

WORLD WAR I

Introduction

World War I (WWI), originally known as the European War, was one of the deadliest conflicts in history. The world's great economic powers were split into two opposing sides: the Allied Powers and the Central Powers. New deadly weapons and military strategies, such as trench warfare and submarines, affected the way in which this war was fought. These new technologies resulted in immense casualties, which gave rise to the need for physicians and hospitals dedicated to caring for wounded soldiers. In this lesson, students will explore WWI through the scrapbooks of Syracuse University alumnus and American military surgeon, Edward Van Duyn.

Standards

NY STATE STANDARD 1: HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES AND NEW YORK

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

NY STATE STANDARD 2: WORLD HISTORY (GRADES 9-12)

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

COMMON CORE: CC6-8RH/SS2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

AASL STANDARDS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER: 2.1.1

Continue an inquiry-based research process by applying critical thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, organization) to information and knowledge in order to construct new understandings, draw conclusions, and create new knowledge.

Learning Objectives

Using primary sources related to the lives of soldiers during WWI, students will:

- » Learn about primary sources, what they are and how to interpret them in order to help understand the past.



Grades 9-12 Materials

- » Primary Source Documents: Four photographs from the scrapbook of Edward Van Duyn.

- » Expand their knowledge about WWI and imagine what life was like as a military surgeon.
- » Create a timeline about the events that took place during WWI.

Assessment

Assessment should be largely based on a timeline, demonstrating the student's ability to:

- » Decipher primary source documents.
- » Think critically about WWI and military medical services.
- » Expand their thinking about WWI to include what life was like during the war from a surgeon's point of view.
- » Create a timeline that combines an imagined narrative about the photograph with actual moments in the war.

Students should use the primary source photograph they have been assigned to create a narrative timeline. The timeline should reflect what they imagine happened before the picture was taken, when the picture was taken, and after the picture was taken. Dates and key events from the war should be included in the timeline.

Getting Started

- » Explain that primary sources are original documents that tell us about the historical moments in which they were created. Ask the following questions: How can you tell that you are looking, touching, or listening to a primary source? What is a secondary source? Explain that secondary sources are interpretations of primary sources.
- » Introduce the skill of the lesson. In this lesson, students will expand their thinking about WWI to include what life was like during the war from a surgeon's point of view. To do this they will be examining photographs from the scrapbook of Edward Van Duyn. Explain that Van Duyn was an American military surgeon during WWI. He was placed with the Hospital Unit G from December 10, 1917 to May 5, 1919. After the students have examined the photographs, they will be creating a timeline that combines the events depicted in the photographs with real moments in the war.

Direct Instruction

1. Show the four photographs from Edward Van Duyn's scrapbook to the class. These include: "Photograph of WWI Hospital Unit Carrying Stretcher," "Photograph of WWI Soldiers Wearing Gas Masks in War Trench," "Photograph of WWI Soldier Standing by a French Ambulance for Red Cross," and "Photograph of WWI Soldiers Wounded from Battle."
2. Explain that students will be placed into four groups. Each group will be assigned one primary source photograph to decipher. Have the students brainstorm events that could have happened before and after their photograph through details in the image. For example, a student might conclude that the flag in the background of the "Photograph of WWI Soldiers Wearing Gas Masks in War Trench," suggests that these soldiers just arrived and planted their flag after a gruesome battle.
3. After the students have brainstormed in groups about their photographs, have them share these details with the class. Then ask the students to recall key moments of WWI that might have occurred at or near the time that these photographs were taken. Write those dates on the board. Also ask the students to recall what technological or military advances took place during WWI. Write the students' ideas about technological advances on the board. If there is a computer in the classroom, the teacher can have the students search for relevant or interesting events that took place during this time.

4. Next, have the students work in their groups to develop an imaginary narrative about Edward Van Duyn based on their photograph. Tell the students that their timeline should also incorporate real dates, events, and historical details from WWI. The timeline should represent what happened before the picture was taken, when the picture was taken, and after the picture was taken.

Reflection and Sharing

- » Have each group of students present their timeline to the class, pointing out the details of the photograph which gave them ideas for the narrative timeline.



“Photograph of WWI Soldiers Wearing Gas Masks in War Trench,” 1916. Scrapbook volume 2, Edward S. Van Duyn World War I Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.



“Photograph of WWI Hospital Unit Carrying Stretcher,” 1916. Scrapbook volume 2, Edward S. Van Duyn World War I Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.



“Photograph of WWI Soldier Standing by a French Ambulance for Red Cross,” 1916. Scrapbook volume 2, Edward S. Van Duyn World War I Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.



“Photograph of WWI Soldiers Wounded from Battle,” 1916. Scrapbook volume 2, Edwards S. Van Duyn World War I Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.