**World War I - Trench Warfare:**

Following a series of battles in the first three months of the year (e.g. at Mons, Marne and Ypres) there was a dash to the sea to stop the enemy controlling the coast. This is now known as the ‘race to the sea’ as the opposing armies tried to go round the end of each other. Once the coast had been reached, the result was a stalemate.

In early 1915, the Imperial German Army began selecting the most favorable high ground to start construction of a strong defensive line of trenches, barbed wire defenses, mined dugouts and deep bunkers, reinforced concrete emplacements and selected strongpoints.

It is easy to think only of the front line trench but the British Army initially used a system of three parallel trenches, linked by communications trenches: the front trench; a support or travel trench approximately 65 and 90 meters behind the front trench; and the third reserve trench further to the rear.

Between the two front lines was ‘no man’s land.’ This was fully exposed to artillery and rifle/machine gunfire from both sides and attacks usually resulted in sustained and severe casualties. On the Western Front, ‘no man’s land’ was typically between 90 and 275 meters. However, at Vimy Ridge there was a gap of only 25 meters between the two front line trenches.

Let’s watch the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P92guhd7d-8>

1. As you’re watching the video, write down a list of problems of life in the trenches. Next to each problem listed, explain why it was a problem.

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| Problem: | Explain, why a problem |
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Use the diamond cards below to rank the problems of life in the trenches from most important to least important. Then write a paragraph to justify your top three choices. 