Photograph, American soldiers wearing gas masks move through a field of flowers. One man not wearing a mask is falling back as if having been injured.
Caption reads, Attacking Front Line Trenches. Inscription reads, fake!

What Made WWI a Modern War? – A Digital Investigation of WWI Technology

Recommended Grade Levels: 7-12

Course/Content Area(s): Social Studies, World History, U.S. History, Media Literacy

Authored by: Mary Kate Lonergan, National WWI Museum and Memorial Teacher Advisor

LESSON OVERVIEW:	This dynamic lesson is designed to spark students' curiosity and enhance their inquiry skills through a captivating digital investigation. By exploring the factors that made WWI a modern war, students can delve into topics and resources that resonate with their interests. Throughout the lesson, they will refine their media literacy and analysis abilities, culminating in the creation of media that answers the pivotal question: What made WWI a modern war?
OBJECTIVES:	*Students will:*
	● Examine and explore the different innovations and technologies developed during WWI ● Consider and evaluate the impact of new technologies developed during WWI ● Answer the essential question: What made WWI a modern war? ● Evaluate and ask questions about the reliability of the sources they engage with during the lesson
STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:	**National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework Standards:** **D2.His.1.9-12.** Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts. **D2.His.10.9-12.** Detect possible limitations in various kinds of historical evidence and differing secondary interpretations. **D4.3.9-12.** Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).
TIME NEEDED:	Two 40 minute class periods, one 80 minute class or flexible depending on modifications
INTERDISCIPLINARY:	Includes some media literacy components and digital creation
PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:	● Students should have at least a basic understanding of the causes of WWI and early combat. ● They should also have a basic understanding of why the war became a stalemate.
MATERIALS NEEDED:	● Access to the internet and computers ● "What Made WWI a Modern War?" Digital Investigation SLIDES - Make your own copy by clicking "File" and then clicking "Make Copy of Entire Presentation"

LESSON

PRE-ASSESSMENT/INTRODUCTION/HOOK:

Brainstorm Warm Up: Ask students to recall how wars before 1914 were fought and using what type of weapons. Record their responses and display them for students to see.

Optional Image Analysis: Project an image of a World War I soldier (trench warfare is ideal). Consider using an image from the [Museum and Memorial's collection here](). Ask students to write down 3-5 things they see that seem "outdated" in today's combat context. Briefly discuss as a class, then reveal it is an image from WWI and ask how these seemingly outdated methods could be "modern" for their time. Follow up and ask: "What methods and technology present in this photo are still used today?"

Set up the Digital Investigation: Show the video clip titled "Tech Developments of WWI" on slide 2 of the "[What Made WWI a Modern War? Digital Investigation]()" and provide some context as needed. Connect the lesson to the brainstorm above and highlight how combat and military technology transformed during WWI.

- Consider asking students to reflect on the source and model some of the independent thinking they will do while completing the digital investigation:
  - Who created this video?
  - What is the purpose of the video (persuade, inform, entertain, or sell)? How do you know?
  - How might the purpose and authorship affect the reliability of this source?
  - What makes this a reliable source for learning about WWI?
  - What makes this a less reliable source for learning about WWI?
  - What questions would you need to ask in order to determine how reliable a source this is?

DIRECTIONS:

Review Directions: After the warmup (and optional activity) review the directions on slide 2 with students.

1. Students will select 5 technologies or advancements of WWI in the following slide tableaus (slides 3, 6, and 9). They should click on the link and explore the resource to learn more. Links vary - some are video clips, some are infographics, some are primary sources, etc. Teachers should review all resources before implementation. Additionally, teachers can change or update any resources to better meet the needs of their students' or context.*
2. Students will complete the corresponding chart for each of their five choices (slides 4, 7, and 10).
3. Slide 11 asks students to synthesize and summarize their findings and thoughts about what made WWI a modern war.

4. Assessment: Students can choose between 3 synthesis and assessment activities (slide 12): 1. A letter from a WWI soldier, 2. A vlog from the point of view of a WWI soldier, or 3. A "historical head" of a WWI soldier. Again, teachers can adapt, edit, or eliminate any of these options.

***Note on how to edit and adapt slides:** The slides are designed so that students can only type and click as needed. Teachers can edit the slides by clicking on "Slide" in the top menu bar, then clicking "edit theme." From there, teachers can edit the theme slides and add or eliminate anything.

POST-ASSESSMENT:

Students can choose between 3 synthesis and assessment activities (slide 12):
1. **A letter from a WWI soldier:** Students will write a letter home from the perspective of a WWI soldier. They will describe the harsh realities of life in the trenches and highlight specific technologies that made this war unlike any before, using key vocabulary related to WWI weaponry, living conditions, and advancements from the resources they explored in the investigation.
2. A vlog from the point of view of a WWI soldier: Using a smartphone or video editing software, students will create a short vlog for folks back home. Describe the daily struggles of trench warfare and showcase the surprising ways technology has changed this war, using key vocabulary related to WWI weapons, living conditions, and advancements from the resources they explored in the investigation.
3. A historical head of a WWI soldier: In the space provided, draw/choose the thoughts, ideas, and visions of a WWI soldier. Create/select EIGHT **images, ideas, or symbols** and then explain each. Be sure to use color, ***avoid using words***, and be creative! Words should only be used on the description part on the back page. Note: You may need to provide hard copies for students or students will need to make a copy of the existing file titled "Historical Head Template SHARE - FILE, MAKE COPY of ENTIRE PRESENTATION"

 Again, teachers can adapt, edit, or eliminate any of these options.

MODIFICATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS

This is a fully adaptable and customizable lesson. Some ideas on how to customize and adapt:
- For limited time:
  o Eliminate some of the technology options/resources
  o Assign the assessment activity for homework (or assign the investigation as homework and do the assessment activity in class)
- Focus on standards and content:
  o Include only the technologies included in your state or local curriculum
- Highlight media literacy:
  o Model how to answer the "What makes a source more or less reliable" questions on the charts.

o   Have students share their responses to those questions. Where do they agree or disagree? What might account for that?

o   Keep a running list or anchor chart of criteria for what makes a source reliable

o   The cover image for this lesson is labeled "fake!" - Ask students what that might mean and why they think the image was created. Ask students to consider what impact this 'fake' image might have on the viewer, including themselves.

Accommodations:

● Encourage students to use text to speech extensions or closed captions on some of the videos. The WWI letter (slide 1) is recorded and can be read to a listener

● Assessment: The assessment activity is differentiated by process and choice. Encourage students to choose the option that best highlights their strengths.