

The Little Guys in The Great War

A WebQuest for Grade 11 Social Studies

By Zachary Wilson - 2006

Last updated September 2, 2011



[The Brave Defense of Belgium by her Little Army](#)

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Task](#) | [Process](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Teacher Page](#) | [Home](#)

#1 Introduction

The year is 1920 and an ugly chapter in world history has just ended. The Great War, which has encompassed every inhabited continent, is finally over. The treaties have been written, the armies are on their way home. Now the great work of rebuilding lies ahead. Most of the world wants only to forget the years of toil, bloodshed, and tears, but there are some who know that the world needs to remember the events of the war.

Of particular importance is remembering the contributions of the common soldiers; the men who did the fighting whether in the trenches, at sea, or in the air. Who were these fighting men? What places around the world did they come from, and where did they end up? What did they do in their spare time? How did they live and die? Everyone remembers the big names and what the kings and generals and presidents did. But what was the Great War like for the little guys?

In this WebQuest you will try to answer this question by looking at photographs taken during the First World War. What was life like for the men fighting the largest war the world had seen? What do the pictures tell you about them?

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Task](#) | [Process](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Teacher Page](#) | [Home](#)

#2 Task

You and your partner will be assigned to represent a country which fought in the First World War at the League of Nations Historical Council. Use the links below to get to read about your tasks.

[Britain](#)
[France](#)

[Japan](#)
[Germany](#)
[The Ottoman Empire](#)
[The Austrian Empire](#)
[Russia](#)
[Italy](#)
[The United States](#)
[Belgium](#)

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Task](#) | [Process](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Teacher Page](#) | [Home](#)

#3 Process

This section describes how you will go about completing your project.

1. You will be assigned a partner (or partners) and the group will be assigned a nation to research.
2. All group members will work together to complete the WWI photo analysis activity at [Picturing Modern America](#).
3. Find background information
 - Partners will examine the [WWI Timeline](#) and the [Events and Statistics](#) web sites to gain background knowledge about the war.
4. You will decide who wants to take the following roles.
 - **Photo Analyst** - Creates a picture summary for each photo.
 - **National Historian** - Creates the one page national contribution summary.
5. Each member will search through the collected [WWI Newspaper Pictorials](#) looking for single pictures that best represent the soldiers from their county. The group will decide together which 4 - 5 photographs will be included.
6. Groups will print the pages that their picture is on and cut away the portion that will not be used. Each group will be provided with poster board backing, which they will secure their pictures to.
7. Groups will analyze the photographs based only on what they can see in the picture, logically assume, and find written in the caption. Findings will be recorded on the [War Photos Analysis sheet](#).
8. Groups will discuss how this information should be presented to the Historical Council and will outline their presentation.
9. Individual Projects
 - **Photo Analyst** – After analyzing the photographs with your partner create a ½ page summary for each of them. Refer to the rubric to see complete requirements for your project
 - **National Historian** – After reviewing background information and reviewing photos write a 1 page summary of the accomplishments of your country's troops. Even if your country was on the 'losing' side there will still be great battles and hardships to mention. (Put a positive spin on it). See the rubric to find complete guidelines for your project.
10. Groups will present together their photos, orally summarize their findings for the council, and affix their photographs to the map display. See the rubric below for guidelines on your oral presentation.

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Task](#) | [Process](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Teacher Page](#) | [Home](#)

#4 Evaluation

Each student will receive a group grade on the oral report, which is presented jointly

as a group, but will receive an individual grade on the separate project.

View the links below to see the scoring rubrics for each portion of the WebQuest.

[Photo Analysis Rubric](#)

[National Contribution Rubric](#)

[Oral Presentation Rubric](#)

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Task](#) | [Process](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Teacher Page](#) | [Home](#)

#5 Conclusion

Now that you have looked into what life was like for the common soldiers in WWI take a few minutes and consider these questions. What were some of the everyday things soldiers dealt with? What did they do that affects us today? What made them do it; why would they give up what they had at home to go fight such an enormous war? Would you be willing to do the same?

Write a journal entry to record your thoughts about these questions and to note a few details from each presentation. Write this journal entry as an email to your teacher for his/her review. Make sure you completely answer the above questions.

It is important to remember that, although it is the generals, kings, emperors, and diplomats who are usually featured in textbooks, it was the little guys who made everything happen. Without them no general, president, or king would have been famous at all. They were the ones who kept going when things got tough and who lived and died because of how the war went. They were the ones who ultimately decided how the war was won and lost. Looking at it that way kind of makes the little guys seem a lot bigger.

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Task](#) | [Process](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Teacher Page](#) | [Home](#)

#6 Credits and References

Designed by Zachary Wilson - Graduate Student/Assistant, 2006, with [Teaching with Primary Sources at Waynesburg University](#). Last updated September 2, 2011.

Template created April 2006 by Amy Martin, [Teaching with Primary Sources at Waynesburg](#) based on a template designed by Lisa Bradshaw, [Teaching with Primary Sources- Colorado](#).

Many ideas for webquest content and worksheets were adapted by permission from [Teaching with Primary Sources - Northern Virginia Partnership](#).

The Little Guys in The Great War

A WebQuest for Grade 11 Social Studies

Zachary Wilson 2006

Last updated September 2, 2011



[The Brave Defense of Belgium by her Little Army](#)

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#7 Introduction for Teachers

This lesson was developed as part of An Adventure of the American Mind at Waynesburg College, a federally funded professional development program to assist teachers in using Library of Congress resources to support student learning.

The lesson is intended to be both a review of and culmination to a unit centered on the First World War. Students will have studied early twentieth century history including these topics: Tensions and arms buildup in the early 1900's; Causes of WWI, How WWI was fought; The victory of the Allied Powers; The Versailles Treaty; This WebQuest focuses on the role of the common soldier in the First World War and what we can tell about them from the pictures we have of them. As anticipatory set teachers may display [War of the Nations Map](#)

School District and State: Waynesburg University, Teaching with Primary Sources, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#8 About the Learners

This WebQuest is designed for 11th grade social studies students, but could possibly be used in 12th grade by increasing the number of pictures each group has to analyze. This WebQuest could also be used by a middle school class by decreasing either the amount of writing required or the amount of pictures.

Before beginning this WebQuest students should have a good working knowledge of the general course of events of WWI. Students should also possess the technical know how to enable them to save an image from the internet and word process a document in MS Word.

Modifications for specific students

Gifted students can analyze more photographs or read and find pictures that illustrate the novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque

Learning disabled students require more time to complete this WebQuest. These students may also need extra practice analyzing photographs through [Picturing Modern America](#).

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#9 Pennsylvania Academic Standards

Identify and evaluate primary documents material artifacts and historic sites important in United States history from 1890 to Present. – (History 8.3.12B)

Evaluate the significance of individuals and groups who made major political and cultural contributions to world history since 1450. – (History 8.4.12A)

Identify and explain important documents, material artifacts and historic sites in world history. – (History 8.4.6B)

ISTE NETS for Students

Students will use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity. (#3)

Students will use technology to locate, evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources. (#5)

Students will use technology resources for solving problems and making informed decisions. (#6)

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#10 Process for Teachers

This WebQuest takes a week or more of class periods to complete. The individual assignments may be completed outside of class, but it is recommended that time be given to the students in class to at least begin these projects. It is suggested that seven class periods be allowed for the completion of all the activities contained in this WebQuest. Five periods should be given for the completion of the tasks, one for the oral presentations, and one period for students to journal their concluding thoughts.

If desired by the teacher this WebQuest could be integrated with a language arts class (particularly a class studying *All Quiet on the Western Front* or WWI poetry)

The following section is the process the students will go through in accomplishing the tasks given to them. These instructions also appear in the student section of the WebQuest. Notes for instructors appear *italicized* below.

1. You will be assigned a partner (or partners) and you will both be assigned a nation to research.
 - *Care should be given in making these assignments because each pair of students will need to complete several tasks to complete the WebQuest. Be sure that each group contains one student with particularly good computing/technical skills.*
2. Both group members will work together to complete the WWI photo analysis

activity at [Picturing Modern America](#).

3. Find background information
 - Partners will examine the [WWI Timeline](#) and the [Events and Statistics](#) web sites to gain background knowledge about the war. *Other resources, such as textbooks or alternate web sites, that the instructor feels are appropriate may be used . Suggested resources are listed below in the 'Resources for Teachers' section .*
4. You will decide who wants to take the following roles.
 - **Photo Analyst** - Creates a picture summary for each photo.
 - **National Historian** - Creates the one page national contribution summary.
 - *Ideally these roles will be voluntary but may be assigned. More roles and assignments may be added as group size warrants. Each group member, in addition to their individual projects, will participate in the oral presentation.*
5. Each member will search through the collected [WWI Newspaper Pictorials](#) looking for single pictures that best represent the soldiers from their county. The group will decide together which 4 - 5 photographs will be included.
6. Groups will print the pages that their picture is on and cut away the portion that will not be used. Each group will be provided with poster board backing, which they will secure their pictures to.
 - *Glue, card stock, scissors, and other art supplies will be necessary for the students to complete this task.*
7. Groups will analyze the photographs based only on what they can see in the picture, logically assume, and find written in the caption. Findings will be recorded on the War Photos Analysis sheet.
8. Groups will discuss how this information should be presented to the Historical Council and will outline their presentation.
 - *Remind students periodically that their presentations should pull together both the individual projects and the background information they have found.*
9. Individual Projects
 - **Photo Analyst** – After analyzing the photographs with your partner create a ½ page summary for each of them. Refer to the rubric to see complete requirements for your project
 - **National Historian** – After reviewing background information and reviewing photos write a 1 page summary of the accomplishments of your country's troops. Even if your country was on the 'losing' side there will still be great battles and hardships to mention. (Put a positive spin on it). See the rubric to find complete guidelines for your project.
10. Groups will present together their photos, orally summarize their findings for the council, and affix their photographs to the map display. See the rubric below for guidelines on your oral presentation.
 - *A large map of the world will be necessary for students to pin/paste/fasten their photos to prior to their oral report.*

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#11 Resources for Teachers

-WWI Newspaper Pictorials (from American Memory)

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/rotogravures/>

-WWI Military Newspapers (from American Memory)

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/sgphtml/sashtml/sashome.html>

-The Great War (from PBS)

<http://www.pbs.org/greatwar/>

-The First World War
<http://www.firstworldwar.com/index.htm>

-Map of the World
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3200.ct000575>

Suggested Readings

Keegan, John. (1998). The First World War. New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc.
ISBN: 0375400524

Remarque, Eric. (1987). All Quiet on the Western Front. Ballantine Books.
ISBN: 0449213943

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) |
[Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#12 Evaluation for Teachers

Each student will receive a group grade and an individual grade for this WebQuest. The individual grade will come from the individual assignments and the group grade will come from the group oral presentation. The Photo Analysis Summary is worth 30 points, the National Contribution Paper is also worth 30 points, and the oral presentation is worth 40 points.

An additional goal of this WebQuest is to give students skills in working in small groups. To emphasize the need for teamwork the group portion was designed to hold more significance in relation to the students grades.

The following are evaluation tools used in this WebQuest:

[War Photo Analysis Sheet](#)
[Photo Analysis Rubric](#)
[National Contribution Paper Rubric](#)
[Oral Presentation Rubric](#)

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) |
[Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#13 Conclusion for Teachers

If your class uses journal writing on a regular basis have the students journal on the questions provided below. If you class does not journal regularly have them write a brief response to the questions. Discuss students' responses, particularly responses to the final question.

The following is the text which appears in the Conclusion section of the Student Page.

Now that you have looked into what life was like for the common soldiers in WWI take a few minutes and consider these questions. What were some of the everyday things soldiers dealt with? What did they do that affects us today? What made them do it; why would they give up what they had at home to go fight such an enormous war? Would you be willing to do the same?

Write a journal entry to record your thoughts about these questions and to note a few details from each presentation. Write this journal entry as an email to your teacher for his/her review. Make sure you completely answer the above questions.

It is important to remember that, although it is the generals, kings, emperors, and diplomats who are usually featured in textbooks, it was the little guys who made everything happen. Without them no general, president, or king would have been famous at all. They were the ones who kept going when things got tough and who lived and died because of how the war went. They were the ones who ultimately decided how the war was won and lost. Looking at it that way kind of makes the little guys seem a lot bigger.

What was the Great War like for the little guys?

[Introduction](#) | [Learners](#) | [Standards](#) | [Process](#) | [Resources](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Conclusion](#) | [Credits](#) | [Student Page](#)

#14 Credits and References

Designed by Zachary Wilson - Graduate Student/Assistant, 2006, with [Teaching with Primary Sources at Waynesburg University](#). Last updated September 2, 2011.

Template created April 2006 by Amy Martin, [Teaching with Primary Sources at Waynesburg](#) based on a template designed by Lisa Bradshaw, [Teaching with Primary Sources- Colorado](#).

Many ideas for webquest content and worksheets were adapted by permission from [Teaching with Primary Sources - Northern Virginia Partnership](#).