History: How did the Allies win the First World War?

Year 8 Term 2

Trinity MAT

Timeline

4 Aug 1914	The German Army launches the Schlieffen Plan.
23 Aug 1914	The BEF help to stop the German army at Mons.
21st Feb 1916	The Battle of Verdun begins.
1st July 1916	The Battle of the Somme begins.
6th April 1917	The US declares war on Germany.
21st Mar 1918	The German Army launches the Spring Offensive.
8th Aug 1918	The Allies launch the Hundred Days Campaign.
11th Nov 1918	The Armistice is signed.

Key people

Field Marshal Douglas Haig	Haig ordered the Battle of the Somme where the British army suffered 60,000 casualties on the first day. Haig's leadership of the battle made him one of the most controversial figures of the war.
Paul Von Hindenburg	Hindenburg was a German war hero of the First World War who led defeats against the Russian Army. He became leader of the German forces until he retired at the end of the war.
Kaiser Wilhelm II	The German leader from 1888 to 1918. The word 'Kaiser' means 'Emperor'. He had to sign the armistice in 1918, which ended the First World War.

Key Terms

Allies	A united group of nations or individuals working together. 'The Allies' was the name of Britain, France, Russia, Italy and the USA in the FWW.
British Expeditionary Force (BEF)	The name of the British Army in 1914. This had around 250,000 members in 1915.
Stalemate	A position where neither side can move forward.
Attrition	The tactic of reducing the strength of an army by constantly attacking and wearing it down.
Bombardment	A continuous attack with bombs, shells, or other missiles.
Artillery	Long range guns which fire large, metal shells, on land. They fire from large distances.
U-Boat	A German submarine used in the First and Second World Wars.
RMS Lusitania	A US passenger ship that was sunk in 1915. It was secretly carrying supplies to Britain.
Blockade	Sealing off a location to stop supplies from entering.
Armistice	An agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting.

Key Topics

The Schlieffen Plan and Stalemate

- The Schlieffen Plan was a German plan to avoid the heavily defended French border and capture Paris by going through Belgium. The plan was to defeat France in 6 weeks before the Russian army mobilised.
- The Belgian forces held up the German army which gave time for Britain to get involved. This led to a stalemate as both armies began to dig trenches.

Key Battles: Verdun and the Somme

- The Battle of Verdun was a 10 month battle between the German and French armies. The Germans began the war of attrition. Around 360,000 German and 340,000 French soldiers died.
- The Battle of the Somme lasted for 5 months and began with a 7 day bombardment of German trenches. In total, there were around 500,000 British casualties, 430,000 French and 600,000 German.

The War at Sea—U-Boats and the Blockade

- The U-Boat campaign were repeated German attacks on the British Navy and trade ships. In 1915, German U-Boats sank the RMS Lusitania. This tactic was heavily criticised by countries not fighting in the war as innocent people were being attacked.
- The British blockade of Germany began in 1914 and ended in 1919. The idea was to stop the amount of food and supplies entering Germany by sea.

The Spring Offensive and the Hundred Days Campaign

- In March 1918 the Germans launched the Spring Offensive – a huge last-ditch attack. The Germans pushed deep into France and began to attack Paris with artillery. However, the offensive failed as the German Army had no supplies.
- The Hundred Days Campaign was the Allied attack which ended the First World War. German forces were pushed back into Germany.