

The Great War: A Historical Overview

Learning objective: To understand the causes and the nature of life during the First World War.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions below using evidence from the text.

In 1914, a global conflict known as the First World War began. It involved many nations, largely divided into two opposing groups: the Allies and the Central Powers. While the war started due to complex political alliances and tensions in Europe, it quickly spread across continents. Ellie the elephant, who loves studying history, explains that this was the first time machines like tanks and aeroplanes were used on such a large scale. Many soldiers spent months living in trenches, which were long, narrow ditches dug into the ground for protection. Life in the trenches was difficult, involving cold weather, mud, and the constant fear of danger. Back at home, life changed significantly for families. People rationed food, and women took on jobs that men had traditionally held, such as working in factories or on farms. The war eventually ended with an armistice on 11th November 1918. It changed the map of the world forever and left a lasting impact on how countries interact. History reminds us of the importance of peace and understanding between nations, a lesson that Ellie believes is vital for everyone to remember.

Word bank: Alliances · Trenches · Conflict · Patriotism · Frontline · Armistice

1. According to the text, on what date did the First World War end? (1 mark)

2. What were the two main sides involved in the conflict mentioned in the passage? (2 marks)

3. Why might life in the trenches have been considered physically and mentally challenging for soldiers? (2 marks)

4. How did the role of women in society change during the war years? (2 marks)

5. Ellie says that studying history is vital for peace. Do you agree with this? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing a quiet field where poppies are growing, representing the remembrance of the soldiers who served during the war.



Extension challenge: Research what the 'Armistice' was and write a short diary entry from the perspective of a person living in 1918 hearing the news that the war had ended.