

Name _____

Date _____

The Ottoman Empire's Role in World War I

Reading Passage

The Ottoman Empire, once a dominant force across Southeast Europe, Western Asia, and North Africa, entered World War I in 1914 on the side of the Central Powers, which included Germany and Austria-Hungary. Ottoman leaders sought an alliance with Germany to strengthen their declining empire, recover lost territories, and protect themselves from historic rivals such as Russia, Britain, and France. This decision was pivotal in shaping the course of the war and the future of the Middle East.

During the war, Ottoman forces fought on several major fronts. One of the most significant was the Gallipoli Campaign (1915–1916), where they successfully defended the Dardanelles Strait against Allied forces, notably the ANZAC troops from Australia and New Zealand. The victory at Gallipoli became a symbol of national resilience and elevated the status of Mustafa Kemal, who would later be known as Atatürk. For the Allied powers, it was a humiliating blunder that ended their campaigns in Turkey.

Elsewhere, the Ottomans engaged Russian forces in the Caucasus, British troops in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq), and fought campaigns in Palestine and Syria. The Arab Revolt (1916–1918), supported by Britain, further destabilized Ottoman control over its Arab provinces.

The involvement of the Ottoman Empire broadened World War I into a truly global conflict, bringing the fighting to the Middle East, the Caucasus, and the eastern Mediterranean. The Gallipoli Campaign, in particular, became a defining moment for the national consciousness of Australia and New Zealand. Meanwhile, the Arab Revolt and military defeats weakened the Ottoman state.

By 1918, the Ottoman Empire was defeated and signed the Armistice of Mudros, ending its participation in the war. Allied occupation and the loss of territories led to significant political changes. The defeat was followed by the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1923), which resulted in the abolition of the Ottoman sultanate in 1922 and the founding of the Republic of Türkiye under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923.

These events marked the end of the centuries-old Ottoman Empire and redrew the political boundaries of the modern Middle East.

Fill in the Blank

Word Bank: Gallipoli, Central Powers, 1914, Republic of Türkiye, Armistice of Mudros, Atatürk, Arab Revolt

1. The Ottoman Empire entered World War I in _____.
2. The Ottoman Empire joined the _____ alongside Germany and Austria-Hungary.
3. The famous campaign where Ottoman forces defended the Dardanelles was called _____.
4. The revolt, supported by Britain, that weakened Ottoman control over Arab provinces was the _____.
5. After World War I, the Ottoman Empire signed the _____ and was eventually replaced by the _____.

Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question:

1. What was the main reason the Ottoman Empire joined World War I?
 - a. To strengthen the empire and regain lost influence
 - b. To form an alliance with Britain
 - c. To end the Gallipoli Campaign
 - d. To support the Arab Revolt
2. Which military campaign became a symbol of Ottoman resilience and influenced Turkish national identity?
 - a. Mesopotamia Campaign
 - b. Caucasus Campaign
 - c. Gallipoli Campaign
 - d. Arab Revolt
3. Who led the Turkish War of Independence and became the first president of the Republic of Türkiye?
 - a. Sultan Mehmed VI
 - b. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk
 - c. Lawrence of Arabia
 - d. Enver Pasha
4. What event directly contributed to the weakening of Ottoman control over Arab provinces?
 - a. Signing the Armistice of Mudros
 - b. The Arab Revolt

- c. Gallipoli Campaign
- d. Formation of the Central Powers

1. Which treaty ended the Ottoman Empire's involvement in World War I?
 - a. Treaty of Versailles
 - b. Treaty of Sèvres
 - c. Armistice of Mudros
 - d. Treaty of Lausanne

Open-Ended Questions

Answer the following questions in complete sentences:

1. Explain two reasons why the Ottoman Empire decided to join World War I. Support your answer with evidence from the passage.

2. How did the outcomes of World War I affect the political boundaries and leadership of the Middle East? Give specific examples.

3. Discuss the significance of the Gallipoli Campaign for both the Ottoman Empire and the ANZAC forces.

Answer Key

Fill in the Blank Answers

1. 1914
2. Central Powers
3. Gallipoli
4. Arab Revolt
5. Armistice of Mudros and Republic of Türkiye

Multiple Choice Answers

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. B
5. C

Sample Responses (Open-Ended)

1. The Ottoman Empire joined World War I to strengthen its declining power and regain lost territories, seeing Germany as a strong ally. Additionally, it sought protection against historic rivals such as Russia, Britain, and France, who threatened its remaining lands.
2. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire led to the occupation and division of its territories by Allied powers, redrawing the political boundaries of the Middle East. The abolition of the sultanate and the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye under Atatürk marked a shift in leadership and the end of centuries of imperial rule.
3. The Gallipoli Campaign was significant for the Ottoman Empire as it defended a vital strait and boosted national pride and hope. For the ANZAC forces, it became both a military blunder and a defining moment in their national identities.