GET READY FOR THE QUIZ...
WW1& Interwar Lesson 1 QUIZ

1. Name the four main causes of WW1.
2. Who was shot?
3. Which Empire threatened Serbia?
4. Which country backed up Serbia?
5. Why was Canada at war?
6. What law or Act did Borden pass to give the gov’t more power?
7. Where did Canadian soldiers train?
8. What German plan failed?
9. Why did it fail?
10. What was the line of trenches in France and Belgium called?
Lesson #2: Warfare & The CEF

LESSON OUTLINE & OBJECTIVES *(don’t copy)*

• In today’s lesson we will look at the ways in which the war was fought and at five of the major engagements in which Canadian forces participated.

• you will learn:
  – About “attrition”
  – How new technology changed warfare
  – About hardships experienced by soldiers
  – Why Vimy Ridge is a distinctly Canadian victory
  – The cost of Canadian involvement.
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Trench Warfare

• The Allies realized they couldn’t break through the German lines.
• They were forced to dig opposing trenches, but often in lower positions, as the Germans had taken the high ground.
• Many of the Allied trenches hit ground water and were very muddy.
• The allies had to live in the worst conditions.
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- Soldiers often got “Trench Foot”
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- Trench lines and territory didn’t change much.
- It soon became a war of **attrition**, rather than movement.
- Trenches were often dug 3-4 rows deep, and never in straight lines
- Machine guns and barbed wire protected trench lines.
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PROBLEMS FACING ATTACKING TROOPS

- Aircraft can warn of the build-up of enemy troops before an attack.
- Concrete block house for a machine-gun
- Support trench
- Reserve trench
- Long-range artillery is placed about 10 km behind the front line. These guns fire at advancing enemy troops.
- Communication trenches allow reserves to be brought forward without exposing them to enemy fire.
- No Man's Land (the stretch of land between the trenches of the opposing sides) has already been churned up by shell fire. In wet weather it becomes a mass of mud, making it even harder for troops to cross.
- Front-line dug-outs provide protection but not against a direct hit from an artillery shell.
- A deep dug-out: German ones could be 15 m below ground and too well constructed to be damaged by shell fire.
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Chemical Weapons: Chlorine Gas

- First used by the German Army, 1915 at Ypres.
- Soldiers experienced chest pain & burning in their throats; chlorine gas destroyed the lungs of its victims, leading to a slow death by asphyxiation (drowning).
- The French ran and left a 4 mile gap in the line, but Canadian & British troops retook the position before the Germans burst through the gap.
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Chemical Weapons: Mustard Gas

- First used by the German Army in 1917, it was the most lethal gas used during the war.
- Odourless & once in the soil it remained active for several weeks.
- It took twelve hours to take effect.
- It caused skin to blister, eyes burn, vomiting, as well as internal & external bleeding; was very painful & soldiers were strapped to beds.
- It took 4 to 5 weeks to die of mustard gas poisoning.
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The Machine Gun

- This new development changed the nature of war
- It literally mowed soldiers down as they advanced
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The Ross Rifle

- Sam Hughes issued Canadian soldiers the Ross Rifle to replace the Lee Enfield Rifle
- It was inferior & frequently jammed
- Hughes refused for a long time to replace it.
- In the meantime, Canadian soldiers took Lee Enfield rifles from fallen British soldiers.
- The Lee Enfield eventually replaced the Ross Rifle.
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Tanks

• A British idea that came late to the battlefield in WW1
• They were an attempt to deal with the machine gun
• They were not effective
  • Unreliable, easily stuck in the mud.
  • Easy targets for artillery.
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The Aeroplane

• First airplane flight was in 1903 by the Wright brothers
• Early pilots dropped bricks & shot pistols
• Soon guns were mounted on the planes
• They were also used for reconnaissance (spying)
• The top WW1 allied ace was William (Billy) Bishop, (CAN)
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U-Boats

- German submarines harassed & destroyed many ships.
- Moving undetected, the U-boat was an effective weapon.
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Canadian Command & Leadership

• **Minister of Militia Sam Hughes** was plagued by scandals and when he challenged the PM in 1916, he was fired.

• **Julian Byng** (British) commanded the CEF from 1916-17; promoted after the success of Vimy Ridge.

• **Arthur Currie** (Can)Commanded the CEF after Byng. He was mostly responsible for Vimy. Known for careful planning, he was a fierce advocate for the safety & cohesion of Canadian soldiers.

• **PM Robert Borden** sought more Dominion input into the war, and got it in 1917 when **British PM David Lloyd George** established the **Imperial War Cabinet**, comprised of the Prime Ministers of all the Dominions.
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The CEF at War

- The CEF was the **Canadian Expeditionary Forces**.
- 425,000 Men & Women joined the CEF
- 35,000 joined British Services (such as the Air Service)
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Ypres, (Second Battle of)

- April 22-24, 1915, Belgium
- Canada’s 1st Div. was subject to the first chlorine gas attack which burned and blinded troops
- The allies suffered 6,035 casualties, with no clear winner
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The Somme (July-Nov 1916)

- Best example of “war of attrition”
- Fought over low ridges near the Somme River in France.
- Day 1- Br. Casualties 57,470, (19,240 were fatalities).
- A Newfoundland regiment went into battle with 801 soldiers, only 65 answered roll call the next day.
- Canadians suffered 24,029 casualties
- Soldiers walked shoulder to shoulder across no man’s land, only to be mowed down by German machine guns.
- Total casualties were about 1 million.
- British gained only 10 km at the end. Considered a defeat
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Vimy Ridge (April 9, 1917, Northern France)

- French failed three times to retake the ridge.
- Canadians made careful plans and rehearsed the attack.
- They used a creeping barrage & “the Vimy Glide”.
- Vimy Ridge was a major Canadian victory! Most objectives were achieved on the first day, and the battle was finished on the third.
- We won more ground, took more prisoners, captured more artillery and suffered less losses than any previous British offensive
- 10,602 casualties- (3,598 dead)
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Passchendaele (3\textsuperscript{rd} Battle of Ypres)

- November 1917, Belgium
- Canadians were ordered to attack
- Germans had the position for months, had little value
- 600,000 British soldiers had died trying to take it.
- Gen. Currie tried hard to limit risks; he predicted 16,000 dead
- Victory cost 15,654 Canadian lives.
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Canada’s 100 Days

• Aug 1918- Nov 11, 1918: A series of rapid allied victories
• The final Allied offensive was spearheaded by Canada.
• The Canadian troops broke through Germany’s heavily fortified “Hindenburg Line”
• The Germans were forced to abandon significant amounts of materials as they were slowly pushed back
• Germany was defeated, but continued to fight hard and never fully retreated.
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POSSIBLE QUIZ QUESTIONS NEXT CLASS

1. What condition was a consequence of wet trenches?
2. A war where there is little movement, but a constant wearing down (killing) of troops is called “a war of ?”
3. Which country introduced tanks?
4. Which country introduced poison gas?
5. What Canadian-made rifle was essentially useless?
6. In which battle did Canadians “glide”?
7. In which battle did Canadians first get gassed?
8. Which battle cost almost 16,000 Canadian lives?
9. Which battle was the best example of attrition?
10. Name one of the commanders of the CEF.