World War I

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for U.S. History

Target audience – U.S. History learners	Time required – 15 minutes

Activity	Discover the key fronts of World War I and the impact of the United States' involvement.
Social Studies Standards	C3: D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts. C3: D2.His.2.9-12. Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.
Learning Outcomes	• Students will identify the Allied Powers, Central Powers, Western Front, and Eastern Front. • Students will identify and explain how U.S. involvement changed the course of World War I.

Map URL: http://esriurl.com/historygeoinquiry9

❓ Ask

What were the two major alliances during WWI?

- ❓ Click the URL to launch the map.
- ❓ What were the two alliances during WWI? *[Allied Powers and Central Powers.]*
- ➔ With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents of Map (Content).
- ➔ Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Europe, 1916.
- ❓ What geographic advantages did each alliance have? *[The Central Powers divided the Allies and made transportation between the fronts difficult; the Allied Powers surrounded Germany and Austria-Hungary.]*

⬇ Acquire

Where was WWI fought?

- ➔ Click on Bookmarks and choose the World War I Fronts bookmark.
- ➔ Click on Contents button and turn on the WWI Fronts layer.
- ➔ Click each front to answer the questions below.
- ❓ What were the major fronts of WWI? *[Western, Eastern, and Italian.]*
- ❓ Where was the Eastern Front? *[East of Germany, inside Russia, and from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.]*
- ❓ Where was the Western Front? *[West of Germany, in France, and from the North Sea to Switzerland.]*

🔍 Explore

Why was the Western Front important?

- ➔ Choose the Western Front bookmark.
- ➔ Turn on the two layers, Western Front and Capital Cities.
- ❓ How far was the front from Paris & London? (Use the Measure tool.) *[60-70 and 125-150 miles, respectively]*
- ❓ How far was the front from Berlin? *[400-500 miles]*
- ➔ Hover over the layer name, Western Front. Click the button, Show Legend.
- – By 1915, WWI had reached a stalemate, and each side dug trenches about 800 yards apart.
- ❓ In 1916, which countries had Western Front trenches? *[Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium]*
- ❓ Why were U.S. forces not along the Western Front? *[The U.S. was neutral in 1915.]*
- – The U.S. did not declare war on Germany until 1917, after the Zimmermann Telegram. The U.S. began sending troops to Europe in May of 1917. By 1918, more than 2 million U.S. forces were in Europe.

Analyze

How did American forces help end WWI?

➜ Turn on the Allied Victories layer, and play the animation. Pause at the end, showing all the battles.
❓ What patterns do you notice with the locations of these battles? *[They occurred between Paris and the Western Front and moved from west to east toward Germany.]*
➜ Show the Allied Victories table, and sort END_DATE by descending order (see help box, below).
❓ Which battle occurred last? *[The Meuse-Argonne Offensive was the last battle.]*
❓ How long did this offensive last? *[It lasted six weeks, from September to November of 1918.]*
– The Armistice began on the "11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month" of 1918.
❓ How did U.S. involvement help bring WWI to an end? *[The U.S. provided fresh troops and equipment, and helped end the Western Front stalemate.]*
➜ Close the table.

Act

What is the legacy of WWI?

➜ Turn off the layer, Allied Victories.
➜ Select the bookmark, Europe, 1916.
➜ Turn the Europe, 1920 layer off and on to show country boundaries before and after WWI.
❓ Which countries were divided up the most? *[Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia were most divided.]*
❓ What were some of the challenges that Europe faced after WWI? *[Europe faced challenges like rebuilding, having economic recovery, and maintaining peace and order.]*

MEASURE - DISTANCE

- Click the Measure tool.
- Select Distance, and then choose the unit of measurement.
- Click once to start measuring, click once to change direction, and double-click to stop measuring.

SHOW TABLE AND SORT

- With the Details button underlined, click the button Show Contents of Map (Content).
- Hover over the layer name. Click the button, Show Table.
- Click the field name (the top row).
- Choose Sort Ascending or Sort Descending.

Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW?
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THEN TRY THIS...
- Create a density map to show the highest density of U.S. casualties along the Western Front.
- Create a 60-mile buffer around the Western Front to visualize how many countries were located within two to three hours of this major front.