Year 9 HT 1 – Causes of the First World War

World War 1 was a global conflict that lasted between 1914 and 1918. It was one of the deadliest and most destructive wars in human history, involving over 30 countries and resulting in millions of casualties.

World War One, which happened from 1914 to 1918, had several causes. One important cause was the system of alliances between countries. Many countries had agreements to support each other if one of them got into a conflict. So when one country got involved in a fight, it quickly pulled in other countries too. Another cause was the competition between powerful nations, like Germany and Britain, who wanted to have the biggest empires and the most influence around the world. There were also tensions between different groups of people, like the Serbs and Austrians, which led to conflicts. Finally, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary sparked the war when a Serbian nationalist killed him.

In the UK, World War 1 had significant impacts on various aspects of society, such as politics, economy, and culture. Here are some of the key historical events that were happening in the UK during this period:

- 1914: The war broke out in August as Germany invaded Belgium in an attempt to gain territory. The UK, as part of the Allies, declared war on Germany. Conscription was introduced, and millions of men were recruited to the armed forces.
- 1915: The Battle of Gallipoli took place, in which Allied forces attempted to capture the Ottoman Empire's capital city of Constantinople. It resulted in heavy casualties on both sides.
- 1916: The Battle of the Somme was fought, and it was one of the bloodiest battles in human history. More than one million soldiers were wounded or killed from both sides.
- 1917: The Russian Revolution took place, which saw the end of the Tsarist regime and the rise of communism. The UK introduced rationing due to food shortages caused by the war effort.
- 1918: The war ended on 11 November 1918 with the signing of the Armistice Treaty. The UK experienced a flu pandemic that caused widespread death and devastation.

Apart from the events in the UK, various significant events also took place around the world during World War 1 that had an impact on the UK as well. Here are some of the key historical events:

- 1914: The Ottoman Empire joined the war on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary.
- 1915: Italy joined the war on the side of the Allies.
- 1916: The Easter Rising took place in Ireland, which was an armed rebellion against British rule.
- 1917: The US entered the war on the side of the Allies, and Germany launched its final attempt to win the war in the Spring Offensive.
- 1918: The Spanish flu pandemic broke out, killing millions of people worldwide. The armistice was signed, leading to the end of the war.

Further reading:

Fiction:

"Private Peaceful" by Michael Morpurgo - This is a moving story about two brothers who enlist to fight in World War

Non fiction:

"The Great War: Stories Inspired by Objects from the First World War" by David Almond and others - This book is a collection of short stories from several authors, inspired by objects from World War 1.