

# Germany

## 1918-1945

**Assessed by an exam: 1 hour 15 minutes.**

**Total no. of marks = 50 marks. 4 SPaG marks.**

Question	Stem	Magic Formula	Marks and time
1	What can you learn from Source A about..	1 supported inference	4 marks 5 minutes
2	Explain significance of..	2 x detailed paragraphs	9 14 minutes
3 OR 4	In what ways did...	3 x detailed paragraphs – one on own topic	12 marks 18 minutes
5a or 6a	Describe	2 x detailed paragraphs – link points	9 marks 14 minutes
5b or 6b	'Statement' Do you agree?	3 or 4 x detailed paragraphs with sustained argument	16 marks 4 SPaG marks 24 minutes



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# What do you need to know?

## Weimar Germany and the rise of the Nazi Party

Topics	Description
<b>The early years and the Weimar Republic 1918–23.</b>	The problems facing Germany in the immediate post-war years including the Spartacist Uprising, the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and reactions to this within Germany. The formation and constitution of the Weimar Republic and the problems it faced in the years to 1923, including challenges from left and right, the Kapp Putsch, the formation of the National Socialist Party.
<b>Challenges and recovery 1923–29.</b>	The challenges of 1923: the key events, including the invasion of the Ruhr, hyperinflation and the Munich Putsch. Recovery after 1923 – ‘The Golden Years’? The significance of the work of Stresemann 1923–29, including the introduction of the Rentenmark, the Dawes and Young Plans and Germany’s entry to the League of Nations.
<b>Support for the Nazi Party 1923–32.</b>	Support for the Nazi Party from different social groups in the years to 1929. Reasons for growth including changes of tactics and in Nazi Party organisation. Reasons for its dramatic increase after 1929, including the appeal of Hitler, the role of propaganda, the role of the SA and the economic and political consequences for Germany of the Wall Street Crash of 1929.

## Government of the Third Reich to 1945

Topics	Description
<b>Creation of the Nazi state.</b>	The reasons why and steps by which Hitler was able to gain total power in Germany: the significance of the existing constitution, the elections of 1932 and the role of von Papen and von Hindenburg in 1932–33; the key events of 1933–34, including the Reichstag Fire, the Enabling Act, the banning and removal of rival power groups, political parties and trade unions; the significance of the Night of the Long Knives, the army oath of allegiance and the death of von Hindenburg. The nature of Hitler’s role as Führer.
<b>Nazi methods of control.</b>	Nazi control of behaviour in Germany and influence on attitudes by national and local groups, methods and systems: the role of the SS and Himmler, concentration camps and local wardens; laws restricting civil liberties; control of the press, political parties and opposition groups and individuals; control of Churches, including the establishing of the Concordat and the Reich Church. The role of Goebbels, the uses of censorship, and the purpose and effectiveness of different types of propaganda, including radio, films, posters, rallies.
<b>Opposition and resistance to the Nazi government.</b>	The nature and extent of opposition and resistance, both in the pre-war period and the war years including the role of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, the significance of Pastor Niemöller, the White Rose Group (1942–3) and the July Plot of 1944.



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# Social impact of the Nazi state to 1945

Topics	Description
<b>Nazi policies towards women and the young.</b>	Nazi policies towards young people and women; their importance to the Nazi state and party, including the nature and purpose of education in schools for boys and girls; the role and effectiveness of youth movements 1933–45, including preparation for war, charity work and military role in the war years. The emergence of rebel groups, for example the Edelweiss Pirates. The role of women within the family, society and employment, and changes to their role during the pre-war period and the war years: women’s contribution to the German Home Front 1939–45.
<b>Economic changes.</b>	The impact of economic policies to reduce unemployment: the New Plan, labour service, construction of autobahns and rearmament. Changes in the standard of living for German workers, Strength Through Joy; wartime hardships.
<b>Nazi treatment of minorities including the ‘Final Solution’.</b>	The importance of Nazi beliefs in Aryan supremacy and the ‘master race’. The treatment of minority groups, including Jews, gypsies and disabled people. Changes in discrimination and persecution 1933–39, including concentrations camps, the shop boycott, Nuremberg Laws and Kristallnacht. The escalating persecution during the war years to 1945 including the use of ghettos and the ‘Final Solution’.

## Origins of Weimar

The German Revolution began on 29th October 1918, when sailors at Kiel refused to obey orders and engage in battle with the British Navy. The sailors in the German Navy mutinied and set up councils based on the soviets in Russia. By 6th November the revolution had spread to the Western Front and all major cities and ports in Germany.

On 9th November, 1918, Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and the Chancellor, Max von Baden, handed power over to Friedrich Ebert, the leader of the German Social Democrat Party.

The new leadership needed to find new ways to govern Germany. At a town called Weimar they created their new constitution.

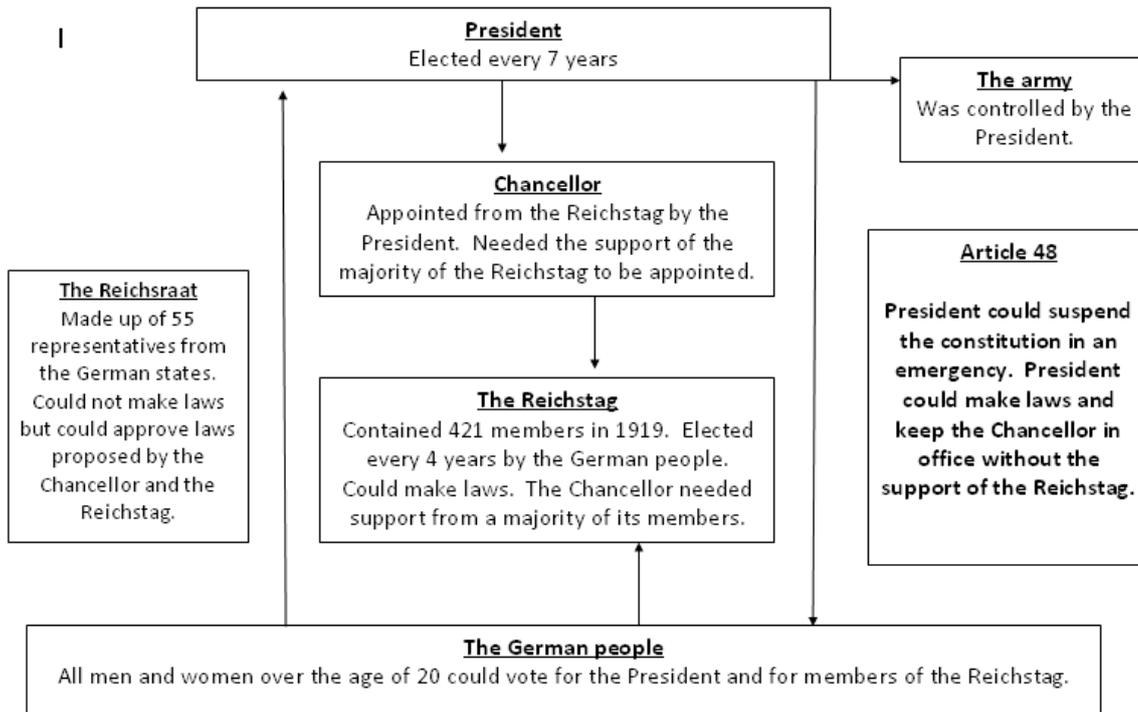


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# The Weimar Constitution



The President had too much power. In an emergency situation the President was allowed to make laws by decree, without going through the Reichstag. This was Article 48 of the constitution.

All Germans over the age of 20 could vote. They also had equal rights. The constitution protected freedom of speech and worship. This was one of the most democratic systems in the world at that time.

German people were not used to democracy. There was no democratic tradition in Germany. The transition from autocracy to democracy had happened very suddenly.

A strong President was necessary to keep control over the Government and to protect the country in a crisis. In normal times, however, the President would stay out of day to day politics.

The Chancellor was responsible for day to day government, but to pass laws he needed the support of more than half of the Reichstag. This would ensure that no Chancellor could gain too much power.

Proportional representation encouraged a lot of small parties which each got a small number of MPs. It was very hard for one party to win a majority of seats. This meant all governments had to be coalitions and strong government was very difficult.

Proportional representation made sure that political parties were allocated seats in parliament in proportion to the number of votes they got. This was a fair system.

The Chancellor was not directly elected by the people. He was appointed by the President. This was another example of the President having too much power.



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# Political Problems facing Weimar

There were many new political parties in Germany and the new government faced opposition from left and right. Between 1918 and 1923 the government faced many attempts to overthrow its power. Uprisings and riots were common in the early days of the new government. It was also common to see private soldiers walking the streets, the most famous of whom were the Freikorps – ex soldiers who believed that Germany needed a right wing government to destroy the communist threat. During this period it is estimated that there were 376 murders (354 carried out by right wing groups and two Weimar politicians were assassinated).

## The Spartacist Uprising

The Spartacists were a group of communists led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, they believed that Germany should be a Communist and in December 1918 there were demonstrations against the government which led to the deaths of 16 Spartacists. Then, in January 1919 a group of Spartacists captured a newspaper building in Berlin and tried to start an uprising in Berlin to try and overthrow the government.

The government turned to military power to solve their problems but the weakened army (Reichswehr) was not enough on its own to defend the country. The government called on the Freikorps to end the rebellion. By 13<sup>th</sup> January the rebellion had been crushed and its leaders, including Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, had been captured and executed. Further communist uprisings were also destroyed and in March 1919 over 1000 people were killed in a failed communist uprising in Berlin. This ended the threat from left wing groups but it was clear that this had only happened as a result of the Freikorps intervention.

## The Kapp Putsch

The government also faced threats from the right. In 1920 there was uproar in Berlin when the government announced measures to reduce the size of the army and disband the Freikorps. The leader of the Freikorps (Herman Ehrhardt) and the politician Wolfgang Kapp refused to accept the government's decision and planned to take over Berlin and form a new right wing government with Kapp as the leader. On March 13<sup>th</sup> 1920 Kapp and the Freikorps took control of Berlin. The army refused to fight the Freikorps, saying "he Reichswehr does not fire on the Reichswehr". Chancellor Ebert then called for a General Strike. Trade unions and civil servants supported the government and went on strike, meaning that everything in Berlin was shut down. Kapp accepted that he couldn't win and the Putsch collapsed, but although more than 400 Reichswehr officers had been involved in the Putsch, very few were punished.

## The Munich Putsch

The Munich Putsch was an attempt by Hitler and the Nazis, working with the old war hero General Ludendorff, to overthrow the government of Bavaria and take control of Germany. The plan went wrong and the attempt was easily destroyed by the army. However, the trial of the ringleader (Adolf Hitler) increased publicity for his cause and although he was found guilty of treason he only spent 9 months in jail.



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## International problems: the Treaty of Versailles

Although the First World War ended in 1918 the treaty which ended the war was not signed until 1919. The peace treaty between Germany and the Allied countries (Britain, USA, France, Italy) was called the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was not invited to the Treaty negotiations.

### The main terms of the Versailles Treaty were:

- the surrender of all German colonies as League of Nations mandates;
- the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France;
- loss of other areas of Germany land to Belgium, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Denmark
- Occupation and special status for the Saar under French control;
- demilitarization and a fifteen-year occupation of the Rhineland;
- German reparations of £6,600 million;
- a ban on the union of Germany and Austria;
- an acceptance of Germany's guilt in causing the war;
- provision for the trial of the former Kaiser and other war leaders;
- limitation of Germany's army to 100,000 men with no conscription, no tanks, no heavy artillery, no poison-gas supplies, no aircraft and no airships;
- the limitation of the German Navy to vessels under 100,000 tons, with no submarines;

The German government signed the Treaty as they felt they had no choice. Within Germany there was outrage at the terms of the Treaty and many people blamed the government who had agreed to sign the Treaty. The politicians who signed the Treaty became known as the “November Criminals” who had “stabbed the army in the back” (“Dolchstoß”).



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# Economic Problems

In 1919 the German government was bankrupt – the country had its money (and its gold reserves) during the war.

**Gold reserves** = the amount of gold kept by a government to support the currency.

spent

- ❖ The Treaty of Versailles made things even worse for the government – Germany lost industrial areas like the coalfields in Silesia AND they had to pay reparations to the victors. With a shortage of industrial goods (caused by the loss of industrial areas) and the loss of the gold reserves, by 1923 Germany could no longer meet reparation payments.
- ❖ In retaliation for Germany's failure to pay, French troops invaded the Ruhr (a heavily industrial part of Germany which contained 80% of Germany's coal and iron production). The French army confiscated raw materials, manufactured goods and industrial machinery. German workers went on strike and some even tried sabotaging the factories but they were arrested by the French, who brought in their own workers to run the factories. With an army of 100,000 (opposed to 750,000 in the French army) the German government had little choice but to accept what had happened. As the strike continued, the government needed to find money to support the German workers and their families in the Ruhr!
- ❖ The occupation of the Ruhr led an increase in Germany's debts, unemployment and a shortage of goods. The shortage of goods led to inflation which meant that prices increased. Furthermore, the government was short of money to pay their debts and the rise in unemployment meant they were making less money from taxes.
- ❖ With a shortage of money, the government decided to print more money, by 1923 the government had 300 paper mills and 2000 printing shops to print more money.

**In 1919 a loaf of bread cost 1 mark, by 1922 it cost 200 marks, by 1923 it cost 100,000 million marks!**

Although this allowed the government to start repaying reparations it meant that money was devalued and prices began to rise again. The money was printed, the less it was worth and the more prices rose. This process was so extreme and happened so quickly that it became known as

hyperinflation.

- ❖ Hyperinflation meant that the German mark became worthless in comparison to foreign currency and as a result foreign suppliers refused to accept German marks for goods. This meant that there were no imports into Germany and shortages of food and goods got worse. As prices rose, people with savings found that any money they had saved in bank accounts, in insurance policies or in pensions was now worthless. These people were mainly from the middle classes.
- ❖ As prices continued to rise daily it became harder for people to buy what they needed – many workers were paid daily because if they waited until the end of the week, their weekly wage would have become worthless. People had to carry money in wheelbarrows and baskets, others refused to be paid in cash at all but swapped goods.

**In 1918  
£1 = 20 marks  
In 1923  
£1 = 20 billion marks**

A German woman burns German money because the notes will burn for longer than the amount of wood she could afford to buy with the money!



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# Stresemann

Between 1924-1929 Germany recovered as a result of the hard work of Gustav Stresemann. Stresemann was Foreign Secretary in Germany from 1923-1929 and from August – November 1923 he also served as Chancellor.

**End of Passive Resistance:** Stresemann's first action was to end passive resistance in the Ruhr and send German workers back to work. This meant the government no longer had to find money to support striking workers and violence in the Ruhr between Germans and French soldiers was ended.

**Rentenmark:** Stresemann got rid of the worthless German mark and replaced it with the Rentenmark. Only a limited number of rentenmarks were made which meant that it kept its value and restored people's confidence in German money. This ended hyperinflation.

**Dawes Plan:** In 1924 Stresemann made an agreement with Germany called the Dawes Plan which said that Germany would start paying reparations again, but with arrangements that were much more sensible. The USA also agreed to help reorganise the German Reichsbank to make it better. The Dawes Plan also agreed that the French would leave the Ruhr in 1925 and most importantly, the Plan offered Germany loans which would help the economy recover. Over the next six years US companies and banks loaned nearly \$3,000 million which helped economic recovery and helped Germany to meet reparations payments.

**The Locarno Treaties:** Stresemann signed the Locarno Treaties in 1925 to help improve relations with France and Britain and to gain international support for Germany. The Locarno Treaties were an agreement between Germany, France, Britain and Italy to protect borders between Germany, Belgium and France and to keep peace in Europe. This allowed Germany to return to international politics and introduced a period of cooperation between Germany, France and Britain that has been referred to as the "Locarno Honeymoon".

**The League of Nations:** The signing of the Locarno Treaties resulted in Germany being welcomed into the League of Nations – an international organisation which was supposed to maintain peace and stability by helping countries to cooperate. This showed that Germany was being treated as an "equal" to other countries and in 1926 Germany was given a permanent seat on the Security Council (the decision making body of the League). This represented Germany's return to "Great Power" status.

**Kellogg-Briand Pact:** In 1928 Germany was one of 65 countries that signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact which meant that the countries would only keep their armies for self-defence and would solve international issues peacefully.

**The Young Plan:** In 1929 Stresemann negotiated the Young Plan which agreed a new plan for reparations repayments. The Young Plan reduced the amount of money Germany had to pay to £1850 million and extended the time Germany had to pay by 59 years. This was an incredible achievement for Stresemann although it was criticised by right-wing politicians who did not think Germany should be paying reparations at all.



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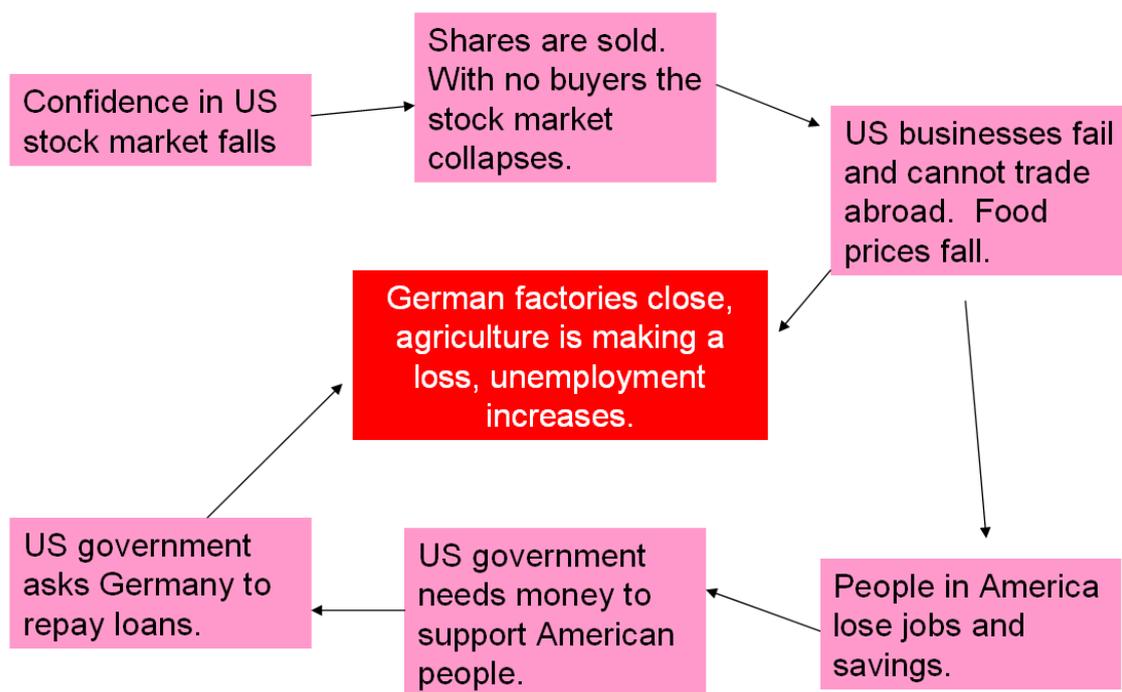
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**Political Stability:** Between 1924-29 Germany became more politically stable and political parties that supported the Weimar Republic were more successful than extremists. For example, support for the Nazis fell from 32 members of the Reichstag in 1924 to only 12 members in 1928. The moderate Social Democrats won every election between 1924-30. However, although this led to some stability, no party ever won an overall majority of seats in the Reichstag and governments were always coalitions. This meant that governments remained unstable. In fourteen years there were 25 separate governments – some governments only lasted a few weeks! In 1925 the army war hero Paul von Hindenberg was elected President of Germany. He was a popular strong figurehead who made Germany appear more stable BUT he had never hidden the fact that he did not support the Republic and preferred the old system of the Kaiser.

**Economic Stability:** Throughout the 1920s, there were extremes of rich and poor in Germany - the most power was held by a few rich industrialists who ran over half of Germany’s industry. Industrial production increased after 1923 and by 1928 industrial production was higher than pre-First World War. By 1930 Germany was one of the world’s leading exporters of manufactured goods. However the German economy didn’t increase fast enough for Germany’s growing population and unemployment rose after 1925. Not all industry did well. Income from agriculture fell and by 1929 farmworkers wages were only half the national average

## Wall Street Crash

In 1929 Germany suffered greatly due to the American Wall Street Crash – which led to a great depression in America and around the world:



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# What impact did the Depression have on Germany?

The Depression had a significant impact on Germany. All groups of people in society were affected as:

- Many businessmen saw their businesses close. Those who didn't lose their businesses saw income fall because people had less money to spend, even on essentials like food or clothes.
- Young people were greatly affected by unemployment. By 1933 over half of all Germans between 16-30 were unemployed and 60% of new university graduates had never had a job. Many of these young people lost faith in the government and started to join the private armies of extremist groups like the Nazis.
- German agriculture was severely effected by the depression. Food prices fell as people couldn't afford them, resulting in a drop in profits for farmers. Farmers were unable to get loans from banks because the banks were having to repay the loans from America and had no money to loan. Some small farms went out of business and farm workers became unemployed.
- By 1932 40% of all factory workers were unemployed. However, the government did not want to end up with hyperinflation again, so they reduced unemployment benefit raised taxes and cut wages. This became a time of extreme poverty for the unemployed, who began to turn to extremist parties.

The depression also caused political problems as there were disagreements about how to deal with the economic problems. The Social Democrats (the biggest party in the government) left the the coalition and the government collapsed. The Chancellor had to use Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution which meant that the government was not controlled by President Hindenburg, an 84 year old who was controlled by business and army leaders. As a result, extremist parties like the Nazis and the Communists became more powerful. In 1930 the Nazi Party won 107 seats in the Reichstag, making them the second largest party. By 1932 they were the largest party in the Reichstag.

The depression caused social problems because of the rise of extremism. People lost confidence in the government and started to become involved in extremist groups; the communists blamed all Germany's problems on the capitalist system and called for a communist revolution. The Nazis blamed the Weimar Republic, the Treaty of Versailles, the Marxists and the Jews. There were regular street battles between the Nazis and the Communists and during the 1932 elections 500 people were either killed or injured.



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# Rise of Hitler

## What were the origins of the Nazi Party?

The Nazi Party was formed in January 1919 by Anton Drexler. Hitler joined in Autumn of 1919. He quickly rose to become the leader of the party. The party was transformed by Hitler and became a political party rather than the discussion group that it had been when he joined. The SA (Brownshirts) was formed to protect Hitler and other party leaders at meetings. It also disrupted the meetings of the Nazi's political opponents.



## What did the Nazis believe in?

**COMMUNISTS** and the Jews were responsible for all the problems Germany was facing.

**NATIONALISM** – Germans should love their country above all else. Germany had been unfairly treated in the Treaty of Versailles and the politicians who signed the treaty were cowards and criminals. Germany deserved revenge for the Treaty.

**LEBENSRAUM** – Hitler believed Germany should conquer other countries and take their land

**RACIALISM** - Germans belonged to the Aryan race. This was naturally superior to all others. Germany was being polluted and dragged down by other races: Slavs, Gypsies and most of all Jews. These people were to blame for all Germany's problems and if Germany were to become great again, they would have to be removed from the German race.

**DEMOCRACY** had failed as a political system Germany needed a strong leader to take decisive action. Individual rights were less important than the interest of the State as a whole.

**SOCIALISM** - workers were suffering under the current system Unemployment was high. The Nazis promised to better look after the working classes. NB Socialist beliefs tended to become less prominent in Nazism as time went on.

Need help to remember? Try this: **Crazy Nigel Likes Reading the Daily Sport**



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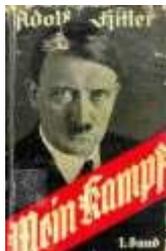
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# Munich Putsch - 1923

## Summary:

The party attempted to take control of the government by force. This failed as the Nazi's did not enjoy widespread support at the time. The government was capable of controlling the armed forces and police. Hitler was imprisoned as a result of the Putsch (Uprising).



In Prison Hitler thought about the methods he had used to try and take control. He realised that the Nazi's would need to get votes to get to power and that the appeal of his party would need to be widespread in order to achieve this. As a result he wrote "Mein Kampf". This book outlines Hitler's beliefs.

Upon being released from prison Hitler started to reorganise the party. The SS (Blackshirts) were introduced as his own personal bodyguard: they later became a much larger organisation with many functions such as carrying out his policies towards the Jews. People were employed within the party to work on strategy and the delivery of an aggressive advertising campaign (propaganda). This included Joseph Goebbels, later the head of propaganda.

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## Details of Munich Putsch:

8 November

On 8 November 1923 the Bavarian Prime Minister and his two most senior Bavarian officials were addressing a meeting of around 3000 businessmen at a beer hall in Munich. Hitler and Goering arrived with 600 Storm troopers. Hitler stopped the meeting, and took Kahr and his ministers into a side room at gunpoint where he persuaded them to support him in overthrowing the Reich (State) Government. Hitler was accompanied by a former General, Ludendorff.

9 November

Hitler decided to let Kahr and his colleagues go, while he and Ludendorff planned how their supporters could seize Munich the following day. It was soon clear that Kahr's promise of support, made at gunpoint, was worthless. When news of the putsch reached Berlin the government ordered the army in Bavaria to crush it. The Nazis could not back down, so they planned to march on Munich anyway the next day.

Confrontation was inevitable. So the next morning, in driving snow, Hitler, Ludendorff and 3000 Nazis marched into Munich. When they reached the city centre, they found the police and the army waiting for them. In a narrow street called the Residenzstrasse about 100 police blocked the path of the march.

The police used rubber truncheons and rifle butts to push back the crowd. One of the Nazis ran forward and shouted to the police 'don't shoot, Hitler and Ludendorff are coming'. Hitler cried out 'Surrender!' Then a shot rang out – no-one knows who fired first – and a hail of bullets swept the street from either side. Hitler fell, either pulled down or seeking cover. He had dislocated his shoulder. The shooting lasted only a minute, but sixteen Nazis and three policemen lay dead or dying in the street. Hitler scrambled to a



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car waiting nearby and was driven away. Ludendorff marched on to the next square where he was arrested. Hitler himself was arrested two days later.

## 1924: Trial and imprisonment

In February 1924 the trial began of the leading members of the putsch. The trial gave Hitler national and even international press coverage for the first time. Newspapers around the world reported his claims that he had led the movement against the 'traitorous' Weimar government. The trial established his reputation as the natural leader of extreme right wing nationalist elements throughout Germany. Hitler's performance at the trial also influenced the judges. He was treated leniently. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, but served less than nine months before he was released. His prison was Landsberg Castle. He had his own room, was allowed as many visitors as he wanted, and spent the time writing his book, *Mein Kampf* (My struggle).

## Changes to the Nazi Party 1924-29

In February 1925 Hitler re-launched the Nazi party. This time his tactics were going to be different. Hitler's aim was now to win as many seats as possible in each Reichstag election and so to become the biggest political party in Germany. Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* was published in 1925. It quickly became a best-seller. The Nazis held public meetings all over Germany. Nazi activists in villages and towns would put on meetings with visiting speakers. If a subject proved popular then they would repeat it. In this way the Nazis learned the skill of focusing on the issues that people thought were important. If this meant changing their policies to fit, then they seemed prepared to do so.

In order to win seats in the Reichstag Hitler began expanding the Party into a national organisation, covering the whole of Germany. He created local branches (Gau) across the country. Each branch was led by a Gauleiter who was in charge of a particular area. Cleverly, Hitler gave Gauleiter positions to those who could oppose him, like Goebbels, who was made Gauleiter of Berlin. By 1929 the membership of the party had expanded to over 100,000. The SA also continued to expand.

Hitler also set up new organisations during this period. Firstly he set up a more elite group of private soldiers - the Schutzstaffel (SS). The SS wore black, very smart uniforms and were Hitler's private bodyguard. Secondly, Hitler also set up the Hitler Youth to encourage young people to support the Nazi Party.

The Nazi Party needed money in order to expand. Most of their funding came from individual donations, however during this period Hitler also tried to get money from big business and played down the 'socialist' elements of his policies to appeal to this group. He was successful to some degree and businessmen such as Thyssen, Krupp and Bosch gave donations to the Nazi Party.



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# Why did Nazi support grow?

## Economic problems and Nazi policies

The Wall Street Crash in 1929 brought Germany's economic improvement to a rapid end. The aid from America stopped. The Nazi's rise can be linked with the economic problems faced by Germany. They offered extreme solutions to the economic crisis. Ignoring the treaty of Versailles and protecting the country from communism appealed to a wide range of people. Other policies included, but were not restricted to: Public works, anti-semitism, reorganisation of the labour corps (workers), redistribution of wealth (welfare policies, how they help those in need). Economic policy was focussed on big business and manufacturing.

The policies were advertised on the radio, at rallies, through leaflet distribution and through a show of strength.

## The use of the SA and the SS

The SA (Brownshirts) was formed to protect Hitler and other party leaders at meetings. It also disrupted the meetings of the Nazi's political opponents.

The military uniform of the SA appealed to many former soldiers. The Weimar government was blamed for signing the treaty of Versailles appealed to the disaffected and to former soldiers. Use of force and the party's strict discipline appealed to those who longed for a return to the old disciplined rule in Germany before the First World War.

The SS (Blackshirts) were also used as his own personal bodyguard: they later became a much larger organisation with many functions such as carrying out his policies towards the Jews.

## Failure of Weimar Government

The appeal of the party grew as the Weimar government failed to deal effectively with the economic crisis that followed the Wall Street Crash, was ineffective in dealing with crime on the streets and had no answers to charges of incompetence in government. Other extremist parties also rose in popularity at the time.

## Fear of Communism

The growth of the communist party at this time (a direct result of the Wall Street Crash) led to an increased fear of a communist takeover. Hitler's party were able to use their extreme opposition to communism to gain support from industrialists, and gained votes from many who feared a communist state. Both the communists and the Jews were blamed (scapegoats) by the Nazis for the problems in Germany.



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## Propaganda

Goebbels masterminded the Nazi's use of the media. Large, well organised rallies were arranged. These gave the impression of strength. Large rallies were filmed. This meant that the wider population was given the impression that the party were strong, well organised and well supported. These rallies, along with use of the Radio, also made great use of Hitler's ability as a public speaker.

Hitler's oratory (speeches) focussed on things that the population would want to hear. He believed that short, simple messages, regularly repeated, would win over most of the population. Posters were also used to get across these messages.



## 1930 election

In the elections to government in February 1930 there were massive gains for both the Nazis and the Communists. Both parties used this as an excuse to stir up trouble in the Reichstag

President Hindenburg refused to make Hitler Chancellor

## April 1932 election

President Hindenburg was re-elected President.

## July 1932 election

The Nazis were the largest party with 230 seats

Hitler demands that he be made Chancellor

Papen could not control the new Reichstag. The Nazis and Communists constantly disrupted it.

## November 1932 election

There was another election. This time the Nazi vote fell by 33%, but the Reichstag was still as impossible to control as the old one.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1933 Hitler is appointed Chancellor. Hindenburg and Papen decided to make Hitler Chancellor because they thought they could use him to bring order back to the Reichstag.



**List the factors behind the Nazi rise to power in order of importance. Justify your first three choices.**



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# How did Hitler move from being Chancellor to the dictator of Germany?

## Obstacle

## How Hitler removed it

<p><b>Communists</b> 27<sup>th</sup> February 1933 – Reichstag fire</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Reichstag fire burnt down. The Nazis blamed the communists and claimed it was the start of a communist uprising. Hitler demanded special powers to deal with the situation.</li> <li>• A Dutch communist Magnus Van Der Lubbe was put on trial for the fire.</li> <li>• It has been claimed by some historians that the Nazis started the fire to strengthen Hitler's demands that he be given special powers to deal with the communists.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reichstag</b> 24<sup>th</sup> March – Enabling Act</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the March election the Nazis finally get a majority in the election.</li> <li>• Hitler uses this to intimidate the Reichstag into giving him emergency powers. For the next four years if Hitler wanted a new law he could make it.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opposition parties/democracy</b> 14<sup>th</sup> July – Opposition parties banned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nazis become the only party</li> </ul>
<p><b>The SA/Ernst Roehm/army</b> 30<sup>th</sup> June – Night of the Long Knives</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By June Hitler is using his SS men to send any major opponents to concentration camps.</li> <li>• The thuggish SA is becoming an embarrassment to him; he is also worried that Ernst Roehm, their leader, could be a threat.</li> <li>• He arranges for his men to break into the leaders of the SA's homes in the middle of the night, 400 are executed including Roehm.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hindenburg/army</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> August – Hindenburg dies</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitler becomes Fuhrer (Supreme Leader) of Germany. The German Army, pleased with Hitler destroying the SA, swear an oath of personal loyalty to him</li> </ul>



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## How else did Hitler destroy opposition?

<b>The Gestapo</b>	Hitler's secret police. They could arrest people just on suspicion and send them to concentration camps without trial
<b>The police and courts</b>	High ranking local police officers were all Nazis. The Nazis also controlled magistrates, judges and courts.
<b>The SS</b>	Formed in 1925 the SS were extremely loyal to Hitler. They were led by Heinrich Himmler. They destroyed opposition and carried out Hitler's Jewish policies.
<b>Economic fears</b>	Many Germans became obsessed with "keeping your head down." They avoided trouble because they feared a return to the times of economic depression and wanted to keep their jobs
<b>Propaganda</b> 	Goebbels, the Head of Propaganda, organised huge rallies, marches and torchlit processions. The Nuremberg rallies gave people a huge sense of belonging and used colour and excitement to encourage loyalty to the Nazis. Even the 1936 Olympics was used to show German superiority to other races and to show the great organisational skills of the Nazis. Cinemas, new technology and newspapers were all used to praise the Nazis.



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# Nazis use of propaganda

## Radio & Cinema

The government took control of all radio stations, which became one of the most important ways of giving people information. The radio broadcast all Hitler's speeches and propaganda like Hitler Youth programmes. There were also loudspeakers in public places to broadcast important speeches by Hitler. The government also made lots of cheap radios (called the people's receiver) to help ordinary people afford radios. This was very successful and by 1939 70% of households owned a radio. However, the people's receiver could only pick up a few Nazi stations and couldn't pick up foreign broadcasts. Cinema was very popular and Goebbels made lots of new films showing Nazi ideas, these were often shown as documentaries before the main film. The films were very high quality and showed key Nazi messages such as showing Hitler as a lover of children and the "evil" of the Jewish population. During this period many films (particularly American films) were banned.

## Posters & Newspapers

- Posters were a cheap and easy way to remind people of Nazi beliefs. They were widely used and placed in prominent (obvious) positions all over Germany. Posters were used to promote Nazi policies and organisations and to enforce Nazi beliefs.
- The government took control of newspapers by controlling publishers, editors and journalists (they all had to become members of Nazi organisations). Laws were introduced to tell newspapers what could and could not be printed and it became "treason" to "spread false news". Anti Nazi newspapers were shut down.

## Culture

- Goebbels set up Reich Chamber of Culture which promoted Nazi ideals). Jewish books were banned and many were burnt publicly. New books were written that emphasised race, war and the Nazi movement.
- The government monitored all types of art and culture, for example there was strict control over music and Jazz was banned because it had black roots). Theatre had to concentrate on German history and political drama with a Nazi message. Many writers and directors (such as the communist Bertolt Brecht) left Germany as a result.
- German art was strictly monitored and traditional. The focus of art was supposed to show German racial purity, military strength, bravery, power and obedience. Modern art was removed from display.
- German architecture avoided modern style and instead focused on classical Greek and Roman designs to show the power of Germany.

## Festivals, Rallies and Celebrations

Goebbels used mass rallies, festivals and celebrations to gain support (as it had worked so well when they were campaigning for election before 1933). Rallies often took place at night, and the combination of organised men in uniform, military music and flags, symbols and lights gave a strong impression of power. The rallies were often filmed and shown in cinemas, to ensure everyone could see the power of the government.



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The government introduced lots of new festivals and holidays including:

- Day of Seizing Power
- Founding of the Nazi Party
- Hitler's birthday
- Anniversary of the Munich Putsch

On these days there would be rallies in major cities and flags anywhere. Failure to hang out a flag could result in people being reported to the Gestapo.

### **Sport & Berlin Olympics 1936**

- The Berlin Olympics had been planned before the Nazis came to power. Goebbels saw as a great opportunity to showcase Nazi ideas to the rest of the world.
- The 1936 Olympics was meant to display to the world the Aryan superiority of Germany to other nations. German athletes were carefully chosen not only for strength but for Aryan appearance.
- The German athletes trained very carefully over a long period and as a result they were very successful, winning more gold medals than any other country!
- Opening ceremony was very impressive and attracted a lot of attention.
- During the games things that could show Germany in a bad light (such as the persecution of the Jews) was stopped!



## **Hitler's Economic Policy**

### **What were the aims of the Nazi Economic Policy?**

- To reduce unemployment,
- To increase production
- To enable Germany to be ready to go to war
- Reduce to a minimum the amount of goods needing to be imported. (brought from abroad)
- To maintain a reasonable standard of living and rate of pay for Germans.

### **What did they do?**

- Increase the size of the armed forces.
- Began rearmament programme (air force, naval constructions and investment in weapons such as Panzer tanks).
- Continuation and expansion of the autobahn (motorway) building programme.
- Forced focus on manufactured goods.
- Their anti-Jewish policies resulted in large amounts of resources being handed over to the Nazi.

### **How did Hitler try to reduce unemployment?**

- Armed forces expanded.
- Militarisation programme leads to jobs in manufacturing.
- Public works such as the Autobahns required lots of workers.
- Also unemployed Jews would no longer be classed as being 'unemployed'.



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## However

- The unemployment figures were not always accurate and were manipulated by the Nazis to look lower

The Ruhr valley and the Rhineland were reoccupied by German troops. This meant that industry was once more under German (Nazi) control. Anschluss (merger with Austria) leads to greater availability of raw materials. Taking of parts of Czechoslovakia provided further raw materials. Later the invasion of Poland would provide cheap labour, raw materials and space in which to expand the economy.

## Was Hitler's economic policy successful?

- Unemployment fell from 6 million to approximately half a million by 1939
- Production had largely increased
- Germany had a powerful army. Weapons production was on a large scale
- Currency was stable and investment rose.
- Infra structure was in place to enable economic expansion. (railways, roads, etc. are built)
- Payment of reparations ended, this enabled investment in Germany.

## BUT

- Rates of pay were no higher in 1939 than they had been in 1928. (Remember that they had slumped though)
- Hours worked rose and workers rights were diminished.
- Few luxury items available, consumer goods also a rarity.
- German recovery from the Wall Street Crash is comparable to that of other countries, the world wide economy improved at a similar rate to that of Germany: so outside factors may have influenced growth.

## Other important points to remember:

1933 Cautious moves towards rearmament (building up the military)

1934 Four Year Plan

1936-39 Investment in military increases

1938 Anti-Semitism increases - Jewish property confiscated and redistributed following Kristallnacht.

## Strength Through Joy:

In May, 1933, Robert Ley was given the task of forming the Labour Front (DAF), the only union organization allowed in the Third Reich. Wages were now decided by the Labour Front and compulsory deductions made for income tax, and for its Strength through Joy programme.

Ley ordered the building of two new cruise-liners that were used to take German workers on foreign holidays. In 1938 an estimated 180,000 people went on cruises to places such as Maderia and the Norwegian fjords. Others were given free holidays in Germany.

The Strength through Joy programme also built sports facilities, paid for theatre visits and financially supported travelling cabaret groups. It also subsidized the development of the People's Car, the Volkswagen



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# The Nazi's Social Policy

## WHAT WAS HITLER'S EDUCATION POLICY?

The Nazis wanted to control young people and ensure their support for the future. They did this by changing what children learnt in school and creating 'out of school' youth movements.

The German Minister of Education (Bernhard Rust) said "The whole purpose of education is to create Nazis." To do this the Nazis changed the school curriculum to contain what they saw as the main needs, military skills for boys and domestic skills for the girls.

The Nazis placed great emphasis on the learning of:

- History – to show the greatness of the Nazis.
- Biology – to teach 'race science' which highlighted the superiority of the Aryans. ("Pure" Germans)
- PE – to get boys fit for the Army and girls fit to be mothers.



To ensure that the German youth were taught correctly, all teachers had to swear loyalty to Hitler and join the *Nazis Teachers League*.

## What were the Hitler Youth Movements?

Membership to Nazi Youth Movements was made compulsory (you had to join). These were for young people of a variety of ages. There were separate groups for boys and girls. Boys went on outdoor activities such as hiking and camping, and then later were taught more about ideology and military training. Girls were taught how to care for their health and prepare for motherhood.



### Boys:

*Pimpf* (Boys aged 6-10)

*Deutshejungvolk* (German Young People, boys aged 10- 14)

*Hitler Jugend* (Hitler Youth, boys aged 14-18)

### Girls:

*Jungmadel* (Young Maidens, girls to the ages of 14)

*Bund Deutscher Madel* (League of German Maidens, girls ages 14-21)



Activities of these groups were shown in Propaganda films as being very popular. The numbers in the movements gradually increased but the attitudes of the members of the groups were sometimes different to those of the Nazis.



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They also had to learn [Nazi](#) dogma and once boys passed the necessary tests they were given a special dagger marked "Blood and Honour". The main objective of the organization was to provide [Adolf Hitler](#) with loyal supporters

The Hitler Youth published a series of magazines including *Youth and Homeland*, *The Young World*, *The German Girl* and *Girls Your World*. Another magazine, *Will and Power*, was produced for Hitler Youth leaders and female guardians.

## What were Hitler's policies towards women?

Most of the advances towards equal rights and opportunities made by women under the Weimar government were removed. There was no equality. Laws were made to ensure that women stayed at home and many employers were encouraged to give all jobs to men.

The Nazis had definite ideas about the role of women in society, their very much in the home as child-bearers and supporters of their Nazi Policies for women were based on the 3 K's, Kinder, Kirche, Kuche *Church and the Kitchen*)



place was husbands. *(Children,*

- Women were given special loans to encourage them to stay at home with their children
- Women were also given medals if they had a large family (Motherhood Cross System)
- Nazis banned birth control clinics, contraceptive and abortion
- Word "family" was only given to households with 4 or more children
- Therefore many women were forced out of their jobs, the first women this happened to were women doctors and civil servants.
- From 1936 no woman was allowed to be a judge or prosecutor as they were unable to think logically according to the Nazis.
- The number of teachers declined and no more women were allowed to become lecturers at universities.

## How did women react to the changes?

- Some always believed that their role was a domestic one and would have voted for Hitler in the first place
- Others may have been converted to the Nazi idea and been proud of the new status of motherhood.
- Others were angry because they had no choice in their new role
- Some protested, and joined opposition groups



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## Why did Hitler suddenly decide many women should work?

By the end of the 30's Hitler's priority was preparing for war. He needed more labour to work in the factories. This meant that at times the Nazi policy towards women was very confused. Factory owners were keen to employ women because they could be paid less.

## Was Hitler's family policy a success?

- 1) The Nazis were able to use the family to put many of their ideas into practice
- 2) Hitler was able to rapidly expand the population, whilst also getting more women into work to get the country ready for war.

### BUT

- Some of these policies were unpopular
- Pressures on couple might have been psychologically damaging

## How did the Nazis try to control the Churches in Germany?

### Catholic Church

In June 1933 Hitler signed an agreement with the Catholic church, agreeing that they could carry on with their religious work and that Catholic schools and youth groups would be left alone. The Pope promised that the church would stay out of politics. (At this time, Hitler still needed the support of the Catholic church and the Catholic Centre Party, to pass the Enabling Act). Hitler soon broke these promises. Catholic priests were harassed and arrested. Those who criticised the Nazis were sent to concentration camps. Catholic schools, youth groups and monasteries were closed down.

### German Christians & Reich Church

The Protestant churches were reorganised into the Reich church which was controlled by the Nazi government. The Reich Church was dominated by the German Christians. The German Christians were Protestants who admired Hitler and had Nazi uniforms and salutes and used the slogan "The swastika on our breast and the cross in our hearts".

### The Confessional Church

As a result of the formation of the Reich church, 5,000 Protestants broke away and formed their own Confessional Church to defend the Protestant church against interference and the German Christians. The Confessional Church was led by Pastor Martin Niemoller, a First World War submarine commander. The Confessional Church was banned in 1937 and Pastor Niemoller was arrested and sent to a concentration camp.



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## German Faith Movement

Some Nazis wanted to get rid of the Christian church entirely and replace it with a new Nazi faith based on pagan-style worship of nature, for example the SS held marriages in rooms carved with runic lettering and the flag of the movement was a golden sun on a blue background.

## Hitler's policy towards minority groups

### How did Hitler treat those he regarded as racially impure?

Anyone not seen as not racially pure was sterilized (they were given an operation to prevent them for having children. The following were regarded as racially impure:

#### 1) Jews

- main target of persecution
- relatively quiet periods but some sudden upturns
- From 1937 onwards persecution increased enormously

#### 2) Gypsies

- were targets because of mixed race and travelling lifestyle
- two attacks on personal freedom
  - 1) were made to give up travelling
  - 2) were sterilized to prevent them having families
- majority of gypsies were exterminated along side the Jews

#### 3) The Insane

- mentally ill were also considered a threat to Aryan purity.
- each patient was sterilized
- measures also included euthanasia and 'mercy killings' by use of injection of carbon monoxide gas.

#### 4) Tramps and Beggars

- they had no fixed home or work
- forcibly integrated or removed from society
- up to 500,000 were put to forced labour
- some were also sterilized

#### 5) Homosexuals

- homosexuality despised by the Nazis
- Many homosexuals in SA (including Rohm), but they were protected by being members of huge organisations which choose to ignore their activities.
- individual homosexuals were arrested by the Gestapo and sent to concentration camps and forced to wear a pink badges



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## 6) Alcoholics

- heavy drinking discouraged. Decline in alcohol consumption
- suspects humiliated by having their heads shaved
- persistent offenders were sent to concentration camps.

## How were the Jews treated under the Nazis?

Anti-Semitism is the dislike or hatred of the Jews.

### Background

- Hitler believed that the Germanic or 'Aryan' race were a 'master race'. He believed other races were inferior (below the Germans). The Jews were one of the most inferior races in Hitler's eyes.

## Why did the Nazi's persecute the Jews?

- Some Germans believed Jews were part of a worldwide conspiracy to take over the world's most powerful governments and businesses
- Some Germans were jealous of what they saw as "Jewish wealth."
- Many Germans blamed the Jews for 'stabbing Germany in the back' after the First World War
- Hitler linked the Jews to communism
- It was politically popular for Hitler to turn Jews into scapegoats for Germany's problems.; the hatred may have been fostered by his involvement in this conflict and a belief in this theory.



## Anti-Semitic policies 1933-1945

- Important positions could only be filled by people who were racially pure.
- The SS were in charge of a selective breeding policy. This involved selecting racially pure women for SS officers to father the children of.
- Educational programmes were introduced that taught Race studies and Eugenics (study of controlled reproduction). School curriculum was rewritten to teach about racial superiority: example being the Old Testament taught as being a struggle between the Jews and the Aryan race.
- Government sponsored boycotts of Jewish owned shops and businesses took place as early as April 1933.

## Stage 1: Denial of rights 1933 -1938

- 1933. Jews lose the right to be German citizens.
- 1933. Refused the right to protection from the police.
- 1933. Illegal for Jews to inherit land.
- 1935. Enforced segregation. Jews banned from: parks, swimming baths, restaurants and public buildings.



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- 1935. Nuremberg Laws. Illegal for Jews to marry Germans or to have sexual intercourse with a German.
- 1933-39. Government propaganda against the Jews.
- 1933-39. Jewish schoolchildren ridiculed and humiliated in front of classes on regular basis (indoctrination process).

During the period 1933 –1938 Jews were also sent to concentration camps. This was not in the large numbers that were to follow, nor were the camps ‘Death Camps’ at this stage. Jews sent to concentration camps in this period were imprisoned due to their response to the Nazi rule or a perceived threat of aggressive reaction to Nazi rule.

### Stage 2: Acceleration of persecution and the beginnings of mass murder 1938 –1941



November 1938: Kristallnacht (Crystal Night: so named because of the amount of glass smashed).

Kristallnacht was a massive pogrom (uprising against the Jews). Across Germany Jewish property, homes and synagogues were vandalised and burnt down. Thousands of Jews were injured and there were deaths. The SA probably organised and implemented this, although no official order has been found: the government said that it was a spontaneous uprising.

The persecution developed in intensity after the outbreak of war in 1939. After defeating Poland the Nazis set about ‘Germanising’ the country and this meant rounding up Polish

Jews and transporting them to the cities. Here they were herded into sealed areas called ‘ghettos’.



By 1941 the Jews had lost all civil liberties including: the right to choose their children’s names (official list of permissible names); forced to live in a ‘ghetto’ (sealed area of a town or city) and they had to wear a Yellow Star of David on their clothes. In 1941 Germany invaded the USSR. This brought about 3 million more Jews under Nazi control. Special units of the SS called the Einsatzgruppen began rounding up and shooting Russian Jews.

### Stage 3: The final solution 1942-5

In January 1942, senior Nazis met at Wannsee, a suburb of Berlin, for a conference to discuss what they called the ‘final solution’ to the ‘Jewish Question’. At this Conference Himmler, head of the SS and the Gestapo was put in charge of the systematic killing of all the Jews within Germany and German occupied territory. Slave labour and death camps were built at Auschwitz, Treblinka, Chelmo and other places. Six million Jews, 500,000 European gypsies and countless political prisoners, Jehovah’s witnesses, homosexuals and Russian and Polish prisoners of war were sent to the se camps to be worked to death, gassed or shot.



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## Opposition to the Nazis

Those who spoke out against Hitler and his policies faced intimidation and threats from the Gestapo, or imprisonment and in some cases execution. However, there were some brave individuals and groups who openly opposed Hitler and his policies - a few survived, but many were killed.

### Who opposed Hitler?

It was difficult - and dangerous - to oppose Hitler. However, some brave people did try:

1. The Catholic Archbishop of Munster, **von Galen**, led a successful campaign to end euthanasia of mentally-disabled people.
2. Some Catholic priests opposed Hitler. In 1937, the Pope's message '**With Burning Concern**' attacked Hitler as 'a mad prophet with repulsive arrogance' and was read in every Catholic church.
3. The **White Rose group** was formed by students at Munich University. They published anti-Nazi leaflets, but were discovered and executed in 1943.
4. A paramilitary wing of the Social Democratic Party, called the **Reichsbanner**, sabotaged railway lines and acted as spies.
5. During the war, 'swing' groups were formed. These were young people who rejected Nazi values, drank alcohol and danced to jazz. More violent groups were called the **Edelweiss Pirates**. They daubed anti-Nazi slogans, sheltered deserters and beat up Nazi officials. In 1944, the Cologne Pirates (the Edelweiss Pirates based in Cologne) killed the Gestapo chief, so the Nazis publicly hanged 12 of them.
6. Many Protestant pastors, led by Martin Niemöller, formed **the Confessional Church** in opposition to Hitler's Reich Church. Niemöller was held in a concentration camp during the period 1937-1945. Another Protestant pastor, Dietrich Bonhöffer, took part in the 1944 bomb plot and was executed.
7. In 1944, a group of army officers and intellectuals called the **Kreisau Circle** tried to bomb Hitler. The bomb was planted by Colonel Stauffenberg. It exploded, but Hitler survived. In retaliation, 5,000 people were executed.



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