

EUROPEAN HISTORY

LO9 ghijk

Post-War Germany and the Causes of the Second World War



*A poster of 1934:
'Yes Leader, We Will Follow You'*

*A poster of 1943
From Hitler Youth to officer in the
Army – Your Path!*

Year 10

Third Edition – 2023

for History SEC 2025



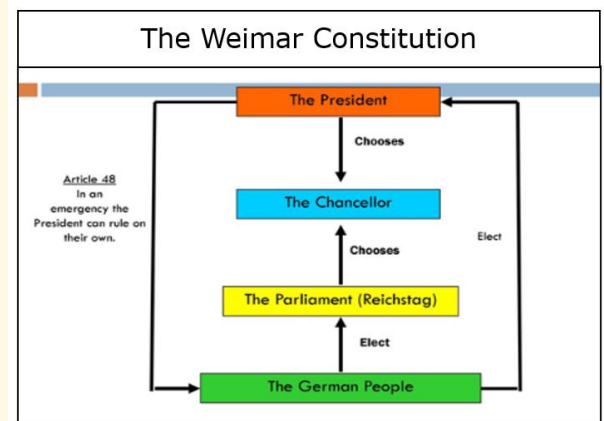
Curriculum Centre Annex

LO9 g The German Weimar Republic and the Rise of Nazism

Key facts about the Weimar Republic (1919–1933)

Weimar Republic was the name given to the German state that replaced the German Empire after the First World War. It was known as such because the constitution of the new republic was formulated in the city of Weimar.

Under the Weimar Constitution German citizens enjoyed equality, freedom of speech and religion. German citizens would elect the President and the *Reichstag* (Parliament). The *Reichstag* made the laws and appointed the Government and Chancellor.



From the very beginning, the Weimar Republic had many problems. First and foremost, the Treaty of Versailles made things very difficult for the post-war German economy. The main challenges of the Weimar Republic are shown in the table below under four headings.

Hyperinflation

Hyperinflation is when inflation goes out of hand. This happened in Germany because of sharp fall in the value of the German *mark* between 1921 and 1923. Since the Germans had to pay the Allies huge amounts of money in war reparations meant that they could not afford to buy imported goods. Moreover, the loss of their colonies meant that they could not rely on cheap raw materials. At the same time, billions of marks hoarded during the war suddenly came back into circulation. This created a hyperinflation whereby prices rose almost hour by hour.

The situation was brought under control when the government issued a new currency. This stabilised prices as only a limited number of banknotes were printed so that its value would rise. This measure restored confidence in the German economy.



The US Government intervened to help Germany come out of the crisis by redefining the terms of the war reparations to ease the financial burden on the Germans.

Banknotes lost so much of their value that they were used as wallpaper.

Political violence

Political violence by the extreme parties from the left (Communists) and the right (Nazis) brought about the dangers of a civil war. Political instability in the late 1920s and early 1930s played an important role in helping the Nazis rise to power.

The SA were the *Sturmabteilung* (or Stormtroopers), this meant 'assault division'. The group were also known as the Brownshirts. It was a violent paramilitary group attached to the Nazi Party.

Hitler formed the SA in Munich in 1921, drawing membership from violent anti-leftist and anti-democratic former soldiers (including the *Freikorps*) using them like a private army. The SA 'Brownshirts' as they came to be called due to their light brown uniform were instrumental in the Nazi's rise to power. They operated outside of the law with their violent intimidation of political opponents and the Jews.



A group of Nazi 'Brownshirts' cheered by the people of Nuremberg in 1929.

French occupation of the Ruhr

The Treaty of Versailles gave France the right to occupy the Ruhr as guarantee for the payment of war reparations by Germany. Hyperinflation made Germany fall behind in the payment of war reparations. In January 1923, France and Belgium invaded the Ruhr, the region of Germany which contained many factories. The French and Belgians intended to use their manufactured products to make up for the unpaid reparations.

In response to this occupation German workers and civilians resorted to acts of passive resistance, strikes and civil disobedience, during which 130 people were killed.

Since about 80% of Germany's coal, iron, and steel industries were based in the Ruhr, many Germans were left unemployed and with a shortage of products on the market.

The occupation of the Ruhr lasted until August 1925 when France and Belgium withdrew their soldiers after the Dawes Plan restructured the payment of reparations and helped to restabilize the German economy.



The Germans workers in the Ruhr resorted to strikes in response to the French occupation.

The Great Depression

The American Great Depression had a tremendous negative effect on the German economy still recovering from the war.

The aftermath of the Wall Street Crash hit Germany and unemployment spiralled while the government struggled to balance the budget. On top of its usual payments, the amount of people claiming unemployment benefits was increasing. As the economic crisis worsened in 1931 extremism became more popular as people desperately sought a solution.

In this scenario, the Nazi were the party that gained most. People resorted voting for Hitler and his party because he was an untried politician with new ideas, hoping that he would solve Germany's problems.



Hitler meeting a group of German workers at the time of the Great Depression.

The end of the Weimar Republic

Despite the party restructuring, the reorganisation of the SA and the Goebbels' propaganda machine, the Nazi Party gained very little in the 1928 elections. They won just 2.6% of the vote, gaining only 12 seats in the *Reichstag*. But the Wall Street Crash in the United States and the resulting economic and political instability swung the electorate in favour of the Nazis.


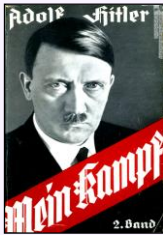









In the 1930 elections, the Nazis obtained eight times more votes than in 1928, secured 18% of the vote and 107 seats in the *Reichstag*. The continuing failure of the government to stabilise the economic situation only increased the popularity of Hitler and the Nazis.

In February 1932, Hitler contested the Presidential election against Hindenburg. Goebbels' propaganda campaign presented Hitler as a new, dynamic and modern leader. To emphasise this point, Hitler flew from place to place via aeroplane. Hitler lost the election with 37% against Hindenburg's 53%. But despite losing, people now viewed him as a credible politician.

Following another *Reichstag* election in July 1932, the Nazis became the largest party with 37% of the vote and 230 seats.

The Weimar Republic ended on 23 March 1933, when Adolf Hitler, who had been appointed Chancellor in January 1933, change the official name of the state to 'Third Reich'.

LO9 h Hitler's rise to power in Germany

The Munich <i>Putsch</i>	<i>Mein Kampf</i>	The Nazi Party	Hitler appointed Chancellor	The <i>Reichstag</i> burning	The Enabling Act	The 'Night of the Long Knives'	Hitler as <i>Führer</i>
<p>Like the Italian Fascists, the Nazis had their own private army, the SA (Brownshirts).</p> <p>The strength of the party was in Bavaria. Nazi leaders in Munich organized a coup to take over the government there.</p> <p>But they were quickly dispersed and the leaders, including Hitler, were arrested.</p>	<p>Hitler was imprisoned in Landsberg Castle for nine months.</p> <p>In prison he wrote the <i>Mein Kampf</i>, a long book about Germany, history, race and his own autobiography.</p>	<p>Hitler learned from the failure of the Munich <i>Putsch</i>.</p> <p>He decided to organize the Nazi Party and increase its number of seats in the Reichstag.</p>	<p>By 1932 the Nazis were the largest party in the <i>Reichstag</i> or Parliament.</p> <p>Hitler wanted to be made Chancellor. At first, President Hindenburg refused, but then he had to accept Hitler's demand.</p>	<p>One month later the Nazis burned the <i>Reichstag</i> building.</p> <p>A new election gave the Nazis a majority seats in the <i>Reichstag</i>.</p> <p>Hitler then declared the Communist Party illegal.</p>	<p>Hitler made the <i>Reichstag</i> pass the 'Enabling Act' which gave him absolute power.</p> <p>He then used this power to destroy the other political parties and the trade unions.</p>	<p>The Brownshirts or SA consisted of some two million men commanded by Ernest Röhm.</p> <p>Hitler now feared these could be a threat to his power.</p> <p>In 1934 he ordered the SS (<i>Schutz-Staffen</i>) bodyguards to shoot the leaders of the SA.</p> <p>The murderers were then officially rewarded by a ceremonial dagger.</p>	<p>In 1934 President Hindenburg died. Hitler then took over the powers of the President and jointed them with those of Chancellor.</p> <p>He took the tile of <i>Führer</i> and made the army take an oath of loyalty to him.</p> <p>Hitler was now dictator of Germany.</p> <p>Hitler then started called the Nazi regime as 'Third Reich'.</p>
	 Source 2	 Source 3	 Source 5	 Source 8		 Source 10	
 Source 1 The Munich <i>Putsch</i>	 Source 4 Hitler and Ernest Röhm	 Source 6 Hitler at a Nazi rally	 Source 7 The <i>Reichstag</i> burning	 Source 9 The elimination of the SA leaders	 Source 11 Hitler as a charismatic leader		

LO9 gh The German Weimar Republic and the Rise of Nazism

1. (a) Give the name of the government which Germany had after the First World War.

_____ (1)

(b) Why was it called so?

_____ (1)

(c) Why was this the first real democratic government Germany ever had?

_____ (1)

2. Identify and briefly explain FOUR problems which this new German government had to face in the 1920s. (8)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) From the chart in page 3, identify and briefly explain FOUR key events in the timeline of Hitler's rise to power in Germany. (8)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

(a) _____
_____ (2)

4. How did the Nazis rename the German government when they obtained power in 1933? (1)

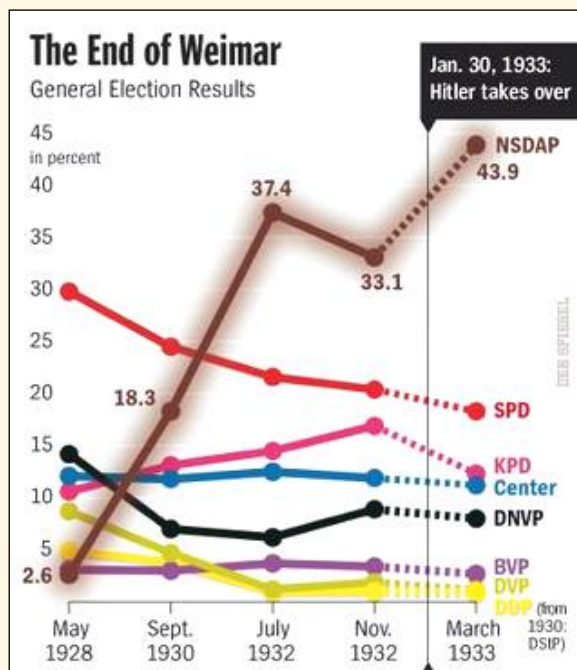
_____ (1)

(Total: 20 marks)

LO9 gh The German Weimar Republic and the Rise of Nazism

Source Question

Carefully study the following sources and then answer all the questions on a separate paper.



Party	May 1928	Sept. 1930	July 1932	Nov. 1932	Mar. 1933	Nov. 1933
National Socialist (Nazi)	12	108	230	196	288	661
German National Peoples	78	41	37	51	52	
German Peoples	45	30	7	11	2	
Economic	23	23	2	1		
Catholic Center	61	68	75	70	74	
Bavarian Peoples	17	19	22	20	18	
State (Democrats)	25	15	4	2	5	
Social Democrat (Socialist)	153	143	133	121	120	
Communist	54	77	89	100	81	
Other Parties	23	53	9	12	7	
Totals	491	577	608	584	647	661

Left: Source A. Election results in Weimar Germany between 1928 and 1933.

Above right: Source B. Number of seats in the Reichstag obtained by the different political parties in Weimar Germany between 1928 and 1933.

Use Source A to answer these questions.

- What trend can you notice about the NSDAP (Nazi Party) when compared with the other political parties in the general elections held between 1928 and 1933? (2)
- (a) What international event contributed to this sharp increase in support for the Nazis among the German electorate between 1928 and 1932? (1)
(b) Explain why this event increased support for the Nazis while at the same time decreased support for the other parties. (3)
- How can you explain why the NSDAP lost support in the elections of Nov 1932 with 33.1% but then increased again its share of the votes in March 1933, obtaining 43.9 of the votes? (2)

Use Source B to answer these questions.

- Name the political parties that obtained the largest number of seats in the *Reichtag*?
(a) In the general elections of May 1928. (2)
(b) In the general elections of September 1930. (2)
- Give reasons why the Nazis fared better than the SDP (Socialists) in the general elections held between 1930 and 1933? (2)
- (a) Why does the result of the general election of November 1933 only mention seats obtained by the Nazis? (2)
(b) What did Hitler and the Nazi do obtain such a result? (2)
- Describe the consequences of the result of the elections of November 1933 on the governance of Germany by the Nazis? (2)

(Total: 20 marks)

LO9 i The Control of German society by Hitler and the Nazis

The ideology of the Nazi 'Master Race'

According to Nazi ideology, humankind is divided into different races, and some races are superior to others. In the past the 'Aryan' race was the super race, and the present-day Germans are descended from the Aryans. Thus, for the sake of Germany's progress, the Germans must keep themselves 'pure' and avoid mixing with other 'inferior' races. The greatest danger for Germans was to intermarry with Jews. Slavs were also considered inferior. Since the Germans are too crowded in Germany, extra land (*lebensraum*) could be taken from Poland and Russia and make the Slav peoples in these lands serve the master race.

Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust: A thorough and horrible campaign was also organized against the Jews. When the Nazis took power there was a steady build-up of persecution of Jews. This is how the Nazis started threatening the Jews from the moment they took-over power:



Left: Passers-by looking at Jewish shops ransacked during Kristallnacht.

Centre: The Nuremberg Laws compelled all Jews in Germany to wear a yellow star as an identification tag.

Right: By time Jews were rounded up and carried to forced labour camps.

- The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 which included the 'Reich Citizen Act' declared that 'no Jew can be a citizen of the Reich.' The Law for the Protection of German Blood declared that 'marriages between Jews and citizens of German or kindred blood are forbidden.'
- Jews were forbidden to practice as lawyers, doctors and teachers or to work in the civil service.
- On *Kristallnacht* (Crystal Night) in 1938, the windows of Jewish shops, homes and synagogues were smashed, looted or set on fire.
- Labour camps were set up where many Jews and other Germans who criticized the regime were sent to do forced labour. During World War II these camps were turned into concentration camps or death camps for the Nazi's 'Final Solution of the Jewish problem' (*i.e.*, the systematic killing of the Jews using gas chambers and cremation ovens. This genocide is remembered in Jewish history as the Holocaust.

Nazi control of German society

- Using strict censorship: Bonfires were held where books whose authors or contents the Nazis disliked were seized and burned in public. School textbooks were re-written to reflect the Nazi narrative. Those newspapers that criticized the Nazis were censored or made to close. All the performing arts (the theatre, the cinema and art exhibitions) were monitored and censored by the Nazis.

Right: One of a series of spectacular mass rallies organized by the Nazi Party at Nuremberg.



- The SS (*Schutzstaffel*) Nazi protection squads and the Gestapo secret police were the two most famous police organisations entrusted with the task of hunting down anyone who opposed the Nazis. During the war, the SS under Heinrich Himmler was given the duty to manage the Jewish death camps.
- The civil service, the law courts and the army were purged from all who were suspected of not being loyal or submissive to the Nazis.



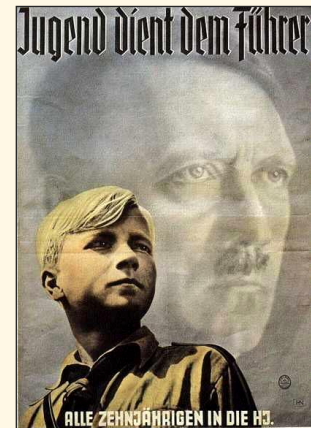
Left: Magistrates in the law courts had to use the Nazi salute during official court hearings.

Right: Hitler congratulating a group of new SS recruits. Heinrich Himmler, Chief of the SS and the Gestapo is the person behind Hitler.

- Forced labour camps: Any people the Nazis did not like, such as beggars, gypsies, homosexuals, and Jews, were rounded up and sent to concentration camps.
- Euthanasia centres: People who were seen as a burden to society (*i.e.*, old and infirm people, and people with physical or mental disabilities) were rounded up and sent to special hospitals where euthanasia (mercy killing) was practiced.

Support for the Nazis

However, Hitler and his brutal regime did not terrorize or kill everyone. For most of his years in power he had the support the German people. He achieved this by systematic propaganda and by brain-washing the people.



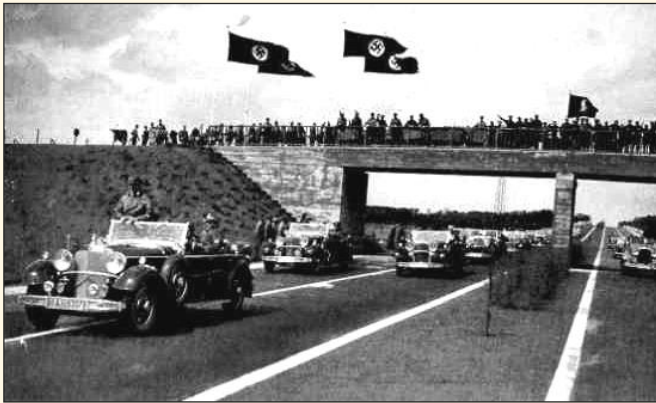
Left: A training session of the Hitler Youth.

Above: Propaganda posters about the Hitler Jugend.

- Nazi mass rallies: During the many rallies organized by the Nazis, Hitler used this ability very skilfully to whip up mass enthusiasm. Sometimes great rallies were held in huge open-air arenas, like the famous Nuremberg Rally of 1934.
- Nazi youth movements: Hitler's supporters set up the 'Hitler Youth' which, by time, became compulsory to all German teenage boys. There was also another organization for girls called the 'League of German Maidens'. German teenagers were given a special uniform and were taught to love and obey Hitler and the Nazi Party. These used were even told to spy on their parents and to report them if they uttered any words against Hitler or the Nazis.
- Hitler appointed Joseph Goebbels as Minister of Propaganda. His task was to tell people what you want them to believe. Goebbels was brilliant at his job – newspapers, radio broadcasts and films were all telling the German people how splendid Hitler and the Nazis were. Goebbels presented Hitler as the leader sent by Providence to restore Germany's greatness. The Olympic Games held in Berlin in 1936 were used to show the world how prosperous and efficient Nazi Germany was.

Hitler's popularity among the Germans

Once in power Hitler could not have remained popular if he did not tackle the unemployment problem. Below are the five most important measures taken by Hitler's regime to reduce unemployment:



Hitler using an autobahn (motorway) during one of his customary tours across Germany.



Hitler inspecting a new Volkswagen automobile which he considered was the pride of German industry.

- The creation of a National Labour Service for the unemployed.
- The conscription of men in the armed forces.
- Improvements in agriculture and the building of motorways.
- The expansion of industry, such as the production of synthetic oil and rubber and the setting up of the Volkswagen automobile factory.
- The mass production of weapons and armaments.
- The 1936 Olympic Games held in Germany were used by Hitler to portray to the world the success and achievements of the Nazi regime.



Left: The manufacture of armaments was one of the pillar industries of the Third Reich.

Centre: Hitler used the Olympic Games of 1936 in Berlin as a showcase of Germany's achievements under the Nazi regime.

Right: The Nazi propaganda poster reads: 'I live in a German family and feel just fine.'

Under the Nazi regime, the German people started enjoying a better standard of living and were pleased that the chaos of the Weimar Republic had ended with Hitler's regime. These people ignored the Gestapo, the concentration camps and the build-up of armaments. They were falsely made to believe that Hitler was not planning for war and that his main aim was to make Germany great again while preserving peace in Europe.

LO9 i The Control of German society by Hitler and the Nazis

1. Read pages 6 to 8 and then briefly explain the following terms about Nazi Germany: (16)

(a)	The Nazi 'Master Race'	
(b)	<i>Lebensraum</i>	
(c)	The Holocaust	
(d)	The 'Final Solution'	
(e)	<i>Kristallnacht</i>	
(f)	The Gestapo	
(g)	The SS (<i>Schutzstaffel</i>)	
(h)	The Hitler <i>Jugend</i>	







2. Mention FOUR reasons why Hitler remained popular with the German people even though he involved Germany in another world war.

(4)

(Total: 20 marks)

LO9 j Hitler's foreign policy and the outbreak of the Second World War

In his foreign policy Hitler wanted to undo the terms of the Treaty of Versailles which most Germans thought was too harsh and unjust for their country.

Step 1 The Rhineland	Step 2 The <i>Anschluss</i>	Step 3 Berlin-Rome Axis	Step 4 The Sudetenland	Step 5 The Polish Corridor	Step 6 Non-Aggression Pact
<p>In March 1936 Hitler sent German soldiers to occupy the Rhineland which had been declared a demilitarized zone by the Treaty of Versailles.</p> <p>France protested but Britain was not willing to help the French if they declared war against Germany.</p> <p>Hitler took this as a lesson for the future. He thought that he could get away with breaking treaties when his forces were weak. What would Britain and France do when his forces were stronger?</p>	<p>The people of Austria speak German too. But Germany had been forbidden to unite with Austrians.</p> <p>By 1934 a Nazi Party was set up in Austria as well. In 1938 Hitler decided to interfere in Austria's internal affairs.</p> <p>The Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg, tried to organize a referendum to show that most Austrians did not want to become part of Germany. But Hitler had already decided to annex Austria, to which the Austrian people showed little resistance.</p>	<p>In 1936 Hitler and Mussolini signed the Berlin-Rome Axis to support each other in their foreign policy. This treaty was made stronger by the 'Pact of Steel' in 1939.</p> <p>They cooperated in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) by helping General Franco to takeover power in Spain. With their help, Franco won the civil war against the Republican Government and became Fascist dictator in Spain.</p>	<p>The German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia was called Sudetenland. The Sudeten Germans complained about their treatment by the Czech government.</p> <p>In his speeches Hitler showed support for the German Sudetens. The French and British became very worried and thus began preparing their armies for war.</p> <p>Then the leaders of Germany, Italy, Britain and France met at the Munich Conference. They agreed to let Germany have the Sudetenland. In return Hitler gave a vague promise to cause no more trouble. This policy, advocated by British PM Neville Chamberlain, was known as 'Appeasement'.</p>	<p>The 'Polish Corridor' and the city of Danzig separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany. It was clear that Poland was going to be Hitler's next victims.</p> <p>Britain and France declared that they would protect Poland if it was attacked by Germany.</p> <p>On the early morning of 1 September 1939, German forces invaded Poland. The British and French governments demanded their withdrawal. When this was ignored Britain and France declared war on Germany. The Second World War had just begun.</p>	<p>In August 1939, a few days before the already planned invasion of Poland, Germany and Soviet Union signed the 'Non-Aggression Pact'.</p> <p>By this agreement, the two states promised not to fight against each other if a war broke out in Europe. They also agreed to divide Poland between them at some future date.</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source 1</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source 2</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source 3</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source 4</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source 5</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source 6</i></p>

Hitler's war aims

By 1939 Hitler had build-up strong armed forces. Does this mean that he planned to start another World War? How can we know what really went on in Hitler's mind? Here are the conclusions of two famous historians:

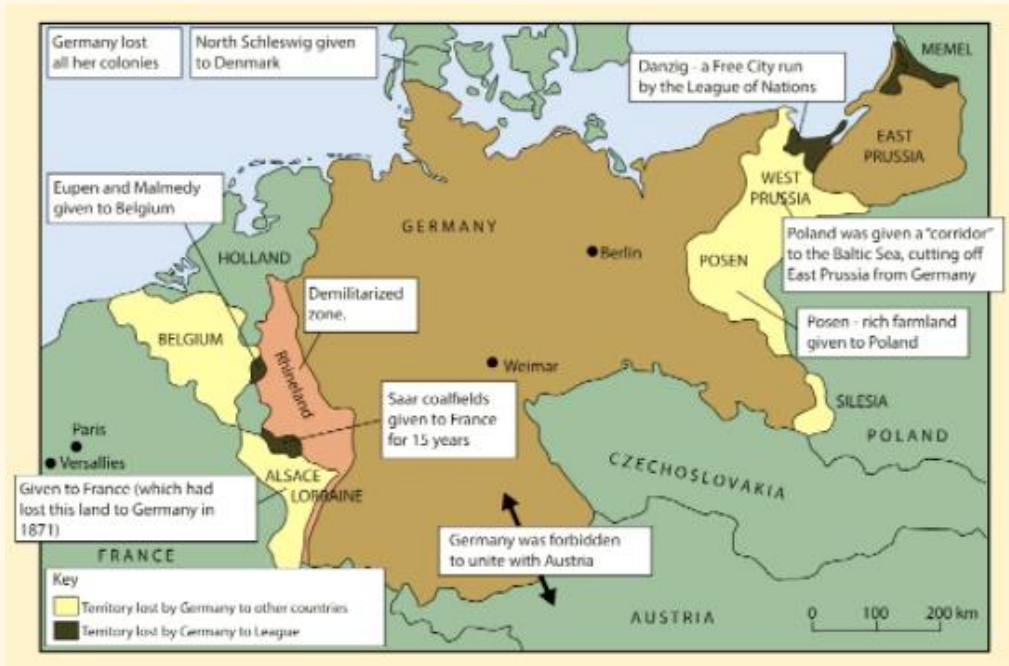
A.J.P. Taylor: 'The war of 1939, far from being premeditated, was a mistake, the result of diplomatic blunders on both sides.'

Hugh Trevor-Roper: 'It [*i.e.*, the war] was a programme of Eastern colonization, entailing a war of conquest against Russia ... it was always possible that a war in the West would be necessary before he [Hitler] could march against Russia.'

Germany's foreign policy under Hitler explained through maps.

When analyzing these two maps of Germany between the wars, one should note the following regions:

- The areas shown in yellow and black in Map 1.
- The Rhineland
- The Saar Region
- Danzig as a 'Free City'
- The Sudetenland
- The 'Polish Corridor'



Map 1. Germany's territorial losses after the First World War
Retrieved from: <http://ibslhistory.weebly.com/the-rise--rule-of-the-nazis.html>



Map 2. Germany's territorial gains under Hitler up to 1939.
Retrieved from: <https://www.internationalschoolhistory.com/lesson-3---hitler.html>

LO9 j Hitler's foreign policy and the outbreak of the Second World War

1. Put these episodes in Hitler's foreign policy in their correct chronological order, starting from the most distant one. (6)

A	The Berline-Rome Axis	
B	The Non-Aggression Pact	
C	The Anschluss	
D	The reoccupation of the Rhineland	
E	The 'Polish Corridor' Crisis	
F	The Sudetenland Crisis	

2. Which TWO of the above foreign policy episodes were a direct infringement of the Treaty of Versailles by Hitler?

_____ (2)

3. Why was the Non-Aggression Pact a revolutionary treaty in international diplomacy?

_____ (2)

4. Why was the reoccupation of the Rhineland considered Hitler's first diplomatic gamble?

_____ (2)

5. Give TWO reasons why Mussolini and Hitler intervened in the Spanish Civil War.

_____ (2)

6. (a) Briefly explain what it meant by Chamberlain's policy of appeasement towards Hitler.

_____ (2)

- (b) Why did this policy fail to stop another European war from breaking out in 1939?

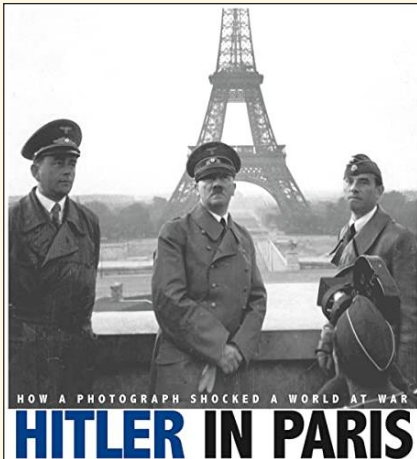
_____ (2)

7. To what extent do you agree with AJP Taylor's remark that the Second World War was caused by diplomatic blunders on both sides?

_____ (2)

(Total: 20 marks)

LO9 k Why the Axis Powers were defeated in the Second World?



Adolf Hitler visited Paris the day after France had signed the armistice. He admired the city's architecture and visited places of interest. He was not able to go on the Eiffel Tower, because the French had severed the lift cables just before the German invasion.

The spectacular way how Germany defeated France in a few weeks made Hitler believe that the German forces were invincible and that his plans were a sign of his military genius. He started comparing himself with Frederick the Great of Prussia and Napoleon.

This conviction made him decide on how to deal with Britain, the only power that had to be defeated to secure victory in Europe. His plan was to invade Britain from France after destroying Britain's air force bases by a systematic bombing of airfields, industrial centres and even London itself by the German *Luftwaffe* (air force).



Though continuous bombings between July and October 1940, however, Hitler still failed to achieve his objectives. Since the *Luftwaffe* was losing more aircrafts than the British RAF, in the end he had to postpone the invasion indefinitely and stop the aerial bombings. Instead, he decided to conquer other parts of Europe, i.e., Scandinavia and the Balkans. This tactical withdrawal was the first of Hitler's mistakes for he left Britain able to continue fighting while secretly receiving weapons from the United State. The Battle of Britain showed also that the Nazi forces were not invincible.

In June 1941, Hitler ordered the invasion of the Soviet Union (code name 'Operation Barbarossa'). Hitler predicted a quick victory, but after an initial success, this massive campaign involving three million German soldiers dragged on and eventually failed due to strategic mistakes, the Russian harsh winter weather and the determined resistance by the Russians.



The surprise attack by the Japanese Navy and Air Force on the US naval base at Pearl Harbour in December 1941 triggered Hitler to declare war on the United States as an ally of Japan. In its turn, the US declared war on the Axis Powers, making the war a global conflict. One thing which Hitler miscalculated was the huge resources in military equipment, which added to those of the Soviet Union, would by time outnumber Germany's and Japan's.





The Afrika Korps in North Africa, led by the German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, was defeated in May 1943 during the Second Battle of El Alamein. This defeat marked a significant turning point in the conflict in North Africa, leading to the surrender of the remaining Axis forces in North Africa.

From North Africa, the Allies undertook the invasion and liberation of Sicily and mainland Italy from the Axis forces. This development in turn led to the downfall of Mussolini when the King removed him from Prime Minister. From then onwards, Italy switched sides in the war by joining the Allies.



At the Battle of Stalingrad, fought between August 1942 and February 1943, nearly two million soldiers were killed or injured in the fighting. But this battle ultimately turned the tide of the war in favour of the Allied forces. From then onwards, the Germans in the Eastern Front fought on the defensive while Soviet forces started a military offensive with the aim of liberating all Russia and Eastern Europe from the Nazi forces.



On 'D-Day' 6 June 1944, Allied forces launched the largest amphibious invasion in the history of warfare. Codenamed 'Operation Overlord', the Allied landings on the beaches of Normandy marked the start of a long and costly campaign to liberate Western Europe from Nazi occupation. At the same time Soviet armies were advancing in Eastern Europe and another Allied army was advancing from Italy. Germany thus found itself compelled to fight a defensive war on three fronts.



By January 1945, the Soviets had entered Germany from the east while the Allies crossed the River Rhine into Germany from the west. Hitler spent his last days in the bunker in Berlin where he committed suicide on 30 April. On 8 May Germany signed an unconditional surrender to the Allies which ended the war in Europe.

But the Japanese continued to fight with no signs of accepting defeat. Since Japan was an island state it was much more difficult for the Allies to invade and occupy that country. So the Americans decided that the only way to speed up the end of the war by forcing the Japanese to surrender was by using the atomic bomb. Thus two such bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August 1945. On 15 August Japan surrendered unconditionally, thus ending the war in Asia as well.

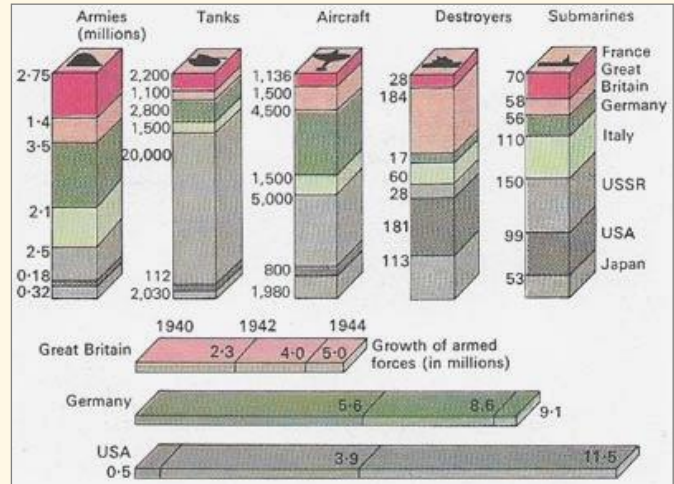
LO9 k Why the Axis Powers were defeated in the Second World War?

Source Question

Carefully study the following sources and then answer all the questions on a separate paper.



Source A. 1942 Greatest extent of Axis occupation in Europe and North Africa.



Source B. The military strength of the Allied and Axis Powers in World War II compared. Retrieved from: https://www.daviddarling.info/encyclopedia_of_history/W/World_War_II.html

Answer these questions using the map of Source A as evidence.

- From the map, identify the colour of the following:
 - The Axis Powers
 - the Allied Powers
 - the neutral states
- Name the TWO Axis Powers that are shown on the map.
 - Name the THREE Allied Powers that are shown on the map.
- The vast areas in Europe conquered and occupied by German Nazis in the end caused them a serious logistical problem. Briefly explain what this problem implied in military terms.
- How did various partisan groups that operated in Nazi occupied Europe contribute to Germany's eventual defeat in the war?
- Why was Germany's geographic position in central Europe prove to be a weakness that resulted in its total defeat by 1945?
- How did the naval blockade of Germany by the British and US navies also contribute to the defeat of Germany?

Answer this question using Source B as evidence.

- Using the data chart in Source B, explain why it was very unlikely that the Axis Powers could hope of winning the war against the combined military strength of the Allied Powers.

Answer this question after having read pages 13 and 14.

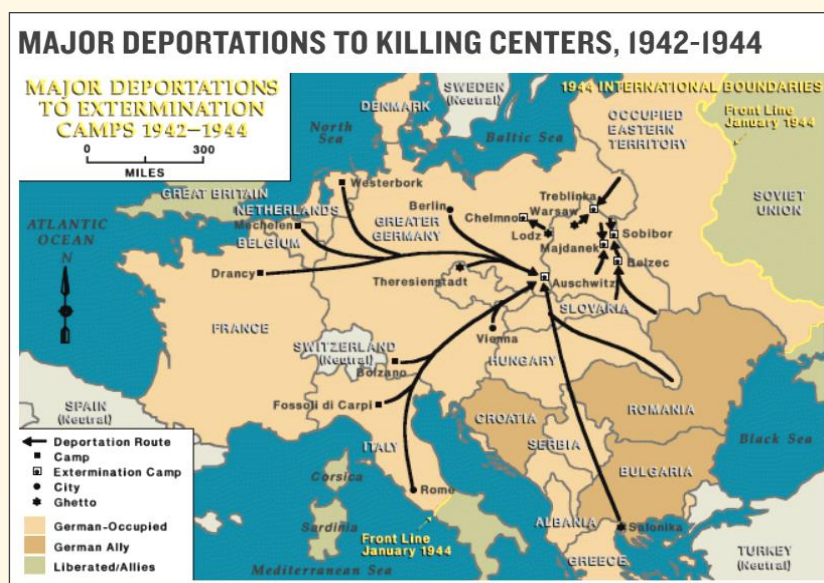
- List in order of importance the FIVE decisive battles or military campaigns which contributed the most to the defeat of Germany in the Second World War.

(Total: 20 marks)

LO9 hj The Nazi Holocaust

When Hitler and the Nazi takeover power in 1933, they implemented a thorough policy of antisemitism which took the following form: legal discrimination; social exclusion; theft and plunder of goods and property; organized violence; deportation; internment; forced labour and worst of all mass killings (i.e., genocide, which the Jews called 'Holocaust', a Jewish name meaning 'sacrifice').

The Holocaust involved the mass murder of nearly 6 million Jews and other people such as Gypsies, Slavs, disabled people and gay people. Hitler and the Nazis hated the Jews and blamed them for Germany's defeat in the First World War. Before coming to power, Hitler had written a book called My Struggle. In the book he talked about another war in Europe in which the Jews would be completely wiped out. This plan, called 'The Final Solution of the Jewish Problem' was put in place in January 1942



Hitler decided to organise further killings by building death camps in certain locations, such as Auschwitz in Poland. The camps were grim places where Jews and many other groups were forced into slave labour, before being starved to death, murdered in gas chambers and cremated in order to destroy all evidence of this crime against humanity. At Auschwitz alone, over 2 million people were systematically killed in this way. The Jews were hunted down, arrested and deported in death trains from all Nazi occupied Europe.

Retrieved from the Holocaust Encyclopaedia.
<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/gallery/auschwitz-camp-complex-maps>

There are some wonderful stories of survival and human compassion in these awful times. Oskar Schindler was a German who saved 1,200 Jews from certain death. His humane actions were made into the film Schindler's List in 1993.

Some Jews fled to other countries, like the young girl Anne Frank. She hid from the Nazis for two years in the Netherlands. When caught and taken to Bergen-Belsen prison camp where she managed to keep a diary which became famous. Sadly, she died in 1945 at the age of 15, a few weeks before the camp was liberated by the Russian army. Luckily, there were children who were sent by their parents to other countries, such as Britain, on special trains to be fostered until the war ended.

Many of the survivors had lost their families, and many were homeless for some time. Surviving Nazi leaders were brought to justice at the Nuremberg Trials of 1945-1946, where their war crimes were exposed. Many were sentenced to death or to life imprisonment.

Further research about the Holocaust

Use the link below to learn more about how the Nazi persecuted the Jews and other peoples:
<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust>

Select and download TWO pictures about each of these aspects of the Holocaust. Beneath each illustration include an appropriate descriptive caption.

1. Deportation of Jews to the concentration camps (4)
2. Living conditions in the camps (4)
3. Liberation of the camps by the allies (4)
4. Survivors of the Holocaust (4)
5. The Nuremberg Trials for the Nazi leaders accused of war crimes. (4)

Total: 20 marks)

LO9 ghijk - Essay questions about Weimar Germany and the Outbreak of the Second World War

Carefully read these essay titles and then choose **one** to answer.

SEC Level 2–3

1. (a) Account for the growth of the Nazi Party in Germany between 1920 and 1933. (10)
(b) Explain how Hitler acquired totalitarian powers by 1934. (10)
2. (a) Trace the course of events in Europe's international relations between 1936 and 1939 that contributed to the outbreak of the Second World War. (10)
(b) How far was Hitler responsible for the outbreak of war? (10)
3. (a) How did Hitler and the Nazis control Germany society during the Third Reich? (10)
(b) What did he mean by the 'Final Solution' and how was this brought about? (10)
4. (a) Briefly explain why Germany lost the war and the Allies won the war in Europe by the Spring of 1945. (10)
(b) How did this defeat affect the history of post-war Germany? (10)

SEC Level 1–2

1. (a) Identify FOUR problems of the German Weimar Republic? (8)
(b) Briefly explain these four problems. (12)
2. (a) Identify FOUR features of the Nazi dictatorship in Germany. (8)
(b) Describe the political and/or social implications of these four features. (12)
3. (a) Identify FOUR main causes which led to the outbreak of the Second World War. (8)
(b) Account why Germany lost the Second World War by the Spring of 1945? (12)

