Boardworks High School United States History



World War I

The Emergence of Modern America (1890–1930)

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ICONS: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page





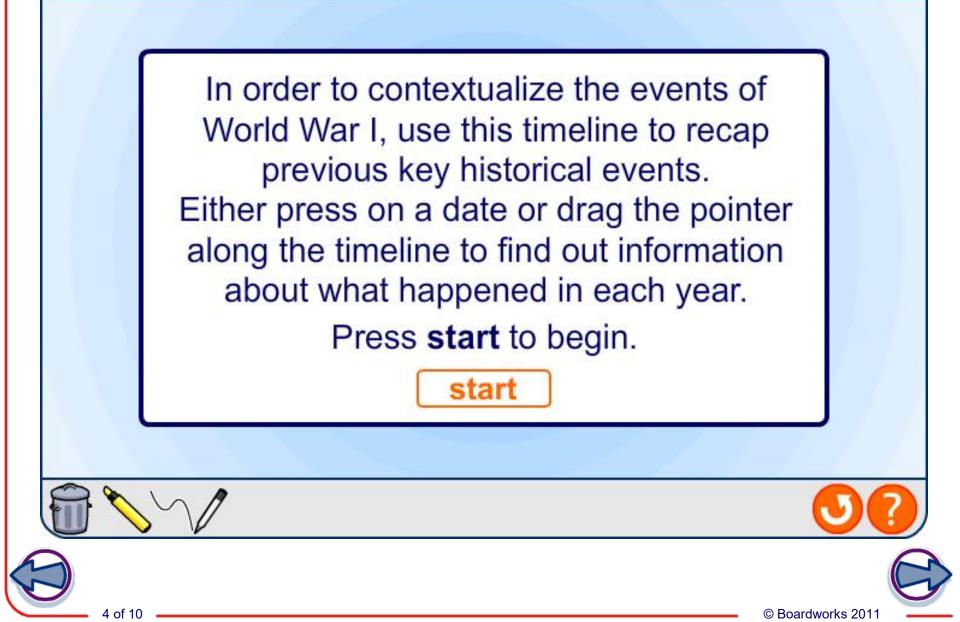
By the end of this section, you will learn about the origins and causes of World War I and be able to answer these key questions:

- How did nationalism and imperialism threaten the peace in Europe?
- What was the Alliance system and which countries were involved?
- What was the trigger that caused the outbreak of war?









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In the lead-up to World War I, several developments made for an unstable environment and threatened the peace in Europe.





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In the 19th century, **nationalism** grew in the hearts of many of the people of Europe, with different outcomes. People became increasingly interested in having their own **sovereign** nation that would unify people of the same ethnicity and culture.

This threatened to tear apart empires like Austria-Hungary, which was made up of a diverse populace.

On the other hand, Prince Otto von Bismarck of Prussia used nationalism to unify German states into one country by manufacturing the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. The German states unified for mutual protection.







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Imperialism was a dominant force in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The powers struggled to expand their

empires, fighting for dominance over Africa and Asia. They also made sure that they held every possible advantage over their rivals.

In 1814, following Napoleon's defeat, the great powers of Europe had met in Vienna to create a balance of power.

However, with Germany's unification and rising military might, the power balance was shifting.





Why were the Americas not subject to imperialism? What do you think the cartoon shows?





Although Europe remained war-free for some years, some countries felt threatened and humiliated by each other. Therefore they all placed emphasis on policies of **militarism**.

It became imperative, as a sign of strength and patriotism, to maintain a strong standing army and to be ready to mobilize in an instant.



With the exception of Britain, all the great powers of Europe had impressive standing armies by 1914. Britain was, however, the world's leading naval power.





