

STUDY GUIDE - 6TH GRADE

The World at War

WORLD WAR I (1914-1918)

What was World War I?

World War I was a global conflict that involved many countries from Europe and other parts of the world. It was called "The Great War" because never before had such a large war occurred.

Main Causes

- **Nationalism:** Countries wanted to prove they were the most powerful
- **Alliances:** Countries made pacts to help each other if there was war
- **Competition for colonies:** European nations competed for territories in Africa and Asia
- **The Assassination of the Archduke:** The event that started the war was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in 1914

Sides in Conflict

Central Powers:

- Germany
- Austria-Hungary
- Ottoman Empire
- Bulgaria

Allied Powers:

- France
- United Kingdom
- Russia
- Italy (later)
- United States (from 1917)

Important Characteristics

- **Trench warfare:** Soldiers fought from deep ditches called trenches
- **New weapons:** Tanks, airplanes, and poison gas were used for the first time
- **Duration:** The war lasted 4 years (1914-1918)

Consequences

- Millions of people died or were injured
- Changed the map of Europe
- Creation of the League of Nations (to prevent future wars)
- Germany had to pay war reparations
- Ended with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919

Key Facts to Remember

✓ Started: 1914 ✓ Ended: 1918 ✓ United States entered: 1917 ✓ Peace treaty: Treaty of Versailles

WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)

What was World War II?

It was the largest conflict in human history, involving almost every country in the world. It was fought in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the oceans.

Main Causes

- **The Treaty of Versailles:** Left Germany weak and angry
- **The Great Depression:** Worldwide economic crisis in the 1930s
- **Dictators:** Authoritarian leaders emerged like Hitler (Germany), Mussolini (Italy), and Stalin (USSR)
- **Expansionism:** Germany, Italy, and Japan wanted to conquer more territories

Sides in Conflict

The Axis Powers:

- Nazi Germany (Adolf Hitler)
- Italy (Benito Mussolini)
- Japan (Emperor Hirohito)

The Allied Powers:

- United States
- United Kingdom
- France
- Soviet Union (USSR)
- China
- And many other countries

Important Events

In Europe:

- **1939:** Germany invades Poland, war begins
- **1940:** Germany conquers France
- **1941:** Germany attacks the Soviet Union
- **1944:** D-Day - Normandy Invasion - Allies liberate France
- **1945:** Germany surrenders in May

In the Pacific:

- **1941:** Japan attacks Pearl Harbor (Hawaii) - United States enters the war
- **1945:** United States drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
- **1945:** Japan surrenders in August

The Holocaust

One of the most terrible events in history. The Nazi government persecuted and murdered millions of people, especially Jews, in concentration camps. It's important to remember this so it never happens again.

Consequences

- It was the most destructive war in history
- Millions of people died
- The United Nations (UN) was created to maintain world peace
- Europe was divided between East and West
- The United States and Soviet Union became superpowers

Key Facts to Remember

✓ Started: 1939 ✓ Ended: 1945 ✓ Pearl Harbor: December 7, 1941 ✓ D-Day: June 6, 1944 ✓ Atomic bombs: August 1945

THE COLD WAR (1947-1991)

What was the Cold War?

The Cold War was a period of tension and competition between two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union (USSR). It was called "cold" because there was never a direct war between these two countries, but they competed in everything.

Why did it start?

After World War II, the United States and the USSR had very different ideas about how to govern:

- **United States:** Capitalism and democracy
- **Soviet Union:** Communism and authoritarian government

Main Characteristics

Opposing Blocs:

- **Western Bloc:** Led by the United States (NATO)
- **Eastern Bloc:** Led by the USSR (Warsaw Pact)

Important Events

The Berlin Wall (1961-1989)

- Germany was divided into East and West
- A wall was built in Berlin to separate the two parts
- It symbolized the division of the world

The Space Race

- The United States and USSR competed to reach space
- **1957:** USSR launches Sputnik (first satellite)
- **1961:** Yuri Gagarin (USSR) is the first human in space
- **1969:** Neil Armstrong (USA) is the first human on the Moon

The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

- The USSR placed nuclear missiles in Cuba (close to the United States)
- It was the most dangerous moment of the Cold War
- It was resolved peacefully

The Arms Race

- Both countries manufactured thousands of nuclear weapons
- They lived in fear of nuclear war

How did it end?

- **1989:** The Berlin Wall fell
- **1991:** The Soviet Union dissolved
- The United States remained as the only superpower

Key Facts to Remember

✓ Duration: 1947-1991 ✓ No direct war between USA and USSR ✓ Berlin Wall: 1961-1989 ✓ Moon landing: 1969 ✓ Cuban Crisis: 1962

QUICK COMPARISON

Aspect	World War I	World War II	Cold War
Years	1914–1918	1939–1945	1947–1991
Type	Global war	Global war	Tension without direct war
Main countries	Germany vs France, UK, USA	Axis vs Allies	USA vs USSR
Result	Allied victory	Allied victory	Fall of USSR

STUDY TIPS

Use these techniques:

1. **Timelines:** Draw a line with important dates
2. **Maps:** Identify the countries involved
3. **Flashcards:**
 - Side A: Question (When did WWI start?)
 - Side B: Answer (1914)
4. **Teach someone:** Teaching another person helps you remember better
5. **Acronyms:** Create words with the first letters of important lists

Practice Questions:

World War I:

1. When did WWI start and end?
2. Which countries formed the Central Powers?
3. What was the Treaty of Versailles?

World War II:

1. Who were the Axis Powers?
2. What happened at Pearl Harbor?
3. When were the atomic bombs dropped?

Cold War:

1. Why was it called the "Cold War"?
2. What was the Berlin Wall?

3. Who landed on the Moon first?

IMPORTANT VOCABULARY

Allies: Countries that unite to fight together

Armistice: Agreement to stop fighting

Capitalism: Economic system based on private property and free market

Communism: System where the government controls the economy

Dictator: Leader with absolute power

Holocaust: Genocide of Jews and other groups during WWII

Nationalism: Strong pride in one's own country

Superpower: Extremely powerful country

Treaty: Formal agreement between countries

Trenches: Deep ditches where soldiers fought in WWI

STUDY CHECKLIST

Check off when you've studied each topic:

- ☐ I understand the causes of WWI
 - ☐ I know the sides of WWI
 - ☐ I know when WWI started and ended
 - ☐ I understand the causes of WWII
 - ☐ I know the Axis Powers and the Allies
 - ☐ I remember key events of WWII (Pearl Harbor, D-Day)
 - ☐ I understand what the Cold War was
 - ☐ I know who the superpowers were
 - ☐ I know the importance of the Berlin Wall
 - ☐ I understand the difference between the three wars
-

FINAL REFLECTION

These wars changed the world forever. Although they were terrible events, they teach us important lessons:

- The importance of peace and diplomacy
- Why we must respect human rights
- The value of working together as countries
- The consequences of intolerance and hatred

Remember: Studying history helps us not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Good luck on your test! 

Remember to review this guide several times, do the practice questions, and if you have doubts, ask your teacher.