



ENQUIRY 11



How great was the impact of the First World War?

Key stage 3

ENQUIRY OVERVIEW

This enquiry is designed to be taught as part of a broader study of the First World War and students should be introduced to its broader historical context prior to embarking on the activities suggested here.

It examines how great the impact of the First World War was on Europe. The principal focus will be on looking at the impact of the War on Britain and the major powers in the decades which followed 1918. The enquiry will look at a range of factors and encourage students to evaluate the impact of each before reaching a judgement as to the real impact of the First World War.

Students start by considering how war might bring about change. This information is then set in the wider context of how the First World War brought about change in Europe. This includes looking at both positive and negative aspects of change.

Students will look at a wide range of sources of evidence, including posters, cartoons, maps and secondary accounts. The end product will be a written answer in response to the enquiry question.

There are plentiful materials on most aspects of the impact of the First World War. The lessons which follow suggest some issues and pathways to investigate, with some examples of supporting resources, but alternatives and other wider implications of the War are easily available and could be covered. The purpose of this enquiry is to give a broad overview of the issues and to assess the wide impact that the War had in bringing about change.

There are opportunities through this topic to make links to English (e.g. developing speaking and listening skills, inferring meaning from text, writing imaginatively, creatively and thoughtfully), and citizenship (e.g. looking at the actions individuals, groups and organisations can take to influence and provoke popular opinion) and geography (e.g. interactions between people and their environments, the location of places and environments).



LESSONS

STAGE 1 Was Woodrow Wilson being realistic in trying to achieve his 14 Points?

Start with the quote from George Creel, propaganda chief to Woodrow Wilson (**Presentation 1**). *What do students think Creel meant by this?* In pairs, get them to discuss the quote and its meaning. *In what ways might the First World War have changed the world?* This can be done as a think, pair, share exercise.

Use the summary of Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points (**Resource 1**). Get students to read through these points and try to assess what Wilson's hopes were for the postwar world. They should start by discussing what they think the points suggest before writing their own summary. *Do they think that Wilson was being too idealistic or hopeful with his aims?* This can be done either through discussion or as a written response.

The next activity will ask students to consider Wilson's aim against the mood of the people of the Allied countries in 1919. Students should look at the poster and accompanying text and consider what this suggests. In pairs, they should discuss what impact these attitudes might have on the attempt to create the peace treaties in 1919.

Having done this, the students will now look at a summary of the main points of the Peace Treaties (**Resource 2**). Many short video clips are available on You Tube or through educational videos – you may want to use a clip to show the main terms of the Treaty of Versailles, rather than the written version provided. There are a couple of short tasks which encourage students to assess the main themes of the peace treaties.

Students now need to compare Wilson's 14 Points with the main terms of the Peace Treaties. Firstly they should work to identify similarities and differences. Having completed this, they can discuss whether or not the evidence suggests that Wilson was successful in his aims.

The next activity will get students to look at two cartoons from this period. What do these two cartoons suggest about attitudes towards the Treaty?

To sum up this section, students should return to the original question: *Was Woodrow Wilson being realistic in trying to achieve his 14 Points?* To reach a judgement on this, students should draw a judgement line:

Realistic  Unrealistic

They should mark a point on this line which they think best sums up their view and then come up with 3 points of evidence which prove their point. This can be done either with bullet-points, or by encouraging the students to write a paragraph in response to the question.



LESSONS

STAGE 1 Was Woodrow Wilson being realistic in trying to achieve his 14 Points? (continued)

List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 1

Presentation 1

Resource 1

Resource 2

STAGE 2 Was redrawing the map of Europe really a good thing to do?

This stage develops students' understanding of the impact of redrawing the map of Europe after 1919. It looks at the issues that this would cause as well as some of the problems associated with the countries affected by this.

Start by looking at the picture of one of the meeting rooms at the Paris Peace Conference (**Presentation 2**). *What issues do the students see occurring at the conference?* They should be encouraged to think about the large numbers present, the many different demands each would have had and the challenges in coming to an agreement.

Now move on to compare the two maps of Europe. The first map shows Europe in c.1914, the second Europe after c.1920 (**Presentation 2**). This can be achieved in a number of ways. Either you can show the first map for a short period of time and then show the second, or show both side by side in the form of a 'spot the difference'; the slides have been developed to allow either approach. Having done this, students should then be encouraged to make a list of the potential positive and negative outcomes that this re-drawing could have.

Using the next slide you should encourage students to add to their list of positive and negative outcomes based on the source from www.johndclare.net.

The following three slides look at the issues faced by some of these countries as they dealt with changes brought about by the War and the re-drawing of the map of Europe. The first slide could be used as the start of a research task to investigate what happened in each of the countries mentioned – Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary. The next two slides can be used to help students assess the impact of the re-drawing of the map of Europe in the following decades. The first source is an excerpt from a speech by Adolf Hitler, the second looks at the impact on the Middle East. The Middle East sources are accompanied by an evaluation question.



LESSONS

STAGE 2 Was redrawing the map of Europe really a good thing to do? (continued)

To sum up, students should link back to the original question: *Was redrawing the map of Europe really a good thing to do?* Each student can be asked to prepare their own response to the question which could then be used in a class discussion. Each should be encouraged to decide on their own view and look to support this with evidence (prove it!).

List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 2

Presentation 2

STAGE 3 Did the First World War really change the lives of ordinary people?

This stage will focus on assessing the impact that the First World War had on ordinary people's lives. Students will be looking at a range of source material and reaching a judgement as to how much lives were changed by the War.

Students will start with the two accounts from those who experienced the War, one a female factory worker, the other a soldier (**Presentation 3**). The students should consider what these suggest about how the War changed ordinary people's lives.

The remaining slides in the presentation should be printed off prior to the lesson. These will form the basis of the next activity (based on the Marketplace activity from Teacher's Toolkit by Paul Ginnis).

Students will work in pairs, or in groups of 3, depending on your class size. Each grouping should be given one of the printed slides. They will also need a sheet of plain A3 paper. First, they should read the text which they have and identify the key point: *What do they learn from it about how the War affected people's lives and what does it suggest?* They should then be given 10 minutes to turn these key points into a picture summary on their A3 sheet. They should be limited to using a maximum of 10 words. However, they can use as many images as they like.

At the end of their 10 minutes, each grouping must decide who will be their 'expert' and who will go and gather more information. The expert will stay with the poster which they have created. They will use it to teach others about their area of life. The other member(s) of the group will go and visit another group to find out as much as they can. (This process can be controlled by a time limit of 2-3 minutes.) At the end of that



LESSONS

STAGE 3 Did the First World War really change the lives of ordinary people? (continued)

time, students return to their original group and feedback what they have learned. At this point students should start recording what they are learning from their own source and the other groups. This could be done using a mind-map or by recording the information on individual postcards (one per piece of info). Continue this process for another 4-5 goes so that students start to build up a range of evidence. Students can swap roles if you would like them to.

At the end of this process the students should have a broad range of evidence of how the War affected ordinary people. At this stage, students could be asked to carry out their own research to develop the information they have gathered.

The next activity gets the students to divide the information they have gathered, firstly into positive and negative factors and then into different categories. Depending on the ability of the group they could define these themselves, or you might guide them along the line of social, political and economic factors.

Having divided the information into categories, they should now place the information into a hierarchy – from the most to least significant. They could record this in a table or as a card-sort activity if they have recorded the information on postcards.

Finally, they should link back to the question: *Did the First World War really change the lives of ordinary people?* Students should discuss this question in their groups. They should aim to reach a consensus and agree on three pieces of evidence which they will use to prove their judgement. This can then form the basis of a class discussion or a written response.

List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 3

Presentation 3

STAGE 4 Is the First World War still having an impact today?

The stage will encourage students to make links between the impact of the First World War and the world they live in today. The stage is largely about reflection and will encourage them to review what they have learned in the earlier stages of this enquiry.



LESSONS

STAGE 4 Is the First World War still having an impact today? (continued)

Students should start by creating a mind-map showing as many different factors as they can remember as to how the First World War impacted upon people's lives. They should then look to mark the point they have recorded as either having a positive or negative impact. To develop this further, you should then get students to try and identify five areas which are still having an impact today – for example, women being able to vote, conflict in the Middle East, the role of the United Nations. Some groups may need more or less support to do this. This activity could also develop into a research extension task to encourage them to investigate and uncover the links to today.

To conclude this task, students should then do a 5-3-1 task. Encourage them to record their own top five ways in which the First World War had an impact. Each student should be expected to be able to prove why these five are the most significant. They should then share these with a partner and justify why they have chosen them. After discussing with their partner their own choices, they should then remove two of them, leaving them with three. Swap to another partner and repeat this task. This time, following the discussions, they should decide the most significant impact of the First World War, and come up with three reasons which prove it! This can then form the basis for either a written answer in response to this enquiry or for a class discussion.