

History

In this essay I have chosen to write about history, specifically the first world war. History is the study of past events whether that's human or physical. You can focus on many different types of history such as political history, economic history, gender history, cultural history, religious history, fashion history, food history, political thought, sports history or the history of science. Almost everything to ever exist has a history so there are endless things to sample or specify in.

History can lead to many different career paths. Many graduates carry on with their studies to a master's degree or above. Lots of history graduates go into the legal profession while others will go into consultancy, investment, banking or accountancy. Examples of specific jobs directly related to a history degree include academic researcher, heritage manager, secondary school teacher, archivist or museum education officer. To study history at university, you will need to have studied history before, other essay based subjects such as English, geography, humanities or religious education may also help prepare you for a history degree.

I particularly enjoy learning about the first world war by watching films and previous learning last year at school. The first world war is often overshadowed by the second world war because WW2 is more recent and due to varying factors such as the atrocities that took place, the modernisation of the weaponry used and the wider spread of those who became affected by it. During the years which WW2 took place events could also be documented easier. It's unfair to forget about the conflicts and the millions of lives lost in the first world war. WW1 took place from 1914-1918 and mainly involved people from the middle east, south pacific, Australia, North America, Japan, China, India, Britain and across Africa.

WW1 (also known as the great war) started in 1914 after the assassination of archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria. Franz Ferdinand was the heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire. He was shot to death along with his wife while visiting Sarajevo, Bosnia by the Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princep after the archduke's driver took a wrong turn. This triggered the alliances of the central powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman empire) and the allied powers (Great Britain, France, Japan, Canada, Romania, Russia, Italy and the United States). This plunged the world into a 4-year war with unprecedented levels of carnage and destruction thanks to the new technology and trench warfare. Eventually the allied powers won but 16 million people had died in the process.

WW1 saw some of the worst conditions the world had ever seen. Trenches were dug 2 metres down and reinforced with wood, tree posts and sandbags filled with clay. They typically had embankments at the top with a barbed wire fence. Trench warfare gave the advantages of

cover from enemy ammunition and shells, strategic defensive positions and invisibility. However, there were incredibly high casualty rates due to the incredibly unsanitary conditions where diseases such as trench foot. This is an infection where the soldiers' feet turned blue or red and was caused by standing in waterlogged trenches in boots and socks that were constantly wet. Typhus fever also rampaged through the trenches. Typhus fever was transmitted to soldiers by body lice because of the unsanitary conditions, the mortality rate was between 10-80% as there was no antibiotics at the time.

The battle of the Somme took place from 1 July and 18 November 1916. It was a major battle in WW1 on the upper reaches of the river Somme in France. It was intended to hasten a victory for the allies. However, it ended up being one of the most deadly and bloodiest battles in human history with more than a million of the three million dying or wounded in the battle. Another significant battle in WW1 was the battle of Verdun-sur-Meuse. It took place from 21 February to 18 December 1916 (the longest battle in history) on the western front in France just north of the hills of Verdun. It was the longest battle of WW1 and 714,231 people died. These were two of the most significant battles of the whole war and played a big part in the outcome of the war.

Although I enjoy studying the war and other subjects in history, I probably wouldn't choose to study it at university because I'm not really looking for a career to do with history. I think I would prefer to keep it as a general interest.