



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT  
STANDARD 10.5.1**

***Factors Leading to  
World War I***

**Specific Objective:** Analyze the arguments for entering into war presented by leaders from all sides of the Great War. Analyze the role of political and economic rivalries, ethnic and ideological conflicts, domestic discontent and disorder, and propaganda and nationalism in mobilizing the civilian population in support of “total war.”

<b>Competition Among Nations—Late 1800</b>	
<b>Rivalry</b>	<b>Example</b>
Competition for markets and materials	Germany competed with Great Britain, Europe’s industrial leader.
Competition for colonies in Africa and Asia; imperialism	Great Britain was the leader in the race for colonies. Germany and France each sought to control Morocco, in northern Africa.
Competition for European territory	Austria-Hungary and Russia vied for influence in the Balkans.

**The Rise of Nationalism and Militarism**—Nationalism, a deep devotion to one’s own nation, fueled competition. It also encouraged the growth of militarism, the policy of glorifying military power and keeping an army prepared for war. In the 1890s, many European nations began building large armies.

**The Alliance System**—Each nation was required to support its allies. A conflict between any two countries could draw everyone into war. The Great Powers formed two alliances.

\_\_\_ In 1907, the Triple Alliance was composed of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy. By 1915, the Ottoman Turks and Bulgaria had joined and it became known as the Central Powers.

\_\_\_ In 1907, the Triple Entente was composed of France, Great Britain, and Russia. Italy joined in 1915; the United States in 1917. These countries became the **Allies**.

**The “Powder Keg” Leads to Total War**—The Balkan Peninsula was called the “powder keg” of Europe because of its more than 400 years of ethnic and political conflict. After the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, Serbia, a mostly Slavic country, nearly doubled its territory. Russia, also a largely Slavic country, supported Serbian expansion. Austria and Germany did not.

**The Powder Keg Ignites in 1914**

\_\_\_ June 28—Archduke Franz Ferdinand—heir to the Austria-Hungary throne—is killed by a Serbian nationalist in Bosnia, an Austro-Hungarian province.

\_\_\_ July 28—Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia. Russia mobilizes to aid Serbia.

\_\_\_ August 1—Germany, an ally of Austria-Hungary, declares war on Russia.

\_\_\_ August 3—Germany declares war on France, Russia’s ally.

\_\_\_ August 4—Germany tries to invade France through neutral Belgium. Great Britain, France’s ally, declares war on Germany.