

| Key Events | | Section B: Part 3 Ending of World War I 1917-1918 | |
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| 1917 Feb 6 th April | Desperate to break stalemate, Germany restarts unrestricted submarine warfare. USA declares war on Germany | Effects of the British Blockade | The main activity of the British navy had been to blockade Germany's ports to stop essential supplies of food and war materials reaching Germany. By 1917 the Germans were feeling the effects of the blockade and tried to starve Britain out first so resumed unrestricted submarine warfare. Unfortunately attacking US ships brought the USA into the war in April 1917. Crucially by 1918 G's economy was being starved of raw materials and food for the people and soldiers. People were rioting and the navy at Kiel mutinied. This put pressure on the Kaiser to abdicate and the new government to seek peace in order to restore order. |
| | | USA's entry into war | The USA joined the war after G had resumed unrestricted submarine warfare and it had been discovered G hoped to ally with Mexico – a rival of the USA's. The effects were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Huge psychological blow to Germany. Crucially US navy was 3rd largest and its destroyers could protect B's ships in convoy across the Atlantic. This kept Britain supplied. - USA sent tanks and heavy guns to aid the war of movement in 1918. - USA sent over a million troops that were well fed, well equipped which was a huge boost to the Allied war effort aiding the 100 days Offensive. |
| Mar and Nov | RUSSIAN REVOLUTION begins in March – army becomes less effective. November revolution brings in Communist government who seek peace with Germany and sign Brest-Litovsk treaty. The Allies (Britain, France and USA) lose an ally. G transfer 1000's of troops to Western Front. 1918 German LUDENDORFF OFFENSIVE initially breaks through the Allied lines but G's can't maintain. Allied 100 DAYS OFFENSIVE begins. Allies push German army back using a combination of tactics. 8 th Aug – “Black Day” – worse day for German army. By Sept Allies reach Hindenburg line. Kaiser abdicates. 9 th G becomes a Republic. 11 th Armistice signed 1919 Treaty of Versailles signed. | Military developments in 1918 | The advances in technology meant tanks were better equipped to deal with the terrain and wireless communication between aircraft and artillery improved their accuracy. There was a change in military tactics such as the creeping barrage developed from 1916 onwards which replaced the rigid trench warfare mentality that had led to stalemate. The effects were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New attitude meant Generals used new weapons more effectively, using a combination of weapons e.g troops supported by tanks, aircraft and artillery created a war of movement as seen during the 100 days offensive. - As big guns hit targets accurately, lay down smokescreens or gave covering fire for their men whilst attacking the allies were successful. |
| 1918 Mar | | German Ludendorff Offensive | March 1918 G's launched a spring offensive. G's started with a typical huge bombardment and gas attacks, followed up with attacks by smaller bands of “Storm troopers” – highly trained, lightly equipped troops. But G's lost 400,000 men and had no reserves to call on. Poor discipline, ill-equipped and poorly fed meant G's were no match for Allied forces. |
| May - Aug | | Allied 100 Days Offensive | Between May and August the Germans could no longer make any progress. They were up against well-led and well-equipped Allied forces. With the support of the US troops and equipment such as tanks. Only a matter of time before G's surrendered. Effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allies were much more successful against their poorly disciplined, ill-equipped opposition. - 8 Aug Allies counter attack along Western Front – known by Germany's army as “Black Day”. By September reached Hindenburg line, by October the German army was retreating. |
| Sept | | Abdication of the Kaiser | In an attempt to avoid a potential revolution like in Russia the Kaiser abdicated. Many believed the a peace settlement would be based on President Wilson's 14 points. However, the new Weimar president in Germany Friedrich Ebert faced a critical situation – starving people, riots so needed peace quickly. |
| Nov | | Role of General Haig and Marshal Foch | Haig's reputation damaged by huge casualties at the Somme 1916 but actively promoted new strategies and technologies used successfully during the 100 Days offensive. French Commander Marshal Foch appointed Commander-in-chief of Allied forces. Planned with Haig the successful 100 Days Offensive. |
| 1919 June | Armistice | Signed on 11 th November. Came into effect at 11a.m. G had to evacuate all occupied territory, release all prisoners, surrender navy; guns, machine guns, planes, trucks and lorries had to be handed over. Those who signed it accused of stabbing G in the back. | |