm (William) II, the ruler of Germany, attempted to block further colonial expansion by France. He did this by sending German troops to take control of a number of French colonies in North Africa. In both cases, France, with Britain’s support, resisted Germany’s attacks, resulting in the defeat of Germany. Once again, these events escalated the tension between major European powers.

Militarism

Militarism is the belief that all nations should build and maintain strong armed forces so that they are prepared to defend themselves against attack or promote their national interests. In the lead up to World War I, many European countries competed with each other not only over the size of their empires, but also over the size of their armies. Between 1870 and 1914,

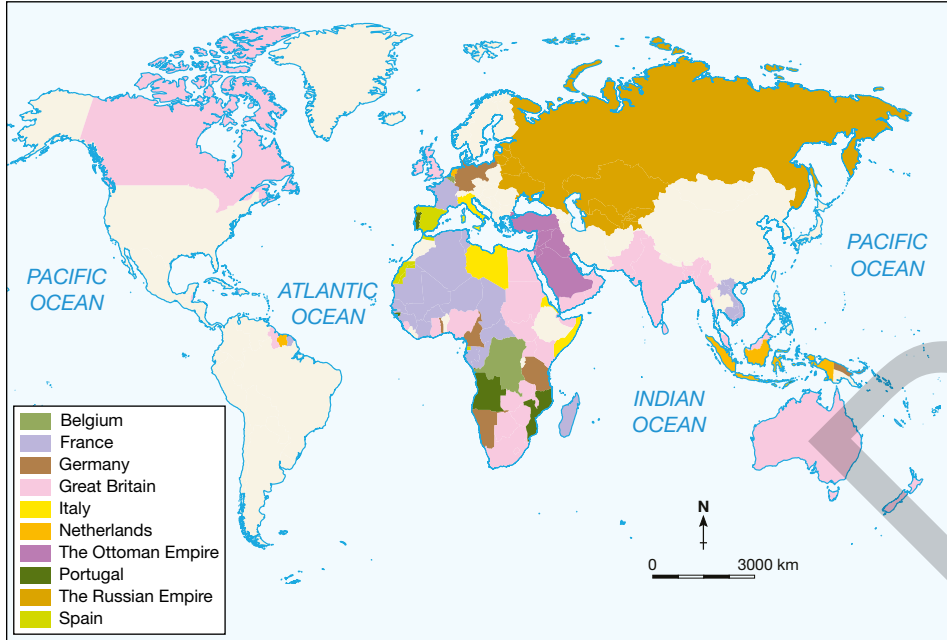
military spending in many European countries increased on average by about 300 per cent. After 1871, all the major European nations except Britain also introduced **conscription**, which meant that all men over the age of 18 were forced to serve a minimum period in the armed forces such as the army or navy.

By 1900, Britain had developed the largest and strongest navy in the world. It needed a navy of this size to administer and control its huge overseas empire. When Germany started to build up its own navy, Britain became suspicious. Germany and Britain began competing over who could build the most ‘Dreadnoughts’ – a very fast, powerful and heavily-armoured battleship (see Source 7). By early 1914, even though the leaders of Europe were still talking of peace, they were clearly involved in an arms race and were preparing for war



Source 6 Graph comparing the growth in numbers of Dreadnoughts held by the British and German navies in the lead-up to World War I

WORLD: EUROPEAN EMPIRES BY 1914



Source 4 Source: Oxford University Press

Source 5 Military spending and soldier numbers of key European powers, 1913–1914

Country	Size of population (millions)	Military spending (US \$ millions)	Soldier numbers (millions)
Germany	67	60	8.25
Britain	45.8	50	0.75
France	39.6	40	1.5
Austria–Hungary	52.8	22.5	0.65
Russia	139	15.5	1.25
Italy	35.5	10	0.75



Source 7 A picture taken of the Royal Navy’s HMS Dreadnought. It made such an impact when introduced in 1906, that all battleships built after that time became known as ‘Dreadnoughts’.

Check your learning 9.3

Remember and understand

- 1 Define the following terms in your own words:
 - a imperialism
 - b nationalism
 - c the alliance system.
- 2 What were the two major alliances formed before World War I? Which countries were the members of the two alliances?
- 3 Why was Germany’s colonial empire so much smaller than Britain’s in the lead up to World War I?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Using Sources 5 and 6, explain what is meant by the term ‘arms race’. Explain the possible reasons why major European powers began to increase the size of their armed forces between 1900 and 1914.

Evaluate and create

- 5 Do you think an arms race necessarily means that war is likely? Give reasons for your answer.

9.4 The outbreak of World War I

The event that finally triggered the outbreak of World War I in 1914 took place in the Balkan states. The Balkans is an area of south-eastern Europe made up of countries such as Romania, Serbia, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Bulgaria (see Source 2). The Balkan states were politically very unstable in the lead up to World War I. Three major imperial powers were actively involved in the region: Austria–Hungary, the Russian Empire and the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire.

The complex relationships between these powers made the Balkans a potential crisis point. Austria–Hungary controlled parts of the Balkans. In 1908 Austria–Hungary annexed (took control of) Bosnia–Herzegovina. Different ethnic groups in Bosnia–Herzegovina, such as the Serbs, did not see themselves as either Austrian or Hungarian and wanted to join

together to form their own nation. They began a nationalist movement and began protesting to achieve independence from Austria–Hungary. The Russian Empire supported the Serbian nationalists because they wanted Bosnia–Herzegovina to become part of Serbia.

The emperor of Austria–Hungary was aware of this growing tension in the Balkans. Believing that the people of Bosnia–Herzegovina would be charmed and won over by a royal visit, he sent his nephew, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and the Archduke’s wife Sophie, on a goodwill visit to the city of Sarajevo. On 28 June 1914, while many people lined the streets to welcome the royal couple, a Serb nationalist by the name of Gavrilo Princip took the opportunity to show his feelings towards their



Source 3 An artist’s impression of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo

imperial rulers. During the parade, he shot and killed the Archduke and his wife (see Source 3).

The ‘July Crisis’ and declarations of war

From that point on, the results of a single event in the Balkan region of south-eastern Europe escalated into a European war. The key to the spread of the conflict was the complex alliance system that developed in Europe between the 1870s and 1907.

Immediately after the assassination, Austria–Hungary blamed the government of neighbouring Serbia. The following month was a confusing and frantic period of bluff, threats and negotiations between key European powers that became known as the ‘July Crisis’. The Austrians issued a series of 10 harsh demands to Serbia. Serbia agreed to nine of the demands, but to accept all would have meant that Serbia lost any real independence, so negotiations broke down.

Exactly one month after the assassination, Austria–Hungary declared war on Serbia. The next day, Serbia turned to its ally Russia for support. Russia was also a Slavic nation and promised to protect Serbia against Austria–Hungary and its ally in the Triple Alliance, Germany. Russia then began preparing its army for war. On 31 July, Germany demanded that Russia stop these preparations. When Russia did not respond, Germany declared war. At the same time, the Germans also asked the French government what its intentions were. France

issued a vague response, stating that it would ‘follow its own interests’. In reality though, France was obligated to support its ally Russia as both were members of the Triple Entente.

The Schlieffen Plan and the invasion of Belgium

At this point, Germany was faced with hostile forces preparing for war on both its Eastern and Western borders. This was a threat that Germany had feared ever since France and Russia became members of the Triple Entente in 1907. The German response was to use a special military plan devised by a military strategist called Alfred von Schlieffen. It became known as the Schlieffen Plan. The Schlieffen Plan called for German troops to launch an all-out attack on France by passing through neutral Belgium. The aim was that the French forces could be defeated before the huge Russian army was ready to go to war. That way, Germany would not have to fight France and Russia at once. Instead, with France defeated, it was thought that Germany could concentrate solely on fighting Russia. The Schlieffen Plan was based on the following assumptions:

- Russia would take at least six weeks to get its army ready for war
- France would be easily defeated in six weeks
- Belgium would not resist any German attack
- Britain would remain neutral.

The main problem with the Schlieffen Plan was that it violated Belgium’s neutrality. Britain had signed a treaty with Belgium in 1839 guaranteeing to come to its defence if another country attempted to invade its borders. As a result, the German invasion of Belgium forced Britain to become involved in the growing conflict.

Source 4

Key dates in the lead-up to World War I	
28 June 1914	Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand
23 July 1914	Austria–Hungary presents 10 demands to Serbia
25 July 1914	Serbia agrees to only nine of the 10 demands
28 July 1914	Austria–Hungary declares war on Serbia
29 July 1914	Russia promises support for Serbia
1 August 1914	Germany declares war on Russia
3 August 1914	Germany declares war on France and invades Belgium
4 August 1914	Britain declares war on Germany (Australia becomes involved)
6 August 1914	Austria–Hungary declares war on Russia

Source 1



Source: Oxford University Press

Source 2



Source: Oxford University Press

The war escalates

On 3 August 1914, British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey sent a message to the German government announcing that Britain would declare war if Germany did not withdraw its troops from Belgium by midnight. There was no response to the message, so on 4 August 1914, Britain and its empire found itself at war with Germany.

Italy was also a member of the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria–Hungary. It was expected that Italy would join the war on their side. However, under the wording of the Triple Alliance, members

were not to support each other if one had been the aggressor. Italy used this clause to remain neutral at the start of the war and to switch to the Triple Entente in May 1915. Turkey entered the war on the side of the Triple Alliance in October 1914. It was against Turkey that Australia’s first land battles took place. The USA also came into the war, on the side of the Triple Entente (or Allies), in April 1917 after German submarine attacks on passenger ships resulted in the deaths of hundreds of American civilians.

9.5 Australia’s entry into World War I

Before the outbreak of World War I, Europe had been relatively peaceful for over 40 years. The last major war (the Franco–Prussian War) had been fought in 1871, meaning that a whole generation of young men and women across Europe had grown up with no real experience of war. The same was true of Australia. Apart from a small number of soldiers who had fought for Britain in Africa during the late 1800s, Australians had no experience of war and had little understanding of what it meant. Largely as a result of this inexperience, there was a perception that war was glorious, exciting and heroic. Young people, especially boys, were brought up on military stories and were taught military drills in school. In these stories, the heroes were rarely wounded or killed; they won their battles effortlessly, and the drills taught them to obey orders and work together. This idealistic outlook on war and military involvement encouraged a romantic view of military action.

The great adventure When World War I began in 1914, Australia had been a single, federated (united) country for only 13 years. Although Australia was a self-governing country, it was still a **dominion** of the British Empire and was obliged to follow the instructions of Britain in many areas of government. As a result, when Britain declared war on Germany Australia automatically became involved, as did all other countries that were part of the British Empire. In Australia, a wave of enthusiasm for the war effort swept the country. The men of Australia rushed to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). According to legend, many were concerned that the war might end before they got to Europe. The Australian government initially promised to supply 20000 men to the British war effort by the end of 1914 – in reality, the number of men enlisted by this time was around 50000.



Source 1 An Australian recruitment poster from 1915 (AWM ARTV00021)

keyconcept: contestability

The Schlieffen Plan

Historical events can become contestable with the release of new sources of information. The Schlieffen Plan is a good example of this because it has become the accepted explanation of German tactics in 1914. More recently, however, historians like Terence Zuber have used material released from German archives after the fall of the Berlin Wall to challenge this view. They argue that the 1905 Schlieffen Plan was not a practical war plan, but actually a theoretical training exercise. This argument is based on inconsistencies between the 1905 Schlieffen Plan and the German mobilisation plans implemented in 1914.

Zuber points out that the Schlieffen Plan was for a war against France on a single front, yet in 1914 Germany was planning for a war against France and Russia. The actual document outlining the Schlieffen Plan was also in the possession of Alfred von Schlieffen’s daughters in 1914, rather than with the military.

Historians have to be prepared to accept the emergence of new evidence that challenges accepted beliefs. The Schlieffen Plan has long been accepted as fact, but as Zuber argues, it can now be regarded as contestable.

For more information on the key concept of contestability refer to page XX of ‘The history toolkit’.

Check your learning 9.4

Remember and understand

- Which European power took control over Bosnia–Herzegovina in 1908?
- Which Balkan state believed that Bosnia–Herzegovina should break away from Austria–Hungary and join it? Why did Russia support this move?
- Why did the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife tour Sarajevo?
- Why did Serbia refuse to comply with the last of 10 demands issued by Austria–Hungary after the assassination?
- What was the event that involved Britain in the war in Europe?

Apply and analyse

- Explain why there is now historical debate surrounding the importance of the Schlieffen Plan in understanding Germany’s actions at the start of World War I?

Evaluate and create

- Use the information provided to construct a flow chart that clearly explains the key events that lead to the outbreak of World War I in 1914.
- Using the Internet conduct research about the difference between the 1905 Schlieffen Plan and the plans used by Germany in 1914. Put this information into a table to compare the two plans.



Source 2 An Australian recruitment poster from 1917 (AWM ARTV00026)

The reasons for enlistment were varied and complex. Some men were driven by a desire to show what their new nation could contribute to a world conflict. Others went to war purely out of loyalty to 'the mother country' – Britain. Many of the first wave of volunteers who enlisted to fight were former British soldiers. Others were British citizens who happened to be living in Australia. In addition to these people, some wanted to show their support for Britain in case Australia should need Britain's help at some stage in the future.

There were young men who joined out of a spirit of adventure. These men saw the war as an opportunity to leave home, see the world, meet beautiful foreign women and experience life beyond Australia's shores. Whole football and cricket teams joined, as did groups of workmates from businesses and factories in cities and country towns. Many women encouraged their husbands, boyfriends, brothers and even fathers to enlist. Many young women preferred to socialise with men in uniform.

The opportunity to earn a good income also acted as an incentive. The pay was 6 shillings (60 cents) per day, a figure calculated to match the average wage

of Australian workers, minus the cost of rations. The promise of regular pay also encouraged many unemployed men to volunteer. As the war progressed, hatred of the enemy also became a motivation for enlistment. Propaganda stories (often exaggerated) of German atrocities were used in recruiting campaigns.

In every city and town, recruiting rallies were held. Platforms would be set up with the Australian and British flags side by side as a backdrop to the speeches. High-profile sportsmen such as footballers, cricketers and athletes would be planted in the crowd. When the call went out for young men to step forward and sign up, it was frequently one of these sportsmen who led the charge.

Among those who offered to enlist were also Aboriginal Australians. Only 400 Aborigines were accepted for service – all others were rejected on the basis that they were not 'of substantial European origin or descent'. When Australian soldiers returned from World War I, there were many benefits available to them to assist their readjustment to civilian life. Aboriginal soldiers, however, were denied access to these benefits.

Of course, not all motives for joining the war effort were noble. There were stories (perhaps just rumours) of soldiers changing their names before enlisting in order to get away from their wives or other commitments. Others enlisted to escape the boredom of jobs they hated, to leave school early, or to escape the strict rules and confines of their family homes.

Those who had fought in the Boer War (1899–1902) in Africa had some understanding of the brutality of war but, for most, war seems to have meant adventure. Based on all of the thoughts that ran through the heads of those who enlisted, particularly in the first few months, the idea of death or even injury seems to have been very much in the background.

Questioning voices

Despite the positive response by many, not all Australians were enthusiastic about the war. Some argued that it was not Australia's war and that Australian troops would make little difference to the final outcome of the war. Others were opposed to the war because they were **pacifists** – people who are opposed to violence and war. One group of pacifists were the Jehovah's Witnesses, a religious group whose beliefs prevented them from participating in any armed conflict or wars.

There was also a small group known as **conscientious objectors** – people who opposed war and refused to perform military service because it went against their beliefs, religion or conscience. The Women's Peace Army, led by a woman named Vida Goldstein (see Source 3) was a women's organisation made up of pacifists and conscientious objectors. Their mission was to mobilise women in Australia who opposed the war. Goldstein, who was also a well-known **suffragette** (a woman demanding the right to vote), attracted large numbers of people to public meetings.

Finally, there was a small number of Australians who did not enlist because they were afraid, or because they believed it was in their best interests financially to stay at home. Very few records relating to these people exist today, but we do know that those who were reluctant to go to war often used excuses such as poor health or family responsibilities to explain their decision not to enlist.

In total, however, all of the groups who objected to the war only made up a small percentage of the total population. In 1914 and through most of 1915, the dominant feeling towards the war was positive and supportive. It was only as the harsh reality of war became clear to Australians that this initial enthusiasm began to fade away.



Source 3 Vida Goldstein, president of the Women's Peace Army was both a suffragette and a pacifist.

Check your learning 9.5

Remember and understand

- 1 What was the attitude of most Australians to war before 1914? Why did they hold this attitude?
- 2 What were three reasons why an Australian might have wanted to enlist?
- 3 Why were some Aboriginal Australians not accepted for service?
- 4 Why were some people or groups not enthusiastic about the war?

Apply and analyse

- 5 Examine the two recruiting posters (Sources 1 and 2).
 - a Identify the techniques used on these posters to encourage Australian men to enlist such as:
 - the overall message of the poster (what it wants the viewer to do)
 - any emotions the poster taps into
 - the effect that the poster may have had on people at the time.
 - b Now identify the key features, such as:
 - symbols and images
 - words
 - arrangement of the images and words
 - colours of the posters.
 - c Which poster do you think would have been more successful at the time? Justify your answer based on the techniques and elements used.

Evaluate and create

- 6 Use a range of print and digital resources to locate and print a series of recruitment posters from World War I (two of which must be Australian). Be sure to include posters from a range of different countries that were involved in World War I. Analyse these posters, looking for points such as:
 - appeal to sense of national identity
 - appeal to sense of adventure and excitement
 - appeal to sense of outrage and anger at the enemy.

Create a PowerPoint presentation in which you identify the key features and techniques of the posters in each category. Discuss whether you think each poster was successful in encouraging people to get involved in the war effort and why.

9A rich task

Why Australians enlisted to fight

When Britain declared war on Germany, Australia (part of the British Empire) was also obligated to enter the war. The Prime Minister of Australia Joseph Cook said in August 1914:

...Whatever happens, Australia is part of the Empire, right to the full. When the Empire is at war, Australia is at war.

All major political parties, churches, community leaders and newspapers seemed to support Australia’s entry to war. It was seen as a moral and necessary commitment. There was a rush to the recruiting offices. Early in the war, only the very fittest and healthiest men were accepted.

Source 2

Turn your eyes to the European situation and give the kindest feelings towards the mother country at this time. I sincerely hope that international arbitration will avail before Europe is convulsed in the greatest war of any time. All, I am sure, will regret the critical position existing at the present time, and pray that a disastrous war may be averted. But should the worst happen after everything has been done that honour will permit, Australians will stand beside our own to help and defend her to our last man and our last shilling.

An excerpt from a speech by Andrew Fisher, Leader of the Opposition (later Prime Minister), in 1914 just before the outbreak of war

Source 3

I wasn’t eighteen. I was working on the lathe [carpentry tool], next to another chap ... I said to him ‘Why don’t you enlist?’ I said ‘I’ll enlist if you do’ ... I went right up to Victoria Barracks and enlisted. We left the factory and I had to get my father’s signature. Well, I forged that.

Stan D’Altera (in A Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, Oxford University Press, p. 27)

Source 4

I have joined the Australian Army ... it’s not bad money here, 5/- [shillings] a day and clothes and food ... nearly as good as cabinet making and not half as hard. You may (think) it’s funny (my) turning up such a good job, but ... this (employer) had only about three days work left for us ... things are so bad out here for there is a drought on and we haven’t had any rain for months, so I thought I would join the army.

Corporal RE Antill in a letter to his parents, 1914 (defencemagazine)

Source 5

I have enlisted and I don’t regret it in the very least. I believe it is every young fellow’s duty. There are far better men than any of us have already gone... we are the sort of men who ought to go.

Private AJ McSparrow (in B Gammage, *The Broken Years*, p. 7)

skilldrill: Historical sources as evidence

Evaluating the reliability and usefulness of sources

Evaluating the reliability and usefulness of sources is one of the most important, and perhaps most difficult, historical skills you need to master. The first thing to understand is that these terms (*reliable* and *useful*) are not interchangeable. A source can be both unreliable and useful at the same time, or both reliable and not useful at the same time.

Step 1 Evaluating reliability

To determine the reliability of a source, you need to identify whether it is **biased**. Being biased means having an unbalanced or one-sided opinion. Bias is found in secondary and primary sources. It is natural for people to show their opinion when they write something. To recognise bias in a source, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who wrote it or made it?
- When was it written or made?
- Why was it written or made?
- Was the person who wrote or made it paid? If so, who paid them?
- Does it distort the facts?
- Does it give one side of the story, or is it balanced?
- Can the views expressed in this source be verified by another source?

By finding the answers to these questions, you can come to a conclusion about whether the source is biased. Make sure you give specific reasons for your conclusion. You need to explain how and why a source is biased, and how this bias affects its reliability. The more biased the source, the less reliable it is. But remember, no single source is ever completely reliable or unreliable.

Step 2 Evaluating usefulness

Some historical sources are more useful than others. But sources are not simply useful or not useful in their own right. They are useful or not useful depending on what you wish to find out from them.

Just because a source is biased does not automatically mean that it is not useful. It may be extremely useful if you are investigating the opinions of a particular group at a particular time. However, if you are investigating ‘the facts’ of an event, a biased source may be much less useful.

For example, anti-Chinese **propaganda** during the gold rushes may be very useful when considering Australian attitudes towards migrants in the 19th century, but not much use as evidence about the important role that Chinese migrants played in the development of the Australian economy. So to reach a conclusion about whether a source is ‘useful’, you need to be very clear about *what* you want to use the source for.

Use the following steps to evaluate a source’s usefulness.

- Be clear about what historical question you are investigating.
- Identify whether the source is biased/reliable using the process above.
- Look at what the source is telling you and compare it to what you need/would like to know. Remember to consider both explicit and implicit messages.
- Ask yourself: what are the uses of this source to answer my historical question?
- Ask yourself: what are the problems of using this source to answer my historical question?
- Make a final judgement about the source’s usefulness for your purposes.

Apply the skill

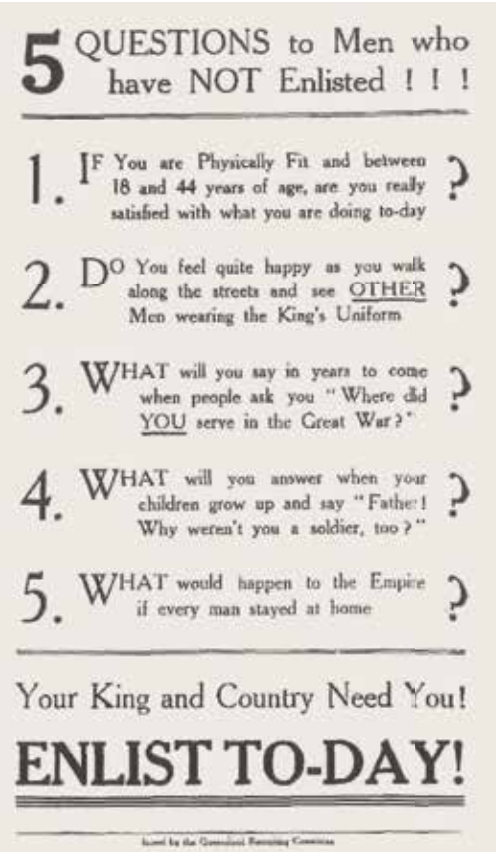
Read each of the sources provided in this section. Then, using the steps provided:

- 1 Evaluate each source’s reliability.
- 2 Evaluate how useful each source would be in explaining the factors which motivated Australian men to enlist.
- 3 Evaluate how useful each source would be in explaining the methods used by the Australian government to encourage men to enlist.

Be sure to explain how you reached your conclusions.

Extend your understanding

- 1 Think about some of the reasons why young men decided to enlist for World War I. Do you think the same reasons apply for young Australians who enlist to fight in wars today?
- 2 Visit the Australian Army Reserve website.
 - a Identify some of the methods used by the creators of the website to encourage Australians to join the Reserves.
 - b Create a Venn diagram to demonstrate the similarities and differences between these methods.



Source 1

A recruitment poster for World War I issued by the Queensland Recruiting Committee

9.6 The nature of warfare in World War I

Unlike earlier wars, World War I was fought across a large part of the world and involved many countries. Britain, France and Russia fought against Germany and its allies on the Western Front (a zone of fighting in Western Europe). Germany also fought against Russia on the Eastern Front (a zone of fighting in Eastern Europe). There was also fighting in Turkey and the Middle East, and in North Africa. Finally, there were small conflicts in the Pacific Ocean, where a combined effort of Japanese and Australian forces took over German colonies in New Guinea. The common feature across all regions and theatres was the emergence of new technologies.

New technologies

Over the course of World War I, many new technologies were introduced and existing technologies such as military vehicles and weapons were improved. Developments in powerful long-range weaponry, such as the machine gun and heavy artillery, were particularly important. Deadly new chemical weapons and gases were also a significant development.

Much of this technology is blamed for extending the war, as the conflict quickly became an evenly

matched battle of technology and tactics, with neither side able to break the deadlock. Unlike earlier wars, in which the soldiers moved around constantly to gain an advantage, both sides on the Western Front were forced to dig **trenches** for protection, bringing the armies to a stalemate.

Guns and artillery

Machine guns, which had first been used during the American Civil War, were improved for use in World War I (see Source 2). Many were capable of firing up to 600 rounds of ammunition (bullets) per minute in short bursts. Facing one machine gun was similar to facing 250 soldiers with standard rifles. Although these new machine guns often overheated and were heavy and difficult to move through the mud, they were devastating when used against oncoming troops.

Heavy artillery guns were also used widely in World War I for the first time. Like canons, these guns could fire large shells over a long distance, usually projecting them in an arc to land on the target from above. Like machine guns, heavy artillery guns were heavy and difficult to move. They were usually mounted on wheels that often became bogged down in the mud or got stuck in bomb craters.



Source 2 British machine gun operators wearing gas masks fire on the enemy during the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

Gas

In April 1915, Germany introduced poison gas as a weapon of war (see Source 4). Chlorine, which was blown over the enemy trenches, burned and destroyed the respiratory tracts (airways) of anyone without a gas mask, causing terrible pain and death. Other gases were introduced throughout the war, including mustard and tear gas. Poison-gas attacks were so horrific that the use of chemical and biological weapons was banned under a treaty signed in 1925 known as the Geneva Protocol.

Tanks

The British army introduced the first tanks into the war in September 1916 at the Battle of the Somme in France. While they were successful at overcoming barbed-wire obstacles and trenches, the mechanical unreliability of these early tanks meant they were not always so useful. The first tanks were designed and built quickly, so they frequently broke down or became stuck in muddy trenches. The crews inside the tanks had to endure unbearably hot and noisy conditions, almost constantly choking on the fumes inside the cab. By the end of 1917, improvements in the design and manufacture – and tank battle tactics – made tanks more effective.



Source 4 A soldier and dog wearing gas masks work to find the wounded in areas where poison gas has been used.

Aircraft

Large-scale aerial warfare was conducted for the first time during World War I. At first, small planes were used to scout for enemy positions. Later, planes armed with machine guns were used in aerial combats, known as **dogfights**.

Huge airships called **zeppelins** (named after their inventor Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin) were used by the Germans in the first air raid over England in January 1915. Made of a cylindrical metal frame covered with fabric and filled with gasbags full of hydrogen, zeppelins were able to fly higher than conventional aircraft and drift almost silently over their targets. This made zeppelins difficult to shoot down with normal anti-aircraft guns. The ability to hit targets accurately from a zeppelin was poor though, and they were also vulnerable to strong winds that could blow them off course. Towards the end of the war, zeppelins were largely replaced by multi-engine bomber planes, such as the Gotha G.V. bomber (see Source 3). Britain responded with its equivalent, the Handley Page Type O bomber (see Source 1, bottom left corner).

Source 3 German airmen attach a 100-kilogram bomb to the underside of a Gotha G.V. bomber.



Source 1 British aircraft like the ones shown here played a vital role in World War I.

War at sea

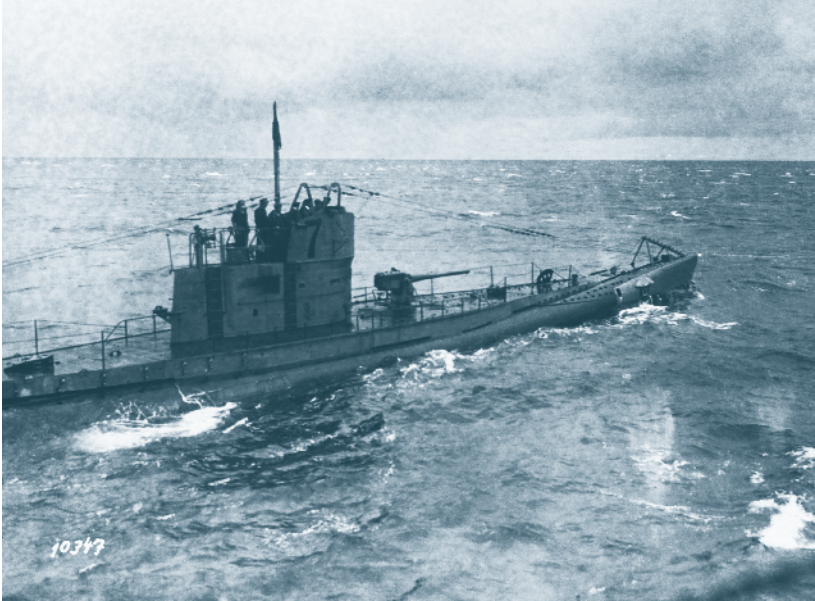
In 1914, the sea was vital for transportation, trade and communications. Protecting the sea lanes in your own waters – or striking at those of the enemy – was an essential part of the war effort.

Submarines were widely used during World War I. Initially they were used by the Germans to attack and sink trade ships carrying imported food and vital goods between allied countries. German submarines were commonly referred to as U-boats, short for *Unterseeboote* (undersea boats). U-boats were able to disrupt the movement of goods and people by sea and struck fear into those travelling by sea.

Another naval tactic that reduced the ability of ships to carry soldiers and supplies, was the laying of underwater mines (explosives) in the North Sea. Although agreements had been made regarding where mines could be placed, neither side was very strict when following them. Mines made the North Sea a very dangerous place for ships. This was also a problem for the **neutral nations** of Norway and Sweden, which were heavily reliant on the North Sea for fishing and trade with the rest of the world.

Communications

Advances in communication technologies during World War I allowed faster contact between commanding officers behind the scenes and soldiers fighting on the front line. The development of telephone and wireless (radio) systems allowed instant reports from the battlefield to be passed to command centres. Tactical decisions could be made much more quickly. On the downside, telephone lines had to be laid in each new location where fighting took place and were easily damaged by artillery. Wireless radios were also very heavy and difficult to move. Despite the increased use of these new technologies, soldiers still acted as runners to relay information. Motorbike couriers, carrier pigeons and even dogs were used at times (see Source 6).



Source 5 A surfaced German U-boat during World War I



Source 6 Dogs were sometimes used to carry messages to and from the battlefield. This dog is bringing orders to a soldier in the trenches.

Check your learning 9.6

Remember and understand

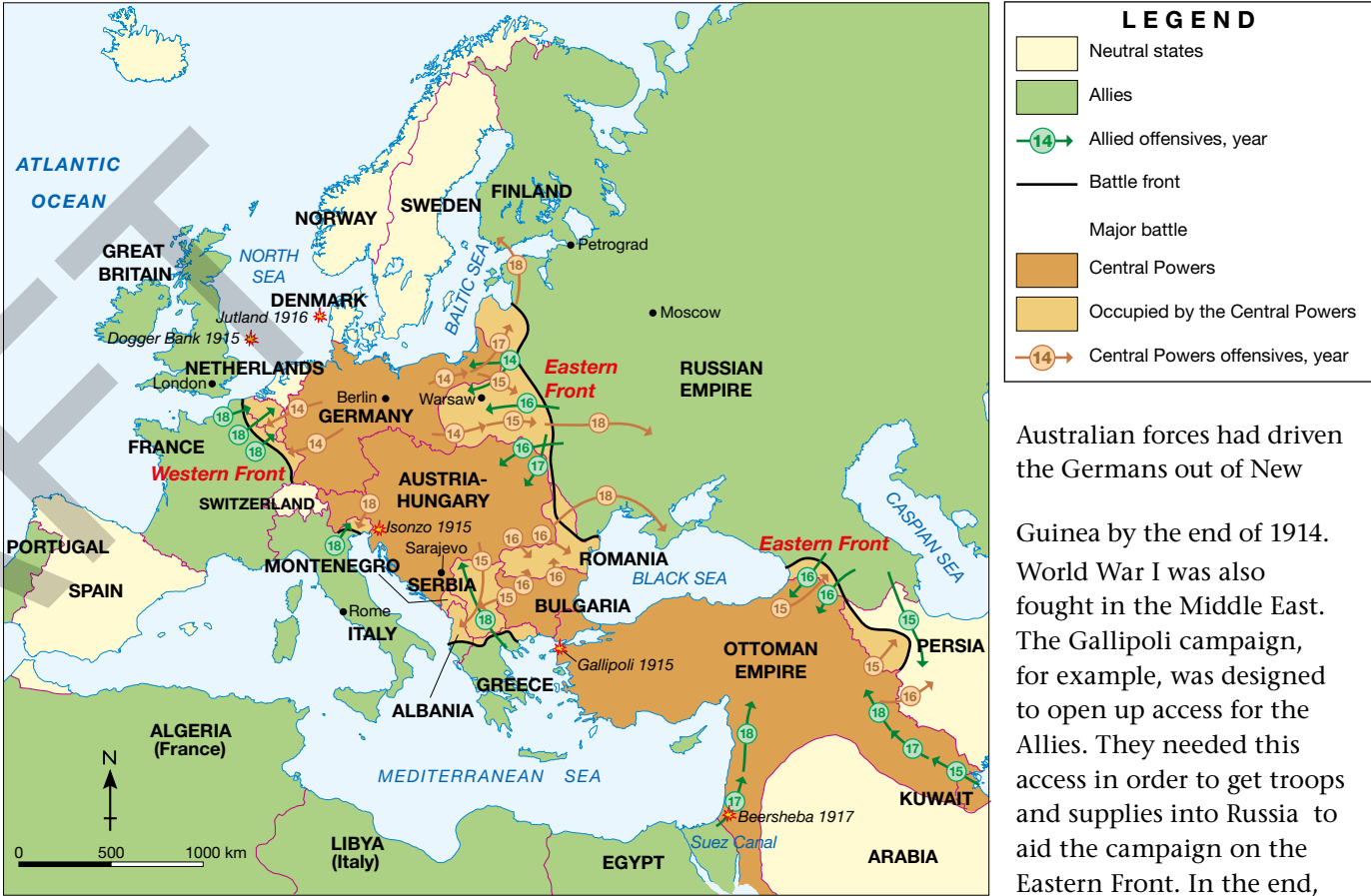
- 1 Identify three ways in which the technologies used in World War I were different from those used in earlier wars.
- 2 In what ways did submarines change the way World War I was fought?

Apply and analyse

- 3 Do you think new developments in technology actually prolonged the war? Explain your answer.
- 4 Why do you think that the use of poison gas was banned under the Geneva Protocol in 1925, while the use of other types of weapons was not?
- 5 What were the advantages and disadvantages of new developments in communication technologies?

9.7 Where World War I was fought

WORLD WAR I: MAJOR BATTLES AND ALLIANCES



Source 1

Source: Oxford University Press

In World War I, the greatest loss of life took place in Europe. Many of the best-known land battles of World War I were played out in an area in France and Belgium known as the Western Front (see Source 1). However, the Eastern Front was also very important, especially in terms of the conflict between Germany and Russia. A third front, along the border between Italy and Austria, was the scene of fierce fighting and great loss of life.

Because so many European nations had large colonial empires, people from all over the world participated in the conflict. Members of the British Commonwealth (such as Australia, India, South Africa, Canada and New Zealand) were involved in the conflict. The war came close to Australia because Germany had colonies in Samoa and New Guinea. As early as August 1914, New Zealand forces occupied German Samoa with no loss of life.

the deaths of around 140 000 soldiers from countries including Britain, Canada, France, Australia, New Zealand, India and Turkey. More than half of those killed were from Turkey.

Following the withdrawal from Gallipoli in December 1915, some of the Allied troops, including the Australian Light Horse, were redeployed to Palestine where they fought alongside Arab tribes against Turkish troops from the Ottoman Empire.

Japan, a rapidly modernising nation, was also involved on the side of the Triple Entente. In response to a request from Britain in 1914, Japanese ships led raids on German naval vessels around Chinese waters. The Japanese further provided 17 battleships to assist British naval actions in the Mediterranean Sea and in South Africa. Japan also took advantage of the war situation to extend its power and influence in China.

Australian forces had driven the Germans out of New Guinea by the end of 1914. World War I was also fought in the Middle East. The Gallipoli campaign, for example, was designed to open up access for the Allies. They needed this access in order to get troops and supplies into Russia to aid the campaign on the Eastern Front. In the end, the Gallipoli campaign was abandoned, but not before

keyconcept: Contestability

Lawrence of Arabia

When World War I began, TE Lawrence (see Source 2) was a university student, specialising in the study of Middle Eastern archaeology. In October 1914, he became a member of British intelligence and shipped out to Cairo in Egypt. Over the course of the war, Lawrence became a close adviser to an Arabic prince by the name of Emir Faisal. Lawrence and Faisal helped to unite a number of Arabic tribes and convince them to fight against the troops of the Ottoman Empire. During the war, the Ottoman Empire was a member of the Central Powers fighting against the Allies (see Source 1). Lawrence convinced the Arabic tribes to support British troops and military strategies.

Lawrence also worked with the Arab tribes against the Ottoman Turks and supported their demands for independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1916 – an event known as the Arab Revolt. His adventures earned him the title ‘Lawrence of Arabia’ and made him a popular hero in Britain during the war. Later, Lawrence’s reputation as a heroic figure was questioned by historians who contested the accuracy of his reports and writings about the role he played in the Arab Revolt.

For more information on the key concept of contestability refer to [page XX](#) in ‘The history toolkit’.



Source 2 TE Lawrence – also known as Lawrence of Arabia – in 1915.

The USA enters the war

At the start of the war in 1914, the USA remained a neutral country, but its sympathies definitely lay with the members of the Triple Entente – Britain, France and Russia. In the early years of the war, the USA continued to trade with Britain and provided indirect support for the war effort in Europe by transporting supplies across the Atlantic Ocean.

In an attempt to stop this trade, the Germans began to use submarine warfare. On 7 May 1915, the British passenger ship *Lusitania* was sunk by a German submarine, killing 1198 passengers (see Source 3). Among the dead were 128 Americans.

Following the sinking of two more British ships carrying American passengers, Germany agreed to stop submarine attacks on ships carrying civilians. This pledge lasted until March 1917, when German submarines sunk more American ships. As a result of these attacks, on 6 April 1917, the USA declared war on Germany.

Another suggested motivation for the USA joining the war was the large amount of money that American bankers had lent to the British and French. It was important that the Triple Entente countries win the war in order for them to pay back the debt to the USA.

The USA also supplied extra food, facilities and money to fund the final months of the campaign.



Source 3 A sketch of the passenger ship *Lusitania* sinking on a trip from Liverpool to New York after it was hit by a torpedo from a German U-boat

Check your learning 9.7

Remember and understand

- 1 World War I was predominantly a European war. Why then were people from so many other parts of the world involved?
- 2 What was the main purpose of the Gallipoli campaign?

Apply and analyse

- 3 What impact do you think the early Australian and New Zealand successes in the Pacific would have had on attitudes to war in Australia?

Evaluate and create

- 4 Using the information provided together with your own research, identify the main reasons why the USA became involved in World War I. Which do you believe to be the most important? Why?

9.8 The Western Front

The most common image that comes to mind when people think about World War I is the image of the trenches, and the mud, blood and barbed wire that were features of the long, drawn-out war on the Western Front. Although this was generally regarded as the most important area or ‘theatre of war’ in which the war was fought, there were also many others (see Source 1).

At the start of the war in August 1914, the Germans had marched through Belgium into France. Fierce resistance from the British and French stopped them from moving further into France. However, the Allies were unable to drive the Germans back, and by Christmas 1914 there was a deadlock. The Germans and the Allies faced each other across a line of trenches (see Source 1) that stretched from Ostend on the Belgian coast in a south-easterly direction to the Swiss border (see Source 2 for more detail).

Many historians see the Western Front as the defining experience of World War I. New weapons, such as gas and tanks, were introduced there. Defensive tactics using machine guns, trenches, barbed wire and artillery meant that rather than a rapid war of movement, war on the Western Front became bogged down in a senseless series of attacks and counter-attacks, each achieving little but costing millions of lives.

Breaking the stalemate

Between 1915 and 1918, many attempts were made to break the stalemate of trench conflict. These attempts tended to follow a pattern. Initially there would be a long and sustained artillery attack – opposing trenches would be bombarded with explosive shells. These attacks could go on for a few hours or sometimes for many days. It was believed that this would force the defending troops underground, destroying their fortifications and clearing the way for troops to cross **no man’s land** (the narrow strip of land between opposing trenches that belonged to neither army).

Weighed down with heavy equipment, soldiers would cross the strip of territory to their opponent’s trenches.



Source 1 French soldiers wait in their trenches on the Western Front during World War I.

EUROPE: THE WESTERN FRONT IN 1915



Source 2 The two-trench system along the Western Front ran unbroken from the Belgian coast to Switzerland. Source: Oxford University Press



Source 3 Allied soldiers at the Battle of the Somme, 1916.

Struggling through mud-filled shell holes created by their own artillery, they might learn that the bombardment had not destroyed the barbed-wire obstacles between the lines. More frightening still was the possibility that the artillery attack had failed to destroy the enemy's position. Often, as soldiers made their way across no man's land, the enemy would emerge from deep bunkers to fire on them with machine guns.

Generally, such assaults on enemy trenches failed to achieve their goals. Confusion, smoke, noise and death turned plans into chaos. If attackers reached enemy lines, hand-to-hand (or one-on-one) combat with rifles, bayonets, pistols and grenades often followed. If ground was gained, it could be retaken in a counter-offensive only weeks later. The only real consequence of most of the battles that took place on the Western Front over four years was death and injury.

The Somme

The first Battle of the Somme (in an area along the banks of the Somme River) was one of the most costly attempts to break the stalemate of the trenches. Between July and November 1916, the Allied forces tried to break through German lines. Focused on a 19-kilometre front in northern France, the soldiers managed to push the Germans back by about 8 kilometres. These gains came at an enormous price. The initial 'softening up' bombardment used over 1.5 million shells in a week-long attack. British deaths on the first day of the assault are estimated at over 19 000. Thirty-five thousand were injured and 2000 were counted as missing. French casualties for the first day alone were around 7000.

Later in the Somme campaign, Australian and New Zealand troops fought at Pozières from 23 July



Source 4 The remains of Commonwealth soldiers who died during the Battle of Fromelles, and objects recovered at the site, are recorded by specialists of the Oxford Archaeology Institute after being recovered in mass graves in Fromelles.

to 8 August 1916. After making early gains, Australia suffered over 23 000 casualties. By the end of the Somme campaign, casualty figures for the Allies were around 620 000 dead and wounded, and 500 000 for the Germans.

Australian engagements on the Western Front

Australians fighting on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918 were engaged in numerous battles that earned more than 50 Victoria Crosses for the soldiers who participated. The Victoria Cross is the highest Commonwealth military decoration for valour 'in the face of the enemy'. Australians again distinguished themselves in battle and earned a reputation for courage and toughness, especially in 1918, under the leadership of General Sir John Monash.

There was also terrible loss of life. In battles along the Somme, and at towns such as Passchendaele, Villers-Bretonneux, Ypres and Amiens, thousands of soldiers were killed or wounded, often for little gain in the futile 'game' of trench warfare.

Two of the most destructive battles involving Australians were at Fromelles in northern France in 1916 and at Bullecourt, closer to Paris, in 1917. At Fromelles, an attack on the German trenches was designed to draw German attention away from an onslaught on the German lines 80 kilometres to the south, on the banks of the Somme River.

The attack was unsuccessful and the cost was terrible. In one day, 1917 Australian soldiers were killed and over 3600 were injured, some to die later of their injuries. This event has been described as 'the worst 24 hours in Australia's entire history'.

Because the Germans quickly regained any territory they had lost, the Australians had no opportunity to bury the dead. The Germans buried many in mass pits. During the 1920s, most of the bodies were reburied in Commonwealth War Graves cemeteries, but one mass grave remained undiscovered until 2007. In that year, as a result of painstaking research by war historian Lambis Englezos, a burial site was identified on the edge of the town of Fromelles. It has since been confirmed that up to 400 Australian soldiers are buried in this mass grave. The process of identifying these soldiers and preparing them for reburial (see Source 4), with full military honours, in a newly built cemetery is slow and delicate. Up to 75 soldiers have been positively identified so far through the use of DNA technology.

Nurses on the Western Front

At the start of the war, a small number of women wanted to join the services but were told that war was 'no place for ladies'. The only women allowed to enlist and serve overseas were nurses.

The nurses worked under appalling conditions, especially on the Western Front where makeshift field hospitals were often set up in trenches behind the lines (see Source 5). The nurses became known as 'the roses of no man's land'.

Over the course of World War I, 2562 Australian nurses joined the AIF as members of the medical units. Out of this number, 2139 served overseas in the Middle East and on the Western Front. Twenty-five women lost their lives while serving overseas and 388 received military honours.

Source 5

I cannot remember what came next, or what I did, except that I kept calling for the orderly to help me and thought he was funkling [showing cowardice], but the poor boy had been blown to bits. Somebody got the tent up, and when I got to the delirious pneumonia patient, he was crouched on the ground at the back of the stretcher. He took no notice of me when I asked him to return to bed, so I leaned across the stretcher and put one arm around and tried to lift him in. I had my right arm under a leg, which I thought was his, but when I lifted I found to my horror that it was a loose leg with a boot and a puttee on it. It was one of the orderly's legs which had been blown off and had landed on the patient's bed. The next day they found the [body's] trunk about 20 yards away.

Sister Kelly, an Australian nurse in France describing her experiences when a bomb hit a casualty clearing station behind the lines



Source 6 A nurse in a makeshift hospital on the Western Front

Check your learning 9.8

Remember and understand

- 1 In your own words, define 'the Western Front'.
- 2 Why had the war become 'bogged down' on the Western Front by the end of 1914?
- 3 What was 'no man's land'?
- 4 Describe the pattern followed in most of the attempts to break the stalemate on the Western Front.
- 5 Why is the first Battle of the Somme regarded as one of the most disastrous battles of the war?
- 6 What qualities did nurses need to possess in order to do their jobs successfully under such difficult circumstances?

Apply and analyse

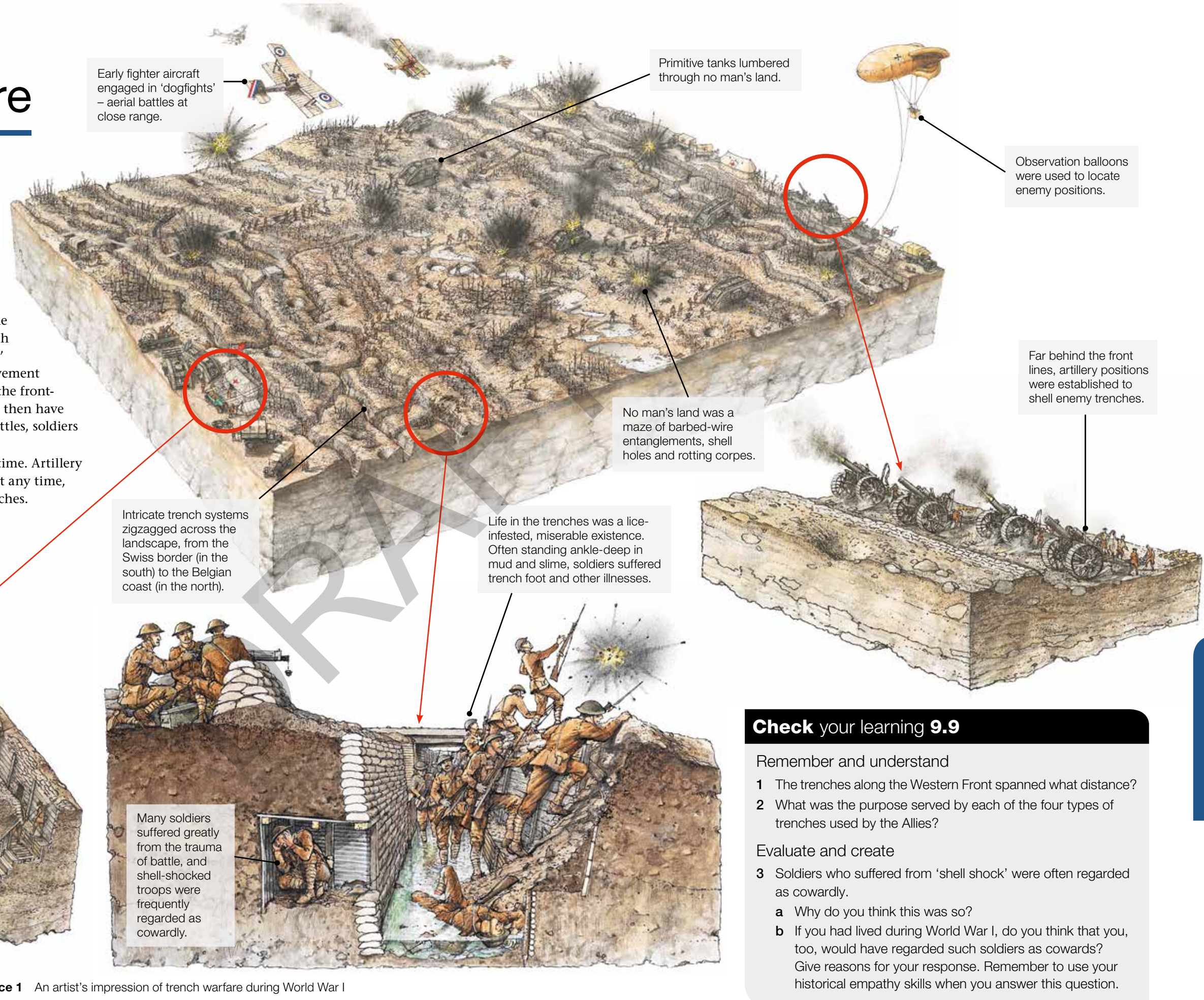
- 7 When it was obvious that little or nothing was gained through repeated assaults on enemy trenches, why do you think military commanders continued to order these assaults?
- 8 Despite their knowledge of terrible loss of life and injury, soldiers continued to take part in the assaults on the Western Front. Suggest three reasons why they did so.

9.9 Trench warfare

The trenches along the Western Front were approximately 700 kilometres long, stretching from the coast of Belgium to the border of Switzerland (see Source 2 on page 468). In most cases, trenches were 2 metres deep by 2 metres wide.

The Allies used four types of trenches. The 'front-line' trench was usually about a kilometre from the German's front trench. Further behind this front-line trench was the 'support' trench, with men and supplies to assist those on the front line. Further behind again was the 'reserve' trench, with more emergency supplies and men. Smaller 'communication' trenches connected all the trenches and allowed for the movement of messages, supplies and men. Soldiers took turns being in the front-line trenches. Sometimes they would be there for eight days, then have four days in the support trenches. However, during major battles, soldiers could be in the front line for much longer.

Soldiers were aware that conditions could change at any time. Artillery from the enemies meant that death and injury could come at any time, leaving smashed and dismembered bodies and wrecked trenches.



Source 1 An artist's impression of trench warfare during World War I

Check your learning 9.9

Remember and understand

- 1 The trenches along the Western Front spanned what distance?
- 2 What was the purpose served by each of the four types of trenches used by the Allies?

Evaluate and create

- 3 Soldiers who suffered from 'shell shock' were often regarded as cowardly.
 - a Why do you think this was so?
 - b If you had lived during World War I, do you think that you, too, would have regarded such soldiers as cowards? Give reasons for your response. Remember to use your historical empathy skills when you answer this question.

9.10 The Gallipoli campaign

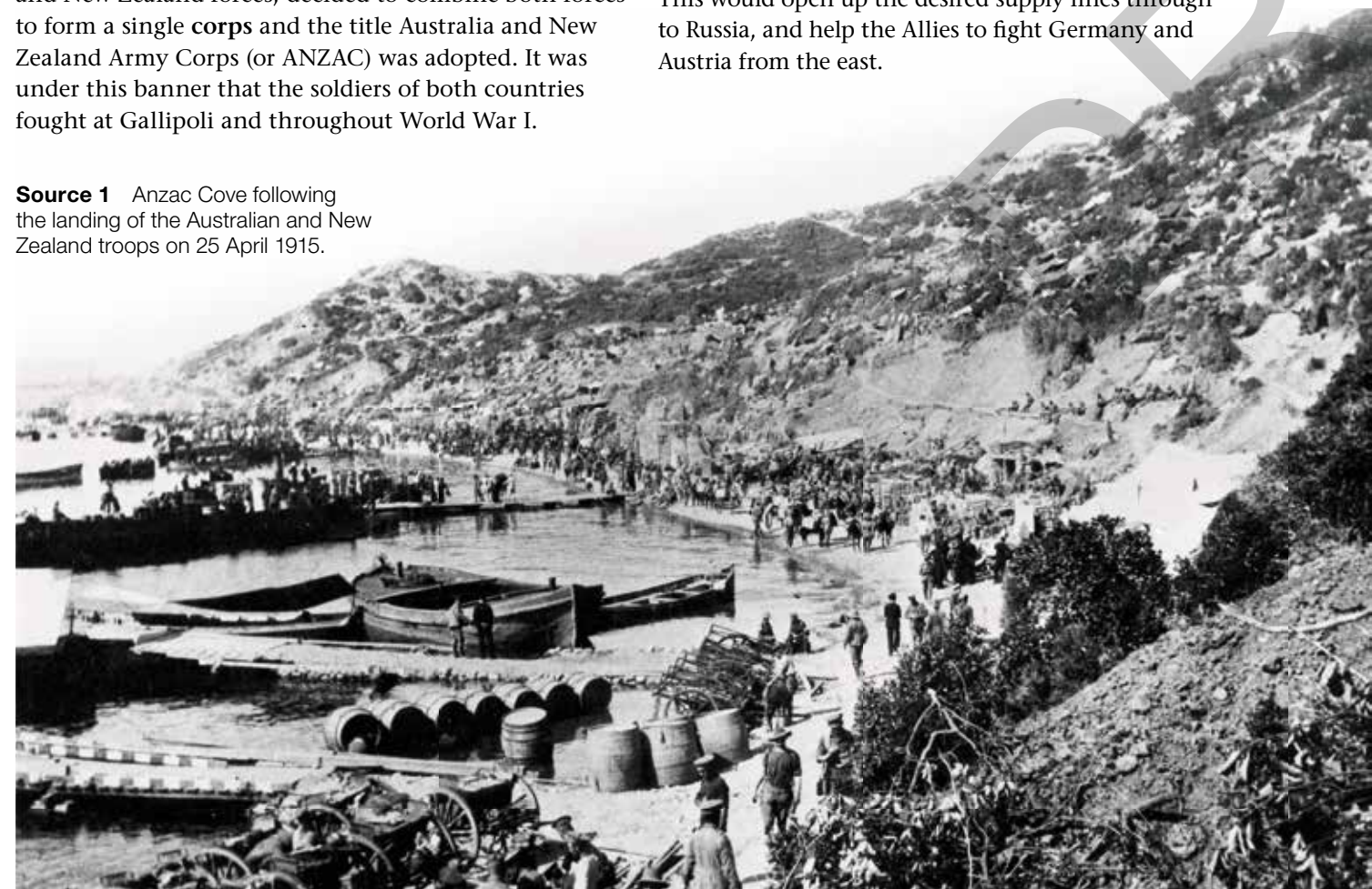
In an attempt to break the stalemate that had developed on the Western Front, Winston Churchill (Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty), who was in charge of the Royal Navy, argued for an attack on Turkey. Turkey was part of the Ottoman Empire and an ally of Germany. The Gallipoli campaign, as it became known, was the first major battle of World War I for Australian troops. It took place on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey. Although many Australian men who enlisted in the early months of the war believed they would be travelling to Europe to fight against the Germans, many were instead sent to fight against the Turks.

Formation of the Anzacs

When the war began in 1914, there was an enthusiastic response from people in Australia and New Zealand. Initially the two military forces of Australia and New Zealand were separate. The Australian troops formed the First Australian Imperial Force; and the New Zealanders formed the First New Zealand Expeditionary Force.

Early in 1915, as the two forces were training in Egypt, General Birdwood, commander of the Australian and New Zealand forces, decided to combine both forces to form a single **corps** and the title Australia and New Zealand Army Corps (or ANZAC) was adopted. It was under this banner that the soldiers of both countries fought at Gallipoli and throughout World War I.

Source 1 Anzac Cove following the landing of the Australian and New Zealand troops on 25 April 1915.



The Gallipoli landing

The Gallipoli campaign was launched because Britain and France needed to move troops, equipment and weapons to allied troops in Russia. In order to do this they needed to travel across the Mediterranean Sea, pass through Turkish waters and cross over the Black Sea into Russia (see Source 3). As a result, the plan required Turkey (part of the Ottoman Empire and an ally of Germany) to be forced out of the war.

The first part of the campaign plan was launched in March 1915. This involved a naval attack through the Dardanelles – a sea passage from the Mediterranean Sea to the Black Sea (see Source 4). This action failed because the entrance to the Dardanelles had been laid with underwater mines. Three Allied battleships were destroyed by these mines, and another three were badly damaged.

A plan was then developed to launch a land attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula from the Aegean Sea coast. The hope was that the Allies would surprise the Turks, defeat them quickly and then march on to take control of the Turkish capital, Constantinople (now known as Istanbul). This would open up the desired supply lines through to Russia, and help the Allies to fight Germany and Austria from the east.

On 25 April 1915, ground troops from Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, India and the British dominion of Newfoundland (now part of Canada) landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

The campaign was in trouble from the beginning. As the Australian and New Zealand troops landed at what is now called Anzac Cove, they faced cliffs up to 100 metres high and heavy gunfire from behind the Turkish fortifications. Those soldiers who made it to the beach were unprotected as they faced the Turkish guns. The Anzacs managed to secure the beach and made limited progress up the cliffs and inland.

Although the plan had been to take 7 kilometres of territory, the day ended with barely a single kilometre achieved. More than 600 Australian soldiers were killed on the first day of the campaign. On hearing news of the disastrous landing, the British commander of the campaign, General Sir Ian Hamilton, ordered the troops to 'dig, dig, dig until you are safe'.

Source 2

It is stated in messages from Cairo that the majority of wounded who have arrived there deny the stories of Turkish atrocities. They state that the Turks are fighting most fairly. In one case, a Turk dressed the wounds of a British soldier under fire. Another left his water bottle with a wounded Australian. An Australian who was taken prisoner, but subsequently escaped, stated he was very well treated.

An extract from the Melbourne newspaper *The Argus*, 22 June 1915

ALLIANCES IN EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST



Source 3

Source: Oxford University Press

DETAIL OF THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA



Source 4

Source: Oxford University Press

In August 1915, the Australians and New Zealanders launched two famous diversionary attacks – the Battle of Lone Pine and the Battle of the Nek. The Australians captured Lone Pine, in fighting so fierce that seven Victoria Crosses were awarded to their men. At the Nek, a charge by Australian troops cost the lives of 234 in an area about the size of three tennis courts.

Despite these battles, the situation on Gallipoli remained largely unchanged for the eight months of the campaign.

Over this time, respect grew between the Turkish soldiers and the ANZAC troops on the battlefield. Each side saw the other as honourable, and agreements were made to hold fire and bury the dead respectfully (see Source 2). Both sides had an amnesty (agreement) to enable a number of dead Turkish soldiers to be buried under the Red Crescent flag of their nation. Over time, the two sides even began trading with each other.

Conditions at Gallipoli

Conditions at Gallipoli were extremely difficult for the Anzacs. As the Turks held the high ground, the Anzacs were always exposed to enemy fire. Nowhere was safe. They were in constant danger day and night, from snipers (expert shots) or artillery bombardment from the Turkish guns.

The Allies landed in the Turkish spring, and a sweltering summer followed. When winter arrived, the bitter cold and snow took its toll on the troops. For men used to the mild weather conditions in Australia, the icy north wind and snowfalls cut right through protection offered by their uniforms and light blankets. Frequent rainfalls flooded the trenches and turned the battlefields to mud.

Despite the rain and snow, drinking water was in short supply. It had to be shipped in to the troops, and this could be difficult if a supply ship ran into problems. Water was rationed carefully and soldiers were so conscious of the shortages that they often shaved with leftover cold tea. Food was more plentiful, although lacking in variety. Rations commonly included canned meat, corned beef (called ‘bully beef’) and hard biscuits. Fresh food was rarely available.

Poor health was a major problem. More Australians and New Zealanders died or were forced into hospital as a result of disease rather than enemy action. Painful conditions and diseases such as trench foot, dysentery, diarrhoea and gastroenteritis were common in the damp conditions of the trenches. Illness was also spread by rats, lice, flies and mosquitoes. Many pests were attracted by the strong odour of decomposing bodies and human waste. Poor sanitation and food-handling practices meant the germs were often transferred to food and water supplies.

Source 5

We landed on Gallipoli in what we were wearing and continued to wear it day and night until the socks were the first garments to become unwearable, and they were cast out and we went barefoot in our boots.

There were parasites which caused an abominable itch to which ever part of the skin where they operated. They lived and bred mainly in the seams of the inner garments and as there was no hot water or chemicals available for their control or destruction the field was open for them to multiply and flourish. The best control means available was to wear the clothing inside out and then there were no seams next to the skin for the pest to hide away in and breed. This I did with my flannel shirt, but I simply could not come at wearing my trousers inside out, even though many of the other men did. It simply looked too awful.

An extract from a letter that Lieutenant Frank Boyes wrote about conditions at Gallipoli



Source 6 Australian soldiers resting in a trench at Gallipoli

Withdrawal

In December 1915, the Anzacs were finally ordered to withdraw from Gallipoli. To hide the fact that they were leaving, they rigged up some rifles to fire at random. They did this by attaching tins to the rifles' trigger mechanisms with string. When the tins filled with water dripping from other tins suspended above, their weight caused the triggers to be pulled and the rifles to fire. This tactic became known as the ‘ghost guns of Gallipoli’. Soldiers also carefully wrapped the horses' hooves in cloth to muffle the sound of their leaving. The last Australian soldiers were evacuated overnight on 19–20 December. Because of its efficiency, the silent withdrawal is usually remembered as the most successful part of the Gallipoli campaign.

Over the course of the campaign, 8709 Australians died, and 19000 were wounded. Over the same period, over 80000 Turks were killed. During their time on Gallipoli, the ‘diggers’ – as Australian troops became known – displayed a courage and ingenuity that would form the basis of the Anzac legend. This legend would contribute to the Australian sense of identity over the course of the

20th century.

The Australian Light Horse

Following the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the Australian infantry were deployed to the Western Front in France and Belgium. However, the mounted troops remained to continue fighting against the Turks in Egypt. They became involved in what was known as ‘the Sinai and Palestine campaign’.

The Australian Light Horse was a combination of cavalry and mounted infantry that had been developed during the Boer Wars in Africa (1899–1902). Traditional cavalry forces were becoming obsolete as nations developed more powerful infantry and artillery weapons. However, Australia's vast distances made military leaders reluctant to do away with mounted soldiers. The answer was a mounted force of trained infantry soldiers who would ride swiftly into battle, but fight on the ground like regular infantry. Australian mounted troops made a significant contribution to the defeat of Turkish troops in the Middle East.

The most famous battle fought by the Light Horse was the Battle of Beersheba in October 1917. The charge was aimed at capturing the important Turkish base of Beersheba, and has been called the last successful cavalry charge in history (see Source 7).



Check your learning 9.10

Remember and understand

- 1 What does the term ‘ANZAC’ stand for?
- 2 What was the outcome of early attempts by Allied forces to pass through the Dardanelles?
- 3 Where was the Australian infantry (soldiers who fought on foot) deployed to after the Gallipoli campaign? What happened to members of the Australian Light Horse (soldiers who fought on horseback)?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Write a paragraph explaining why the Gallipoli campaign was ultimately unsuccessful.
- 5 Why do you think the ANZAC soldiers earned high praise, even though they did not achieve what they hoped to?
- 6 Explain why some people argue that the withdrawal of the Anzacs from Gallipoli was the most successful part of the campaign.

Evaluate and create

- 7 Do you think the Gallipoli landing and the Anzac legend would have become as central to Australian culture and folklore if it had not been the nation's first experience of war? Explain your answer.
- 8 Draw a sketch of the beach at Anzac Cove where the troops landed during the Gallipoli campaign (see Sources 1 and 4). Label your sketch, and highlight the difficulties that the soldiers faced on arrival.

Source 7 *The Charge of the Australian Light Horse at Beersheba, 1917*, George Lambert (1920) (AWM ART02811)

9.11 The end of the war

After the failure of the Gallipoli campaign, the stalemate on the Western Front dragged on through 1916, 1917 and into 1918 with little change. By early 1918, troops on both sides were exhausted, resources were depleted and morale was at rock bottom. For the original Anzacs who had enlisted with such enthusiasm in 1914, there was a feeling that the war would never end.

The USA's involvement

Although the USA did not declare war on Germany until 1917, it had been involved in the war from the beginning supplying the allies with weapons and supplies.

After German submarines sank ships carrying American civilians, Americans were outraged and put pressure on their government to enter the war. US President Woodrow Wilson (see Source 1) initially campaigned for a peaceful end to the war, but was unsuccessful. When the Germans announced in March 1917 that they would continue to sink any ship that approached Britain, including passenger ships carrying civilians, this was the catalyst for the USA to finally intervene.

On 3 April 1917, President Wilson made a speech declaring that the USA would enter the war and restore peace to Europe. Three days later, they officially declared war on Germany. American troops joined the French and British in the summer of 1918.

Russia's withdrawal

As the United States was entering World War I, Russia was getting ready to get out. In 1917, Russia became swept up in an internal revolution. The new communist government, wanting to focus on internal troubles, looked for a way to remove Russia from World War I. Negotiating separately from the rest of the Allies, Russia signed the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty with Germany on 3 March 1918.



Source 1 US President Woodrow Wilson

With the war over against Russia, Germany was able to divert its troops in the west in order to face the new American soldiers.

Events on the Western Front

The freshness and enthusiasm of the American troops made a huge difference to the Allied troops on the Western Front. After years of almost constant defeat and huge numbers of casualties, by early 1918 the Allies had begun to slowly gain the upper hand over the Central Powers (Germany, Austria–Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria).

The Battle of Le Hamel

In July 1918, Australian and American soldiers launched an attack on the Germans in and around the town of Hamel in northern France. The battle was planned and commanded by an Australian by the name of Lieutenant General John Monash.

The Battle of Le Hamel in July 1918 was said by some to be the most well-prepared battle in World War I. General Monash distinguished himself by developing and using innovative tactics for coordinated infantry, artillery, tank and aircraft attacks. This meant that

Allied battle objectives were achieved in 93 minutes. Using conventional tactics would have meant that the fighting would have lasted for weeks, with much higher casualty rates.

The Battle of Amiens

The Battle of Amiens, which began on 8 August 1918, was an important event because it would come to mark the final offensive by the Allies before bringing the war to an end. Allied forces advanced over 7 miles on the first day and, from then on, German defences were continually penetrated and forced to retreat. For this reason, the first day of the battle is often referred to as the 'Black Day for the German Army'.



Source 3 Victorians celebrating Armistice Day in Melbourne in 1918

This battle also marked the end of trench warfare on the Western Front, as fighting became mobile once again.

On 26 September 1918, from their retreated position at the Hindenburg Line, the Germans were infiltrated by the Allies in only hours. German commanders began accepting that defeat was imminent.

The Armistice

At 5 am on 11 November 1918, the head of the German delegation, Matthias Erzberger, signed the **Armistice** (ceasefire) that marked the end of 'the war to end all wars'.

The terms of the Armistice were written by French Marshal Ferdinand Foch, and required the Germans to withdraw troops, surrender artillery, trucks, aircraft and naval vessels, return prisoners of war, and make promises about repatriation (repaying the costs of the war). The Armistice also stipulated that the fighting was to end later that day, at 11 am Paris time (i.e., the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month). The news was quickly given to the armies during the morning of 11 November, but even after hearing that the Armistice was due to start at 11 am, intense warfare continued right until the last minute.

While the Armistice put an end to the fighting, it was initially only to last for 30 days and it did not determine how peace could be secured and maintained. The ceasefire was made permanent the following year when members of the Commonwealth and the **League of Nations** signed the **Treaty of Versailles**. The treaty (a binding agreement) was the official document that ended World War I and outlined the terms of surrender between the victorious Allies (including Australia, Britain and the USA) and the defeated Central Powers (including Germany, Austria–Hungary and the Ottoman Empire).

News of the Armistice spread quickly around the world. People celebrated by dancing and singing in the streets. But at the same time as people celebrated, many were also overcome with sadness and horror as they reflected on the millions of soldiers who had lost their lives, or the many more who returned home with physical and mental scars.

Check your learning 9.11

Remember and understand

- 1 In what ways was the USA involved with the war before their official entry into it in 1917?
- 2 What event finally triggered the USA into declaring war on Germany?
- 3 When and why did Russia withdraw from the war against Germany?

Apply and analyse

- 4 How and why did the entry of American troops into the war on the Western Front contribute to the defeat of the Germans?

Evaluate and create

- 5 Even after the Armistice was signed at 5 am on 11 November 1918, there were many more casualties later that morning before the official ceasefire at 11 am. For each of Britain, France, the USA, Canada and Germany conduct some research to find out:
 - a What was the name of the last soldier killed?
 - b What time did they die?
 - c How and why were they killed?
 - d Present your findings in a short report.

9B rich task

Life in the trenches

The trenches that soldiers dug during World War I were typically around two metres deep by two metres wide. On both sides, conditions were barbaric, although German trenches tended to be better engineered and more comfortable than the French and British equivalents. To avoid snipers (marksmen trained to ‘pick off’ enemy soldiers from concealed locations), soldiers spent most of the daylight hours under the trench line – most attacks took place at dusk or in the early morning when visibility was poor. Soldiers were often bored during the day, and caught brief moments of sleep where they could. Those falling asleep on watch could be severely punished.

The soldiers had to share the trenches with millions of rats (see Source 1) that fed on the remains of dead soldiers left on the battlefields. With so much available food, some rats grew to be as large as cats. They bred constantly and spread disease as they ran over the faces of the sleeping soldiers.

Lice were also constant companions that lived and laid eggs in the seams of the soldiers’ uniforms. The troops were often unable to bathe or change their clothes for weeks at a time. Even when washed, it was almost impossible to rid clothes of the lice eggs. Lice were responsible for the spread of ‘trench fever’. If soldiers were fortunate enough to end up in military hospital, it took them up to 12 weeks to recover from this painful illness.

Relentless rain turned the trenches to canals of stagnant mud. Trench foot, acquired from standing for long periods in wet, muddy conditions, was a fungal infection that caused swelling. Serious cases could result in amputation. The winter of 1916 was one of the harshest on the Western Front. The cold was so intense that water was carried to the troops as blocks of ice.



Source 1 German soldiers display the result of a night's rat-catching in a trench on the Western Front.

Source 2

We are lousy, stinking, ragged, unshaven, sleepless. Even when we're back a bit we can't sleep for our own guns. I have one puttee [fabric strip wound around the lower leg for protection], a dead man's helmet, another dead man's gas protector, a dead man's bayonet. My tunic is rotten with other men's blood and partly splattered with a comrade's brains. It is horrible but why should you people at home not know.

Excerpt from a letter written to his family by John Alexander Raws, a South Australian soldier, who spent only four weeks on the Western Front before he was killed on 23 August 1916

Source 3

Enormous noise. Continuous explosion. A deserted landscape. Complete immobility of everything. Men were eating, smoking, doing odd jobs but no one was fighting. A few were peering in periscopes or looking through loopholes. I tried, but could see nothing but upturned empty fields. Then suddenly there was a terrific crash which flung me yards. I picked myself up and did my best to laugh. Nearby a man lay with a tiny hole in his forehead and close to him another limped with blood pumping out of his leg. They were both carried away. A casualty was not a matter for horror but for replacement. I regarded the incessant bombardment as temporary and expected every moment to see men going over the top to put the guns out of action. Nothing happened, however. That was how I first saw war.

RH Mottram, from RH Mottram, John Easton and Eric Partridge, *Three Personal Records of the War*, Scholartis Press, London, 1929

skilldrill: Historical sources as evidence

Identifying and locating relevant sources, using ICT and other methods

Being able to locate relevant primary and secondary sources using the Internet is an important historical skill. However, you need to keep in mind that not all information you find on the Internet is necessarily true, accurate, reliable or credible. So, in addition to being able to find source material online, you need to be able to evaluate the reliability and credibility of the information you find.

Use the following steps to apply this skill:

- Step 1** Identify key words related to your topic and type these into a search engine such as Google. (Use only these key words – do not type in whole sentences or questions.)
- Step 2** Add further relevant keywords to refine your search if you cannot find what you want on your first attempts.
- Step 3** Look beyond the first page of results. The best results do not always appear first.
- Step 4** Assess the reliability of each site by asking yourself:
 - Who is the author or creator? If it is an individual, do they have their credentials listed (e.g. a degree or title)? If it is an organisation, is it a reputable organisation like a government or university department?

- What is the purpose of the website? Is it trying to inform, persuade or sell?
- Is the site objective? Is the author's point of view biased?
- Is the information accurate? Can the information be verified if you cross-check it with other sources of information?
- Does the site contain spelling mistakes or grammatical errors? (If so, this is usually an indication that the site is not particularly reliable.)
- Is the information current? Can you find evidence of recent updates?

Apply the skill

- Conduct an Internet search to find relevant, credible and reliable source material about life in the trenches during World War I using the steps outlined above.
- Copy the data chart below into your workbook. Read the source material you have located and record the key points in the appropriate column. Make sure you also record the URLs of the sites you have used.

Life in the trenches – data chart						
	URL	Food, clothing and shelter	Hygiene	Entertainment	Mateship	Injury, death and medicine
Source 1						
Source 2						
Source 3						
Source 4						

Extend your understanding

- Read the letter written from the trenches by John Raws (Source 2).
 - Why do you think he felt that people at home should know what he was going through?
 - What impact do you think such letters would have had on the views of war at home? Suggest several responses.
- Use the text and sources included above, as well the notes you have recorded in the data chart as a result of your research, to write three brief diary entries from the perspective of a soldier that describes life in the trenches. Write one diary entry about a calm period, another about a bombardment, and the final diary entry about the lead-up to ‘going over the top’.

9.12 The impact of war on Australian society

World War I had a significant impact on Australian society. A young nation with a population of less than five million in 1914 lost over 60 000 young men as a result of the war. Many of these men were the fittest and most able of the male population. As a percentage of total troops sent to war, Australia's losses were the highest of any of the Commonwealth nations (see Source 2). A summary of the numbers of those who served and of the numbers of deaths and other casualties makes it clear that Australia made a major sacrifice for the Allied war effort.

The initial enthusiasm with which most Australians greeted the outbreak of war did not last. By the middle of 1915, the reality of war began to dawn. Following the landing at Gallipoli, Australians received the news of more than 2000 deaths. As a result, many in the nation took a more sober view or became disillusioned. There was still strong support for the war and the soldiers, but any excitement had evaporated.

By late 1916, Australia was a bitterly divided country. Not only was there a growing dissatisfaction with the war, but a real sense that there was 'inequality of sacrifice'. Many working-class Australians felt that they had contributed the most in terms of enlisting soldiers, and that they were also being exploited at home. There was a perception that middle- and upper-class people were less affected by the war. Some were even seen to be profiting from lucrative government war contracts. These perceptions were not always accurate, but they still had an impact on the growing divisions in the nation.

The War Precautions Act

In 1914, the federal government passed the War Precautions Act, which gave the government increased powers for the duration of the war. This Act gave the federal government the legal right to, among other things, monitor and **intern** German-Australians, impose a direct income tax, censor letters and publications, and set fixed prices for certain goods.



Source 1 An Australian poster from 1917 encouraging Australians to enlist. After heavy casualties on the Western Front, Britain pressured Australia to make a bigger contribution to the war effort.

Source 2 A comparison of British Commonwealth casualties, World War I

Country	Total soldiers sent to war	Total casualties (captured, missing, wounded or killed)	% of casualties
Britain	5 000 000	2 535 424	50.71
Canada	422 405	210 100	49.74
Australia	331 781	215 585	64.98
New Zealand	98 950	58 526	59.01
India	1 096 013	140 015	12.77

Statistics from *Australian Campaigns in the Great War*, Lt The Hon. Stanisforth Smith

Impact on the Australian economy

World War I had a major economic impact on Australia and other nations. The cost of providing weapons, ammunition and supplies to the forces at home and overseas was vast. To meet these expenses, the federal government introduced income tax. It was also necessary to borrow funds from overseas. Australia borrowed heavily from Britain to build vital wartime infrastructure, such as expanded railways. Australia would take over 20 years to pay back loans taken out during the war.

The redirection of raw materials to the war effort and the needs of wartime industries caused **inflation**. As a result, the cost of living in Australia rose by up to 50 per cent during the war years. The war also disrupted international trade. Naval blockades and the use of shipping for military purposes meant fewer ships were available to move trade goods to overseas markets. The Australian government had introduced **tariffs** (taxes) on imported goods to protect its local wartime supplies. Many countries looked elsewhere for trade and discovered new sources in Japan and the USA.

On the positive side, however, Australia developed new industries. The fact that fewer goods could be brought in from overseas meant that inventive Australians began to develop alternatives that were made here. By the end of the war, 400 new products were being manufactured in Australia. The Newcastle steelworks, opened in 1915, was flourishing, the Australian National Shipping Line had been established and the role of the Commonwealth Bank expanded considerably.

One new product, developed as a direct result of the war, was a medication called Aspro (see Source 3). Before the war, aspirin (which at the time was a trademarked German-made pain reliever called Aspirin) had been widely used for pain relief in Australia. After the outbreak of war, the use of Aspirin became unpopular and unpatriotic because it was made by the German company Bayer. Two Australian pharmacists, George Nicholas and Henry Smith, analysed Aspirin and came up with an Australian version, which they called Aspro. Aspro became one of the most widely used over-the-counter medicines available in Australia.

There were people who profited from supplying goods needed for the war effort. These included farmers who supplied wheat, dairy products and meat to feed the soldiers here and overseas. Wool was in great demand for soldiers' uniforms (see Source 4) and munitions factories were working overtime to support the war effort.



Source 3 Aspro was developed in Australia as a direct result of the war.



Source 4 Wool, used to make soldiers' uniforms, was a valued commodity during the war.

However, many workers felt that they were not sharing in the wartime profits. Wages fell but the cost of living rose. This led to some resentment and even strike action in the coal industry, and on the railways and the wharves. These strikes drew much criticism. The strikers were described as unpatriotic and selfish, and they were largely unsuccessful.

Check your learning 9.12

Remember and understand

- 1 How many Australian men died in World War I? How does this figure compare with the losses suffered by other Commonwealth nations?
- 2 What were some of the factors causing division in Australian society by 1916?
- 3 What did the Australian federal government do in order to cover the great cost of the war effort?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Explain how the war influenced Australian manufacturing.

Evaluate and create

- 5 Aspro was developed because Bayer Aspirin was no longer imported from Germany. Research other products that were imported from Germany and Austria before the war to see if the bans placed on them led to the development of Australian alternatives.

9.13 The impact of war on Australian women

Historians often describe World War I as the first 'total war', because it was the first time that nations had mobilised all of their industries, resources and citizens for the war effort. Before World War I, most people's involvement in wars was usually limited to paying taxes and worrying about friends and family members engaged in fighting overseas. By comparison, 'total war' placed many new pressures on those left at home.

With so many men away at war, there was an expectation that women would take on many duties that had previously been the responsibility of men. Women did a great deal of voluntary work, including fundraising and assisting with recruiting. They also moved into previously male domains in the workforce, such as working in munitions factories. In Britain, women were also able to join the armed forces, but only for home defence.

Most women were supportive of involvement at the start of the war and more than 2000 served, generally as nurses. While these women faced dangerous conditions overseas, the women on the home front also found their lives changing.



Source 1 This photograph, taken in 1915, shows women making uniforms at the Commonwealth Clothing Factory in Melbourne. Women were offered better working conditions and wages here than those offered by private employers, but they were also expected to work extremely hard for the war effort.

Women in the paid workforce

Before the war, most women had been homemakers, with a small number working in traditionally female roles such as teaching, nursing, dressmaking or domestic work. However, with around 500 000 young men off at war, women wanted to support the war effort at home. There was some resistance by **trade unions** to hiring women in traditionally male jobs, as it was thought that this might lower wages. However, women were able to take on some traditionally male roles, such as store clerks and bank tellers. The government controlled war-related work and women were rarely able to gain jobs in these areas.

The Australian Women's Service Corps was formed with the aim of training women to take over male jobs in the services at home, to free more men to fight overseas. However, women were told that their services were not necessary.

Source 2

The Australian Women's Service Corps, which has a membership of 1000, and which was formed recently with the object of training women to undertake the duties of motor-drivers, orderlies, clerks, and kitchen hands, in order to release men for fighting purposes, a few weeks ago made an offer to the Defence authorities to provide 700 women for such duties. A reply has been received from Mr T. Trumble, secretary of the Defence department, thanking the corps for its patriotic offer, but intimating that there are no positions available wherein the services of women could be utilised.

The Argus, Melbourne, 4 January 1917

By the end of the war, the percentage of women working outside the home had risen by about 13 per cent. However, there was an expectation after the war had finished that women who had taken on the traditional roles and jobs of men would return to the home, making way for returned soldiers.

Women's voluntary work during the war

During World War I, women were strongly encouraged to help the war effort by joining voluntary organisations. Vast numbers of women and girls sewed and knitted to ensure that the troops had warm clothing, and raised money to help those affected by the war.

Women who took on voluntary work developed skills and confidence. For many women, especially younger ones, these opportunities helped to shape their lives as the nation moved into the 1920s.

Australian Red Cross

After it was founded in Melbourne in 1914, the Australian Red Cross grew to have branches in every state of Australia. Women volunteering for the Red Cross attended working bees where they made packages for the men serving overseas. These packages included things like soap, toiletries, food, clothing and medical supplies. The Red Cross also raised money to assist soldiers' families, and established homes for wounded soldiers to recover in.



Source 3 Australian Red Cross poster, 1914–1918

Women were also active in influencing and encouraging men to enlist. Some women refused to speak to men who had not enlisted. Other women sent white feathers, a symbol of cowardice, to men who had not enlisted.

Images of women were regularly used in posters published by the government to encourage recruitment. Women were portrayed as 'helpless and vulnerable victims', in need of Australian soldiers to protect them from the 'evil Germans'.

Other women encouraged men not to enlist. Vida Goldstein, for example, was a Melbourne woman who actively promoted pacifism (opposition to war) and formed the Women's Peace Army in 1915.

Check your learning 9.13

Remember and understand

- 1 What roles were open to Australian women during World War I?
- 2 Describe some of the main activities of the volunteer organisations that existed to help the war effort.

Apply and analyse

- 3 Why do you think the offer of the Australian Women's Service Corps was rejected?

Evaluate and create

- 4 Put yourself in the role of a business operator during World War I. When one of your male employees enlisted, you employed a young woman who has proved to be excellent. You have spent time and

money developing her skills and knowledge. When your former employee returns from the war, he expects to be re-employed. He has lost a leg and is suffering from shell shock. You have to decide what to do. You cannot afford to employ them both.

- a On a sheet of paper, write all the arguments for sacking the woman and re-employing the man. On the other side, list the reasons in favour of keeping the young woman and telling the man to look for work elsewhere.
- b Decide which candidate you should employ to fill the position. Write a letter to the unsuccessful candidate explaining your decision and outlining the reasons for it.

9.14 The conscription debate

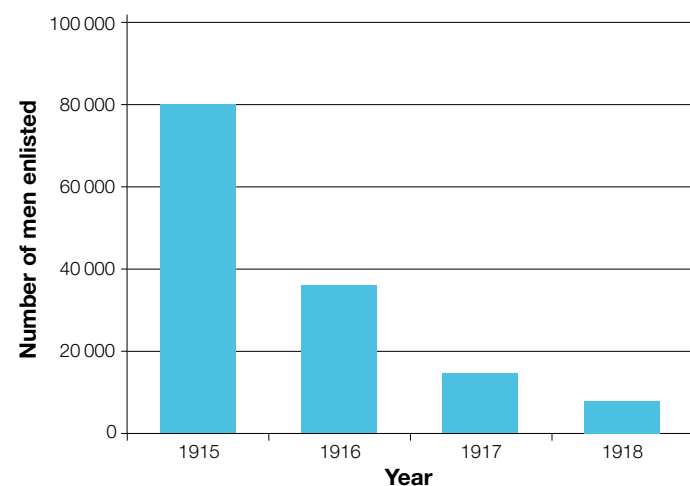
Despite the changes brought about in Australia by World War I, it did not impact on the Australian home front to the same degree as in France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, Turkey and Britain, where fighting took place. In these countries, civilians suffered through food shortages and regular military attacks. Because of the immediate danger faced, all of these countries had systems of **conscription** (compulsory service in the army) during the war. In Australia, however, service was not compulsory. This did not stop it from becoming one of the most divisive and bitter arguments of the war.

Enlistment

When the war began in 1914 many Australian men saw participation in the war as an exciting and noble cause. Men flocked to enlist as most expected the war to be over quickly. But as the war dragged on and information about the number of deaths and casualties emerged, volunteer numbers began to drop. Although there was a peak in enlistments after Gallipoli, from late 1915 numbers steadily declined.

As the numbers of men enlisting declined, the Australian government tried to pressure men to enlist through propaganda campaigns that either encouraged or shamed men into enlisting. The process of asking people to enlist is called recruitment.

Recruitment became an issue when the Australian Prime Minister William Morris (Billy) Hughes returned from a visit to Britain and the Western Front in 1916.



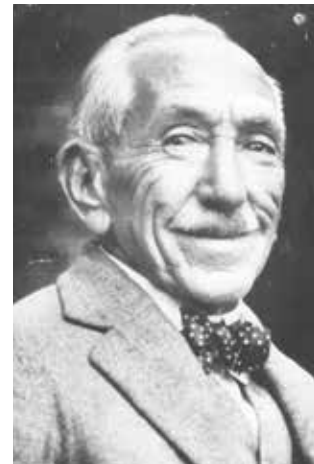
Source 1 Enlistments in the First AIF 1915–1918

Over 27 000 Australian soldiers had just been killed in the first five weeks of the Battle of the Somme in July 1916. Due to the decline in the number of Australian volunteers, heavy Australian losses and the critical state of the war on the Western Front, Hughes announced that there would be a **referendum** (a special national vote) to give the Commonwealth Government the power to force men of military age to join the army.

Hughes believed that Australia needed at least 7500 men to enlist per month if it was to maintain its fighting strength. To achieve this, he announced that we needed to introduce conscription. This was despite the fact that only a year earlier he had declared, 'In no circumstances would I agree to send men out of this country to fight against their will.'

The conscription plebiscites

The issue of conscription triggered a major debate around Australia. In October 1916, Australians were asked to vote for or against conscription in a **plebiscite** (a public vote or opinion poll). A plebiscite is similar to a referendum, but its outcome is not legally binding and does not result in a change being made to the Constitution. The 1916 plebiscite was narrowly defeated. Most of Hughes' Labor parliamentarians were opposed to conscription and, as a result, the Labor Party split. At the end of 1916, Hughes and 24 of his supporters left the Labor Party and formed a new party known as the Nationalist Party. The Nationalist Party was made up of Hughes and his supporters, along with most of the former members of the Liberal Party. One year later, in 1917, a second plebiscite was held. Again, it was defeated. Hughes could still have introduced conscription, because the results of the plebiscites were not legally binding, but he chose not to.



Source 2 William Morris (Billy) Hughes

Australia divided

Supporters of conscription tended to be middle- and upper-class people of British and Protestant background. These people, known as pro-conscriptionists, argued that it was the patriotic duty of Australians to continue to support the war effort. They accused opponents of being lazy and selfish, of being 'German lovers' and of letting down the thousands who had already given their lives. In pro-conscription **propaganda**, images of noble Australian soldiers and their families are shown suffering for the good of the country as they fight the Germans.

Opponents of conscription were more likely to be working class, Catholic and of Irish background. Catholic Archbishop Daniel Mannix was the unofficial leader of the anti-conscription campaign and he urged Catholics to vote 'no'. Those who opposed conscription claimed that Australia had already given enough of its young men. They said that it was not really Australia's war. They also argued that several hundred thousand soldiers had gone voluntarily to the war and that it was not necessary to force Australians to fight. Anti-conscription propaganda urged people to vote 'no' in the plebiscite or 'Death Ballot' (see Source 4).

Many trade unionists opposed conscription, arguing that the war was a **capitalist** war and should not be supported. Some trade unionists also argued that if the majority of able-bodied Australian men were sent to the front, employers would begin to employ non-whites at lower wages, undermining the gains that Australian workers had made. Women were equally divided on the issue and were used by both sides of the campaign. Images of women and children frequently appeared in conscription propaganda (see Source 3).



Source 3 A pro-conscription poster produced in Australia around 1918. The word 'Hun' is a derogatory term being used here to refer to the Germans.

Check your learning 9.14

Remember and understand

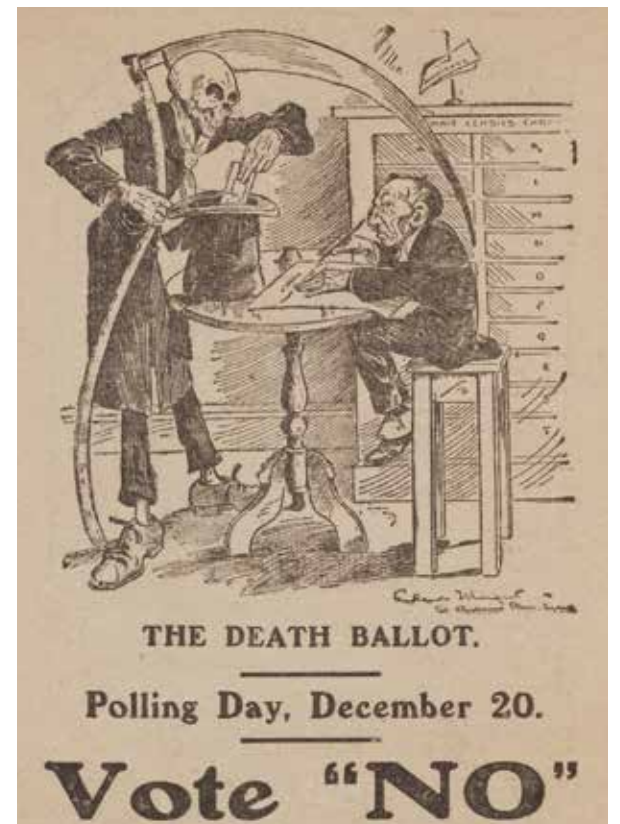
- 1 Why do you think both sides of the conscription debate used women, especially mothers, in their propaganda?

Apply and analyse

- 2 Why do you think that Billy Hughes held two plebiscites when he had the power to introduce conscription without the nation's support?
- 3 Can you explain why middle- and upper-class people were more likely to support conscription than working-class people?

Evaluate and create

- 4 Do you think the war might have affected Australia differently if conscription had been introduced? Conduct some additional research and write a 250-word report to outline the possible effects of conscription on the war effort and the home front.



Source 4 An anti-conscription cartoon, printed in 1917, from the No Conscription Council Campaign Committee

9.15 Anti-German sentiment in Australia

Throughout the second half of the 19th century, many Germans had settled in Australia. Most German settlers arrived in Port Adelaide, and then moved on to settle in areas such as the Barossa Valley (in South Australia), the Riverina (in New South Wales) and south-east Queensland. Many German immigrants found these regions suitable for wheat and dairy farming, the planting of vineyards and wine making. By 1914 over 100 000 people of German descent lived in Australia. Many of these had been granted full Australian citizenship before 1914, while others were second- and third-generation Australians. On the whole, German-Australians were a well-established and well-liked community prior to the outbreak of the war.

The outbreak of war

With the rising tension between the British and German Empires, German-Australian communities began to find themselves the subject of suspicion and hostility in Australia. When war broke out in 1914 this changed to outright aggression.

At the time, many German-Australians had come to think of themselves as Australian first. Indeed many of them enlisted in the AIF. For example, the first Australian commander of the AIF, General John Monash, was the son of German migrants.

However, when Australia and the rest of the British Empire were at war with Germany, German-Australians were considered potential threats to national security. Many Anglo-Celtic Australians believed the German-Australians had divided loyalties or even that they were spies. Almost overnight, German-Australians became the target of hate campaigns. Propaganda and vicious rumours were

circulated (see Source 1). Life became very difficult for anyone of German descent.

Two months after the war began, the Australian government created more tension between British-Australians and German-Australians with the introduction of the War Precautions Act. The Act authorised the Commonwealth government to do whatever it felt necessary to secure the safety of the nation. This Act, together with later regulations and Acts, set out a number of restrictions on the lives of people of German descent. In particular, it specified that all ‘**enemy aliens**’ (foreign residents from enemy nations) had to register and report weekly to local police stations or military authorities, pledge their allegiance to Australia and the British Empire, and inform the authorities of any change of address.

Source 1 This 1916 poster shows Australia renamed ‘New Germany’, and Australia cities given German names such as scare tactics were common during World War I.



Source 2 Holsworthy Internment Camp in Liverpool, New South Wales

Internment

Over the course of the war, nearly 7000 people were classified by the government as ‘**enemy aliens**’ and imprisoned in **internment camps**. Most of these people were of German or Austro-Hungarian descent who had been residents in Australia when the war broke out. Some had lived here for many years or had even been born in Australia. There were no hearings or appeals.

Initially, internment camps were set up all across Australia, but in July 1915, all internees were moved to camps in New South Wales. Here, the three main internment camps were at Trial Bay Gaol, Berrima Gaol and Holsworthy Army Barracks. Germans who were not placed in camps were carefully watched by the police and neighbours.

Hostility towards Germans in Australian society at the time was so strong that many people of German or Austrian heritage decided that life inside the internment camps would be preferable. Many of them had lost their jobs and could not feed their families. During the war, 1500 people chose to enter internment camps voluntarily.

Other reactions to ‘enemy aliens’

In response to the threat of German-Australians, the government closed down German schools and changed the names of towns that it thought sounded ‘too German’. In New South Wales, Germantown became Holbrook; in Tasmania, the town of Bismarck became Collinsvale; and in Victoria, Mount Bismarck was renamed Mount Kitchener – after the British Field Marshal, Lord Kitchener. In Townsville, the German Gardens became the Belgian Gardens.

Many families of German descent changed their names to stop harassment from the government and a war-mad community. German schools and churches were closed, German music was banned, and German food was renamed.

After the failure of the second conscription plebiscite in 1917 the anti-German campaign was increased further. People of German descent were stopped from joining the Army, and from holding civil positions such as local councillors or Justices of the Peace.

Many Australians also refused to work beside people of German descent, striking until they were sacked from their jobs. People refused to buy anything from German-owned businesses.



Source 3 Australian propaganda cartoons such as this one by artist Norman Lindsay (published around 1915) did much to fuel anti-German sentiment in Australia. The cartoon shows a ‘Hun’ (a derogatory word used to refer to Germans) as a brutal ape-like monster reaching out to crush the world, the blood of its victims dripping from Europe down towards Australia.

Check your learning 9.15

Remember and understand

- 1 How many people of German descent were living in Australia at the start of World War I?
- 2 What were some of the suspicions held about German-Australians after war broke out? Who held these views?
- 3 What restrictions were placed on German-Australians as a result of the War Precautions Act?
- 4 Why did some German-Australians voluntarily enter internment camps?

Apply and analyse

- 5 Negative attitudes towards Germans, even those who were born here or were naturalised Australians, were widely held by British-Australians during World War I.
 - a How do you explain this reaction?
 - b Do you think the same reaction would happen today if Australia were at war with a country from which many Australian citizens had migrated?

9.16 The impact of war on Australia's international relationships

World War I had a significant influence on the growth of Australia as a nation; in fact, many historians describe it as 'our nation's coming of age'.

When World War I broke out in 1914, Australia was still a very young nation. **Federation** – the process by which six British colonies united to form the Commonwealth of Australia – had only taken place in 1901, so this was the first time Australia had ever committed its own troops and fought under its own flag (rather than the flag of Great Britain). To this day, World War I remains the most costly conflict ever for Australia in terms of the number of deaths and casualties suffered. In total, around 300 000 men enlisted from a total population of less than five million. Of these, more than 60 000 were killed and around 155 000 were wounded. As a percentage of total population, this meant that Australia's sacrifice was greater than that of any other country in the war. This sacrifice gave Australia a certain amount of influence and acknowledgement on the world stage that it had not had before the war.

Australia gets a seat at the table

After the war ended in 1918, the victorious Allied Powers met to discuss terms for the surrender of the defeated Central Powers. The talks, held in Versailles outside Paris, became known as the **Paris Peace Conference**. In 1919, Australian Prime Minister William 'Billy' Hughes travelled to Paris to attend. He was away for 16 months and at the end of this time signed the **Treaty of Versailles** on behalf of Australia – the first time Australia had signed an international treaty. Hughes' major achievement at the Paris Peace Conference was to gain a **mandate** (permission) for Australia to govern the former German colony of New Guinea. He also strongly supported arguments for severe **reparations** (penalties and fines) to be placed on Germany.



Source 1 At the end of World War I, the leaders of the victorious Allied Powers met in Paris. This photograph of the Paris peace talks shows Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes standing on the far right in the second row.

Australia's relationship with Britain

World War I brought about many changes for Australia's relationship with Britain. The service of the Australian troops in the Middle East and on the Western Front earned high praise from the British military command. By the end of the war, Australia's relationship with Britain was still strong, but Australia was a little more independent.

This growing self-confidence was shown through Australia's contributions at the Paris Peace Conference (see Source 1). During the 1920s and 1930s other steps were taken towards independence. In 1931, the British parliament gave Australia the right to make its own foreign policy and trade treaties.

Despite these changes, loyalty to Britain remained strong. One way that this was shown was through responses to the many royal visits after the war. For example, in 1920, the Prince of Wales visited Australia and was greeted with enthusiasm everywhere he went.

However, the bonds remained strong. When the Great Depression hit Australia in 1929, Prime Minister James Scullin initially relied on advice from Britain and

the Bank of England. The close relationship with Britain was also reflected by Prime Minister Robert Menzies when he announced in 1939, 'Great Britain has declared war upon her (Germany) ... as a result, Australia is also at war.'

Australia's relationship with Asia

Prior to World War I, Australia did not have a very positive relationship with Asia. Instead, Australia's international relationships were heavily focused on Britain and countries in Europe. At the time, Australia also had very strict and discriminatory immigration laws towards people from Asia.

One of the outcomes of the Paris Peace Conference was the formation of the **League of Nations** – an international organisation designed to prevent future wars and promote peace. When the **charter** (founding statement) for the League of Nations was debated, Japan argued that a clause be added outlining 'the equality of all nations and fair treatment of all peoples'. Prime Minister Hughes argued strongly against this clause being added and was successful. The Japanese were offended by Australia's position on the issue and it strained relations for many years. Despite this, trade between Australia and Japan increased steadily (as it did with other Asian countries such as China).

In the 1930s, Japan began to flex its military muscle in Asia and expand its territory by force. As a result, Australia was forced to take a more independent approach to foreign policy. Australia's closeness to Asia meant that the government had to look Australia's interests in its own region and respond to local events.

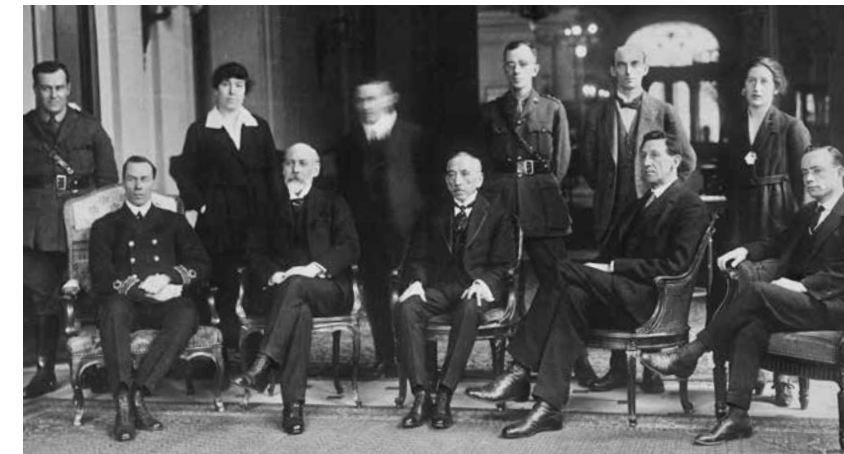
Australia's relationship with the USA

Prime Minister Hughes gained considerable respect from world leaders at Versailles, but not from everyone. Hughes was a demanding presence at the Conference and was able to secure a number of victories for Australia in the negotiations. Hughes often disagreed with US President Woodrow Wilson, who described him as 'a pestiferous varmint'.

Despite these tensions between Prime Minister Hughes and President Wilson at Versailles, relations between Australia and the USA were largely positive in the 1920s and 1930s. Australia began to increase its diplomatic relations with America and trade between the two countries also increased. After the war, there was also an increasing interest among Australians in American culture, especially films and music.

9C What impact did World War I have on Australia?

Over time, trade and military agreements with the United States led to Australia looking away from Europe and strengthening ties with the United States. Although the Australian government had extended military connections to the USA as far back as 1908, it was only in the lead-up to World War II that the United States came to be seen as a major ally of Australia.



Source 2 Australian soldiers carry Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes – fondly called 'the little digger' – along George Street, Sydney in triumph after returning home from the Paris Peace Conference.

Check your learning 9.16

Remember and understand

- 1 What was the Paris Peace Conference and when was it held?
- 2 What was Prime Minister Hughes' major achievement at the Paris Peace Conference?
- 3 What was the League of Nations and what was it designed to achieve?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Why was Australia's relationship with Asian countries strained around the time of World War I?
- 5 Why did US President Woodrow Wilson describe Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes as 'a pestiferous varmint'?

Evaluate and create

- 6 Despite increasingly close relationships with Asia and the USA, many Australians still support the idea of the British Queen as Australia's Head of State. Research the arguments for and against this issue. Conduct a class debate on the topic: 'Australia is mature enough to choose its own Head of State.'

9C rich task

Conscription

The issue of conscription was one of the most bitter and divisive debates in Australian history. Even though both plebiscites were defeated, and achieved no change at all, the impact on the nation was lasting. The issue divided friends, neighbours, workmates and even families. Well into the 1920s the scars of these bitter battles could be felt in the Australian community. Prime Minister Billy Hughes and Archbishop Daniel Mannix were two of the most important figures in the debate, with Hughes being the greatest proponent of conscription and Mannix being its loudest critic.

Source 1

Britain has raised, I say, an army and navy of over five million men. She has raised more than one-tenth of her total population. We have raised, at the outside, about one-twentieth...The time has come when (Australia) must do better...

Does anyone who loves his country... doubt that if Germany wins in this war she will lay her predatory hands on this country of ours? ... Is there in the world a greater prize than Australia? ... I tell you, and I am armed with knowledge, that our position is hopeless ... We may say what we like, but once the Allies' line is broken in France... there is an end of us. Get that into your minds. But for the allied armies and the British navy we are doomed men. We may bleat and we may struggle, but we are like sheep before the butcher, and nothing can save us.

... Tens of thousands of our kinsmen in Britain have died that we might live free and unmolested. Is there one man who will say that we ought not to pay the debt we owe to Britain, with our lives if need be, for shielding our country with the bodies of her glorious soldiers and sailors from the scorching blast of war? Australians! This is no time for party strife. The nation is in peril, and it calls for her citizens to defend her. Our duty is clear. Let us rise like men, gird up our loins and do that which honour, duty and self-interests alike dictate.

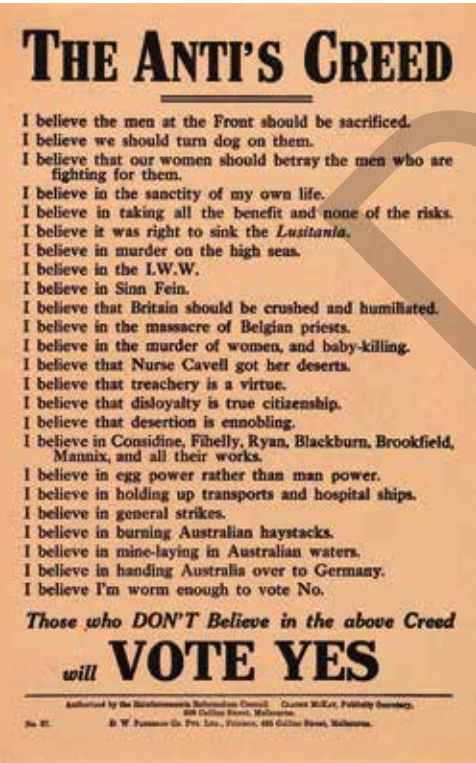
An excerpt from a speech by Prime Minister Billy Hughes, 18 September 1916

Source 2

... It is only twelve months since the people of Australia pronounced their emphatic verdict ... that Australia is a democratic country, and that there is no room here for slavery and conscription. Now you are asked to pronounce on the same question again. I hope that your answer will be the same as before, but more emphatic and decisive.

We are quite ready to hear anything that the conscriptionists have to add on what they said on the previous occasion. Many things said then have since been unsaid, because they were untrue. This time, I hope that, even at the cost of some effort, they will stick as closely as they can to the truth. We were told a year ago that we should vote for conscription because there was some great secret locked up in the bosom of the Prime Minister. I hope there is no secret there now! Let us hear the worst. Indeed, we are likely to get very gloomy news from this to the taking of the referendum. We always get the news that fits the occasion. At other times, all our battles are victorious and our losses are very light. But now the Allies will suffer one defeat after another – and all for the lack of conscription in Australia and of a few more Australians in the trenches. Do not take my word for this. Just watch the papers. Wait and see what they have ready for you during the next few weeks. You will be appealed to as if everything depended on what Australia does or leaves undone ...

Excerpt from a speech delivered by Archbishop Daniel Mannix to 6000 people, two months before the second conscription plebiscite in 1917



Source 3

A leaflet produced by the 'Reinforcements Referendum Council', a pro-conscription group in Melbourne, Victoria, in 1917 (AWM RC00317)

skilldrill: Historical sources as evidence

Identifying the origin, context and purpose of primary and secondary sources

Historians use primary and secondary sources to gather evidence about the past. Both primary and secondary sources are useful, but sources will almost always reflect the perspective of the person who created them, as well as the attitudes and beliefs of the time they were created in. All sources are affected by the author's own point of view, and in some cases an author may have been paid or forced to write in a particular way or ignore certain facts. This is why historians must carefully analyse and evaluate sources. Historians need to identify:

- what a source is and where it came from (origin)
- what life was like when the source was created (context)
- why the source was created (purpose).

Ask yourself the following questions to identify the origin, context and purpose of a source:

Step 1 Identify origin

- What type of source is it?
- Who wrote, produced or made the source? What do you know about their age, gender, occupation, position in society or religious background?
- When was the source written, produced or made?
- How old is the source?
- Is it an eyewitness account or was it written by someone at a later date?
- Is the source complete?

Step 2 Identify context

- What was life like when this source was created?
- What other events may have been happening at the time and might have influenced the author or source?
- What was the political environment like at the time the source was created?
- What sort of common prejudices and social norms existed at the time that may have influenced the author or the source?

Step 3 Identify purpose

- Why was the source written or created?
- Was it designed to entertain, persuade or argue a point of view?
- Does the author have anything to gain personally from the source?
- Does it give a detached, balanced account?
- Were there political reasons for the creation of the source?
- Is it propaganda?

Apply the skill

- 1 Identify the origin, context and purpose of the three sources in this section (Sources 1, 2 and 3) by following the steps provided.
 - a For each source, work through the questions listed in steps 1, 2 and 3. Create a table in which to record your answers at each step. In order to answer some of these questions, you will need to draw on information from this chapter. You may also need to conduct some additional research about Prime Minister Billy Hughes, Archbishop Daniel Mannix and the Reinforcements Referendum Council.
 - b Once you have completed your analysis of the three sources, write a 300-word report that explains the origin, context and purpose of each.

Extend your understanding

- 1 Many women wrote letters to newspapers arguing for and against conscription during World War I. Choose one side of the conscription debate and write a letter to the editor from the perspective of a parent whose son is a soldier on the front line.

9.17 Anzac Day and the Anzac legend



Source 1 The Shrine of Remembrance opened in Melbourne in 1934 to commemorate Victorians who gave their lives in World War I. Similar war memorials exist in towns and cities across Australia.

Even before World War I had ended, Australians began looking for ways in which the whole nation could recognise the efforts of the Australian forces and commemorate their sacrifices. Today, we continue to remember World War I with two official commemoration days – Anzac Day and Remembrance Day – along with a number of other symbols and traditions.

For Australians, commemoration of World War I has always been closely tied to the Gallipoli landing on 25 April 1915. Despite Australians being involved in more successful campaigns and battles during World War I, it is Gallipoli that has come to symbolise Australia’s war experience.

Despite the disastrous landing and loss of life, Australians at home met the news from Gallipoli with a sense of pride. In the first news reports that reached Australia, the soldiers were praised for their courage and gallantry. British war correspondent (journalist) Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett wrote of the Anzacs, ‘There has been no finer feat in this war than this sudden landing in the dark and storming the heights, above all holding on whilst the reinforcements were landing.’ (*The Argus*, 8 May 1915). His views were echoed by British General Sir Ian Hamilton.

Source 2

... History contains no finer record of dauntless bravery than is here described, while the knowledge of the magnificent part taken in this spectacular drama by our own gallant troops will thrill every heart in our own land.

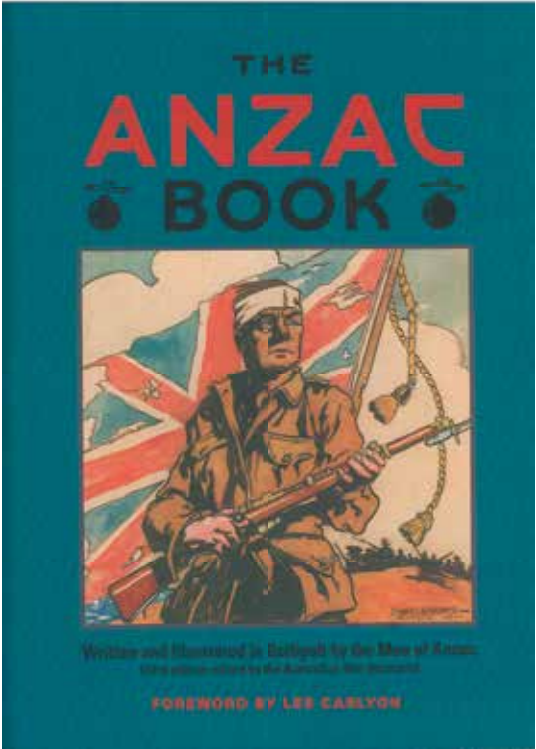
Ian Hamilton, ‘Australia’s Glorious Day: The Official Story of the Landing and Attack by Our Combined Forces at the Dardanelles’

The greatest praise of all came from King George V, who stated that the diggers had ‘indeed proved themselves worthy sons of the Empire’.

Anzac Day commemoration

Anzac Day, 25 April, was made a day of commemoration in 1916. That year, ceremonies and marches were held all around Australia. A march was also held in London, England, where the ANZAC troops were hailed by local newspapers as ‘The Knights of Gallipoli’. By 1927, Anzac Day had become a public holiday in Australia, with marches and dawn services held around the country annually.

The events of 25 April 1915, on a peninsula in Turkey, continue to resonate with Australians today.



Source 3 Cover of *The ANZAC Book*, a collection of stories, poems, sketches and reminiscences by the Australian soldiers at Gallipoli, edited by CEW Bean (AWM ART90422)

More than any other event in Australia’s history, the Gallipoli landing occupies a special place. A legend has developed around Gallipoli that grows stronger as the years pass. Schoolchildren learn about the Gallipoli landing and relish legends such as the story of Simpson and his donkey. Hundreds of thousands of Australians join in or watch Anzac marches through large capital cities and small country towns. Many more take part in commemorations and wreath-laying ceremonies at war memorials throughout the country.

Each year, increasing numbers of young Australians find their way to Gallipoli to be present at the Anzac Day dawn service there. It has become something of a rite of passage. Anzac ceremonies, wherever they are held, traditionally conclude with the words from Laurence Binyon’s poem ‘For the Fallen’:

Source 4

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

‘For the Fallen’, Laurence Binyon



Source 5 A dawn memorial service is held on 25 April each year at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli.

Origins of the legend

The significance of the Gallipoli campaign, and the origin of the Anzac legend that surrounds it, can largely be linked to the fact that it was the first time that Australia had fought in a war as a nation. Australia had only existed for 13 years as a united country at the time it went to war. Australians at home waited eagerly for accounts of the first encounter of the Australian Imperial Force. When news of the first battles at Gallipoli appeared in Australian papers on 8 May 1915, the fact that the landing had been a failure was almost completely overlooked.

Commentators at the time, and in the years since 1915, have developed the theme that Gallipoli was a defining national experience. It has been said that ‘Australia became a nation on the shores of Gallipoli’. Historians have referred to the Gallipoli experience as Australia’s ‘baptism of blood’ or ‘baptism of fire’. Australian historian Bill Gammage wrote of the experience, ‘The circumstances of a national army, an arena, a brave enemy ... led three nations, Australia, New Zealand and Turkey, to create national traditions from the Gallipoli Campaign’.

It has also been suggested that, although they were enemies, a sense of respect developed between the Anzac soldiers and the Turks. Engraved at Anzac Cove are the words written in 1934 by Kemal Atatürk, Commander of the Turkish 19th Division during the Gallipoli campaign, and the first President of the Turkish Republic, from 1924 to 1938:

Source 6

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ... you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

Memorial written by Kemal Atatürk, 1934

Source 8 ‘A present from home – “Do they think we’re on a bloomin’ picnic?”’, cartoon from *The ANZAC Book*, 1916, edited by CEW Bean, p. 64 (AWM ART00052)



Source 7 Anzac soldiers in the trenches using periscope rifles (AWM A03868)



Source 9 As this photo (taken on 19 August 1966 during the Vietnam War) indicates, Australian soldiers have maintained the spirit of ‘mateship’ in battle first evident at Gallipoli 50 years earlier. (AWM FOR/66/0665/UN)

keyconcept: significance

Alec Campbell

The last living direct Australian link to the Gallipoli campaign was lost on 16 May 2002 with the death of Alexander William (‘Alec’) Campbell, aged 103. Campbell enlisted in the AIF at age 16, after lying about his age to meet the required minimum age of 18. Campbell landed at Gallipoli in November 1915. He carried ammunition, supplies and water to the trenches. He was discharged on medical grounds around a year later. Campbell’s funeral in 2002 was attended by the then Prime Minister John Howard and the chiefs of the defence forces. On this day, around Australia and overseas, flags were flown at half-mast to pay respect to this final link to Gallipoli.



Source 10 Alec Campbell

For more information on the key concept of significance refer to page XX of ‘The history toolkit’.

Check your learning 9.17

Remember and understand

- 1 What was the immediate reaction in Australia to the news of the Gallipoli landing?
- 2 In what year was Anzac Day made a day of commemoration?
- 3 In what year did Anzac Day become a public holiday?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Why do you think the Gallipoli landing is such a significant event in Australia’s history?

- 5 The Anzacs were fighting the Turks on their home soil. They could be said to have invaded Turkey. However, there seems to have been a mutual respect between the two peoples, which has grown through the years. What reasons can you think of to explain this? Conduct research online to help you if necessary.

Evaluate and create

- 6 Re-read the memorial written by Kemal Atatürk (Source 6). Imagine you are one of the mothers whose sons are buried at Gallipoli. Write a letter of gratitude to Atatürk.

9.18 Other forms of commemoration

Symbols, traditions and events that commemorate war are important elements in almost all nations. Well-tended war cemeteries can be found wherever significant battles have been fought. The Australian War Memorial in Canberra is one of the most visited sites in Australia. War memorials, avenues of honour and statues of war heroes can also be found in virtually every Australian town and city.

The legacy of World War I has shaped many aspects of Australian society and culture over the course of the 20th century, both positively and negatively. The restrictions on trade imposed by the war forced Australia to develop new industries.

The War Service Homes scheme was responsible for the development of new suburbs – streetscapes of comfortable Californian bungalows that are so desirable today. New hospitals, including the Repatriation General Hospital established in Hobart in 1921, were set up to care for those who had returned from war with physical or, sometimes, mental injuries. The Returned and Services League (RSL), established in 1916, continues to provide support and advocacy for the veterans of any war that Australia has engaged in over the past century.

Remembrance Day

Anzac Day is the main day for war commemoration in Australia and New Zealand. However, Remembrance Day, 11 November, is a more general recognition of the sacrifices made in war. This date marks the day and the hour when the Armistice (ceasefire) was signed, bringing an end to World War I.

In many countries, people pause for one minute at 11am on Remembrance Day to remember those who gave their lives in war. Red poppies are worn to symbolise the dead. Red poppies grew wild along



Source 1 During World War I, red poppies were the first plants to bloom on the battlefields of France and Belgium. Today, the red poppy has become a symbol of sacrifice and remembrance.

the Western Front and also in Turkey. At these ceremonies, the poem ‘In Flanders Fields’ (see Source 2) is frequently read.

Source 2

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

‘In Flanders Fields’, John McCrae (1872–1918)

The Australian War Memorial, Canberra

The Australian War Memorial in Canberra is Australia’s nation memorial to all those who have died or participated in the wars of the Commonwealth of Australia. It was opened in 1941, but the idea for it was conceived on the shores of Gallipoli.

Charles Bean (1879–1968), a journalist, was Australia’s official war correspondent during World War I. He went ashore on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and stayed close to the front line for the rest of the war. It was he who, in 1918, first imagined how the Australian War Memorial would appear.

Source 3

... on some hill-top – still, beautiful, gleaming white and silent, a building of three parts, a centre and two wings. The centre will hold the great national relics of the A.I.F. One wing will be a gallery – holding the pictures that our artists painted and drew actually on the scene and amongst the events themselves. The other wing will be a library to contain the written official records of every unit.

CEW Bean, 1918, cited in Australian War Memorial website

The Australian War Memorial features a Roll of Honour that lists all those who died in World War I, as well as a Commemorative Roll which lists all those who died as a result of war injuries after the war finished.



Source 4 Charles Bean at work on war histories in his Victoria Barracks office, Sydney, c. 1935 (AWM AO5389)



Source 5 An aerial view of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1945 (AWM 100793)

Check your learning 9.18

Remember and understand

- 1 Why are red poppies worn on Remembrance Day?
- 2 What is the purpose of the RSL?

Apply and analyse

- 3 Why do you think that wars and war experiences are such significant elements of so many national stories?
- 4 What is the main purpose of the Australian War Memorial? What information is featured there?

Create and evaluate

- 5 The poem ‘In Flanders Fields’ (Source 2) is often read at Remembrance Day ceremonies. Think carefully about the emotions and sentiments that it expresses. Write your own poem that also reflects these sentiments and that commemorates World War I.

9D rich task

The Anzac legend today

The Anzac legend has not remained static. It was expected that as the last of the World War I diggers died, the significance of Gallipoli would begin to fade. There was some decline in interest in Anzac Day in the decades after World War II, but since the 1980s Anzac Day has grown in significance.

The reasons for this resurgence of interest in the Anzac legend and the Gallipoli story are complex. The attention paid to the declining numbers of World War I veterans combined with the popularity of films such as *Gallipoli* have brought the events of 1915 to the attention of the wider community. The pilgrimage of Gallipoli survivors in 1990, to mark the 75th anniversary of the campaign, brought widespread media and popular awareness of the Gallipoli landing.

Today, interest in Anzac Day has never been stronger. School assemblies, church services, television and radio programs and even sporting events are linked to the commemoration of the Gallipoli landing. In fact, as the nation approaches the centenary of Gallipoli in 2015, the place of the Anzac legend is firmly and securely at the centre of national consciousness.

Yet despite the significance of Anzac Day in Australian society, opinions on its origins and importance vary. The following sources (see Sources 1 to 3) show how Australians have debated the meaning of the Anzac legend across time.

Source 1

No one can express all that this day means to us Australians and New Zealanders. 'It is', said Australia's great historian Manning Clark, 'about something too deep for words.' But in the stillness of the early dawn, and in the silence that will settle once more along this shoreline, we feel it in the quiet of our hearts. The sense of great sadness. Of loss. Of gratitude. Of honour. Of national identity. Of our past. Of the spirit, the depth, the meaning, the very essence of our nations. And of the human values which those first Anzacs – and those who came after them – embodied and which we, their heirs, must cherish and pass to the future.

May they rest with God.

Address by His Excellency the Governor-General Sir William Deane at Gallipoli, 25 April 1999

Source 2

HR: [Anzac Day] is a day on which Australia remembers the war dead from all wars and grieves and mourns their death and their sacrifice. But there's another quite different aspect of it, and that is it's suggesting that the actual landing at Anzac was an event of overwhelming historic importance, and in fact many people would argue, and do so, that it was the creation of the Australian nation.

... We ... fully accept and appreciate that every nation has some kind – some day – in which to remember the sacrifice of those who have gone to and have died in war, or have suffered in war. There's no problem with that whatsoever. It is what is built upon that. We are simply pointing out that the whole interpretation of Australian history is distorted by this view of Anzac.

AG: Australia's achievements in nation building and social areas – a living wage and decent working conditions, the 1967 referendum relating to Aborigines – all these things ... are cast aside in favour of a new militarised view of history.

HR: [Governments in the last 15 years] have put a great deal of money, particularly addressed at children, ... at schools, curriculum material, films ... an unprecedented amount of government money going into promoting a particular view of history.

... we can only presume it was done with a view that Australians needed a unifying myth; they needed something to feel proud about their country. But ..., by 1914, Australia was ... a society which would be the envy of many countries even today. And yet the argument of the militarists is that this achievement wasn't as great because, at the time, there was this view that nations didn't become complete until they'd had their baptism of fire.

... Our argument is not with the mourning-aspect of Anzac Day, it's more with the way in which a whole interpretation of history has been built upon that and, in a way, sanctified by that.

An extract from an interview with the historian Professor Henry Reynolds, ABC, News, AM, Brisbane, 24 April 2010. Henry Reynolds [HR] is speaking with reporter Annie Guest [AG] about the book *What's Wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History*, UNSW Press, 2010, which he and Professor Marilyn Lake co-edited.



Source 3 Australian soldiers in a boat heading towards Anzac Cove, 25 April 1915 (AWM AQ2781)

skilldrill: Historical sources as evidence

Identifying and analysing different historical interpretations

As explained earlier, historians use two types of sources to gather evidence about the past:

- Primary sources – objects or materials created or written at the time being investigated
- Secondary sources – accounts about the past that were created after the time being investigated.

Much of the historical study and research you will complete in secondary school involves reading secondary sources (for example, textbooks and websites about the historical period you are studying). While these secondary sources at first glance may appear to provide a balanced, objective and unbiased view of historical events or periods, this is not always the case. All historians write from a particular perspective. There is no single objective, unbiased 'truth' – instead, all historians have to interpret historical events and issues from their own perspective. Historians must use evidence to support their interpretations, but there is no absolutely 'correct' way of interpreting evidence. They are also required to use (or disregard) different sources of evidence to support many different interpretations. For example, many historians writing in the early 1900s about the British settlement of Australia presented this in a very positive light, and more or less ignored the negative experiences of Indigenous Australians.

For these reasons, it is very important that you are able to identify and analyse different historical interpretations.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What historical event is being interpreted?
- What particular features, incidents, actions or behaviours are seen as negative in this interpretation?
- What motives or characteristics are being attributed to the humans involved in this interpretation?
- What primary sources are used to support the interpretation? How?
- What primary sources might have been left out of or ignored by this interpretation?
- Does this interpretation involve a critique of other interpretations? If so, what is being said about other interpretations?

Apply the skill

- 1 Consider Sources 1 and 2. Using the questions above as a guide, identify and analyse the way that the writer of each source has interpreted the events that occurred on 25 April 1915 on the shores of Gallipoli. Write a 250-word report explaining your findings using additional background information from the Internet if required.

Extend your understanding

- 1 Interview 10 people (males and females of various ages and occupations). Use these interviews, plus other material in this chapter, to write an article for your school newsletter titled: 'What Anzac Day means to Australians today'.
- 2 The Peter Weir film *Gallipoli* (1980) is thought to have played an important role in the revival of interest in the Anzac legend. View the film and suggest why it may have had this impact. Refer to specific features of the film (scenes, characters, incidents, symbols and music).