

Key Events		Section B: Part 1 World War One 1914-1918 – What was life like in the trenches?	
Aug 1914	British troops delay the German advance at the Battle of Mons	The failure of the Schlieffen Plan	The German plan had been to defeat France in 6 weeks (following a surprise attack via neutral Belgium) before moving east to defeat Russia. However, the Germans encountered problems from the start. Belgium put up a strong resistance, the British slowed the Germans down at Mons and the French held them at the river Marne outside of Paris by ferrying troops in a fleet of taxis. Both sides now tried to out-flank each other in what became known as the race to the sea. The failure to out-flank meant that both sides dug defensive trenches.
Sep 1914	French troops halt the German advance at the river Marne.		
Aug/Sep 1914	The failure of the Schlieffen Plan leads to stalemate on the Western Front	The nature of trench warfare	The industrialisation of warfare and the introduction of new technology, meant that war was on a bigger and more deadly scale than ever before. Trenches were deep ditches protected by barbed wire, sand bags and machine guns. The trenches offered the best protection for soldiers from machine guns, snipers, shell fire. However, to attack, soldiers had to get out of the protected trench and cross ‘no man’s land’ leading to heavy casualties. Soldiers did not spend all their time in the trenches, as the conditions were terrible. Rats, fleas and lice made life uncomfortable and rotting corpses sewage and unwashed soldiers led to terrible smell. Some suffered from trench foot especially in the wet winters of 1914-15. Men kept up morale and continued to fight for different reasons such as a sense of adventure, discipline, leisure time, humour, comradeship, patriotism, comforts and respect.
Dec 1914	British and German troops stop fighting on Christmas day.		
May 1916	The biggest naval battle of the war – Jutland		
July 1916	The Battle of the Somme	New technology and weapons	New weapons were developed to try to break the stalemate, artillery, machine guns, gas, tanks, aircraft. None broke stalemate alone but when used in combination proved highly effective during the 100 Days Offensive.
July 1917	Battle of Passchendaele	The Christmas Truce	On Christmas day 1914, soldiers from Britain and Germany got out of their trenches and met up in no man’s land. They exchanged food, cigarettes and drinks and some even played games of football. A few days later though they returned to trench warfare.
Sep-Nov 1918	Foch and Haig lead the 100 Days Campaign that leads to allied victory		
1919	Treaty of Versailles	The Battle of Jutland	The largest sea battle of the war. The British lost more ships and men. Initially seen as a disaster by Britain, but the German attempt to break the blockade failed and the German fleet returned to port and remained trapped for the rest of the war.
Key people		The Battle of the Somme	The worst day in British military history, 50,000 casualties. The battle went on for several months as General Haig looked for a breakthrough. Over a 300,000 killed overall, the German army never recovered its strength after the battle. Many have criticised the waste of life, but the battle is seen as an overall allied victory
Marshal Foch	Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces		
General Sir Douglas Haig	British General blamed for high casualties at the Battle of the Somme, also in command during the victorious 100 Days Campaign	The Battle of Passchendaele	Fought over the low lying fields of Belgium, the battle is responsible for many iconic images of the mud filled horror of trench warfare. Over 400,000 men were killed or wounded for very little territorial gain. It was clear that new tactics were needed.
Lloyd George	British Prime Minister who wanted a compromise treaty that allowed Germany to trade again	Foch / Haig and the 100 Days Campaign	Marshal Foch took overall command of allied forces and co-ordinated the efforts of French, British and American troops. The British in particular won a series of victories, using a combination of tanks, artillery, planes and poison gas, all controlled by better communication. The result was defeat for the German army and an end to the war. Soldiers and sailors in Germany began to refuse to fight and the Kaiser was forced to abdicate. The war ended at 11am on the 11/11/18.
Woodrow Wilson	President of the USA who wanted a fair treaty that did not punish Germany too harshly		
Georges Clemenceau	French Prime Minister who wanted revenge on Germany	The Treaty of Versailles	The leaders of Britain, France and USA met at Versailles to decide what should happen to Germany after the war. Lloyd George for Britain wanted to allow Germany to trade but with some punishment. Woodrow Wilson for the USA wanted a treaty that was fair to Germany and shared the blame. Clemenceau for France wanted to punish Germany in revenge for the damage and deaths caused by the war. The result was a compromise treaty that left Germany angry and wanting revenge.