

ACTIVITY FIVE: WAR AND PEACE

Learning Objectives

- To understand how wars start and how they can be ended;
- To look at the Treaty of Versailles and its effects ;
- To understand the connections between national and international history, economic, military, political, religious and social history.

Resources

- [Trench Brothers Historical Context](#)
- [BBC Bitesize Treaty of Versailles](#)
- Further sources as required

Introduction

1. Working as a class, small groups or pairs, discuss the following:
 - a. Think about your family and your friends. Do you often have arguments with them? What sort of things do you argue about? Do you sometimes find that small fights become big ones very quickly? Do you always take the same side?
 - b. Do you have a space you call your own at home? Do you get annoyed if people come in and disturb you without asking? What usually happens?
 - c. How do you usually make up with your family and friends after an argument? Does anything change afterwards?
2. When feeding back from the discussion, (maybe writing up good ideas on the board), link into the fact that countries often have arguments and need to make up. Can students see how them fighting with family and friends can link to this? Are there any recent examples of this that you can think of in the news at the moment?

MAIN TASKS

1. Think about the First World War. Make a list of reasons why it started and escalated e.g. Assassination of Franz Ferdinand, existing treaties with other countries to stop historical enemies resurfacing, arms race. You can go into as much or as little detail here as you like. Discuss these reasons. How important do they seem?
2. Look at the timeline of the War and also some of the statistics about how many people were killed or wounded in [Historical Context 19. The End of the War](#). Lead a discussion using the following questions as prompts:
 - After 4 very bloody years, what was achieved? How can you evaluate whether a war was 'worth' it?
 - Can you imagine what might have happened if there hadn't been a war? What about if the result had been different? (Think about the difference between having this discussion with the benefit of 100 years hindsight, and everything that's happened in between, and trying to assess this at the end of the war in 1918-19.)
3. Remind students of their discussion about how they end arguments with friends or family. Ask them how they think countries do this. How do countries make sure that war doesn't break

out again? Introduce the idea of treaties (probably already discussed above but in the context of previously existing treaties).

4. The Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1919. Either, show the students the video clips on the BBC Bitesize information website about the treaty, or use this as an opportunity for research. Ask them to make notes about what happened, and then feedback.
5. Discuss these questions either as a class or in small groups:
 - What penalties were imposed on the Germans. Does it seem fair? Did it go far enough or too far? (e.g. reparations etc.)
 - What other ways are there of making peace?
 - Can wrongs be righted and amends made or does no-one have the right to do this?
 - Are there any effects of the First World War that can still be felt?