AB Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship

This period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism.

Students will study the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of these two developments and the role ideas played in influencing change. They will also look at the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on them.

Part one: Germany and the growth of democracy

* Kaiser Wilhelm and the difficulties of ruling Germany: the growth of parliamentary government; the influence of Prussian militarism; industrialisation; social reform and the growth of socialism; the domestic importance of the Navy Laws.
* Impact of the First World War: war weariness, economic problems; defeat; the end of the monarchy; post-war problems including reparations, the occupation of the Ruhr and hyperinflation.
* Weimar democracy: political change and unrest, 1919–1923, including Spartacists, Kapp Putsch and the Munich Putsch; the extent of recovery during the Stresemann era (1924–1929): economic developments including the new currency, Dawes Plan and the Young Plan; the impact of international agreements on recovery; Weimar culture.

Part two: Germany and the Depression

* The impact of the Depression: growth in support for the Nazis and other extremist parties (1928–1932), including the role of the SA; Hitler’s appeal.
* The failure of Weimar democracy: election results; the role of Papen and Hindenburg and Hitler’s appointment as Chancellor.
* The establishment of Hitler’s dictatorship: the Reichstag Fire; the Enabling Act; elimination of political opposition; trade unions; Rohm and the Night of the Long Knives; Hitler becomes Führer.

Part three: The experiences of Germans under the Nazis

* Economic changes: benefits and drawbacks; employment; public works programmes; rearmament; self-sufficiency; the impact of war on the economy and the German people, including bombing, rationing, labour shortages, refugees.
* Social policy and practice: reasons for policies, practices and their impact on women, young people and youth groups; education; control of churches and religion; Aryan ideas, racial policy and persecution; the Final Solution.
* Control: Goebbels, the use of propaganda and censorship; Nazi culture; repression and the police state and the roles of Himmler, the SS and Gestapo; opposition and resistance, including White Rose group, Swing Youth, Edelweiss Pirates and July 1944 bomb plot.

BB Conflict and tension: the inter-war years, 1918–1939

This wider world depth studyfocuses on the causes of the Second World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the issues which caused it. This study also considers the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change, as well as how they were affected by and influenced international relations.

Part one: Peacemaking

* The armistice: aims of the peacemakers; Wilson and the Fourteen Points; Clemenceau and Lloyd George; the extent to which they achieved their aims.
* The Versailles Settlement: Diktat; territorial changes; military restrictions; war guilt and reparations.
* Impact of the treaty and wider settlement: reactions of the Allies; German objections; strengths and weaknesses of the settlement, including the problems faced by new states.

Part two: The League of Nations and international peace

* The League of Nations: its formation and covenant; organisation; membership and how it changed; the powers of the League; the work of the League's agencies; the contribution of the League to peace in the 1920s, including the successes and failures of the League, such as the Aaland Islands, Upper Silesia, Vilna, Corfu and Bulgaria.
* Diplomacy outside the League: Locarno treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact.
* The collapse of the League: the effects of the Depression; the Manchurian and Abyssinian crises and their consequences; the failure of the League to avert war in 1939.

Part three: The origins and outbreak of the Second World War

* The development of tension: Hitler's aims and Allied reactions; the Dollfuss Affair; the Saar; German rearmament, including conscription; the Stresa Front; Anglo-German Naval Agreement.
* Escalation of tension: remilitarisation of the Rhineland; Mussolini, the Axis and the Anti-Comintern Pact; Anschluss; reasons for and against the policy of appeasement; the Sudeten Crisis and Munich; the ending of appeasement.
* The outbreak of war: the occupation of Czechoslovakia; the role of the USSR and the Nazi-Soviet Pact; the invasion of Poland and outbreak of war, September 1939; responsibility for the outbreak of war, including that of key individuals: Hitler, Stalin and Chamberlain.

BC Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

This option allows students to study in depth a specified period, the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. The study will focus on major events of Elizabeth I’s reign considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints, and arising contemporary and historical controversies.

Part one: Elizabeth's court and Parliament

* Elizabeth I and her court: background and character of Elizabeth I; court life, including patronage; key ministers.
* The difficulties of a female ruler: relations with Parliament; the problem of marriage and the succession; the strength of Elizabeth’s authority at the end of her reign, including Essex’s rebellion in 1601.

Part two: Life in Elizabethan times

* A ‘Golden Age’: living standards and fashions; growing prosperity and the rise of the gentry; the Elizabethan theatre and its achievements; attitudes to the theatre.
* The poor: reasons for the increase in poverty; attitudes and responses to poverty; the reasons for government action and the seriousness of the problem.
* English sailors: Hawkins and Drake; circumnavigation 1577–1580, voyages and trade; the role of Raleigh.

Part three: Troubles at home and abroad

* Religious matters: the question of religion, English Catholicism and Protestantism; the Northern Rebellion; Elizabeth's excommunication; the missionaries; Catholic plots and the threat to the Elizabethan settlement; the nature and ideas of the Puritans and Puritanism; Elizabeth and her government's responses and policies towards religious matters.
* Mary Queen of Scots: background; Elizabeth and Parliament’s treatment of Mary; the challenge posed by Mary; plots; execution and its impact.
* Conflict with Spain: reasons; events; naval warfare, including tactics and technology; the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

Part four: The historic environment of Elizabethan England

The historic environment is 10% of the overall course and focuses on the site of Burghley Alms House.

The study of the historic environment will focus on a particular site in its historical context and should examine the relationship between a specific place and associated historical events and developments.

Students should be able to identify key features of the specified site and understand their connection to the wider historical context of Elizabethan England.

The following aspects of the site should be considered:

* location
* function
* the structure
* people connected with the site eg the designer, originator and occupants
* design
* how the design reflects the culture, values, fashions of the people at the time
* how important events/developments from the depth study are connected to the site.

Students will be expected to understand the ways in which key features and other aspects of the site are representative of the period studied. In order to do this, students will also need to be aware of how the key features and other aspects of the site have changed from earlier periods.

Students will also be expected to understand how key features and other aspects may have changed or stayed the same during the period.