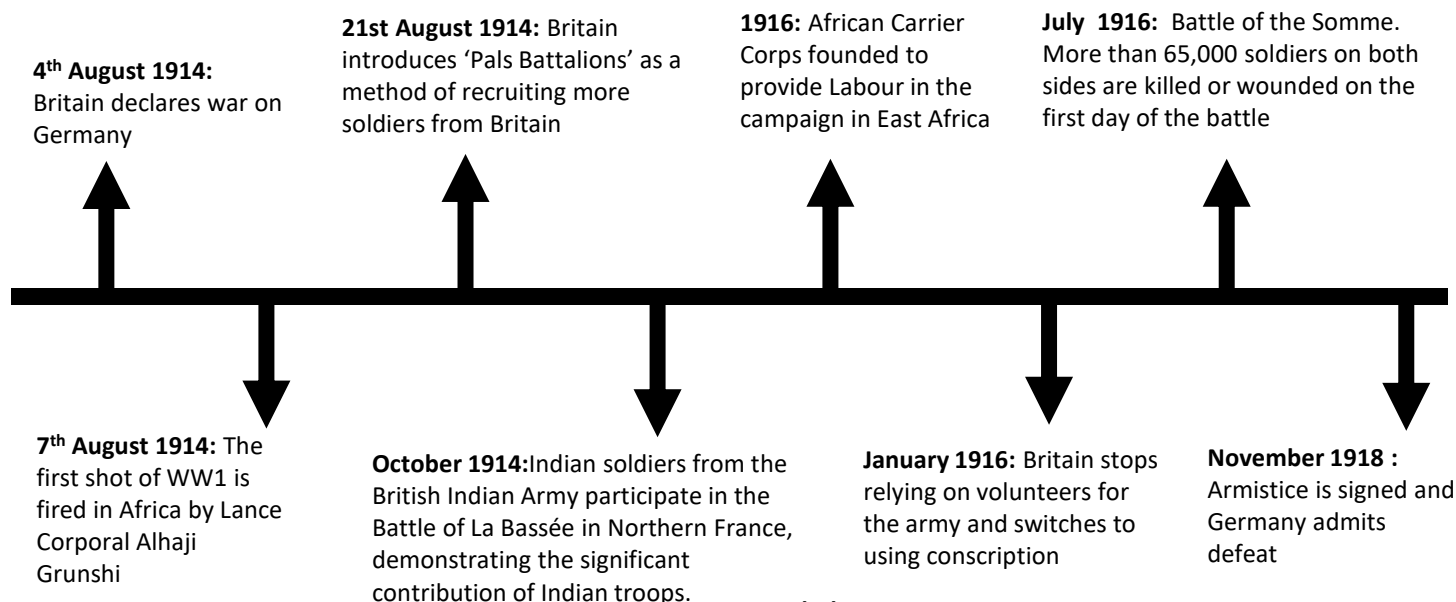







# Knowledge Organiser : How similar were experiences of the Great War?

## Topic Summary:

The outbreak of WW1 in 1914 brought Europe into a bloody war. This was a war of **attrition**. A gruelling new type of warfare of which soldiers from all over the world would experience. With the British Empire at its peak millions of colonial soldiers also fought to protect Europe however despite their sacrifice their story is often left untold. In this unit our aim is to **remember** the experiences of the marginalised and understand how some experiences were **similar or different** due to the environment in which they fought, their role within the army or their treatment by the British Government.









## Key People:

<b>Kitchener</b> 	Lord Kitchener was the secretary of state and in charge of the propaganda campaign to encourage men to join the war effort – He came up with the idea of the Pals Battalions
<b>Eric Hall</b> 	Eric Peace Hall (1893-1967) was born on 1 January 1893 in <b>Sheffield</b> . After leaving school Eric was an engineering apprentice and studied engineering at <b>Sheffield University</b> . Eric Hall joined the war in June 1915 as Second Lieutenant. Eric Halls diary contains detailed accounts of his experiences in war and the <b>Battle of the Somme</b> .
<b>Mal Singh</b> 	Mall Singh was an Indian soldier who fought for the British in World War I. He was captured by the Germans and held as a prisoner of war. While a prisoner, he was recorded reciting a poem in his native Punjabi language as part of a German research project studying racial types.
<b>Lance Corporal Alhaji Grunshi.</b> 	The man to have shot the first shot of WW1 in Africa.
<b>Kasturba Ghandi</b> 	Worked as a nurse in England to help look after Indian soldiers and was well known for the compassion and care in which she looked after the soldiers.

## Vocabulary:

<b>Memorialisation</b> 	The act or process of creating a memorial or taking action to preserve the memory of a person, event, or group
<b>Sepoy</b> 	An Indian soldier serving under British or other European orders.
<b>Tommie</b> 	A nickname for an ordinary British soldier
<b>A Front W E</b> 	A zone of fighting. Western Front was the zone of fighting in Belgium and France against Germany. Eastern Front was between Germany and Russia.
<b>Colonial soldiers</b> 	Soldiers who came from the British and French empires to fight in Europe on the Western Front.
<b>Jigger foot</b> 	A painful and itchy skin infestation caused by the jigger flea common in Africa
<b>Conscription</b> 	The legal requirement to join the armed forces.
<b>Attrition</b> 	The attempt to win a war by wearing down the enemy so they give up the will to continue fighting.
<b>Martial Race Theory</b> 	Used in the context of the British Indian Army, that designates certain ethnic or social groups as being more suited for military service than others.
<b>Trench foot</b> 	Painful condition in the feet where the skin would decompose due to standing in cold muddy water.

## Core Knowledge:

<p><b>Lesson 1:</b> How similar were the theatres of WW1?</p> 	<p>In this lesson you will compare the theatres of World War one and where soldiers fought. The Western front is one of the most iconic battle fields of WW1 characterised by its masses of trenches and no mans land. Soldiers faced issues such as trench foot, shell shock and difficult terrain such as mud and water. Whereas, in the campaigns in Africa soldiers faced other problems such as hot and humid weather, diseases such as malaria and the dreaded jigger foot. On the Eastern Front which borders Russia and Germany soldiers had a variety of climates with forests, swamps and mountains. This led to more open battles and movement of longer distances. Soldiers on the Eastern front were often poorly equipped and ill trained.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 2:</b> What was the 'Great War' like for the British tommie?</p> 	<p>You will investigate the experiences of soldiers of Britain through the use of sources. You will discover that life for the tommie was also varied and soldiers could have been recruited through Pals Battalions or later conscripted to join the war. They fought in trenches designed to try and provide shelter from the continuous bombardment of German artillery. You will discover that wounds were difficult to treat due to nature of the war and medical developments at the time.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 3:</b> What was the experiences of Sepoys in WW1?</p> 	<p>In this lesson you will look at the experiences of Indian soldiers and how historians have had to look away from the written source to understand their reality of WW1. You will look at three sources – a voice recording, a diary and photographs which will explore how Indian soldiers were treated in the army. You will learn that Indian soldiers were recruited based on the martial race theory which argued that certain groups are more suited to war than others. For example, the majority of Indian soldiers came from the Punjab region. You will find out that some Indian soldiers were fervently loyal to the 'mother land' and fought for its freedom gladly. Where as, some soldiers show that their experience was different and some Indian soldiers were agitators and tried to resist the command of the British. Indian soldiers were also often kept at arms length and only saw fighting when necessary in order to minimise exposure to the idea that Indian people should be treated the same as British people.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 4:</b> How similar was the African experience of WW1?</p> 	<p>This lesson focuses on the experience of African men in WW1. You will look at information regarding their role and treatment in the war to explore the idea that some men were recruited as soldiers and others worked in the Carrier Corps as labourers. Recruitment could have looked very different for different people some were encouraged to join by their African Chiefs where as others were forced. African soldiers faced issues such as ill health from diseases exacerbated by lack of medical care. The terrain and work was hard and pay was kept very low – so low that some believe they only paid them to avoid accusations of slave labour.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 5:</b> What was the female experience of WW1?</p> 	<p>You will study the experiences of women on the home fronts in Britain, India and Africa to understand how some communities changed as a result of WW1. Women in Britain were now needed to fill vacancies in factories and therefore worked to produce munition for the war. Women in India played a huge role in campaigning and fundraising for the war. Women such as Kasturba Ghandi worked in hospitals in Britain to help wounded Indian soldiers after the war. Women in Africa took a more active role as the fighting took place within their community. They also worked a camp followers who carried water and supplies for the soldiers. However, looking at the level of recognition these women received we understand that across the different areas it was very low and change for women in society took a lot longer.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 6:</b> What do we remember about WW1?</p> 	<p>In this lesson you will look at the idea of remembrance and revisit the argument of David Olusoga who's book aims to remember the lives and experiences of soldiers which have been marginalised and therefore forgotten in public memory. You will look at how and why these experiences were forgotten and will understand how due to the context of the period the British government needed to maintain the superiority of the British race in order to justify their empire across the world.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 7- 8:</b> Enquiry outcome</p>	<p>You have been asked to design a new cenotaph which aims at remembering the forgotten soldiers of the British Empire. You will pick three different groups and will explain similarities and differences between them. The most successful enquiry outcomes will consider why these similarities and differences may exist.</p>

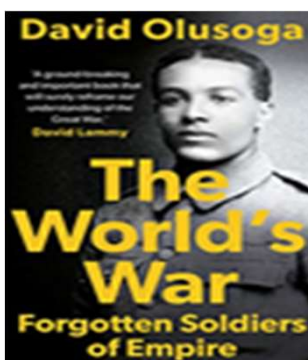


Troops that served Britain during WW1



What do Historians say?:

David Olusoga, *The World's War: Forgotten soldiers of Empire* (2014)



*"Over a century the First World War has shrunk; it has contracted and diminished in our imagination, reduced too often to a tragic but monochrome European feud. The struggles in Africa and Mesopotamia – where three quarters of a million Indians served as soldiers and labourers – as well as the battles in Asia and on the Eastern Front have been pushed firmly into the margins... To seek to uncover the global nature of the First World War is not to dismiss the fact that the conflict was fought mainly in Europe, and mainly by white Europeans, of whom many as 16 million died. But by definition 'mainly' is not the whole story, and beyond 'mainly' lie the experiences, the sacrifices and stories of 4 million non-European, non-white peoples who have remained in the shadows for much too long"*

How can I find out more?



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