

7.2 Causes of World War I

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS intense nationalism 极端民族主义 • flawed alliance system 结盟体系 • territorial and regional conflict
• escalation 升级 • competition for resources 资源竞争

Objective

Build the skills to explain the **causes of World War I** 一战的原因.

You must be able to:

- name the four causes the CED lists
- explain the word 'combined' in the CED's sentence
- state what 'escalate' claims about the conflict's scale
- distinguish a trigger from a cause

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Four causes

Imperialist expansion and competition for resources; territorial and regional conflicts; a flawed alliance system; and intense nationalism.

■ 'Combined'

Territorial and regional conflicts **combined with** a flawed alliance system and intense nationalism to escalate the tensions into global conflict. The causes act together — no one of them produces the outcome alone.

■ 'Escalate'

The tensions were escalated **into global conflict**. The CED's structure is: existing tensions plus a mechanism that magnified them. That is why the alliance system is described as flawed rather than as a cause on its own.

■ Trigger and cause

A trigger starts an event at a particular moment; a cause makes it possible. The alliance system converted a regional conflict into a global one, which is a mechanism of escalation rather than a starting point.

2 Practice

2.1 Name the four causes the CED lists. [2]

2.2 Explain the force of “combined”. [2]

2.3 The alliance system is described as flawed.

(a) State what it did to the conflict. [2]

(b) Distinguish a trigger from a cause. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The CED describes the alliance system as [1]

- **A** effective
- **B** flawed
- **C** absent
- **D** new

3.2 “Escalate the tensions into global conflict” indicates that the tensions were [1]

- **A** created in 1914
- **B** already present and then magnified
- **C** resolved
- **D** imaginary

3.3 A regional dispute becomes a world war within weeks.

(a) Name the mechanism the CED gives. [1]

(b) Explain why this is escalation rather than causation.

[2]

Solutions

2.1 imperialist expansion and competition for resources; territorial and regional conflicts; a flawed alliance system; intense nationalism.

2.2 the causes acted together; no one of them produces the outcome alone.

2.3 (a) it combined with other tensions to escalate them into global conflict. (b) a trigger starts an event at a moment; a cause makes it possible.

3.1 B. the CED's own adjective.

3.2 B. escalation presupposes existing tension.

3.3 (a) the flawed alliance system. (b) it did not create the dispute but converted a regional conflict into a global one.