Year 9
Subject: History
Topic/Unit: Causes of WW1
When: Autumn Term

Huntington School
Learn and succeed

Overview: Students will explore how complex events are rarely the result of a single factor but emerge from a combination of **long-term, short-term, and immediate causes**.

Why this? Why now? Understanding causation is a vital historical skill that allows students to move beyond simple narratives. By studying the "lights going out" in Europe, students learn to identify how deep-seated tensions can be ignited by a single "trigger" event. This provides a necessary foundation for understanding 20th-century global conflict.

Building on...building to: This unit builds on the ideas of Empire and Imperialism covered in Year 8, as well as revisiting causation as a key historical concept. It builds towards studying the rise of Fascism and Communism in Nazi Germany and Russia respectively, and the Second World War.

Sequence Summary:

1. **Introduction to Causation:** Students analyse the story of Alphonse the Camel to define and link long-term, short-term, and immediate causes.
2. **Long term causes: Militarism** (the Naval Race), **Alliances** (the Triple Entente vs. the Triple Alliance), **Imperialism** (competition for colonies), and **Nationalism**.
3. **Short term causes:** A detailed investigation into the **assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand** in Sarajevo by the Black Hand Gang and **The July Crisis:** Examining the rapid escalation of the conflict, including Germany's 'blank cheque,' the Schlieffen Plan, and Britain's declaration of war following the invasion of Belgium.

Key Vocabulary

- **Causation:** Long-term, short-term, and immediate/trigger causes.
- Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism, Nationalism.
- Triple Entente, Triple Alliance, Schlieffen Plan, Ultimatum, Mobilisation.

Assessments:

Students will write an **explanation paragraph** analysing how causes combine to make the war happen. This unit will be formally assessed during their assessment 2.

Able and Interested: working on using causation specific vocabulary such as "exacerbated," "accelerated," and "inevitable" to weigh the relative importance of different factors.

Inclusion, Personal Development, and Wider Skills Visual mapping of European empires and scaffolded "fill-the-gap" activities ensure the curriculum is accessible to all learners. Students develop critical thinking by analysing **political cartoons** to decipher historical messages.