Causes of World War I LESSON PLAN

9th Grade World History Benchmark:

SS.912.W.7.1 Analyze the causes of World War I including the formation of European alliances and the roles of imperialism, nationalism, and militarism.

Directly Correlated 11th Grade U.S. History Benchmark(s):

SS.912.A.4.5: Examine causes, course, and consequences of United States involvement in World War I.

Learning Goals/Objectives:

• Students will be able to explain how alliances, imperialism, nationalism, and militarism led to the outbreak of World War I.

Essential Question(s):

• What were the long term causes of World War I?
• How did alliances, imperialism, nationalism, and militarism lead to World War I?

Key Vocabulary: (terms in BOLD also appear in 11th grade U.S. History item specs)

Imperialism, nationalism, alliances, militarism, World War I, entangling alliances, Central Powers, Allied Powers, Kaiser Wilhelm II

Materials Needed:
Attachment A: Imperialism political cartoon
Attachment B: Linoit directions
**Time:** 70 min.

**Steps to Deliver the Lesson:**

**Introduction/HOOK:** Distribute one political cartoon from the set (Attachment A) to pairs of students. Have them examine their image and make a list of their observations (what they see) and inferences (what they think) based on the image. For each image, give students an opportunity to share some of their observations and inferences, and discuss as a class how each cartoon relates to this time period in world history. (15 min.)

**Note:** Cartoon #1 depicts European imperialism, with Germany, Britain and Russia each shown taking pieces of the world and stuffing them into their grab bags. This is relevant because imperialist competition was one of the reasons for the buildup of tension that led to World War I. Cartoon #2 depicts a map of Europe in 1914 in which dogs represent each country, showing the variety of cultures and nationalities neighboring one another and often coming into conflict. Nationalistic tensions, especially in the Balkan region were another contributing factor leading to WWI. Cartoon #3 depicts a comical interpretation of the alliance system, in which each country is threatening to attack the next one in the line for attacking the one before them. Cartoon #4 depicts European powers all holding weapons, facing each other, suggesting an uncertain hostility amongst them all. This could be seen as an illustration of militarism, which is another one of the causes of World War I.

**Activity:**

1. Assign small groups of students to research the M.A.I.N. (militarism, alliances, imperialism, nationalism) causes of World War I and create a [www.linoit.com](http://www.linoit.com) canvas reflecting what they learned. For each of the main causes, students should add sticky notes with written information, at least one picture, and at least one video clip. Attachment B includes directions for using linoit and a sample of what the student work should look like. (40 min.)
   - Suggested websites for research:
     - [http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/world-war-i-history/videos/causes-of-world-war-i](http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/world-war-i-history/videos/causes-of-world-war-i)
     - [http://alphahistory.com/worldwar1/world-war-i-topics/](http://alphahistory.com/worldwar1/world-war-i-topics/)
     - [http://www.historyhome.co.uk/europe/causeww1.htm](http://www.historyhome.co.uk/europe/causeww1.htm)
     - [http://www.historyonthenet.com/WW1/causes.htm](http://www.historyonthenet.com/WW1/causes.htm)

**Closure:** Have students play a vocabulary review game ([https://quizlet.com/10375194/scatter](https://quizlet.com/10375194/scatter)). Then assess student achievement of the learning goal by having them respond to the essential questions in the form of an exit slip. (15 min.)
Optional Extension Activity/Home Learning:

Have students choose one of the following activities.

- Create a map illustrating European and American imperialism during the early 1900s.
- Prepare a presentation or written report detailing one of the major European alliances prior to WWI.
- Research the history and culture of one of the following nations and create a poster or brochure illustrating what you learned: Germany, Italy, Britain, France, Turkey/Ottoman Empire, Serbia, Russia, etc.
- Create a model of one of the new military technologies developed during the late 19th-early 20th century.
#2

“Satirical Map from 1914”

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<th>Observations</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
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**Humoristische Karte von Europa im Jahre 1914.**
Observations

Inferences
Example of Linoit

Directions for creating a Linoit canvas:


- Go to linoit.com and log in or create a new account.
- Click the “Create a new canvas” box on the home page
- Give your canvas a name (one with no spaces makes it easier for others to access – for example, “WWICauses”)
- Choose the background style/color
- Select privacy options – if this is a collaborative assignment choose “Everyone may post stickies.”
- Click “Create a canvas”
- Start adding sticky notes, images, video clips, etc. using the tool box in the upper right corner.
- Share the URL of your canvas to allow others to post.