

# The Who, What, Where, Why, & How's of WWI

1. **What** nation became a bitter enemy of France in the 1870's? Why?
2. **Why** did the alliance between Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary alarm Russian leaders?
3. **How** did the alliance system encourage militarism?
4. **What** is the main idea behind self-determination?
5. **How** were both imperialism & nationalism involved in the Balkan crisis?
6. **Why** did Russia support Serbian nationalist group that assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand?
7. **What** were the initial countries involved in World War I?
8. **What** was the major problem with Germany's invasion route into France?
9. **Why** did many Irish Americans sympathize with Germany and the Central Powers?
10. **How** did Great Britain and Germany try to win American support?
11. **Why** was America's prosperity intertwined with the military fortunes of Britain, France, and Russia?
12. **How** did Germany respond to Britain's blockade?
13. **What** did Germany do to keep the United States from breaking off diplomatic relations?
14. **What** did Germany promise to Mexico in return for Mexico's support in the war?
15. **What** event finally drew the United States into the war?

**Critical Thinking Skills Activity 9****Distinguishing Fact From Opinion****LEARNING THE SKILL**

Learning to *distinguish fact from opinion* can help you form reasonable judgments about what others say. A *fact* is a statement that can be proven by evidence such as records, documents, or historical sources. An *opinion* is a statement that may contain some truth but also contains a personal view or judgment.

Use the following guidelines to help you distinguish fact from opinion:

- Identify the facts by determining which statements can be proved.
- Consult reliable sources such as encyclopedias, almanacs, etc., to verify the facts.
- Identify the opinions by looking for statements of feeling or belief. Opinions often contain phrases such as *I believe*, *in my view*, *it is my conviction*, and *I think*.
- Identify the statement's purpose. What does the presenter want you to believe or do?

**PRACTICING THE SKILL**

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the excerpt below from a speech by Senator George Norris on April 4, 1917. It was delivered two days after President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany, bringing the United States into World War I. Then answer the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper.

... To my mind, what we ought to have maintained from the beginning was the strictest neutrality. If we had done this I do not believe we would have been on the verge of war at the present time. We had a right as a nation, if we desired, to be neutral. We had a technical right to respect the English war zone and to disregard the German war zone, but we could not do that and be neutral. I have no quarrel to find with the man who does not desire our country to remain neutral. While many such people are moved by selfish motives and hopes of gain, I have no doubt but that in a great many instances . . . there are many honest, patriotic citizens who think we ought to engage in this war. . . . I think such people err in judgment and to a great extent have been misled as to the real history and the true facts by the almost unanimous demand of the great combination of wealth that has a direct financial interest in our participation in the war. We have loaned many hundreds of millions of dollars to the allies in this controversy. While such action was legal . . . , there is no doubt in my mind but the enormous amount of money loaned to the allies . . . has been instrumental [the main influence] in bringing about a public sentiment in favor of our country taking a course that would make every bond worth a hundred cents on the dollar and making the payment of every debt certain and sure. . . .

1. Identify the facts in the excerpt. How can you verify them?
2. Identify the opinions in the excerpt. What phrases does Norris use to signal his opinions?
3. What is Norris's purpose? What does he want his audience to do?
4. How does knowing Norris's purpose help you view the excerpt more objectively?