

# Summary: World War I

## War in Europe

In the early 1900s, nationalism was strong. Britain, France, Germany, and Italy wanted to be world powers. They raced to claim colonies. They made big armies. Countries formed alliances. Britain, France, and Russia made one alliance. They were called the Allies. Germany and Austria-Hungary made another alliance. They were called the Central Powers.

In 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Other countries joined in. The Allies and Central Powers declared war on each other. World War I began.

## America Enters the War

Most Americans wanted the United States to stay out of the war. In 1917, Germany attacked American ships. Congress declared war on the Central Powers. The United States joined the Allies.

Many American men left to fight in the war. America's factories lost many workers. Many African Americans left the South to work in northern factories. Women also worked in factories.

Soldiers fought from long trenches. They tried to capture the enemy. Thousands of men were killed in trench warfare. This fighting lasted for four years. Soldiers used many new weapons. Machine guns, cannons, and tanks were used on the ground. Submarines sank ships. Airplanes were used in war for the first time.

America helped the Allies win the war. On November 11, 1918, the Allies and Central Powers signed an armistice. Leaders from each alliance met in Versailles, France. They signed a peace treaty. President Wilson wanted the treaty to include a new organization. It was called the League of Nations. The organization would work for peace. Many Americans felt they had done enough for other countries. There was a growing feeling of isolationism. The United States did not join the League of Nations.



### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**alliance** *noun*, an agreement between nations to work together and to defend each other

**trench warfare** *noun*, a type of fighting in which soldiers fought from long ditches

**armistice** *noun*, an agreement to stop fighting

**isolationism** *noun*, when a country stays out of other countries' affairs



### After You Read

**REVIEW** What were two major causes of World War I? Highlight words that tell about things that led to the war.

**REVIEW** What was trench warfare? Highlight the sentence that tells about trench warfare.

**REVIEW** What caused the shortage of workers in the United States during World War I? Underline the words that say why factories lost workers.