

Lesson Title: "A Match Without a Fuse"

Time Frame: 2 hours

Standards: Minnesota State Standard 9.4.3.12.1 - Describe the social, political and economic causes of World War I.

Objectives: Students will understand the long term and short term causes of World War One by analyzing primary and secondary sources.

Procedures:

1. Class Discuss the following quote:
 - a. "A Match is nothing without a fuse. A fuse is nothing without a bomb."
 - i. What is the meaning of this quote?
 - ii. How is it related to war?
2. (Background Reading) - Students will read the article "Crisis and Conflict" (pg 1-3) and complete the M.A.I.N. Causes of World War One table (Appendix 1)
 - a. Discuss and check for understanding what "MAIN" means and what students found
3. Students will then analyze the Causes Documents (Appendix 2)
 - a. Students will analyze the documents by answer the questions attached to each one.
4. Students will then use both the "Crisis and Conflict" reading and the "Causes Documents" and complete the Reasons for War Graphic Organizer (Appendix 3)
 - a. Students should create a link between "bomb, fuse, match, spark" to the beginning of World War One. They need to justify what each step is and why.

Modifications:

1. To modify source analysis of the Causes Documents (Appendix 2) for lower level students the teacher should model the Source Analysis steps to entire class.
 - a. Teacher could also break the Documents into a jigsaw activity to break up the number of documents to analyze.

Extensions:

1. To extend this activity have students compare and debate over the question below.
 - a. "Which one of the "MAIN" causes of World War One was most significant.

References:

This lesson is based on concept discussed by David Silbey's presentation on "Why Does America Go to War?" To view his Decision Making and how that leads to war View his presentation on "[The Spanish-American War \(1898\)](#)."

Reading "Crisis and Conflict on the Global Stage" by Saul Straussman from Big History Project.

Reading "A Fire Waiting to be Lit: The Origins of World War I" By Bill of Rights in Action - Constitutional Rights Foundation.

M.A.I.N. Causes of World War One table (Appendix 1)

Cause of WWI	Summary (in your own words)	How did this specifically lead to WWI? (Support from text)
M ilitarism		
A lliances		
I mperialism		
N ationalism		

Causes Documents (Appendix 2)

Document 1:

Since the Congress of Vienna, power dynamics had been changing in Europe. Germany and Britain had become the most powerful countries in Europe because of industrialization and imperialism. France, Russia, and Austria remained powerful as well. They began developing rivalries over pieces of territory that they each considered theirs. Austria wanted the Balkan Peninsula; so did Russia. Germany wanted parts of central Europe; so did France. Germany wanted Morocco; so did France. Both Britain and Germany wanted control over world trading markets.

To address the rivalries, the European powers began to join together in agreements, or alliances, which would guarantee them support from other nations in case of war. Under the guidance of the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Germany and Austria-Hungary formed a military alliance in 1879. Three years later, Italy joined in what became the Triple Alliance (but switched sides later on). The terms of the alliance were, in brief, that if any member became involved in war with another great power, its allies would fight along with them.

In response to the Triple Alliance, the French decided to form its own alliance with Russia. Signed in 1894, the Franco-Russian Alliance stated that if one of the countries of the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) attacked France or Russia, its ally would attack the aggressor. Meanwhile, Britain forged much closer ties to France and Russia throughout the late 1800s because they saw the Germans as rivals. It was understood that if France or Russia were attacked, Britain would join their side. This group became known as the Triple Entente.

Why did rivalries develop?

What countries joined the Triple Alliance? What countries the Triple Entente?

What happened if one country in an alliance was attacked? (Hint: What would the other countries do?)

Document 2:

The Crime of the Ages—Who Did It?



Source: John McCutcheon, *The Chicago Tribune*; H. H. Windsor, *Cartoons Magazine* (adapted)

Describe this political cartoon. What does it show?

Why are all the soldiers pointing at different people?

Document 3:

“Colonies were viewed as essential for survival of the nation. Colonies were sources of raw materials, which were used to make modern weapons. They also provided places for naval bases to protect trade routes. Because the total amount of land in the world is limited, a country must get as much territory as quickly as possible while there was still land left...”

Why did people at the time think colonies were important?

Why do you think imperialism might lead to war?

Document 4:

Nationalism and extreme patriotism were significant contributing factors to the outbreak of World War I. Every one of Europe’s Great Powers developed a firm but excessive belief in its own cultural, economic, and military supremacy. This overconfidence gave birth to a fatal misunderstanding: that in the event of war, one’s own country would be victorious inside a few months.

How did nationalism lead to overconfidence?

Document 5:

Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany: “You will be home before the leaves have fallen from the trees.”

How long did Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany think a war would last?

Document 6:

From 1902 until war broke out in 1914, the British and Germans engaged in a naval arms race. Britain designed a powerful new battleship, the Dreadnought, which it launched in 1906. The Germans immediately copied the Dreadnought, and the British Admiralty decided to maintain as many ships as Germany plus an additional six. The British also redistributed their ships so the biggest and most powerful ships were situated to fight the Germans.

Why do arms races make war more likely?

Document 7:

Franz Ferdinand was assassinated on June 28, 1914 in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, by an 18-year-old Bosnian named Gavrilo Princip. Part of a team of assassins in Sarajevo that day, Princip belonged to the Young Bosnia group, and the Black Hand terrorist group had trained the team. Rounded up by Austrian authorities, the assassins eventually named three leaders of the Black Hand as the planners of the attack: Chief of Serbian Military Intelligence Dragutin Dimitrijevic, his close associate Serbian Army Major Vojislav Tankosic, and Milan Ciganovic, a Bosnian Serb. The Austrian government was already determined to crush the South Slav movement. The assassination of the heir to the empire set a war against Serbia in motion.

Reasons for War Graphic Organizer (Appendix 3)

Directions: Used the provided sources and complete the graphic organizer below. What were the decisions/actions/ideas that acted as a step towards World War One? Then support your decisions based on your background reading and source analysis.

	Bomb	Fuse	Match	Spark
Event or Idea that you label as a decision or a step towards a war				
Why? Support yourself based on sources/reasoning				