

## Military Aviation

World War I introduced airplane warfare—and by doing so, ushered in an era of tremendous progress in the field of military aviation. Although the plane itself was relatively new and untested by 1914, the warring nations quickly recognized its potential as a powerful weapon. Throughout the conflict, countries on both sides built faster and stronger aircraft, and designed them to drop bombs and shoot at one another in the sky. Between the beginning and end of the war, the total number of planes in use by the major combatants soared from around 850 to nearly 10,000. After the war, countries continued to maintain a strong and advanced airforce, as they realized that supremacy of the air was a key to military victory.



▲ A World War I pilot shows off an early air-to-ground communication device.

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

**RESEARCH LINKS** For more on military aviation go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com)



- 1 Designers kept nearly all weight in the center, giving the planes tremendous maneuverability.
- 2 A timing device enabled machine guns to fire through the propeller.
- 3 Engines were continuously strengthened for greater speed and carrying capability.

### Two Top Fighter Planes: A Comparison

	Fokker D VII (German)	Sopwith F1 Camel (British)
<b>Length</b>	23 feet	18 feet 8 inches
<b>Wingspan</b>	29 feet 3 inches	28 feet
<b>Maximum Speed</b>	116 mph	122 mph
<b>Maximum Height</b>	22,900 feet	24,000 feet
<b>Maximum Flight Time</b>	1.5 hours	2.5 hours

### Connect to Today

**1. Drawing Conclusions** Why would communication with someone outside the plane be important for pilots of World War I and today?

See Skillbuilder Handbook, Page R11.

**2. Comparing** Using the Internet and other resources, find out more about a recent innovation with regard to fighter planes and explain its significance.