

Name _____ Date _____



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT
STANDARD 10.5.2**

A War on Two Fronts

Specific Objective: Examine the principal theaters of battle, major turning points, and the importance of geographic factors in military decisions and outcomes.

During World War I, the **Central Powers** (Austria-Hungary, Germany, the Ottoman Turks, and Bulgaria) faced enemies on both sides of their borders—France to the west, and Russia to the east. France, Russia, Great Britain, and Italy in 1915 were the **Allied Powers**. Fighting concentrated in these border areas, which became known as the **Western Front** and the **Eastern Front**. Germany's strategy, the **Schlieffen Plan**, was first to attack France through neutral Belgium, before Russia on the Eastern Front had a chance to gather its forces.

The Western Front

- ___ After initial gains by the Germans, French and British troops were victorious at the **First Battle of the Marne** (September 1914). Germany realized that victory on the Western Front would not be quick and changed its strategy.
- ___ Combat on the Western Front was marked by bloodshed and stalemate largely because of **trench warfare**, in which soldiers fought each other from deep, rat-infested trenches. By early 1915, 600 miles of trenches stretched from the English Channel to the Swiss Border. Soldiers lived in horrible conditions and faced threats from efficient modern weapons and poison gas.
- ___ The **Battle of Verdun** and the **Battle of the Somme** each raged for months during 1916, and the **Battles of Ypres** took place between 1914 and 1918. Little ground was gained in these conflicts, but the human toll was staggering—each battle yielded more than 1 million casualties.

The Eastern Front

- ___ Russia and the Serbs battled the Central Powers on the Eastern Front. There, Germany won a number of victories. At the **Battle of Tannenberg** (1914), Germany won a decisive victory over Russia. In 1915, the Central Powers continued to sweep through Russia and claimed victory in Poland; in 1916 they claimed victory in Romania.
- ___ Russia was old-fashioned country fighting a modern war. Russian soldiers faced the well-armed Germans with little more than courage. The Russians had only one asset—numbers. For more than three years, the enormous Russian army tied up the German army in the East. Thus, Germany could never hurl its full fighting force on the West.