

Ellie's Historical Enquiry: The Great War

Learning objective: To structure an informative historical report about the causes, conditions, and impact of World War I, using evidence and appropriate historical vocabulary.

Use this writing scaffold to organise your report. Ellie the elephant has gathered the facts; now it is your job to weave them into a coherent account. Ensure you use formal language and connectives to link your ideas.

The First World War, often referred to as the Great War, was a transformative global conflict that began in 1914 and fundamentally altered the course of the twentieth century.

Word bank: consequently · furthermore · trench warfare · stalemate · significant · alliances · hardship · in addition · nevertheless · the catalyst · mobilisation · armistice

1. The Causes of Conflict: Explain why the complex network of European alliances acted as a catalyst for the war. Start your paragraph with: 'Tensions across Europe were heightened because...' (3 marks)

2. Life in the Trenches: Describe the daily reality for soldiers on the front line. Start your paragraph with: 'Conditions within the trenches were notoriously difficult; for instance...' (3 marks)

3. Technological Advancements: Compare and contrast the methods of warfare used in 1914 with those used by 1918. Start your paragraph with: 'As the war progressed, military technology evolved rapidly, such as...' (4 marks)

4. The Home Front: Justify why the role of women became vital to the war effort. Start your paragraph with: 'Whilst the soldiers fought abroad, the contribution of people on the home front was essential because...' (3 marks)

5. The Conclusion: What might happen if the Armistice had not been signed in November 1918? Start your paragraph with: 'The signing of the Armistice brought the fighting to an end, yet the long-term consequences included...' (4 marks)

6. Reflective Summary: Explain why it is important for historians to study primary sources, such as soldiers' letters or diaries, when learning about this period. (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Research the 'Poppy' as a symbol of remembrance. Write a short, emotive poem or a diary entry from the perspective of a civilian in 1918 reacting to the news of the Armistice, justifying why peace was so significant to their community.