

WWI Weapons - Webquest

No study of WWI is complete without first studying the weapons of the war. Many new weapons were used during the conflict while others gained a larger role in human warfare during the years of the First World War. For this task, students will use the websites provided in order to complete research for each of the following weapons used during WWI.



Bayonets in WWI

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/weaponry/bayonets.htm>

1. According to the website, why was the bayonet a more “psychological than practical” weapon?
2. What did veterans of WWI say about the bayonet and the ways in which they used it?
3. Why was the saw-blade bayonet, produced by the Germans, a blessing for Allied propaganda?
4. How did the bayonet “personify” the offensive spirit?
5. When was having the bayonet in battle useful?

Machine Guns in WWI

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/weaponry/machineguns.htm>

1. What would have made moving the machine guns of WWI difficult?
2. How big of a crew did the machine gun require?
3. How many rounds could the machine gun fire during WWI?
4. Explain the difficulty or issue that the WWI soldiers experienced in regards to the machine gun AND the ways they tried to fix this issue.
5. Who was Hiram Maxim AND what did he do?
6. According to the website, to what extent did each of the following nations support the machine gun as an effective weapon in the years before the outbreak of WWI?
 - a. Germany:
 - b. Britain:
 - c. France:
7. Explain the many uses of machine guns in warfare as WWI wages on.

Submarines in WWI

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/sub.htm>

1. Why were submarines considered ineffective in the years before WWI by military personnel?
2. Explain how Germany intended to use submarine warfare in February of 1915.
3. How many ships did Germany sink using this strategy?
4. What was Germany hoping to achieve with this submarine strategy?
5. Explain the significance of the sinking of the Lusitania in terms of Germany's submarine warfare.

Airplanes in WWI

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/luf.htm>

1. What were the early planes of WWI made of?
2. According to the website these early pilots needed to be brave. What evidence does the website give to support this idea?
3. How was the life expectancy of a pilot measured during WWI?
4. Based on the information on the website, what were two different roles that the airplane served during WWI? Explain each.
5. What caused the development of "fighter planes"?
6. Why did the pilots wear silk scarves?

Poisonous Gas in WWI

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/weaponry/gas.htm>

1. How was poisonous gas regarded before its use in WWI?
2. What was the reasoning behind using poisonous gas in WWI?
3. According to the website, although Germany is often credited with using gas in the war first, which country actually used gas in warfare first?
4. Explain the first use of poisonous gas in WWI warfare. (By Germany)
 - a. When and where did it occur?
 - b. Which country first used it in battle, AND against which countries was it used?
 - c. What type of gas was used in the first use?
 - d. Explain the effect it had on the soldiers.
 - e. In what ways did it effect the battle that it was first used at? Explain.
 - f. What was the global response to the first use of poisonous gas?
5. What role did the wind play in the use of poisonous gas on the battlefield? Explain.

Tanks in WWI

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/weaponry/tanks.htm>

1. Which nation first developed and used the tank in WWI?

2. Very briefly describe the early evolution of the tank. What were its beginnings?

3. An early form of the tank, called the Killen-Strait tractor, was demonstrated to British officials for use in the military.
 - a. What two prominent British leaders were at this demonstration?

 - b. What part of the demonstration impressed them about the abilities of the tank?

4. How did the tank get its name?

5. The first tank was nicknamed "Little Willie". Briefly describe the abilities and limitations of this tank.

6. What was the name of the first combat-ready British tank?

7. Why were these early tanks considered unreliable?

8. When and where was the first tank used on the battlefield of WWI?

9. What was the significance of the Battle of Cambrai to tank warfare?
10. How many tanks had each of the following countries constructed by the end of WWI?
- a. Britain:

 - b. France:

 - c. Germany
11. To what extent do you think the tank was important for the Allies in the overall war?
Explain your reasoning.