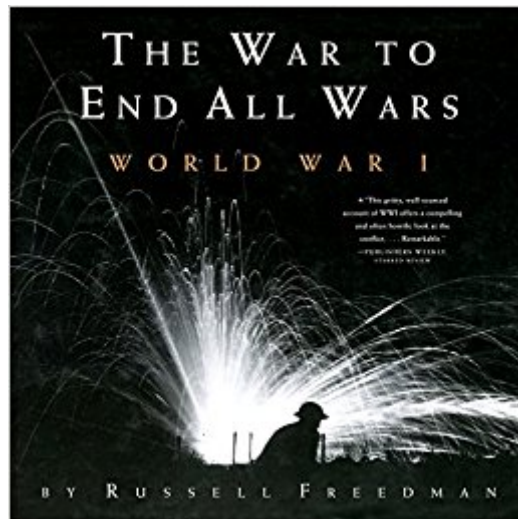


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# The War To End All Wars: World War I



## Synopsis

Nonfiction master Russell Freedman illuminates for young readers the complex and rarely discussed subject of World War I. The tangled relationships and alliances of many nations, the introduction of modern weaponry, and top-level military decisions that resulted in thousands upon thousands of casualties all contributed to the "great war," which people hoped and believed would be the only conflict of its kind. In this clear and authoritative account, the Newbery Medal-winning author shows the ways in which the seeds of a second world war were sown in the first. Numerous archival photographs give the often disturbing subject matter a moving visual counterpart. Includes source notes, a bibliography, and an index.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1220 (What's this?)

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (April 2, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0544021711

ISBN-13: 978-0544021716

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 0.5 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 50 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #60,470 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Military History #20 in Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > Military #33 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > History

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Product Description Nonfiction master Russell Freedman illuminates for young readers the complex and rarely discussed subject of World War I. The tangled relationships and alliances of many nations, the introduction of modern weaponry, and top-level military decisions that resulted in thousands upon thousands of casualties all contributed to the "great war," which people hoped and believed would be the only conflict of its kind. In this clear and authoritative account, the author shows the ways in which the seeds of a second world war were sown in the first. Numerous archival photographs give the often disturbing subject matter a moving visual counterpart. Includes source

notes, a bibliography, and an index.      Exclusive: A Letter from Russell Freedman, Author of *The War to End All Wars*

Dear Readers, About three years ago, I attended the Broadway revival of R.C. Sheriff's heartbreaking World War I drama, *Journey's End*, first staged in London in 1928. As I watched the play, I was reminded that World War I was my father's war, and when I left the theater that evening, I had decided to write *The War to End All Wars*. In 1916, my father ran away from home, changed his name, lied about his age, and joined the United States army. He was 14 years old. Back then, before social security numbers and computerized record keeping, it wasn't difficult to take on a new identity, and that's exactly what my father did. To begin with, he was sent to the Mexican border to fight Pancho Villa under General John J. Pershing. And when the United States entered World War I, he sailed to France with the 7th Infantry Division. In the fall of 1918, he was shot and gassed, and he spent several months recovering at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. My father was proud of his service to America, and I grew up hearing nostalgic stories of his adventures as a teenage soldier. But as I eventually learned, the war's reality presented quite a different tale. This was the first global conflict to employ modern weapons--long-range artillery, rapid-fire machine guns, poison gas, flamethrowers, tanks, and airplanes that bombed and strafed--the first war in which modern weapons inflicted mass slaughter, introducing new kinds of terror and record levels of suffering and death. It was now possible to kill your enemy at distance, without seeing him. Called the Great War at first, because of its massive and unprecedented scale, the conflict later was known as the War to End All Wars, because it was unthinkable, unimaginable, that humanity would allow such carnage to be repeated ever again. While I was working on my book, I spent a sunny autumn morning at the Meuse-Argonne American cemetery in France, the burial place of some 14,000 war dead, most of whom fell during the U.S. Army's Argonne Forest offensive in the fall of 1918. The graves are still visited, often by the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the men buried there. Scattered among the long rows of crosses and occasional stars of David, bouquets of fresh flowers and notes of remembrance pay tribute to those who gave their lives nearly a century ago. As I read the names on some of the headstones, I was uncomfortably aware that if my wounded father had ended up in that cemetery, I never would have existed. Some distance away, near Verdun, I visited a burial place of quite a different kind. During the year-long Battle of Verdun, a group of French soldiers in a trench were buried alive when a German artillery shell exploded nearby. Those men have never been disinterred. Today, the earthen mound covering their remains is a lovingly tended shrine. Rising from the mound, pointing skyward and glinting in the sunlight, the tips of the dead soldiers' bayonets can still be seen. It was said at the time that if the war could just once be described in honest and

accurate language, people everywhere would demand that the fighting be stopped. That challenge was taken up by many ordinary soldiers of World War I, the men in the trenches, who recorded their experiences under fire in letters, diaries, journals, and memoirs that provide us today with eyewitness accounts of what it was like to fight in the War to End All Wars.

Starred Review. Grade 7 Up "In August 1914, European countries "armed to the teeth" and bursting with exuberant nationalism entered what they believed would be a short, glorious affair. What emerged on battlefields such as the Somme, Verdun, and Gallipoli were nightmarish scenes played out on desolate barbed-wire "no man's lands" of machine-gun fire and poison gas. From the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 to the controversial Treaty of Versailles in 1918, Freedman lucidly recounts the origins, meaning, and legacy of history's first "total" war that spanned the globe and was characterized by the horrors and brutality of trench warfare. In synthesizing larger scholarly works, the author's excellent narrative skillfully encompasses all facets of the conflict including battles, leaders, and the new technologies that made it so destructive. Freedman also provides a keen analysis of the ramifications of the war, including an end to a century of American isolation, the Russian Revolution, and the troubled legacy of defeat that provided a foundation for the rise of Fascism and Nazi Germany. Elegantly written and filled with vivid, powerful photographs, this masterful work demands a spot in every collection." Brian Odom, Pelham Public Library, AL Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

We all know what World War II was about--even school kids still hear about Hitler, Hiroshima, and Anne Frank--but World War I doesn't have the huge place in popular culture these days that World War II occupies. Yes, we might remember that the war started with the assassination of an Austrian archduke, but what was it all really about? In the opening chapter, Freedman lays out the critical events of June 28, 1914--the date the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the imperial throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife, Sophie, were assassinated by a member of a Serbian terrorist group. Austria wanted to punish Serbia for this crime, and declared war on its neighbor. But in a series of events that "appeared to defy logic and common sense," before long, all of Europe is caught up in a war that, as Freedman explains succinctly, "few had expected and almost no one wanted...historians continue to debate the tangled and confusing causes of the conflict, the series of accidents, blunders, and misunderstandings that swept the nations of Europe toward war...whether war might have been avoided." Troops were quickly mobilized, and six million troops were soon on

the move in Europe. Each country initially believed that troops would be home by Christmas, and Freedman documents the outbreak of national patriotism that erupted in all the combatant nations. Young men of all European countries ran to volunteer, and we see poignant photographs of fresh-faced young soldiers smiling as they leave for war. But the battles that ensued in August of 1914 brought a new kind of horror to warfare, leading to more than 100,000 deaths and several hundred thousand injured in just that brief period. But no one could have foreseen that the war would drag on for four long years, fought in trenches on a Western front that would change little over the rest of the war and spreading to other countries throughout the world. Besides talking about the war chronologically, Freedman discusses different themes, including the changing technology of warfare, life in the trenches, in-depth discussions of particularly important battles, a discussion of the war at sea, America's role in the war, and the aftermath of the conflict. Freedman enriches his narrative with plenty of moving first-hand descriptions from soldiers who fought in the war; these eye-witnesses hoped that by describing the horrors of war in all their terrible details they would help it from happening again. The abundant archival photographs and maps are critical to the emotional impact of this book (this title is available on audiobook, but without the photographs the listener would miss so much of the impact of this volume that I can't imagine choosing to experience this particular book that way). We see soldiers, both dead and alive, photographed in their trenches, wearing gas masks, washing their feet to help prevent infection, and burying their comrades, as well as photos of world leaders, civilians, and scenes of the devastated landscape. Freedman emphasizes at the end of the book that it is impossible for us to really understand the massive human cost of this war; 65 million men fought in the conflict, with more than half becoming casualties (either killed, wounded, missing, or taken prisoner), not to mention the 10 million civilians estimated to have died of war-related famine or disease. What's more, entire towns were destroyed, farmland burned, and the European economy left in ruins. The bitter irony of Freedman's title, *The War to End all Wars*, will not be lost on any of his readers, since despite the fervent hopes of those who fought in *The Great War*, another enormous conflict erupted less than a generation later. Russell ends his narrative with an ominous full-bleed, two-page photograph of Nazi soldiers in tanks waiting for the order to invade Poland, just 20 years after the Treaty of Versailles. This outstanding book is clearly a must-have for all school and public libraries, and is likely to figure prominently during "award season." While this book could be used for school reports, it makes a riveting read for anyone interested in history. An interesting footnote: this book is dedicated to Freedman's father, who fought in France in WWI as a teenager.

The War to End All Wars. World War I by Russell Freedman  
World War I was supposed to be the war to end all wars in the world. It was brutal, deadly, and unforgettable. Thousands of lives would be lost for a few feet of territory. Unfortunately World War I was a precursor and a cause of World War II and as we all know the horrors of war continue in the world today. World War I started when Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie were killed by a Serbian terrorist group called the Black Hand in 1914 in Sarajevo. After their murders Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia and the Russians (Serbian allies) declared war on Austria and then Germany declared war on Russia and so on until almost two dozen countries were involved in a war for reasons most couldn't clarify. World War I would change the way war was fought when it employed modern weapons, like tanks, long range artillery, trench warfare and poisonous gas. Battles would be fought on land, sea and in the air with newly designed bomber planes. Over 20 million people died in World War I, many empires collapsed, revolutions were fought, famine was widespread and the world map was redrawn. Freedman does an excellent job of explaining World War I clearly and accurately. Many photos depict the anguish of war, the devastation of the landscape and the injury of the soldiers. There are only four maps in the book and personally I would have preferred more. As a world history teacher, maps are really important to me and help me reference the location of an historical event. The War to End All Wars in my opinion could have had a lot more maps illustrating the important battles and their strategic locations. The War To End All Wars is extremely informative, easy to read and understand and an excellent reference resource on World War I.

This is classified as "Juvenile Literature" but should be read by anyone who wants to understand the elements that lead up to and culminated in both World Wars, because the two are inseparable. It covers the historical & political points in concise, well ordered chapters. With photos that are relevant and give a view on how things really were. The author has done a simply brilliant job of getting all the salient facts and even make sense, when seen from almost a century away. If you want to encourage younger folk to read about this era, this is the book. If you're not sure of the history, are curious but don't want to wade through a three inch text book, buy this for yourself.

Great history books for youth. Russell Freeman is a great historian for kids' history books and this is no exception. He covers World War I with a thoroughness that is satisfying and accessible for young people studying history. Great photos and maps accompany the history.

Added part of WWII. Lots of details

great read

Good review of the historical miss steps that led to this outrageous war. Illustrates the need to rid the world totally of aristocratic leadership.

Russell Freedman is a very readable non-fiction author for young people. With the Common Core changing our curriculum from fiction to non-fiction we need more books to read. Usually Mr. Freedman writes about U.S. history so I was delighted to find this book. The photos enhance the text and generate questions from students.

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