# THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR\*

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- 1 Social Sciences
- 2 HISTORY
- 3 Grade 8
- 4 CHANGING IDEAS AND TECHNOLOGY:
- 5 THE FIRST WORLD WAR.
- 6 Module 11
- 7 the changing roles of women during the First World War
- **7.1** Activity 1:
- 7.2 To a) discuss the changing roles of women during the First World War,
- 7.3 and b) compare the results of the First World War with conditions today
- 7.4 [LO 1.3, 2.3, 3.4]

# READING 1

The First World War was bigger in scope and caused a lot more destruction than any previous war. Heavily armed soldiers fought on land, at sea and in the air for four years. About 8 million soldiers died on the battlefield.

At home the civilians were also aiding the war effort. War supplies needed to be produced and transported to the soldiers in battle. To prevent this, big cities were bombed from the air. Large portions of France, Poland and Belgium, where some of the most important battles were fought, were completely destroyed. Women working on the farms and whose fields were bombed from the air, had to care for themselves, their families and the wounded while still producing enough food to feed the war effort.

Mines and factories were damaged beyond repair. Underfed women and children in the factories had to produce the necessary war supplies and provisions. Many combatants were left destitute by the war and returned to ravaged houses and businesses. The majority of the soldiers were left unable to work, due to poor

<sup>\*</sup>Version 1.1: Apr 11, 2009 4:16 am -0500

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circumstances and medical services on the battlefield. The traditional roles of the woman as housekeepers, teachers, and nurses were replaced with the roles of businesswomen and farmers.

By 1918 millions of civilians were dying of famine or illness. Then the Great Flu Epidemic broke out. More than twenty million people (more than those who died in the war) died of the flu.

The traditional role of the woman as supporter of the fighting man changed to that of women of the battlefield of survival. Women had to take over the role of breadwinner to support husbands and sons who returned from the war physically or mentally crippled.

# READING1 (b)

The most serious social problem facing us today in South Africa is HIV/AIDS. Many children today are born with HIV/AIDS and large portions of the community die from it. The cost of caring for AIDS patients and provision of care to AIDS orphans and victims of AIDS come to millions of rands. As with the First World War, this war has already spread around the globe. HIV/AIDS can be described as a pandemic.

# 7.5 Assignment:

# 7.6 Study source A and complete the table

#### SOURCE A

AIDS CONCEPTS:

HIV: refers to a deficiency in the human immunity system

AIDS: refers to the immunity deficiency syndrome

EPIDEMIC: the circumstances in which a specific illness spreads quickly

PANDEMIC: refers to the spread of a specific illness at an alarming speed over large areas of the earth IMMUNE SYSTEM: refers to a person's ability to fight an illness

Let us compare the statistics from three countries. The numbers are rounded off. In 1997 the total population of South Africa was 43 336 000. Approximately 360 000 people died of AIDS, while in Ethiopia, with a population of 60 148 890, approximately 1 000 000 people died of AIDS. In Zimbabwe, with a population of 11 682 000, 130 000 people died of AIDS.

• FILL in the correct information on the following **table**:

•

•

• Country	• Population	• Aids Deaths

Table 1

•	Complete:
1	A pandemic is
/2/	
	2. Three similarities between the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the First World War
	2.1
	2.1

2.3	/3/	
3. The difference between HIV/AIDS and WW 1 is:		/2/
4.1 Continuity is		
/1/		
4.2 How did WW1 change the role played by woman in society?		/3/
/ <b>10</b> /		

# 8 Assessment

# Learning outcomes(LOs)

#### LO 1

# Historical Enquiry

The learner will be able to use enquiry skills to investigate the past and present

# Assessment standards(ASs)

We know this when the learner:

- 1.1 continues to identify and select a variety of historical and archaeological sources relevant to an inquiry [finds sources];
- 1.2 evaluates the sources used (e.g. "Who created the source?", "Is it reliable?", "How useful is the information?") [works with sources];
  - 1.3 interprets graphical and statistical sources [works with sources];
- 1.5 communicates knowledge and understanding by constructing own interpretation and argument based on the historical sources (including extended writing, artwork, graphics and drama); uses information technology where available and appropriate [communicates the answer].

#### LO 2

# Historical Knowledge and Understanding

The learner will be able to demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding

We know this when the learner:

- 2.1 begins to make links between historical events and processes in different contexts in the same period [chronology and time];
  - 2.2 recognises that causes and effects of effects vary in importance [cause and effect];
  - 2.3 explains charges in a wider historical and environmental context [change and continuity]

# LO 3

# **Historical Interpretation**

The learner will be able to interpret aspects of history.

We know this when the learner:

- 3.1 examines historical interpretation by asking relevant questions about the author of an historical source [source interpretation];
- 3.2 identifies and gives reasons for the different ways that the past is represented and interpreted [source interpretation];
  - 3.3 explains why history is not objective or neutral [source interpretation];
- 3.4 recognises that sense of identity may influence the way events in the past are interpreted [influences on interpretation];
- 3.5 describes main features and uses of material remains of the past in a given context [representation of the past];
- 3.6 explains the importance of conserving our natural and cultural heritage (e.g. objects, buildings, heritage sites) [representation of the past];
  - 3.7 explains how and why people's memories of the past might differ [representation of the past].

# 9 Memorandum

# Activity 1:

SOURCE A: AIDS

- 1. An epidemic / disaster (1) on a worldwide scale. (1) =2
- 2.1 Loss of life.
- 2.2 Worldwide onslaught.
- 2.3 Financial cost. =3
- 3. The one is a disease, the other a fight. (2)
- 4.1 Continuous / maintained. (1)
- 4.2 Women continue to fulfil all their modern roles. =3