

Collin Libassi

Lesson: Anarchy, Militarism, and Alliances – The Buildup to World War I

Time: 90 minute block

Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

Discuss the difficulty of maintaining peace in the international system

Evaluate the effects of alliances on Europe's stability before WWI

Discuss the effects of militarism and an arms race on stability in Europe before WWI

SOL Objectives

WHII.9 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the worldwide impact of World War I by

a) explaining economic and political causes

Explanation

I cannot take full credit for this game because it is a variation on a game done by William and Mary Professor Michael Tierney. However, I have made substantial modifications to the game in order to fit it to my classes and my particular lesson. In this lesson students will each student will be part of a group that represents a country that took part in World War I. In my game, students were not even told that they were about to simulate World War I, and their country name was a code name that in some way related to the real country. Other teachers may decide to tell students which country they represent beforehand.

There are 6 countries represented in this game – Serbia, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, and Great Britain. The students are assigned to one of these groups, and the number of students in each group approximates the population of that country. Each country is given a note card and a game card. The game card will be where they write down their artillery purchases. The note card will have the following information about their country. The population count assumes a class of 25 students.

Great Britain [my code name: The Kingdom of Fish and Chips]

Population: 4

Production Capability: \$2 per round

Allies: The Republic of Snails, The United Realm of Caviar

France [The Republic of Snails]

Population: 4

Production capability: 4

Allies: The Kingdom of Fish and Chips, The United Realm of Caviar

Germany [Bratwurstia]

Population: 4

Production Capability: \$4 per round

Allies: The Empire of Cheese Dumplings

Russia [The United Realm of Caviar]

Population: 7

Production capability: \$2 per round

Allies: The Kingdom of Fish and Chips, The Republic of Snails, and The Union of Stuffed Cabbage

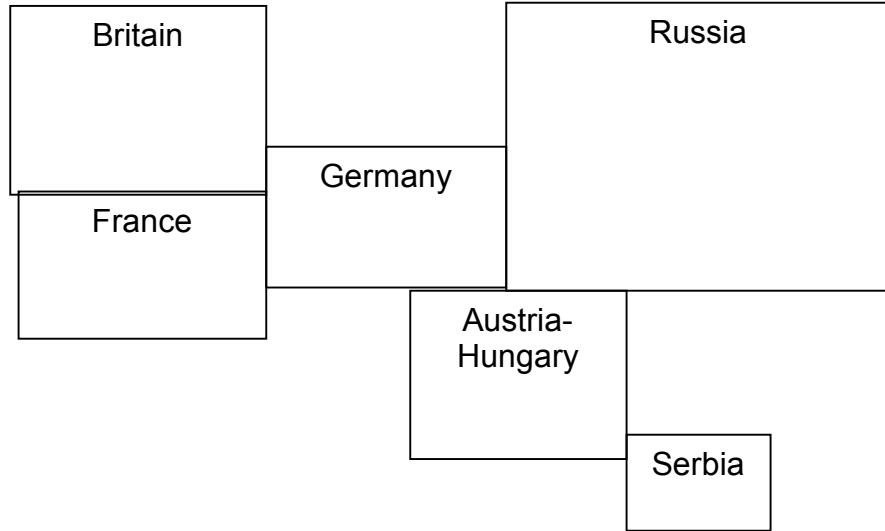
Serbia [The Union of Stuffed Cabbage]

Population: 2

Production capability: \$1 per round

Allies: The United Realm of Caviar

Each country's production capability is an approximation of its ability to put well-trained and well-equipped ground troops into the field in WWI. While Great Britain was a great economic and naval power, its army was not as strong as Germany's. Russia has a high population, but their productive capability does not correspond to their population. The map below shows how countries will be arranged in the classroom. The Central Powers are surrounded by the Allies, though the Allies will not be able to take advantage of this situation unless they work together.



Materials

Game cards/directions for each group

About 50 pictures of WWI artillery and a \$1 bill, cut in to small pieces to be used as game pieces in each round

2 dice

Note cards with each group's name, production capability, and allies written down

Procedure:

[10 minutes]

The teacher will explain the rules of the game to the students while they follow along with their game cards and direction sheets. According to the game rules, the game will be used as a reading quiz grade. The way each country's score is calculated, there is a possibility of getting much greater than 100% or as low as 0 depending on how well their country does. I have no intention of actually giving students a quiz grade for this assignment, however, as it is likely that a few countries may be taken over, meaning a significant portion of the class would get a grade of 0. Still, the students must think that their grade is at stake because it makes the game much more serious. Though war will most likely occur in this game, I want students' decisions to go to war to be very calculated decisions rather than simply because they believe war will be more fun.

[60 minutes]

Students will play the game; rules are described below. After the teacher distributes the money in round 1, he/she will hand a note card to Serbia telling them that they have just assassinated a member of the Austro-Hungarian royal family. They will then take one dollar from Austria-Hungary.

[20 minutes]

The teacher will lead a discussion on what happened in the game. Peace was obviously the best possible outcome for the class as a whole, but it may or may not have happened. If there was peace, how did they achieve it? If there was war, why were they not able to maintain peace? Did the assassination have any effect on the actions of the other countries? What effect did the alliances have on the decisions of war and peace?

Assessment: The assessment for this lesson is formative and discussion-based. I am interested in the students' abilities to discuss what happened in the game and their analysis of the issues at hand. Later in the World War I unit students will be required to write a short essay describing the causes of the war.

War or Peace: A Simulation in International Relations

Your Team:

Round Units of Artillery Purchased

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

This page is your GAME CARD

Description: In this game each of your groups plays the leadership role of a different country. The desks you are sitting at are the territory occupied by your state. The game will continue for 4 rounds. During each round you must make decisions about economics and war. The rounds are each broken down into phases during which you can take specific actions.

Scoring: Each state produces a certain number of dollars per round. You may either keep that money or use it to buy artillery units to defend your state or attack others. You only get points for the money you manage to accumulate by the end of the game. You get one point per dollar.

In the end, your group will get a reading quiz grade for its final money count, based off the percentage of dollars accumulated versus the total number possible to have accumulated. Also, the winning group receives 3 bonus points, the second place group gets 2, and the third place group gets 1. If there is a 2-way tie for the lead, each group gets 2 points and the third place group gets nothing. If there is a 3 way tie for first place, each group gets 1 point and the rest get nothing. If there is a tie of more than 3 countries, no one gets the bonus points. ***At the end of the game, the only thing that will earn you points toward your grade is possession of money!***

Playing the Game:

Phase 1: Guns or Butter

1. Each state produces a certain number of dollars per round
2. You may keep the money or use it to buy artillery units for one dollar each.
3. All decisions about purchasing weapons are made "in secret." Any purchase of military hardware is only revealed to other countries after every state has decided whether and how much to purchase. (You will write down the number of artillery purchased on this game card and can conceal it until artillery is distributed.)

Phase 2: Interstate Bargaining and Alliances:

During this phase you may:

1. Make demands and offers to other states

- Threaten to attack unless you are given money
- Ask a state to help defend you or for a sum of money to be paid in a later round.

2. Support your allies

- You and you allies can decide to wage a combined attack on a common enemy
- You may send money to an ally to help them purchase artillery. This money can be sent to an ally that does not even border your territory. However, you cannot send artillery units to an ally that does not border you.

3. Declare Neutrality:

- Inform other countries that you only want peace and will not attack any other states.
- Call for a world-wide collective security coalition where war is "banned."

Phase 3: WAR or NO WAR

You may attack any **non-ally** that borders you. You do not have to attack any other states if you prefer not to. If you win a war with another state, you get its land, its current amount of money, and its ability to make money each round.

1. Announce whom you wish to attack.
2. The attacker lays down **all** his/her forces on the defender's desk.
3. The defender can ask for help from any bordering allies.
4. The attacker can ask for help from any bordering allies.
5. Allies *in bordering states* may join the battle, but they must declare their desire to do so before the battle begins and decide how many artillery units they will contribute to their allies' side.
6. Each side rolls dice, and whichever side has the higher number kills off 1 enemy artillery unit. In the event of a tie, both states lose 1 artillery unit. The attacker may continue the attack as long as desired, or break off the attack after any battle round. The defender may counter attack if the attacker decides to quit.
7. If one state loses all of its military units in a battle, the winners take the losers' money and game card. If all allies cannot agree on how to split up part of the spoils (money, game cards), then those items stay with the loser. Such a loser would still be in the game and continue to receive their designated dollars per round as long as they have a game card.
8. No state can initiate an attack on more than 1 other state per round.

Final Score: Money Units _____ Names of group members _____