

RC based on WWI and WW2, Vietnam War, Cold War

WORLD WAR I

The First World War, War to End All Wars, the Great War and European War are the names sometimes given to what ultimately became known as **World War I**. The title World War I only came about, unfortunately, because several years later there was a second world war. World War I or WWI began July 28, 1914 and ended on November 11, 1918.

There were two sides during the war. The **Allied Powers** included France, Russia, Britain, with the United States joining after 1917. The other side was called the **Central Powers** and they included Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria.

There were several reasons for WWI which included countries concerned about other countries having too much military strength and countries were afraid of losing economic or political position in the world. In addition, in some parts of the world, there was an increase in differences between the races. The French were upset about losing land in a previous war, and the military leaders of the countries were encouraging the conflict.

The event that ignited or started the war was the assassination of **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, meaning he was in line to become its king. Following the death of the Archduke, his country declared war on Serbia.

This began a long chain reaction, including Russia coming in to defend Serbia, Germany declaring war on Russia to help protect Austria, and France declaring war on Germany to help protect Russia. All of this resulted in Germany invading Belgium to get to France, which led to Britain declaring war on Germany. It took only a few days for the Great War to begin in Europe. In all, 30 countries were a part of WWI.

It began as a European War until the United States entered the war in 1917. The two main areas of fighting took place on the **western front**, which was long stretch of trenches that ran from the coast of Belgium to Switzerland. Most of the fighting on this front took place in France and Belgium. The other area was called the eastern front, which included fighting between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria versus Russia and Romania.

Even though the United States entered the war, no fighting ever took place on American soil. The U.S. entered the war when a British passenger ship called the **Lusitania** was sunk by a German submarine killing all the passengers including 128 Americans. The people of the United States were upset and put pressure on the government to enter the war. **President Woodrow Wilson** eventually decided America would enter the war with the goal of restoring peace to Europe.

The U.S. was in the war for only seven and one-half months, however, 116,000 soldiers were killed in the fighting and 204,000 were wounded. The U.S. entered the war as one of the Allies and immediately the balance of power shifted to their side. The Central Powers were not strong enough to defend their positions. There was an Allied operation that became known as the **Hundred Days Offensive** and the enemy was forced back to the border of Germany.

With the United States and the rest of the Allies winning the war, the Central Powers were forced to begin peace negotiations. Ultimately, an agreement was reached called an **armistice** (cease-fire) for all fighting to end at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month and World War I ended on November 11, 1918. The **Treaty of Versailles** was signed in 1919 to make it official.

- Which of the following was also used as a term for World War I?
A: War to End All Wars **B:** Great War **C:** European War **D:** All the above
- Which of the following countries was NOT a part of the Allied Powers?
A: Germany **B:** France **C:** Russia **D:** United States
- Which of the following best describes Archduke Franz Ferdinand?
A: Decided America needed to enter the war
B: Russian leader declaring war on Germany
C: Assassinated heir to the Austria-Hungary throne
D: Leader of the Ottoman Empire
- Which of the following countries declared war on Germany?
A: United States **B:** Russia **C:** Britain **D:** France
- How many countries were a part of World War I?
A: 20 **B:** 30 **C:** 40 **D:** 50
- Which of the following caused the United States to enter World War I?
A: Germany declaring war on Russia
B: Sinking of the Lusitania by Germany
C: Britain's response to the war
D: Because of the Hundred Days Offensive

World War II

Fifty million people died during **World War II** (1939-1945), the deadliest war in world history involving over 50 countries, including the United States. Many of those who died during the war were civilians, and there may have been a total of 80 million deaths. The fighting took place in many areas of the world, and it was the most destructive war in history as well.

Historians believe the cause of the war could be traced back to the **Treaty of Versailles**, which was signed in 1919, officially ending World War I. The first war was fought to make the world safe for democracy, but the agreements that ended the war only caused bitterness and anger among several countries.

Germany, along with other Central Powers, were the biggest losers in WWI. Germany lost a huge amount of territory and had to pay large sums of money to other countries for the destruction they had caused. Germany had high unemployment, high prices, worthless money, and angry citizens. The war in Europe then began with Germany's invasion of Poland.

In the late 1930s, many people across the world were having financial difficulties, and were seeking leaders who would make life better for them. Unfortunately, there were three countries where people were being led by **dictators**, which is a military leader or ruler who takes complete control over a country usually by force. The dictator of Germany was **Adolph Hitler**, in Italy it was **Benito Mussolini**, and in Japan it was **Emperor Hirohito**. They each set up a totalitarian government controlled by a single political party that stops opposition and controls citizens' lives.

They tried to take control of many countries in Europe and elsewhere, but the rest of the world initially did very little to stop them. Besides Poland, Adolph Hitler and the German army invaded Austria, Czechoslovakia, Russia, and other countries. Hitler and the Nazi party also waged a war of terror mainly against Jews, but other minorities as well, eventually killing over 6 million Jewish people in what became known as the **Holocaust**. Adolph Hitler wanted to conquer Europe and the world.

Mussolini sent the Italian troops into Ethiopia and other countries in Africa, and Japanese armies invaded China, and islands located in the Pacific. Japan's attack on **Pearl Harbor** in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, prompted the United States to no longer remain neutral. The attack was a surprise to the U.S. and it killed over 2,400 people and wounded another 1,700. **President Franklin D. Roosevelt**, along with Great Britain and its leader **Winston Churchill**, declared war on Japan, leading the U.S. into World War II. A few days later, Hitler and Germany declared war on the United States.

The United States became the leader of the **Allied Powers**, which included Great Britain, the Soviet Union, China, and France. Of course, the other side included Germany, Japan, and Italy, known as the **Axis Powers**. The fighting between the two sides included many battles throughout Europe, Northern Africa, and in the Pacific.

The end of the war in Europe occurred on June 6, 1944 when the Allies attacked Germany, which is often called **D-Day** or the Invasion of Normandy. The Germans were pushed out of France but fought back during the Battle of the Bulge, but the Germans were eventually defeated, and on May 7, 1945 they surrendered.

The war in Europe ended, but Japan was still fighting in the Pacific. The United States forced Japan's surrender after dropping Atomic Bombs on two cities in Japan, the first on Hiroshima, August 6, 1945, and then the second on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. At least 120,000 Japanese people were killed immediately and Japan surrendered to the Allies on August 14, 1945. It was the first and only time nuclear weapons had been used during a war. World War II was over.

7. Which of the following may have been the cause of World War II?

A: The Treaty of Versailles which ended WWI C: Adolph Hitler's rise to power	B: The deaths of many country's civilians D: Leaders seeking a better life for their country
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8. Which of the following ignited the beginning of World War II in Europe?

A: Poland's invasion of Germany C: Germany's invasion of Poland	B: Germany's invasion of Austria D: Russia's invasion of Germany
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9. All the following leaders are identified as dictators EXCEPT:

A: Winston Churchill	B: Adolph Hitler	C: Benito Mussolini	D: Emperor Hirohito
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10. Which of the following defines the Holocaust?

A: Surprise attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese B: Hitler eventually killing over 6 million Jewish people C: A single political party being set up to control people's lives D: The end of World War II	
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11. Which of the following countries became the leader of the Allied Powers?

A: Britain	B: France	C: China	D: United States
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12. Which of the following dates is D-Day?

A: August 9, 1945	B: June 6, 1944	C: August 14, 1945	D: August 6, 1945
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COLD WAR

There have been several wars fought by many nations throughout the world, include two world wars, the Vietnam War, civil wars, and many others. Each of the wars included much destruction, loss of life, fighting, battles, injuries, and physical and mental trauma. However, a war which is not fought on a battlefield but with mostly words and strategic decisions is called a **cold war**.

A cold war was 'fought' for many years between approximately 1945 and 1990. It was a war without a fight between the Soviet Union (today's Russia) and the United States. The end of World War II was in 1945 when Germany surrendered to the Allies which included the U.S., Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. During WWII, the Soviet Union and the U.S. worked cooperatively to defeat Nazi Germany, but following the war relations became 'cold' between the two superpowers.

It began when Germany was divided among the Ally countries, and the part the Soviets were given to control was turned into a communist country, like the Soviet Union. This meant there were no elections, little freedom for the people, a poor economy, a dictatorship, censorship of the media, and a secret police society watching the citizens closely. In fact, a wall was built in 1961 separating the two halves of the capital of Germany in Berlin. It was called the **Berlin Wall**.

The United States and the other All countries were not pleased with this development. Those living in East Germany were not permitted to leave and became prisoners behind the wall. The whole world was watching the developments between the two superpowers, the Soviets and America.

The two countries began trying to influence other countries throughout the world. The Cold War also led to the development of **weapons of mass destruction (WMD)**, such as nuclear weapons capable of the destruction of another country. During WWII, though they got along, the Soviet leader, **Joseph Stalin**, became distrustful of **Harry Truman**, the U.S. President, because he did not keep Stalin informed about the use of the Atomic Bomb used in Japan. Its use also worried Stalin that the U.S. would one day use it against the Soviets.

There were several events that took place during the Cold War, which only made things worse between the two countries. Many celebrities in the U.S. were unfairly accused of being communists, the Soviets began successfully testing their own nuclear weapons in 1949, between 1950 and 1953, the **Korean War** broke out as North Korea tried to spread communism to the South.

In 1953, the Soviets had a new leader, **Nikita Khrushchev**, following the death of Stalin. He became the leader of the Communist Party, but things did not get better. In 1956, with the Soviet's backing, North Vietnam invaded the South to spread communism, and the U.S. tried to intervene in what became the **Vietnam War**, leading to a great loss of life for America. North Vietnam won the war in 1975 and the entire country became a communist nation.

In addition, a new leader in Cuba, **Fidel Castro**, forcibly took over the country and it also became a communist nation. The U.S. tried to stop it from happening during the **Bay of Pigs** invasion but failed to prevent the spread of communism. At one point, during the **Cuban Missile Crisis**, the Soviets placed nuclear missiles in the country just 90 miles from the U.S.

Finally, beginning with **SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks)**, agreement between the U.S. and the Soviets in 1972 and 1979 led to the two superpowers limiting the production of missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons. After further tension in the 1980s related to influence of Third World countries, which included parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the Cold War ultimately began to break down. Another leader in the Soviet Union, **Mikhail S. Gorbachev**, began dismantling the Soviet communist system and began efforts to bring democracy to the country. Treaties were eventually signed by both countries and the Cold War came to an end in 1991.

13. Which of the following countries was NOT an Ally country during World War II?
A: Russia **B:** France **C:** Germany **D:** Britain
14. All the following are characteristics of a communist country EXCEPT:
A: Free elections **B:** Secret police **C:** Media censorship **D:** Dictatorship
15. Which of the following leaders ended communism in the Soviet Union?
A: Harry Truman **B:** Mikhail S. Gorbachev **C:** Joseph Stalin **D:** Nikita Khrushchev
16. Which of the following most likely caused the most tension between the Soviets and America?
A: Communism **B:** The Berlin Wall
C: Nazi Germany **D:** Weapons of mass destruction
17. Which of the following leaders became most distrustful of Harry Truman related to the A-Bomb?
A: Harry Truman **B:** Mikhail S. Gorbachev **C:** Joseph Stalin **D:** Nikita Khrushchev
18. All the following countries became communist countries during the Cold War EXCEPT:
A: Cuba **B:** Vietnam **C:** East Germany **D:** China

Indochina

The country of **France** owned what we now call Vietnam from 1883-1945. It was called **Indochina**. Vietnam is in Southeast Asia.

During World War II, the Japanese took control of the country. In 1949 France set the southern half up as a state. Southern rebels and communists in North Vietnam then wanted to fight to unite the two parts of Vietnam under communist rule. **Communism** is a type of society where nobody owns any private property and the government is in total control.

The southern part of Vietnam didn't want to be under this type of government. They fought the rebels and the North Vietnamese. The rebels in South Vietnam were called Vietcong. Fighting also occurred in Cambodia and Laos, neighboring countries.

The north was assisted by China and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union sent in advisers and supplies. North Vietnam's leader then was **Ho Chi Min**. He wanted the country united but communist. He began to fight the French. In 1954 the French decided to leave Vietnam.

The country was temporarily cut in half awaiting an election for a leader of the whole country in 1956. The election was never held because U.S. **President Dwight Eisenhower** and the temporary leader of South Vietnam thought that the people would vote for Ho Chi Minh.

The United States helped **Ngo Dinh Diem** get elected as leader of South Vietnam. The first U. S. military advisers went to Vietnam in 1961. The U.S. didn't want the whole country to be communist.

The United States sent the first troops into Vietnam in 1965. It was a brutal conflict. There were about 1.3 million military deaths during the years when the United States remained involved. Over 1 million civilians died. Over 58,000 Americans died in this conflict. Many soldiers were never found.

It was difficult for American soldiers to accomplish anything. **President Lyndon Johnson** limited what the American soldiers could do because he wanted the south to win the war themselves with only the assistance of the U.S. Much of the war was fought in jungles and small villages. Many ambushes and traps were set up for the American soldiers. Soldiers didn't know who the enemy was. Sometimes children and women were the enemy. American planes bombed the north continually.

The American people were told that there would be a victory soon, but they no longer believed that because about 100 soldiers a day were being killed. Protests were held in the United States.

By 1969, the United States saw that this would be an endless war. **President Richard Nixon** slowly began to withdraw troops. All the troops were gone by mid-1975. South Vietnam surrendered to the North in 1975. Today it is a united country which is communist.

The leader of North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, died during the war, in 1969. After the country was united, Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, was named Ho Chi Minh City and became the capital of the whole country.

In Vietnam, the war is known as the 'War Against the Americans and To Save the Nation.'

19. Of which of the following countries was Ho Chi Minh the leader?
A: Japan **B:** North Vietnam **C:** Cambodia **D:** Laos
20. Which of the following Presidents sent troops into Vietnam?
A: President Lyndon Johnson
B: President Dwight Eisenhower
C: President Richard Nixon
D: President John Kennedy
21. Which of the following countries helped North Vietnam in fighting?
A: France **B:** Italy **C:** Soviet Union **D:** India
22. Which of the following Presidents began to withdraw troops in 1969?
A: President Dwight Eisenhower
B: President Richard Nixon
C: President Lyndon Johnson
D: President John Kennedy
23. In which of the following years did South Vietnam surrender to the North?
A: 1969 **B:** 1967 **C:** 1975 **D:** 1968
24. Which of the following cities was named Ho Chi Minh City after the war?
A: Tokyo **B:** Calcutta **C:** Saigon **D:** Shanghai