

# A Greater Killer than the War: The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919

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**Grade Level** High School  
**Class Period(s)** 1-2 class periods

## National Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on earth's surface.

#### Element 5: Environment And Society

15. How physical systems affect human systems.

#### Element 6. The Uses Of Geography:

17. How to apply geography to interpret the past.
18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

## AZ Standards

### ELA

#### Reading

##### Key Ideas and Details

- 9-10.RI.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

##### Writing Standards

##### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- 9-10.W.7** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- a. Apply grades 9-10 Reading standards to literature.
  - b. Apply grades 9-10 Reading standards to informational and nonfiction text.

## Arizona Social Science Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world.

- HS.G1.1** Use geographic data to explain and analyze relationships between locations of place and regions.
- HS.G1.2** Use geospatial tools and related technologies to construct relevant geographic data to explain spatial patterns and relationships.

#### Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth's surface.

- HS.G3.1** Analyze the reciprocal nature of how historical events and the diffusion of ideas, technologies, and cultural practices have influenced migration patterns and the distribution of human population.
- HS.G3.4** Evaluate the consequences of human-made and natural catastrophes on global trade, politics, and human migration settlement.

### DISCIPLINARY SKILLS AND PROCESSES

- SP1:** Chronological reasoning requires understanding processes of change and continuity over time, which means assessing similarities and differences between historical periods and between the past and present.
- SP2:** Thinking within the discipline involves the ability to identify, compare, and evaluate multiple perspectives about a given event to draw conclusions about that event since there are multiple points of view about events and issues.
- SP3:** Historians and Social Scientist gather, interpret, and use evidence to develop claims and answer historical, economic, geographical, and political questions and communicate their conclusions.
- SP4:** Thinking within the discipline involves the ability to analyze relationships among causes and effects and to create and support arguments using relevant evidence.

## Overview

The great influenza pandemic caused between 20 and 100 million deaths—more deaths than World War I. It killed more people than any other single event in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, except WWII. It is often called “The Spanish Flu” because of the increased press attention it received when the disease moved from France to Spain, but it probably started in China or the U.S., and it ranks as one of the worst global disasters in history.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919. They will learn key facts about it and will use maps and primary source news articles to understand its spread and impact across the world.

## Key Vocabulary

**pandemic** – an outbreak of a disease that occurs around the world

**epidemic** – an outbreak of a disease that spreads quickly and affects many people at the same time

**virus** – an extremely small particle that causes a disease and that spreads from one person or animal to another

**influenza (“flu”)** – a common respiratory illness that is caused by a virus and that causes fever, weakness, severe aches and pains, and breathing problems

**global** – involving the entire world

**mortality rate** – the number of a particular group of people who die each year.

## Materials

- World map  
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/World-at.pdf>
- Atlases
- A Greater Killer than the War: The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919 PowerPoint
- Cloze Notetaking hand-outs
- Bulletin of the Arizona State Board of Health October 1918 (pages 2-6)

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/f/flu/9330flu.0013.339/1/--october-1918?page=root;size=150;view=image>

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Locate and label the countries where people were infected.
2. Recall facts about the Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919.
3. Describe how a pandemic can happen today and how a pandemic can be prevented.

## Procedures

*Prior to the lesson: Divide students into groups of 4-5 students.*

1. Introduce the lesson using the title slide and slide 2 of the “A Greater Killer than the War: The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919” PowerPoint. Ask the following questions:
  - Who do you think these people are? (police officers)
  - Where do you think these people are? (Seattle)
  - When do you think this picture was taken? (circa 1918)
  - Why are they wearing masks? (protection from the flu – both getting it and spreading it)
  - What do you think they are doing? (going to enforce laws that protect public from the spread of the flu)
2. Explain that today the class will be learning: 1) How did this past event impact the world? 2) Does this past event have any effect on our present world?
3. Distribute the student worksheet and explain that students should follow along with the PowerPoint and complete the blanks on the pages.
4. Resume the PowerPoint with slide 3 and discuss each slide. (NOTE: the slide notes at the bottom include background information for the teacher to share. Also, the words the students should complete on their worksheet are in red on the PowerPoint slides.)
5. Distribute atlases to each group and a World map to each individual. Show slide 8 entitled “Countries Infected All Over The World.” Instruct students to find the country listed using the

group atlas and shade each country in the corresponding place on the World map. (NOTE: The slide presents only a sampling of all the countries. There were many more.)

6. When students have completed the map work, distribute copies of the the primary source materials (e.g., Bulletin of the Arizona State Board of Health) or allow students to access it electronically. Have students read the article and, as a group, agree on 2 important facts and 1 important conclusion from the reading.
7. Have each group share one fact and one conclusion to the entire class making sure they are different from the other group's contributions.
8. Have the small groups discuss: 1) How could a disease spread across the world today? 2) How can a pandemic be prevented?

## Assessment

Students should have correctly located 80% of the named countries that were affected by the Pandemic. Mastery is considered correctly locating and labeling 18 of the 22 countries.

Students' essays should be graded using the 6 Traits Writing Rubric, focusing on Ideas, Word Choice, and Conventions. A score of 4 or higher on each trait is considered mastery.

Students can be tested on the vocabulary used in the lesson. Mastery will be considered 90% or higher on a test.

## Extensions

Students can research other outbreaks of disease (plague, cholera, Zika, yellow fever, etc) through time. Applications to math can be made by looking at the world's population at the time of the outbreak and then determining how deadly this particular disease was.

## Sources

Crosby, A. W. (2003). *America's forgotten pandemic: the influenza of 1918*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Influenza Encyclopedia. Retrieved from <http://www.influenzaarchive.org/>

Kent, S. K. (2013). *The influenza pandemic of 1918-1919: A brief history with documents*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

The Influenza Pandemic of 1918. Retrieved from <https://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>

Bulletin of the Arizona State Board of Health  
October 1918  
<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/f/flu/9330flu.0013.339/1/--october-1918?page=root;size=150;view=image>