

Name: _____

Date: _____

THE CONFLICT WIDENS

The Great War was a conflict between the Allied Forces and the Central Powers. The Allied Forces included Great Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, and eventually the United States. The Central Powers were Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Turkish Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria.

Turkey was known as the Ottoman Empire before the Great War. The Ottoman Empire extended from Algeria in the west to Mesopotamia in the east, but the empire's hold over its territories was weak. The Ottoman Empire was called the "sick man of Europe." By beginning of the twentieth century, many people believed that it was only a matter of time before one of the European colonial powers took over the six hundred-year-old Ottoman Empire.



A group of military officers known as the Young Turks had seized control of the Ottoman Empire in a 1908 revolution. The Young Turks decided to join the Great War on the side of the

Central Powers when it seemed that Germany would win the conflict. The Turks feared two of the Allied Powers. Russia was north of Turkey and wanted access to a "warm water port." All of Russia's other ports at that time were frozen during the winter months. The Young Turks feared if they did not enter the war, Russia would conquer part of Turkey in order to gain access to the Black Sea. The Young Turks also felt that a victory against Russia would allow the empire to regain land lost to Russia in Central Asia. Great Britain's empire included India, east of Mesopotamia. The Young Turks felt their needs would be best met by joining forces against these two rivals.

The Ottoman Empire signed a treaty with Germany in August, 1914, and sent troops into battle within weeks. The following year, Bulgaria also joined the war on the side of the Central Powers because Bulgaria hoped to gain land from Serbia once the Allies were defeated.

At the beginning of the Great War, many observers believed this alliance to be the strongest in history. As it turned out, another coalition of nations would outlast the Central Powers.

Answer in complete sentences

1. Why was the Ottoman Empire known as the "Sick Man of Europe" in the years leading up to the Great War?

*2. What is a "warm water port?" Why would Russia be very interested in having a warm water port?

3. Why were the Turks fearful that Britain would expand its empire into Turkish holdings?

*This is a higher order learning question. You must answer the question to the best of your ability, but any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.