Focus Questions for pages 644-654

Causes of the War: \[Questions \text{1-6}\]

The origins of World War I (1914-1918) involve many factors, including the conflicts and antagonisms of the four decades leading up to the war. Militarism, alliances, unbridled nationalism, and imperialistic rivalries played major roles in provoking the conflict. The immediate origins of the war lay in the decisions taken by statesmen and generals following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by Gavrilo Princip, an ultranationalist Serbian who supported the ideal of Pan-Slavism (the union of all Slavs in the Balkan region of Europe). However, the crisis following this incident came at the end of a long series of diplomatic clashes between the Great Powers of Europe in the decade prior to 1914, which had left tensions high and almost to breaking point.

1. How did the development of alliance systems between European nations prior to 1914 lead to war?

2. In what ways did imperialism draw European nations closer to war?

3. What role did intense nationalism play in spurring rivalries between European nations?

4. Militarism is regularly cited as another key factor in bringing Europe's great powers to war in 1914. Explain this argument.

5. As a result of the four causes above, the war ultimately began as a regional conflict in the Balkans of southeastern Europe that quickly spread across Europe. Identify the roots of tension in the Balkans prior to the
assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary. Also, why was his assassination the "spark" that exploded the so-called "Balkan powder keg"?

6. At the outbreak of war in August 1914, conflict in Europe became an issue for people around the globe. What made this war a true world war?

7. Describe the nature of warfare during most of World War I. What made it so catastrophic? How did this war differ from previous large-scale conflicts like the Seven Years' War?

8. For what reasons relating to their involvement in World War I would Russian commoners have for being irate with their political/military leaders? (We will soon be studying the causes of Russian Revolutions in 1917 in which there were attempts to create a more responsive system of government)

9. Identify impacts World War I had on the home front in European nations.