How Did the First World War Start?

The First World War, often called The Great War, was an enormous and devastating event in the early 1900s. Over 17 million people were killed and it had a massive effect on politics and countries all over the world. But why did the First World War happen and what caused it?
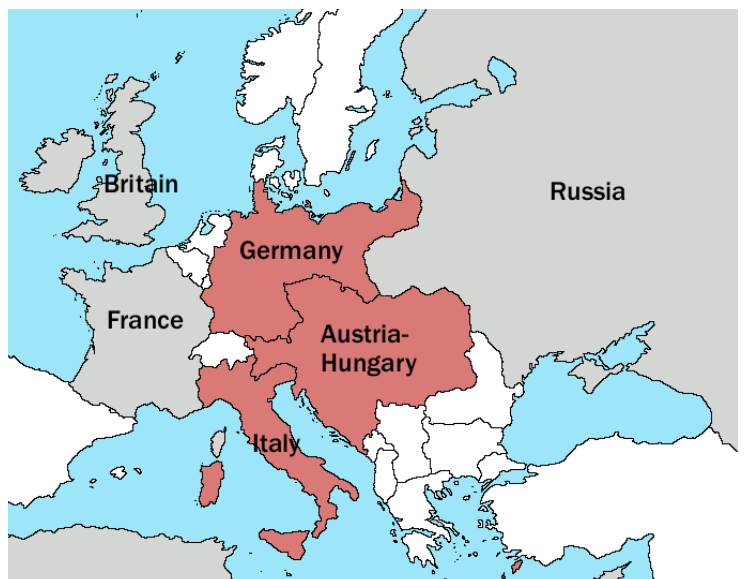
The major catalyst for the start of the First World War was the assassination of a man named Archduke Franz Ferdinand. However, there were other

Picture associated with the arrest of Gavrilo Princip

events which led to the start of the war. The start of the 1900s in Europe was a time of peace for many. In most places, wealth was growing and people were comfortable and countries were thriving. At this time, some European countries, mainly France and Britain, owned and controlled countries in Asia and Africa, as well as some areas of other continents. This was because these countries helped to improve the wealth of Europe.

Before the First World War, many countries were allies with one another and they had defence treaties. This meant that if war was declared on one of the countries, the other members of the alliance had to go to war to help them. There were two main alliances, one between Britain, France and Russia called 'The Triple Entente' and one between Germany and Austria-Hungary called 'The Central Powers'. One of the reasons for these treaties was that, during the early 1900s, each country wanted to be the most powerful. Germany in particular, who did not control many territories, began building warships as they wished to become the most powerful country. At this time, Britain saw what was happening and also began to spend lots of money on building large war ships. As more and more European countries began spending money on ships and armies, they decided to create these treaties to help defend one another if there was ever a war.

On 28th June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, was assassinated by a Bosnian man named Gavrilo Princip. He was a member of a Serbian group called The Black Hand, who had planned the assassination. His assassination led Austria-Hungary to threaten to go to war with Serbia. Due to the defence agreements between countries, Germany was on the side of Austria-Hungary, however Russia sided with Serbia. In order to stop the war, Austria-Hungary made several demands upon Serbia. When these were not met, they declared war on July 28th 1914.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Germany declared war on Russia, and then, on 3rd August 1914, they declared war on France. When Germany marched into France on 4th August, Britain joined the war.

The first major battle of the First World War was the Battle of Mons, which happened in Belgium. This was the first battle between Britain and Germany and is when the First World War officially began for Britain. Britain set up a British Expeditionary Force (BEF), which began to march through Belgium. On 23rd August, they were met by German forces and battle began.

How did the First World War Start **Questions**

1. When did the First World War begin for Britain?

   _____

2. Where was the first major battle and how did it begin?

   _____

3. What was life like in Europe before the First World War?

   _____

4. What does it mean that Archduke Franz Ferdinand was heir to the throne?

   _____

5. Why did some European countries start to build war ships and create armies?

   _____

6. How was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand an important event in the start of WW1?

   _____

7. Why do you think Germany wanted to become powerful and began to build warships and an army?

   _____

8. Why did Britain have to enter the war?

   _____

9. What was the name of the treaty between Britain, France and Russia?

   _____

10. What do you feel is the main reason Britain entered the First World War? Why do you think this?

    _____

    _____

How did the First World War start **Answers**

1. When did the First World War begin for Britain?

   Britain joined the First World War on 4th August.

2. Where was the first major battle and how did it begin?

   The Battle of the Mons in Belgium was the first major battle when the BEF came across German troops and battle began.

3. What was life like in Europe before the First World War

   It was a time of peace and growing wealth for many.

4. What does it mean that Archduke Franz Ferdinand was heir to the throne?

   Heir to the throne means that he was going to be king.

5. Why did some European countries start to build war ships and create armies?

   They started to build war ships and create armies because they wanted to be the most powerful of the countries.

6. How was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand an important event in the start of WW1?

   The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was an important event because it led to Austria-Hungary declaring war on Serbia, and when Russia sided with Serbia, Germany declared war on them, this meant France and Britain also became involved because of the Triple-Entente treaty.

7. Why do you think Germany wanted to become powerful and began to build warships and an army?

   Germany did not own many countries, but Britain and France did and this made them more powerful. Germany wanted as much power as them so began to build war ships and create armies.

8. Why did Britain have to enter the war?

   Britain had to enter the war because they were in a defence treaty with France, and when Germany declared war on them, Britain had to enter.

9. What was the name of the treaty between Britain, France and Russia?

   The treaty was called 'The Triple-Entente'.

10. What do you feel is the main reason Britain entered the First World War? Why do you think this?

   Pupil's own response with justification from the text.

How Did the First World War Start?

The First World War was an enormous and destructive event in the early 1900s. Over 17 million people were killed and it affected the whole world. But why did the First World War happen and what caused it?

The major cause of the First World War was the assassination of a man named Archduke Franz Ferdinand. However, there were other events which led to the start of the war.

The start of the 1900s in Europe was quite peaceful for many. In most countries, people were getting wealthier and were happy. Some European countries, mainly France and Britain, owned countries in Asia and Africa. This was because, these countries helped to improve the wealth of Europe.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Before the First World War, many countries were allies with one another and they had defence treaties. This meant that if one of the countries had to go to war, the other members of the treaty had to go to war to help them. There were two main treaties, one between Britain, France and Russia called 'The Triple Entente' and one between Germany and Austria-Hungary called 'The Central Powers'.

One of the reasons for these treaties was that, during the early 1900s, each country wanted to be the most powerful. Germany did not control many other countries and wanted more power, so they began building war ships and created an army. At this time, Britain saw what was happening and also began to spend lots of money on building large war ships. As more and more European countries began spending money on ships and armies, they decided to create these treaties to help defend each other if there was ever a war.

On 28th June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was due to become king of Austria-Hungary, was killed by a Bosnian man named Gavrilo Princip. He was a member of a Serbian group called The Black Hand, who had planned the assassination. Due to his assassination, Austria-Hungary threatened to go to war with Serbia.

- The defence agreements between the countries meant that Germany was on the side of Austria-Hungary, however Russia sided with Serbia.
- Austria-Hungary declared war with Serbia on July 28th 1914.
- Germany then declared war on Russia, and next, on 3rd August 1914, they declared war on France.
- When Germany marched into France on 4th August, Britain joined the war.

The first major battle of the First World War was the Battle of Mons in Belgium. This was the first battle between Britain and Germany and is when the First World War officially began for Britain.

How did the First World War Start **Questions**

1. When did the First World War begin for Britain?

    _____

2. Where was the first major battle?

    _____

3. What was life like in Europe before the First World War?

    _____

4. Why did some European countries start to build war ships and create armies?

    _____

5. Where did Britain and France own other countries?

    _____

6. Why do you think Germany wanted to become powerful and began to build warships and an army?

    _____

7. What was the name of the treaty between Britain, France and Russia?

    _____

8. When was Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated?

    _____

9. What do you feel is the main reason Britain entered the First World War?

    _____

    _____

    _____

How did the First World War start **Answers**

1. When did the First World War begin for Britain?

   Britain joined the First World War on 4th August.

2. Where was the first major battle?

   The Battle of the Mons in Belgium was the first major battle.

3. What was life like in Europe before the First World War?

   It was a time of peace and growing wealth for many.

4. Why did some European countries start to build war ships and create armies?

   They started to build war ships and create armies because they wanted to be the most powerful of the countries.

5. Where did Britain and France own other countries?

   Britain and France owned other countries in Asia and Africa.

6. Why do you think Germany wanted to become powerful and began to build warships and an army?

   Germany did not own many countries, but Britain and France did and this made them more powerful. Germany wanted as much power as them.

7. What was the name of the treaty between Britain, France and Russia?

   The name of the treaty was 'The Triple-Entente'.

8. When was Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated?

   Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated on 28th June 1914.

9. What do you feel is the main reason Britain entered the First World War?

   Pupil's own response with justification from the text.

How Did the First World War Start?

Introduction

The First World War was an enormous and destructive event in the early 1900s. Over 17 million people were killed and it affected the whole world.

Why Did the First World War Happen?

The major reason for the start of the First World War was the murder of a man named Archduke Franz Ferdinand. However, there were other events that led to the start of the war.

Main Events

The start of the 1900s in Europe was quite peaceful for many countries. In the 1900s some European countries, mainly France and Britain, owned countries in Asia and Africa. These countries helped Europe to be richer and more powerful. The first major battle was the Battle of the Mons in Belgium.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Defence Treaties

- Many countries had treaties with other countries so that if one of them was in a war, the other members had to join the war to help them out.
- **The Triple-Entente** was a pact between Britain, France and Russia.
- **The Central Powers** was a treaty between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Why Did They Have These Treaties?

- Germany wanted to be more powerful because they didn't own many other countries.
- Germany started to build lots of war ships and create an army.
- Britain realised what Germany were doing and started to build their own war ships.
- Countries decided that if there was a war that they needed to help each other, so they created treaties to protect themselves.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand

- Archduke Franz Ferdinand was meant to become king of Austria-Hungary. On June 28th 1914, he was killed by a man named Gavrilo Princip, who was a member of a Serbian group called The Black Hand, who had planned the killing.
- Due to his murder, Austria-Hungary threatened to go to war with Serbia.
- The defence agreements between the countries meant that Germany was on the side of Austria-Hungary, however Russia sided with Serbia.
- Austria-Hungary declared war with Serbia on July 28th 1914.
- Germany then declared war on Russia, and then, on 3rd August 1914, they declared war on France.
- When Germany marched into France on 4th August, Britain joined the war.

How did the First World War Start **Questions**

1. When did the First World War begin for Britain?

    _____

2. Where was the first major battle?

    _____

3. What was life like in Europe before the First World War?

    _____

4. Where did Britain and France own other countries?

    _____

5. What was the name of the treaty between Britain, France and Russia?

    _____

6. What was the treaty called between Germany and Austria-Hungary?

    _____

7. When was Archduke Franz Ferdinand killed?

    _____

8. Why do you think Germany started to build war ships and an army?

    _____

9. What do you feel is the main reason Britain entered the First World War?

    _____

    _____

    _____

How did the First World War start **Answers**

1. When did the First World War begin for Britain?

   It began for Britain on the 4th August, 1914.

2. Where was the first major battle?

   The first major battle was the Battle of the Mons in Belgium.

3. What was life like in Europe before the First World War?

   Before the First World War, it was a time of peace and growing wealth for many.

4. Where did Britain and France own other countries?

   Britain and France owned other countries in Asia and Africa.

5. What was the name of the treaty between Britain, France and Russia?

   The name of the Treaty was The Triple-Entente

6. What was the treaty called between Germany and Austria-Hungary?

   The treaty between Germany and Austria-Hungary was called The Central Powers.

7. When was Archduke Franz Ferdinand killed?

   Archduke Franz Ferdinand was killed on 28th June, 1914.

8. Why do you think Germany started to build war ships and an army?

   Germany wanted to be more powerful so they started to build war ships and created an army.

9. What do you feel is the main reason Britain entered the First World War?

   Student's own response.