

US History World War I

Learning Target:

I can determine why the war settled into a stalemate and examine the defining characteristic of the war – trench warfare.

3. The War Reaches A Stalemate

Initial Expectations –

-Leaders mistakenly thought the war would be over quick and would involve quick, decisive victories

Trench Warfare –

-Style of fighting that developed primarily along the western front of WWI
-1915 saw both armies occupying trenches along the front
-Front ran from North Sea to Switzerland border – 100s of miles

Two Offensives To Break The Stalemate –

1. Battle of Verdun –

-Central Offensive
-French city targeted by the Germans to attack
-Over 1 million casualties – over ½ dead

2. Battle of the Somme –

-Allied Offensive
-British forces lost 60,000 soldiers in one day
-Four month battle left 1 million dead and wounded

New Weapons of the War –

Machine Guns –

-Fired hundreds of rounds per minute
-Much more effective than rifles

Tanks –

-Introduced by Allies at Battle of Somme
-Counteracted the effectiveness of the Machine Gun in trench warfare

Poison Gas –

-Released as a cloud of mist to drift over trenches
-Launched in an exploding shell also
-Without gas masks soldiers would die

Submarines –

- Effectively sank many commercial and military ships with no warning
- Had little effect on outcome of the war

Airplanes –

- Engaged in fights that became known as dogfights
- Had little effect on outcome of the war