



## Teacher material

# Sequencing causes on a human timeline

## Activity Plan

### Introduction

Give each student a role play card from the Student Material. If you have more students you can always pair students together, or add more cards, or use some students as 'timeline managers'. Make sure that every student understands their role play card. If your students have not studied the causes of World War 1 at all, they may need you to explain some of the events. [TEACHER NOTE 1](#)

### Activity

Ask the students to move into time order across the classroom. They will need to talk to each other and work out the sequence for themselves. Then add complexity by saying that they must organise their timeline to scale. That means if there is a gap of 10 years between two events, there should be 10x the space between these events than between events just 1 year apart. If you have 'timeline managers' they are very useful here.

### Discussion

Lead a discussion with students to describe what the human timeline reveals to them about the relationship between the causes. What do they observe? What does this reveal? What metaphorical language can be used to describe the human timeline? *(For example, they might say it starts at snail's pace, or towards the end of the timeline is a crowd. The use of metaphor and simile can be a powerful way to enable students to express change and continuity.)* How could they organise themselves in other ways to show the relationship between the causes? What are the common themes that emerge?

### Debate

Is Europe entirely peaceful before 1914? When is there a danger of war before 1914? Is there a point when war in Europe seems inevitable? Which causes would you describe as underlying causes of the war, and which as shorter term causes?

### Assessment

A few assessment suggestions are given here:

- Students could film their timeline and write a voice-over based on the discussion and debate to publish on YouTube in order to help other students to understand the causes of World War 1.
- Students could draw the 'road' to war and annotate it with the events placed as traffic furniture and vehicles.

#### TEACHER NOTE 1

You could set pre-reading before the lesson to ensure they have some knowledge, or add another lesson in before the role play where students research about the cause on their card so they can explain it to the others.



- Students could write their view on the enquiry question in their exercise books.

Any assessment method used should enable students to demonstrate that they have understood the relationship of causes to each other, can describe the nature of change and arrive at their own reasoned view as to if there is a point when war in Europe became inevitable.

**Source:**

1. “WWI causes” by Harris Morgan. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons.