

Name _____ Date _____ Class _____

Bell Ringer: Setting the Stage of the Great War**Instructions:** Examine the picture. Read the background. Answer the questions.

Powder Keg #1: Nationalism **Powder Keg #2: Militarism** **Powder Keg #3: Imperialism** **Powder Keg #4: Alliances**



Background: At the start of the 1900s, Europe had tension growing throughout the continent. While no war had erupted yet, the potential for one to come about increased over time. This was partly due to four defining features of Europe in the early 1900s. Nationalism is the belief that your country and/or ethnic group are superior to others. Nationalism in this sense goes far beyond healthy patriotism, which is pride in one's country. Rather, it views other nations as inferior to your own, cultivating a sense of arrogance. Militarism is the massive build up of industrial weapons. As various European nations industrialized, they were able to make very powerful weapons. While no war had erupted on the continent yet, various nations had such a massive build up that, if war did develop, it would be horrific for all involved. Imperialism is when a powerful nation controls militarily weaker areas for industrial pursuits. This naturally led to natives in controlled areas rising up against imperialistic nations seeking to control their area. Imperialism also created hostilities between the nations of Europe as they each sought to compete for control across the planet. Alliances began to form before a war even happened. Nations started joining teams so that, if they were ever attacked, they would have other nations help them. Yet, this actually made war more likely. All it would take was two countries from two different teams and a collection of nations would find themselves at war. Above is an illustration that these features of Europe in the early 1900s were like powder kegs that just needed a small spark to explode into a massive war.

1. Why do you think nations wanted to pursue militarism? What did they hope to gain?

2. What were some ways the practice of imperialism led to conflict around the world?

3. If a war had not erupted yet, why were European nations already joining alliances, teams that promised to protect each other should a military engagement break out? How did this actually increase the ferocity and magnitude of a future, potential war?

Answers:

1. Why do you think nations wanted to pursue militarism? What did they hope to gain?

Militarism is the massive buildup of industrial weapons. As various European nations industrialized, they were able to make very powerful weapons. While no war had erupted on the continent yet, various nations had such a massive build up that, if war did develop, it would be horrific for all involved. Yet, the nations who practiced militarism felt a massive build up of weapons would intimidate others from attacking them.

2. What were some ways the practice of imperialism led to conflict around the world?

Imperialism is when a powerful nation controls militarily weaker areas for industrial pursuits. This naturally led to natives in controlled areas rising up against imperialistic nations seeking to control their area. Imperialism also created hostilities between the nations of Europe as they each sought to compete for control across the planet.

3. If a war had not erupted yet, why were European nations already joining alliances, teams that promised to protect each other should a military engagement break out? How did this actually increase the ferocity and magnitude of a future, potential war?

Alliances began to form before a war even happened. Nations started joining teams so that, if they were ever attacked, they would have other nations help them. Yet, this actually made war more likely. All it would take was two countries from two different teams and a collection of nations would find themselves at war.