THE BATTLE OF VERDUN
February - December 1916
Draw the map of France on your notebook page. Make sure it shows the bordering countries of Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany. Indicate the location of Verdun. Somehow indicate on your map that Verdun was a fortified city.
**VERDUN**

- battle took place outside the French town of Verdun
- important because
  - it was fortified and because it was a town that the French were proud of. It had a history going back to the Gauls and the Romans.
  - It had also been both French and German since the 11th century.
  - The Germans controlled it from 1870-1873.
  - It was located between the Ile-de-France (Paris region) and the German border.
GERMAN PLAN

- The Germans understood the importance of Verdun to the French and knew that they would defend it until it “[bled] the French white”.

- war of attrition
  - military strategy where one side tries to wear down its enemy through much pressure and military losses
  - The side with the greater amount of resources usually wins.
RESULT

- The Germans launched the greatest offensive that the world had ever seen and, in the beginning, forced the French troops to retreat to their third line trench.
- French held back the Germans until December 1916.
- longest single battle in World War I
- over a million casualties
Flamethrowers and airplanes were used, but the war was mostly fought with artillery.
DOUAIMONT OSSUARY

ossuary – a place or receptacle for the bones of the dead