

## ACTIVITY FOUR: HUMAN COSTS

### TEACHER DEBRIEFING SHEET

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Compare and contrast the excitement of war with the reality of war.
2. How were civilians and soldiers affected by the new weapons and methods of warfare used in World War I?
3. What do you think were the political, social, economic, and military effects of the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic?
4. Describe the short-term (immediate) and long-term (future) effects of the human costs of World War I. Consider political, social, economic, and military effects.
5. What are the costs of war and the price of peace?

#### Task:

Create a dramatic presentation in which members of the older generation, who lived through World War I, discuss their memories of the war with the younger generation. The discussion must compare and contrast the excitement of war with the reality of war.

#### Task Evaluation Criteria:

- In the dramatic presentation, members of the older generation (who lived through World War I) must discuss their memories of the war with the younger generation, and the discussion must compare and contrast the excitement of war with the reality of war.
- Dramatic presentation makes use of three or more of the following: costumes, props, backdrops, sound effects, and/or narration.
- Group accurately incorporates at least five pieces of World War I historical information (events, geography, data, people, etc.) into dramatic presentation.
- Dramatic presentation includes at least one set of different perspectives (civilian vs. military, Allies vs. Central Powers, men vs. women, etc.).
- Dramatic presentation includes discussion of the costs of war and the price of peace.

#### Extension Questions:

1. What are some of the reasons why people enlist in the military during wartime?
2. In what ways are health and war connected?
3. Compare and contrast what Stefan Zweig saw in the streets of Vienna, Austria at the start of World War I in the summer of 1914 with what Erich Maria Remarque saw at the Western front during the war.
4. Explain how trench warfare increased the number of World War I casualties.
5. Why are civilians attacked during war?
6. Describe what life was like in the trenches during World War I.
7. How are militarism and the human costs of war connected?
8. How are nationalism and the human costs of war connected?
9. How are imperialism and the human costs of war connected?
10. How are alliances and the human costs of war connected?

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### ACTIVITY CARD



Read the CONTEXT-SETTING CARD. Then use the information on your RESOURCE CARDS to talk about the DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.



Examine the TASK and complete the project to meet all of the EVALUATION CRITERIA.

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### CONTEXT-SETTING CARD

In World War I, as in any war, there were many human costs. These human costs included both military and civilian casualties (losses). The rapid (fast) development of new military technologies and tactics (strategies), made possible by the advances of the Industrial Revolution, had a great impact (effect) on the type and number of World War I casualties.

Machine guns, tanks, submarines, airplanes, and poison gas were all used extensively (widely) in combat in World War I, changing how war was fought. At the start of the war, military strategists believed that use of these new weapons meant the war would be fought efficiently and would be over quickly. Instead, use of these new weapons resulted in a deadly stalemate (a standoff, or a tie), that caused more death and destruction than in any previous war.

The stalemate that lasted for much of World War I was largely the result of trench warfare. Soldiers on both sides fought from within long, shallow trenches (ditches). “Going over the top” (rushing to battle out of the trenches) was often very deadly because of the enemy’s machine guns. The trenches were not necessarily a safe place, however, since artillery fire and poison gas could be used against soldiers in the trenches.

By the end of World War I, more than 8 million soldiers had been killed, and more than 20 million were wounded, their lives often changed forever. Civilian casualties are harder to count, but it is estimated that over 5 million civilians were killed as a result of World War I, and millions more civilians if the 1918-1919 influenza (flu) outbreak is included in the count.



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### RESOURCE CARD 1 (OF 4)

#### The Excitement of War Vs. The Reality of War

*From the autobiography of Stefan Zweig, an Austrian writer:*

The next morning I was in Austria. In every station placards [signs] had been put up announcing general mobilization. The trains were filled with fresh recruits, banners were flying, music sounded, and in Vienna I found the entire city in a tumult [commotion]... There were parades in the street, flags, ribbons, and music burst forth everywhere, young recruits were marching triumphantly, their faces lighting up at the cheering...

A city of two million, a country of nearly fifty million, in that hour felt that they were participating in world history, in a moment which would never recur... All differences of class, rank, and language were flooded over at that moment by the rushing feeling of fraternity [brotherhood]. Strangers spoke to one another in the streets, people who had avoided each other for years shook hands, everywhere one saw excited faces. Each individual...had been incorporated into [included in] the mass, he was part of the people, and his person, his hitherto [thus far] unnoticed person, had been given meaning...

"We'll be home at Christmas," the recruits shouted laughingly to their mothers in August of 1914... the young people were honestly afraid that they might miss this most wonderful and exciting experience of their lives...



*From All Quiet on the Western Front, by Erich Maria Remarque, a German writer:*

...Each man lays hold of his things and looks again every minute to reassure himself that they are still there. The dug-out heaves, the night roars and flashes. We look at each other in the momentary flashes of light, and with pale faces and pressed lips shake our heads...

Suddenly it howls and flashes terrifically...the walls reel [move], rifles, helmets, earth, mud, and dust fly everywhere. Sulphur fumes pour in...

It shrieks again, I fling myself down and when I stand up the wall of the trench is plastered with smoking splinters, lumps of flesh, and bits of uniform. I scramble back...




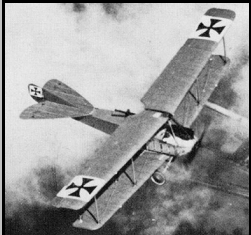

We recognize the smooth distorted faces, the helmets: they are French. They have already suffered heavily when they reach the remnants [leftovers] of the barbed wire entanglements...

I see one of them, his face upturned, fall into a wire cradle. His body collapses, his hands remain suspended as though he were praying. Then his body drops clean away and only his hands with the stumps of his arms, shot off, now hang in the wire...



## ACTIVITY FOUR: HUMAN COSTS

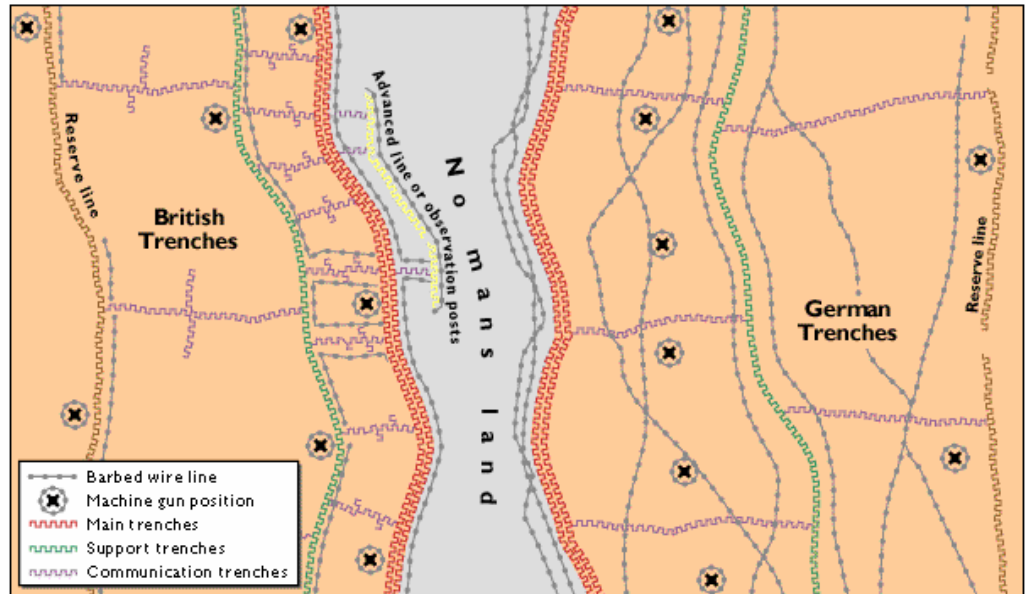
### RESOURCE CARD 2 (OF 4) Technology Changes Warfare

Weapon	Description	Use in World War I	
<p><b>Automatic Machine Gun</b></p> 	<p>Mounted gun that fires a rapid, continuous stream of bullets.</p>	<p>Made it possible for a few gunners to mow down waves of soldiers. This helped create a stalemate by making it difficult for soldiers to advance across the so-called “no-man’s land” between enemy trenches.</p>	<p>The old tactic of sending a mass of men against enemy lines to gain position proved to be deadly for both sides. It forced troops to dig trenches to hide in and shoot from.</p>
<p><b>Tank</b></p> 	<p>Armored vehicle that travels on a track allowing it to cross many kinds of land.</p>	<p>Protected advancing troops as they broke through enemy defenses. Early tanks were not used often because they were slow and clumsy (awkward).</p>	<p>Later tanks, used in large numbers by 1918, when coordinated with infantry and artillery, became an effective instrument in pushing back the retreating German army.</p>
<p><b>Submarine (in German, <i>Unterseeboot</i>, or U-boat)</b></p> 	<p>Underwater ship that can launch torpedoes, or guided underwater bombs.</p>	<p>Used by Germany to destroy Allied shipping. U-boat attacks helped bring the United States into the war. Used to blockade (isolate, or close off) enemy territory.</p>	<p>Blockades became used by both sides as a very effective means to starve whole populations, hoping these civilians would force their governments to surrender.</p>
<p><b>Airplane</b></p> 	<p>One-or-two-seat propeller plane equipped with machine gun.</p>	<p>At first, mainly used for observation. Later, flying “aces” engaged in individual combat, though such “dogfights” had little effect on the war.</p>	<p>Germany bombed land many times using zeppelins (cigar-shaped airships filled with hydrogen). They marked the start of a new war tactic – air attacks against civilians.</p>
<p><b>Poison Gas, Gas Mask</b></p> 	<p>Various gases that cause choking, blinding, or severe skin blisters; gas masks protect soldiers from poison gas.</p>	<p>Lobbed (launched) by missile into enemy trenches, killing or disabling troops. Development of gas masks lessened the importance of poison gas.</p>	<p>Introduced by the Germans in 1915, gases proved unpredictable. Depending on which way the wind was blowing, gas meant for the enemy could blow back at the troops.</p>

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### RESOURCE CARD 3 (OF 4) Trench Warfare

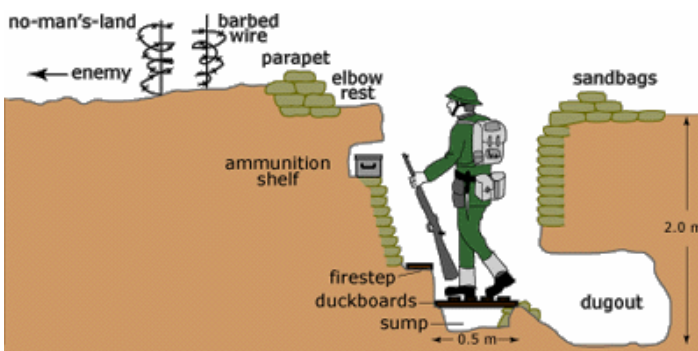
Much of World War I was fought using trench warfare. Soldiers dug systems of trenches (ditches) and equipped them with everything they needed for battle. In addition to fighting from the trenches, soldiers lived in the trenches, often for long stretches of time. At right is a diagram showing what a typical World War I battlefield looked like.



*Private Victor Wheeler, a Canadian soldier, was involved in digging some of the Allies' first trenches:*

With pick and shovel we dug trenches through beautiful fields of grain, fully realizing what damage we were doing to the farmers' hopes of reaping [gathering] small harvests that would enable them to stem [prevent] hunger during the coming winter. The patriarch [father] with his ox-drawn plough, the matronly [motherly] gleaner [grain-gatherer], and the young woman gathering grass and leaves, roots and truffles, stood arms akimbo [with hands on hips], wordlessly, helplessly, hopelessly watching.

Cross-Section of a Trench



*Arthur Savage, a soldier, describes the conditions that existed in the trenches:*

My memories are of sheer terror and the horror of seeing men sobbing because they had trench foot that had turned gangrenous [rotting from disease]. They knew they were going to lose a leg. Memories of lice in your clothing driving you crazy. Filth and lack of privacy. Of huge rats that showed no fear of you as they stole your food rations. And cold deep wet mud everywhere. And of course, corpses. I'd never seen a dead body before I went to war. But in the trenches the dead are lying all around you. You could be talking to the fellow next to you when suddenly he'd be hit by a sniper and fall dead beside you. And there he'd stay for days.

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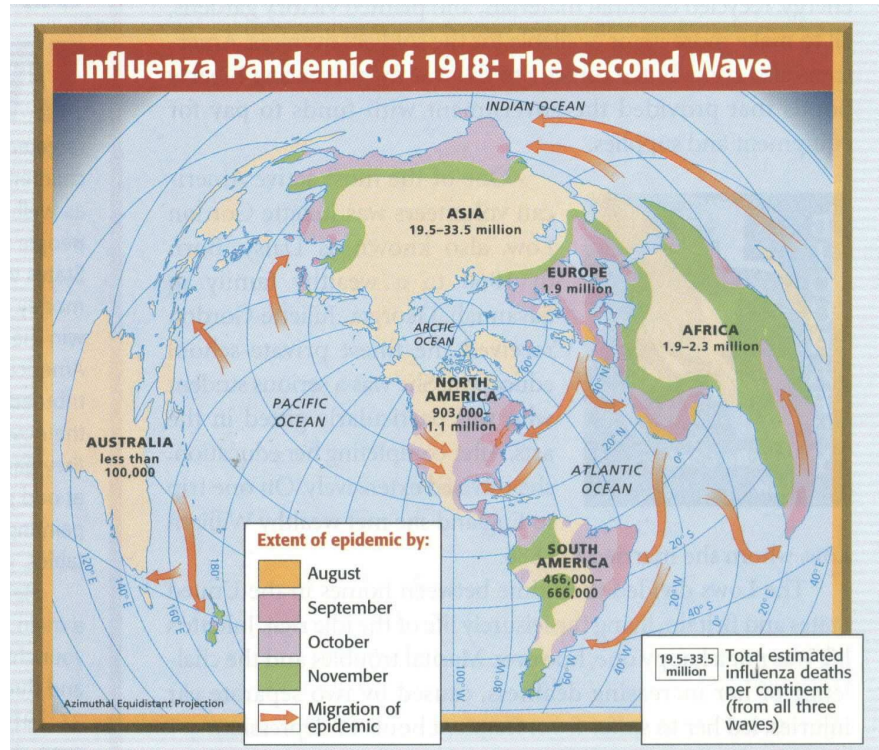
### RESOURCE CARD 4 (OF 4) The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919

In 1918 a deadly flu surfaced. Aided by the mass of human movement and interaction caused by World War I, the flu outbreak quickly circled the globe, becoming a pandemic (a worldwide outbreak of disease, affecting a significant portion of the population). Often known as the “Spanish flu,” the 1918 strain of the virus began with the usual flu symptoms – a sore throat, runny nose, chills, and a fever – but then quickly attacked the victim’s lungs, causing rapid respiratory (breathing) failure. It was not uncommon for people to begin showing symptoms and die just a few hours later. Although scientists worked to develop a vaccine against the Spanish flu, it traveled the world and disappeared before scientists could make much progress.

In the absence of a vaccine, many countries began large public health campaigns (as evidenced by the Canadian poster at right) to try to stop the spread of the flu.

The origin of this deadly flu virus was hard to trace, in part because the warring countries tried to keep the flu a secret from one another, thinking that sharing statistics on flu deaths would show weaknesses that the enemy might take advantage of. Many believe that the first cases occurred in the United States, at the Fort Riley military base in Kansas. However, the first publicized cases were reported in Spain in the spring of 1918, leading to the nickname “the Spanish flu.” Many in the United States and around the world thought that perhaps this flu was a biological weapon, and suspected that the Germans had released it.

It is estimated that over 1 billion people worldwide were affected by the 1918-1919 flu pandemic (half of the total human population at the time), and that over 20 million people died as a result.



## PUBLIC NOTICE

In view of the severity of the present

### Epidemic of Influenza

and in order that all efforts may be concentrated on the stamping out of the disease, the local Board of Health, after consultation with Kingston Medical Society and the Mayor, has enacted that after Oct. 16th, and until further notice,

1. Theatres and Moving Picture Houses shall be closed and remain closed
2. Churches and Chapels of all denominations shall be closed and remain closed on Sundays.
3. All Schools, Public or Private, including Sunday Schools, shall close and remain closed.
4. Hospitals shall be closed to visitors.
5. No public shall be admitted to courts except those essential to the prosecution of the cases called.
6. The Board advises the public most strongly not to crowd into street cars and to avoid as much as possible any crowded train or an assembly of any kind.

Provisions have been made by the Kingston Medical Society whereby all cases applying for assistance will receive the same either by registered practitioners or by final year medical students acting under instructions. Therefore every case of illness should send in a call to a physician.

A. R. B. WILLIAMSON,  
Medical Health Officer.

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### INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Why were there so many casualties (both military and civilian) in World War I?

**Evaluation Criteria:**

- Response gives at least three reasons why there were so many casualties in World War I.
- Response provides at least two specific pieces of historical evidence (events, geography, data, people, etc.) to support each of the three reasons.
- Response includes discussion of both military and civilian casualties.
- Response addresses the costs of war and the price of peace.