The War's Cost

Read how World War I damaged economies and took lives.

MWH.C.6.2.A "Describe the economic destruction and unprecedented loss of life, including the Armenian genocide."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two examples of economic destruction, circle two details about deaths, and put a 1 beside a detail that shows how the Armenian genocide differed from combat deaths.

What the War Left Behind

1 By 1918, parts of northern France and Belgium looked less like farmland than fields of craters. Four years of fighting had wrecked roads, rail lines, factories, and coal mines. Farmers could not simply plant again: shells and trenches had torn up fields, and unexploded weapons remained dangerous. Governments had borrowed heavily to pay for armies, leaving debts even where buildings survived. Rebuilding homes and workplaces took labor and money that could not be used for other needs.

2 The human loss was unprecedented for a European war. Roughly 10 million soldiers died in World War I, and millions of civilians died as well. Artillery, machine guns, disease, and hunger contributed to the toll. Some families lost wage earners; some towns lost so many workers that farms and businesses struggled to recover. These deaths were not only numbers: they changed households, communities, and the ability to rebuild after the fighting ended.

3 In the Ottoman Empire, the government targeted Armenians, a Christian minority, during the war. Beginning in 1915, officials deported Armenians from their homes; many were killed outright or died on forced marches from starvation, thirst, and disease. An estimated 1 million or more Armenians died in what is known as the Armenian genocide. Unlike soldiers killed in combat, these civilians were targeted because of their identity. Survivors lost relatives, homes, and property, leaving entire communities shattered.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe two ways the war made rebuilding northern France and Belgium difficult.

2. What evidence shows that World War I caused an unprecedented loss of life for a European war?

3. How could the deaths of workers slow a town's economic recovery?

4. Describe how Armenians died during the genocide and explain how these deaths differed from combat deaths.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence label for an exhibit called "The Cost of World War I." Connect economic destruction, the scale of the deaths, and the Armenian genocide, and explain why the genocide must not be described as ordinary combat loss.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two examples of economic destruction, circle two details about deaths, and put a 1 beside a detail that shows how the Armenian genocide differed from combat deaths. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe two ways the war made rebuilding northern France and Belgium difficult.	**Fighting damaged fields and infrastructure, while wartime borrowing left governments with debts.**
2	What evidence shows that World War I caused an unprecedented loss of life for a European war?	**Roughly 10 million soldiers and millions of civilians died.**
3	How could the deaths of workers slow a town's economic recovery?	**With fewer workers, farms and businesses struggled to recover.**
4	Describe how Armenians died during the genocide and explain how these deaths differed from combat deaths.	**Armenians were killed outright or died on forced marches from starvation, thirst, and disease. They were civilians targeted because of their identity, not soldiers killed in combat.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

World War I left damaged farms, factories, and rail lines that took money and labor to rebuild. Roughly 10 million soldiers and millions of civilians died, leaving families and workplaces without people they depended on. In the Ottoman Empire, the government deported Armenians, and an estimated 1 million or more died through killing and deadly conditions on forced marches. The Armenian genocide was not an ordinary combat loss because civilians were targeted for their identity, while survivors also lost homes and property.

Accept other passage-based examples of damage or death in the short answers. For the exhibit label, look for an accurate connection among economic destruction, mass death, and the targeted killing of Armenians.