

World War I Newspaper Project

Background

World War I, the Great War, has been referred to as the “first of the man-made disasters of the twentieth century” (Jay Winter). Of the 70 million men who served in uniform, over nine million died or were killed in active service. The war changed the boundaries of countries, changed the balance of power in Europe, and opened the world to the possibility of worldwide conflict that would be realized just 30 years later with World War II. Your task is to consider this war from the perspective of one of the major combatants – Great Britain, France, Russia, or Germany – and to create a newspaper front page from a particular time between 1914-1918 that well illustrates this country’s role in the war. You’ll work with your group members to study World War I from the perspective of the country you’re assigned and create a newspaper front page from *that* time that expresses in a journalistic format the impact of the war in that country.

Listed below are important due dates/deadlines and the time periods and story topics which you’ll be assigned. All of these stories must refer to specific factual occurrences and must include all elements of good news writing (your own summary of events, real or fictional research-based quotes from relevant sources, and paraphrasing or indirect quotes from these sources). Each of your stories will center on an event, either real or fictional, that reveals something about the war.

Important Deadlines (no Procrastinator Permits allowed unless otherwise noted)

1/29 – notes, research (2 pages) with source list

2/5 – story draft (typed in Drive and printed out and brought to class)

2/8 – finalized story due at beginning of period; story is printed and highlighted to match text to sources; annotated, printed Works Cited / Bibliography due at beginning of period; Turnitin deadline (11:59 p.m.); stories with headlines are shared with all members of group via Google Docs / Drive (You may use a Procrastinator Pass for this part of the assignment; your work is due at the beginning of the period on 2/2 and you may submit your writing by 11:59 p.m. on 2/2)

2/14 – photos/captions printed and brought to class; infographic printed and brought to class; news story printed in column format and brought to class; 2 space fillers printed and brought to class

2/21 – newspaper completed by end of period

July 1914 (Germany, Great Britain, France, Russia) – for groups of three

- A news story on **the debate over whether to go to war**. As with recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, public opinion varied in 1914 about whether war was justified. Write a story around a fictional event – a peace march or a pro-war rally, for example – that shows the various views on whether your assigned country should enter this war.
- A news story that analyzes **the readiness of your country for entry into the war**. Your story could be about the release of a government report giving information on the country’s war readiness or a fictional military parade. Look at the strength of your country in terms of its population, its level of industrialization, its level of armaments, etc. Also look at the recent history of your country. What wars had it fought in recently? How had it done? How interested in war is the general population?
- A news story that tells **how your country is responding to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand**. Your story will include some details about the assassination, the ultimatum, but will also look at how your country is responding to this event.

Germany, Great Britain, France, Russia (1915, 1916 or 1917 – pick a month)

- A news story about a **recent battle involving your country and the opposing side**. Choose a real battle that is significant to your country and to the war. See your history textbook or the GCSE textbook in class for suggestions of major battles. Your story should provide details of the battle, include some quotes (made up or real), and place the battle in the context of the war up until the point of that battle.
- A news story that reveals **what is happening on the home front** in the war. Soldiers went off to battle on the front lines, but life continued back at home, and not as it had been. Report on the conditions at home – food, jobs, women’s roles, etc. Create a fictional event to allow you to discuss the home front (a food shortage, for example).
- A news story about **the use of some new type of technology in battle**. (Choose a category of technology such as airplanes/aircraft, submarines/other naval innovations, gas, or machine guns/other artillery.) Report on the new technology (or the lack of new technologies, i.e., Russia) and how it is impacting the battles. Create a fictional event, such as a military general reporting to the gov’t about the effectiveness of a certain weapon (or lack of a certain weapon, as in Russia’s case).
- A news story about the **propaganda** your country is using in the war. Countries used propaganda to get citizens’ support and to raise funds for war. Report on your country’s use of propaganda. Create a fictional story that allows you to discuss your country’s propaganda campaign (new government posters revealed, for example). **(For Russia only:** write about the impending revolution, what its causes are, what the war has to do with it, and what the Russian people think about it.)

Germany, Great Britain, France (June 1919 – six months after the armistice that ends the war)

- A news story on **the impact of the war on the country you’re assigned**. Countries lost many of their young men to the battle, but most countries were also affected economically as well. Look at casualty rates, economic issues, border issues, etc. Create a fictional story to allow you to discuss the impact.
- A news story on **the impact of the war on the soldiers that return**. Soldiers were affected psychologically and physically for many years to come. Your story should look at how soldiers were affected by war and how they cope with life back home. Create a fictional news story to structure your research (e.g., Ten returning veterans of the Great War checked into the _____ hospital to seek treatment yesterday.)
- A news story on **the opinions of people re: the provisions in the Treaty of Versailles**. This story could be the fictional results of a public-opinion poll, for example. Include some context from the war itself to explain why the opinions seem skewed one way or the other.
- A news story on **the reaction to the war from the perspective of artists, poets, and/or writers**. You could focus on just one important artist or several. Create a fictional news story, such as the publishing of a poem or the showing of some art in a gallery, to set up your story.

Newspaper Requirements

- one 700-750-word story per person that meets the guidelines described here and is modeled on the sample story; consistently-styled bylines (and dateline, optional) for each story
- headline printed for each story (when printed, the headline should be at least 30 pt. and take up all, or nearly, all of the width of the entire story layout)
- a nameplate at the top (newspaper title, vol. number, issue number, date, location)
- appropriate photo with caption done according to directions given in class (one per story)
- infographic completed according to directions given in class (one per story)
- necessary space fillers for your “modular” area, to ensure that newspaper is done in modular design and has no empty space or line-spacing / font variations to compensate for empty space

Project Requirements

1. Write, print, and paste on the board one original story according to the specifications your group determines on your Project Specs sheet and different in topic from other group members.
2. Print and paste on the board an appropriate and relevant image to accompany your story.
3. Create and paste on the board an infographic for your story.
4. Write, print and paste on your board a headline for your story.
5. Contribute to the creation of the layout, design, and paste-up of the entire newspaper.
6. Submit your story by deadline to *turnitin.com* (failure to do so lowers writing grade)

Story Research Requirements

Make use of the following for your research:

- Your history textbook and the *GCSE* textbook
- In-class readings in folders (from *The Great War*, *The Western Perspective*, and *The West Transformed*)
- The library books we have in class and any other library or personal books you obtain on your own
- Any of the websites below:
 - <http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i> (History Channel’s web site on WWI)
 - <http://www.1914-1918-online.net/> (International Encyclopedia of the First World War)
 - <http://www.bbc.com/history/0/ww1/> (the British Broadcasting Corporation’s site)
 - <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook38.asp> (lots of links and primary sources here)
 - <http://www.firstworldwar.com/posters> (for propaganda topic only, not a peer-reviewed site)

You may use other websites, but they must be peer-reviewed and they must have approval from your teachers. You’ll need to turn in a Works Cited, so keep track of where you get your information. In fact, your story that you turn in to us must use **highlights** to correspond to where all of the research came from. Your story needs **at least three sources**, one of which must be a book. You will attach an Annotated Works Cited to your story (sample, directions are online). **Story must be between 700-750 words and must follow the directions and model writing.**

Photo / Infographic / Space Filler Requirements

- **PHOTO/ CAPTION:** Find an appropriate / relevant photo for your story and write a caption according to directions we provide. Print the image in a non-distorted, non-pixelated manner such that it will fit into your designed board layout. Print your two-sentence caption to accompany your photo, and make sure the caption fits the width of the photo.
- **SPACE FILLERS:** Create at least two space fillers for your newspaper. These must look authentic and could be advertisements, “what’s inside”, pull quote for your story, news headlines for the rest of the world, etc. Look at actual newspapers for ideas. See <http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/> for ideas from actual front pages. Print these on one piece of paper to turn in (or place them in unused space on your board, and write your initials in the corner).
- **INFOGRAPHIC:** Create a relevant and useful infographic for your story. (Google Drawings is a good tool for infographic design. You may also use PhotoShop if you like, or a similar tool.)