**WORLD WAR I MAP ACTIVITY**

Directions: Read the summary of the causes and major events of the First World War. Do the mapwork at the end of each section.

**Causes of World War I**

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the leading countries of Europe competed for land and power in Asia and **Africa**. Soon bitter rivalries developed. Countries became jealous of one another and drifted closer to war.

Eventually, rival nations separated into two opposing groups. The **Central Powers** consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The **Allied Powers** included Great Britain, France, Russia, Belgium, and later Italy. Smaller countries also sided with the Allied Powers – Serbia, Romania, Albania, Montenegro, Greece, and Portugal. Countries in each agreed to help each other should war break out. Such an agreement was called an **alliance**.

**On the map**: Color or lightly shade with a pen or pencil the nations which were Central Powers. Use a second color or diagonal lines to show the countries that were Allied Powers.

**Major Events of World War I**

1. As tensions and distrust grew between the Central Powers and Allied Powers, armies and navies were increased in size. An all-out war seemed near.

Finally, in 1914, an event occurred which caused **World War I** to begin. Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was in line to become the ruler of **Austria-Hungary** (a Central Power), was assassinated by a man from Serbia (an Allied Power). As a result of this incident, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia and launched an invasion. The other members of the Central Powers and Allied Powers quickly joined the fighting. The worst war the world had known to that time was underway.

**On the map:** Put a **1** in the box next to the arrow which shows Austria Hungary’s attack on Serbia.

1. As troops from Austria-Hungary invaded Serbia, the German army moved rapidly through defenseless **Belgium** and into northern France. Although the Belgians were no match for the swift-moving German army, they fought hard and were able to delay the German advance into **France** by a few days. This gave France and **Great Britain** enough time to organize armies to defend against the German attack. After bitter fighting, the German army was finally halted just 25 miles from Paris.

**On the map:** Put a **2** in the box next to the arrow which marks the German advance through Belgium and into northern France.

1. German troops were not only attacking France on the Western Front, but also **Russia** on the Eastern Front. Germany hoped to quickly crush France, and then turn the full force of its strength against Russia. The plan nearly succeeded.

**On the map:** Put a **3** in the box next to the arrow which marks the German advance into Russia.

1. During the first years of the war, 1914-1916, neither the Central Powers nor the Allied Powers could gain an overall advantage. The **Central Powers** won most of the battles on land, but the Allied Powers had an advantage at sea.

**On the map:** Put a **4** in the box which marks the line of trenches across northern France.

While both sides fought evenly in France, the **Central Powers** made gains elsewhere. The Central Powers overran Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, and Romania, and unleashed a fierce stack against Italy.

**On the map:** Put a **5** in each of the three boxes which show these successes by the Central Powers.

The Allied Powers were vastly superior at sea, mainly through the strength of the **British** Navy. The British set up a **blockade** in the **North Sea**, which for the most part forced the **German** fleet to remain in port throughout the war. The blockade also cut off supplies being sent to Germany from other nations. Germany’s only effective naval weapon was the submarine, or **U-boat**.

**On the map:** Put a **6** in the box next to the line which marks the British blockade of Germany.

1. When the war began in **1914**, Americans breathed a sigh of relief that the **United States** was not involved. President **Woodrow Wilson** issued a proclamation of neutrality, announcing that the United States would not take sides in the war. But as the fighting went on, Americans grew more sympathetic with the **Allied Powers**. This happened for several reasons:

First, most Americans thought **Austria-Hungary** and Germany started the war.

Second, news of the war usually came from the Allies, who spread stories that the Germans were ruthless conquerors trying to take over the world.

Third, because of the British blockade of Germany, the United States traded mostly with the **Allies**.

Fourth, and probably of greatest importance, Americans were angered by Germany’s use of **unrestricted submarine warfare**, in which U-boats sank ships, including unarmed passenger ships, without a warning. The U-boats were trying to cut off the flow of supplies to **Great Britain**. In May of 1915, a U-boat sank without warning the British liner ***Lusitania***, one of the world’s largest passenger ships. Among the 1,197 people who died were 128 Americans.

**On the map:** Put a **7** in the box which marks the spot where the *Lusitania* sank off the southern coast of Ireland.

1. After a strong American protest over the sinking of the Lusitania, Germany temporarily ended unrestricted submarine warfare. But this continued only until 1917. In April of that year, after U-boats had sunk several **American** ships, the United States declared war on **Germany**. About this time, a great revolution took place in Russia. The Russian people, tired of crushing defeats at the hands of the German armies, overthrew Czar Nicholas II. The new Communist government signed a peace treaty with Germany ending Russian involvement in World War I. **Germany** then moved all of its forces to the Western Front.

The United States began sending large numbers of troops and supplies to Europe. American soldiers helped the Allies win key battles at Chateau-Thierry and Belleau Wood. Partly because of America’s involvement in the war, and partly because of the failure of a major German offensive in the spring of 1918, the Central Powers were forced to retreat. **U.S.** troops led by General John J. Pershing defeated the Germans at St. Mihiel, drove them from the Argonne Forest, and advanced in the Meuse Valley. Finally, on November 11, 1918, **Germany** surrendered. The war was over.

**On the map:** Put an **8** in the boxes next to the three arrows which show the arrival of American troops and supplies in Europe.

**MAJOR EVENTS OF WORLD WAR I**

