

# Famous Portraits Series

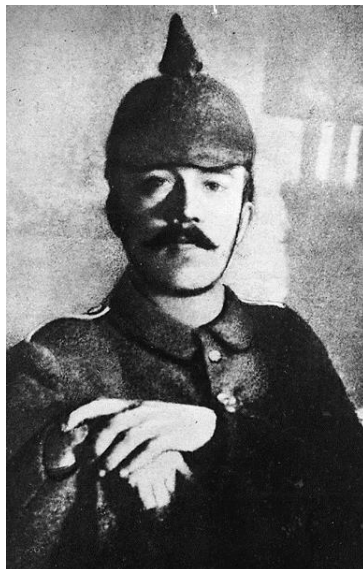
## Adolf Hitler

Chancellor (Führer) of Nazi Germany (1933-1945)

Born: 20 Apr. 1889 Died: 30 Apr. 1945 (Aged 56)



1. Hitler's childhood years at Braunau am Inn (Austria).



2. Hitler serving in the German army during World War I.



3. Hitler wearing the SA uniform in 1924.



4. Hitler when appointed Chancellor in 1933.



5. Hitler as Führer at the Berghof in the Bavarian Alps.



6. Hitler in 1945 close to Germany's defeat in World War II.

© History Department, Curriculum Centre Annexe, 2021 for Year 10 History (Option)

### Photo credits:

1. Adolf Hitler's Childhood Photos - YouTube
2. <https://www.thoughtco.com/facts-about-hitler-1779642>
3. <https://www.vintag.es/2015/03/50-rare-photos-of-adolf-hitler-you.html>
4. [https://familypedia.wikia.org/wiki/Adolf\\_Hitler\\_\(1889-1945\)](https://familypedia.wikia.org/wiki/Adolf_Hitler_(1889-1945))
5. [https://wolfenstein.fandom.com/wiki/Adolf\\_Hitler](https://wolfenstein.fandom.com/wiki/Adolf_Hitler)
6. <http://worldwartwo.filmsinspector.com/2018/12/color-photos-of-world-war-ii-part-15.html>

**Adolf Hitler** spent most of childhood years in Linz, Austria where he had a difficult relationship with his father Alois, with many of their arguments focusing on Hitler's misbehaviour at school. However he was very fond of his mother, who died in 1907. Hitler never advanced beyond secondary education. After leaving school, he went to live in Linz. He wished to study art, but he twice failed to secure entry into the Academy of Fine Arts. For some years he lived a lonely and isolated life, earning a precarious living by painting postcards and drifting from one municipal hostel to another.

When World War I broke out Hitler was permitted to join the 16<sup>th</sup> Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment. After some weeks of training, he was deployed to the Western Front. He welcomed the war with enthusiasm, found discipline and comradeship satisfying and came to believe in the heroic virtues of war. He was wounded in 1916 and was gassed in 1918, for which he was awarded the Iron Cross. Hitler was still in hospital when the war ended.

In 1921 Hitler officially took over as chairman of the Nazi Party. His first official grasp for power came in November 1923 when he and his supporters attempted to seize political power in Munich, as a prelude to a takeover in Berlin. Around 2,000 Nazis took part in a violent coup known as the Munich (Beer Hall) *Putsch*.

The Nazi party gradually grew in numbers throughout the late 1920s. By July 1932, the Nazis had transformed from a small, revolutionary party to the largest elected party in the Reichstag (German Parliament). They did this through the use of effective propaganda and support from the Brownshirts (SA), a paramilitary wing of the NSDAP. Once in power, Hitler set up a Nazi dictatorship built on terror, culminating in the Holocaust, the systematic elimination of the Jewish population.

Hitler's foreign policy resulted in the outbreak of World War II in September 1939. For the first three years of the war, Germany made easy victories in Europe until a number of military blunders committed by Hitler, such as the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, turned the tide of the war against Germany. By January 1945, most of Nazi-occupied Europe had been liberated by the Allies and Germany was open to invasion.

When it became certain that Germany would lose the war, Hitler withdrew into his bunker in Berlin. Moreover, during his later years he may well have been suffering from Parkinson's disease. It is generally accepted that Hitler shot himself. Following his death by suicide, his body and that of his long-term mistress Eva Braun, whom he had married the day before, were removed from the bunker, doused in petrol and set alight.

#### **Further reading:**

- [https://www.ducksters.com/biography/adolf\\_hitler.php](https://www.ducksters.com/biography/adolf_hitler.php)
- <https://www.historyextra.com/period/second-world-war/adolf-hitler-fuhrer-facts-guide-rise-nazi-dictator-biography-pictures/>
- <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/adolf-hitler-1>

### **Questions**

1. How can we conclude that Hitler did not have a happy childhood?
2. Trace how and why Hitler became active in politics after the First World War.
3. How did Hitler communicate his political ideas and aims to the German masses?
4. How did Hitler manage to acquire political power in Germany by 1933?
5. Mention FOUR ways by which Hitler consolidated his power in Germany after 1933.
6. Identify FOUR other Nazi leaders and state their main role under Hitler's regime.
7. Explain FOUR reasons that make Hitler responsible for Germany's total defeat in the Second World War.
8. Identify FOUR adjectives which best describe Hitler's character and personality and give reasons for your choice.