



# Conflict and Tension

1918-1939



Revision Guide

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Conflict and Tension</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>1918-1939</u></b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Red</u></b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Amber</u></b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Green</u></b></p> 
<p>The armistice: aims of the peacemakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The aims of Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George</li> <li>○ Why were they willing to compromise?</li> </ul>			
<p>The Versailles Settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What were the terms of the treaty? What was the reaction?</li> <li>○ How satisfied were the allies with the treaty?</li> <li>○ How were Germany's allies treated at the end of the war?</li> <li>○ To what extent did the 'Big Three' achieve their aims?</li> </ul>			
<p>The League of Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Why was this created? How was it structured?</li> <li>○ Did it help people? How successful was it?</li> <li>○ How did international agreements help the league?</li> </ul>			
<p>The collapse of the League of Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The decline of international cooperation in the 1930s</li> <li>○ The Manchurian Crisis - how did the League react to this?</li> <li>○ Why did Italy invade Abyssinia? How did the League respond to this?</li> <li>○ Was the League of Nations destined to fail?</li> </ul>			
<p>The development of tension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What did Hitler want?</li> <li>○ How did other countries respond to Hitler's foreign policies?</li> <li>○ German rearmament and the road to war</li> </ul>			
<p>The escalation of tension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The reoccupation of the Rhineland</li> <li>○ Which countries supported Hitler?</li> <li>○ Anschluss with Austria – what was the reaction to this?</li> <li>○ What was the Sudeten Crisis?</li> <li>○ Why was Chamberlain so hopeful of 'peace in our time'?</li> <li>○ How did Britain and France react to Hitler's actions?</li> <li>○ Was appeasement a good idea?</li> </ul>			
<p>The outbreak of war</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Nazi Soviet Pact</li> <li>○ The invasion of Poland and the declaration of war</li> <li>○ Why did the Second World War break out?</li> </ul>			

# Timeline 1918-1939

<u>1918</u>	The Armistice is signed ending the First World War
<u>1919</u>	January – Paris Peace Conference June – The Treaty of Versailles is signed
<u>1920</u>	January – First meeting of the League of Nations August – The Treaty of Sevres signed with Turkey
<u>1921</u>	Poland invades Vilna; The Aaland Island crisis March – the League divides Upper Silesia between Germany and Poland
<u>1922</u>	August – The Washington Naval Agreement October – Mussolini becomes dictator in Italy after his march on Rome Economic collapse in Austria and Hungary
<u>1923</u>	July – The Treaty of Lausanne overturns the Treaty of Sevres August – The Corfu Crisis
<u>1925</u>	October – The Greek-Bulgarian Dispute October-December – The Locarno Treaties
<u>1926</u>	Germany joins the League of Nations
<u>1928</u>	The Kellogg-Briand Pact
<u>1929</u>	The Wall Street Crash leads to global depression
<u>1931</u>	The Mukden Incident – The Japanese army invades Manchuria
<u>1933</u>	January - Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany October – Hitler leaves the Disarmament Conference
<u>1934</u>	July – The Nazi Party in Austria assassinate the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss September – The USSR joins the League of Nations
<u>1935</u>	January – The Saar plebiscite, the Saar re-joins Germany March – Hitler announces building up the Luftwaffe and conscription; remilitarisation of the Rhineland June – The Anglo-German Naval Treaty October – Mussolini invades Abyssinia December – The Hoare Laval Pact is leaked to the press
<u>1936</u>	July – Outbreak of the Spanish Civil War October – The Rome Berlin Axis is agreed November – Italy joins The Anti-Comintern pact
<u>1937</u>	Japan launched a full scale invasion on China
<u>1938</u>	March – Hitler invades Austria to achieve Anschluss September – Chamberlain meets with Hitler over the Sudeten Crisis; the Munich Conference October – German troops invade and occupy the Sudetenland
<u>1939</u>	May – Germany and Italy sign the Pact of Steel – a military alliance August – The Nazi-Soviet Pact is signed September – Hitler invades Poland. Britain and France declare war on Germany.

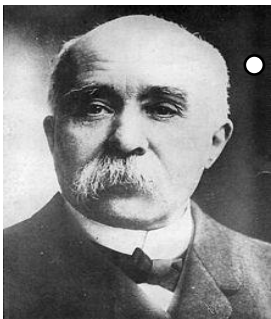
# What were the aims of Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George?

The First World War devastated Europe. Around 8 million soldiers and a further 8 million civilians lay dead. Whole towns had been flattened, farms destroyed and railways blown up. The world would never be the same again. The leaders of the winning countries needed to meet to decide what should happen next.

## The Paris Peace Conference 1919

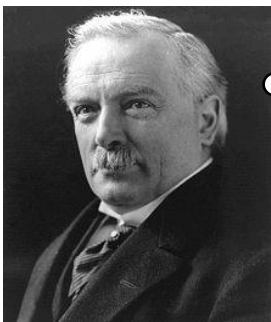
Representatives from 32 countries met. It was led by the leaders of the most powerful victorious countries: Britain, France and the USA known as the 'Big Three'. Each of the leaders wanted different things:

### Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France



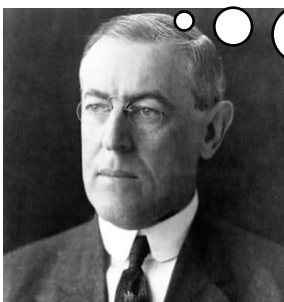
We suffered the most deaths at the hands of the Germans, we must cripple them! We must reduce the Germany army and push its borders back to the Rhine. The Germans should pay us compensation so we can rebuild!

### David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Britain



I was elected because I said I wanted to make Germany pay. I need to stick to this but what if it leads to Germany taking revenge? Britain also needs Germany to trade. We also need to think about the empire, we could gain from German colonies. We need to keep their navy weak to protect our empire.

### Woodrow Wilson, President of the USA



If we are too strict with the Germans it could lead to another war! We need a League of Nations so we can work and trade together. We need self-determination so countries rule themselves. My 14 points will make the world a better place.

As you can see the Big Three wanted different things and this meant that it was difficult for them to agree on things.

# Why were the Big Three willing to compromise when they disagreed on so much?

When the Big Three met at Paris they all brought different ideas and had different experiences during the war. You need to know what they did and didn't agree on as well as the problems they encountered.

## Armistice



Germany and its allies had to sign an armistice after their surrender. Politicians then met to agree a final treaty. The armistice at the end of the First World War included:

- Germany had to pay reparations
- Germany had to give back the Alsace-Lorraine region back to France
- Germany had to move its army out of the Rhineland

Clemenceau used the fact that Germany had agreed to these principles to argue that they should also appear in the final treaty.

## Why was it difficult for the Big Three to agree?

- **Arguments over prior agreements** - During the war the Allies (Britain, France and USA) had made lots of promises to different countries in return for their support. At the end of the war these countries wanted to claim what they saw as being rightfully theirs, but this led to arguments amongst the Big Three. For example Italy had been promised land from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Japan had been told that their claims on land in China would be supported.
- **Time constraints** - The conference took 12 months before the Treaty of Versailles was eventually signed. They were hurried to sign this so that reparations could begin being paid and countries could start to rebuild.
- **Conflict of interest** – Each of the Big Three wanted different things from the treaty this made it difficult for them to agree.
- **A changing Europe** – European politics and the economy had changed dramatically since the end of the war. For example the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed and the Russian royal family had been forced to abdicate and the communists gained power. Europe lay in tatters and people feared poverty caused by the war could lead to trouble.



# The Treaty of Versailles

## What were the terms of the Treaty of Versailles?

The agreements that the Big Three made at the Paris Peace Conference was called the Treaty of Versailles.

- **German armed forces were limited** - The navy would be reduced to 15,000 men and only 6 battleships. Germany was not allowed tanks, submarines or an air force. The army was limited to 100,000 and conscription wasn't allowed. The Rhineland was to be demilitarised
- **Germany had to accept responsibility for the war** - article 231 was the war guilt clause
- **Germany had to pay reparations** - In 1921 £6,600 million was agreed to be paid (Article 232)
- **Anschluss (a union) between Germany and Austria was prevented**
- **The League of Nations was formed** - Germany was not allowed to join
- **Germany was split into two**- along the Polish corridor
- **Land was given to the allies** – 10% of German land was taken e.g. Danzig was made a free city and Alsace Lorraine was returned to France. The Saar (an important industrial part of Germany) was taken under control of the League of Nations. Germany's colonies in Africa were given as mandates to the League of Nations which meant that Britain and France controlled them.

Germany had arguably been the strongest country in Europe. The war and the treaty had a significant effect on the country. The country was in turmoil; the Kaiser fled to Holland and different political parties began arguing with each other. People were also furious at the treaty, believing that it was unjust, this eventually led to the rise of Hitler.

## What was the German reaction to the treaty?

The German people were shocked at the severity of the treaty but had no choice but to accept this. The government became known as the 'November Criminals' and it was said that Germany had been stabbed in the back. The abdication of the Kaiser left no one to run the country so a new democratic government, known as the Weimar Republic, was set up although it faced criticism for not having one strong leader.

The part of the treaty that people hated the most was article 231, the war guilt clause. The German economy was in ruins and over 700,000 people had died from starvation. Nearly 6 million German's found themselves living in different countries who resented Germany. They were also humiliated by the loss of the army, they felt vulnerable and humiliated. This led to anger:

**1918** – October – Revolts in Germany; people protested about the war and food

**1920** – March – The Kapp Putsch against the German government is only narrowly defeated.

**1923** – Germany missed a reparations payment; the French invade the Ruhr, a German industrial area – they plan to seize German goods instead of the money owed. Germany economy crumbles. November – Because of hyperinflation the Nazi party tries but fails to overthrow

**1919** – January – Communists attempt but fail overthrow German government.

**1921** – The League of Nations said that Germany should pay £6,600 million in reparations

**1924** – The Dawes Plan – America lends Germany 800 million gold marks to help them rebuild the economy

## How were Germany's allies treated?

<u>Name</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Terms</u>	<u>Impact</u>
Treaty of St. Germain	Austria	<p><b>Land:</b> Austria lost land to Italy and Romania to create Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia</p> <p><b>Reparations:</b> Reparations to be paid but amount was never fixed</p> <p><b>Military restrictions:</b> 30,000 men in army, no conscription, no navy</p> <p><b>Other:</b> Austria and Germany can't unite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Much of Austria's industrial land was given to Czechoslovakia so Austria lost a source of income.</li> <li>○ The new states were a mix of nationalities which clashed</li> </ul>
Treaty of Neuilly	Bulgaria	<p><b>Land:</b> Bulgaria lost land to Yugoslavia, Greece and Romania. However it did gain some land from Turkey</p> <p><b>Reparations:</b> £100 million</p> <p><b>Military restrictions:</b> 20,000 men in army, no conscription, no air force</p>	
Treaty of Triannon	Hungary	<p><b>Land:</b> Hungarian land was lost to Romania and Czechoslovakia</p> <p><b>Reparations:</b> Agreed that reparations should be set but not fixed. The Hungarian economy collapsed so nothing was paid</p> <p><b>Military restrictions:</b> 30,000 army, no conscription, no navy</p>	
Treaty of Sevres	Turkey	<p><b>Land:</b> Turkey lost land to Greece. The Ottoman empire was split up.</p> <p><b>Military restrictions:</b> 50,000 men in army, navy restricted to seven sail boats and six torpedo boats</p> <p><b>Other:</b> Turkey had controlled important waterways connecting the Black Sea to the Mediterranean but the treaty said they had to open these to other countries. The allies were also allowed to keep troops in Turkey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Turkey overthrew government</li> <li>○ New president threatened to fight the allies over the treaty. The British were not prepared to fight so they agreed the Treaty of Lausanne which allowed Turkey to gain land in Greece and the right to decide how big their armed forces were and reparations were cancelled</li> </ul>

## How significant was the Treaty of Sevres?

The changes to the Treaty of Sevres are significant for a number of reasons:

- It showed that the other treaties were unenforceable; when a country rebelled against the harsh terms there was very little the other countries could do.
- When the British agreed to make a new fairer treaty it looked as if they were accepting that the original treaty was unfair. This undermined all treaties
- Mussolini and Hitler realised they could get away with breaking international law as no one would stop them.

## To what extent did the Big Three achieve their aims?

### Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France

<u>Aim</u>	<u>Evidence this was achieved</u>	<u>Evidence that it wasn't achieved</u>
Punishment and revenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Germany and its allies had to accept responsibility for starting the war. This damaged German pride.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most wanted Germany to be destroyed</li> <li>People felt that Clemenceau had not given them the revenge they wanted. They voted him out of office</li> </ul>
Protection – reduction of Germany's armed forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>German army and navy were reduced</li> <li>Germany was not allowed to have tanks, submarines or planes</li> <li>The Rhineland was demilitarised</li> <li>Germany could not unite with Austria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clemenceau felt that Germany should not be allowed at army at all</li> <li>People in France wanted an independent Rhineland, demilitarising it wasn't enough</li> </ul>
Recover losses and reparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 1921 the amount for reparations was set at £6,600 million</li> <li>France gained coal from the Saar for 15 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The war cost France 200 billion Francs, the reparations were far less than this.</li> <li>Many felt the Saar should have permanently been given to France</li> </ul>

### Woodrow Wilson, President of the USA

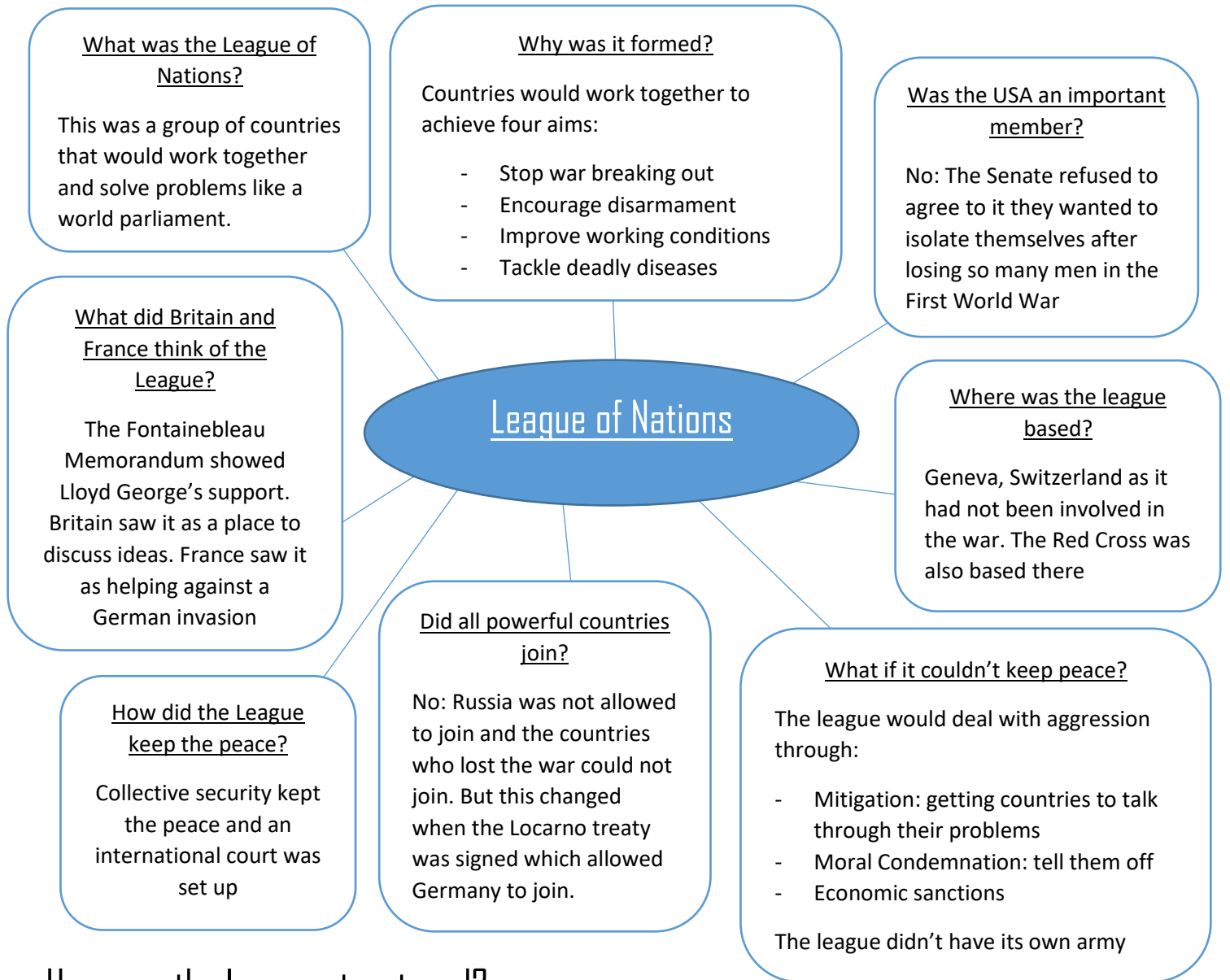
<u>Aim</u>	<u>Evidence this was achieved</u>	<u>Evidence that it wasn't achieved</u>
Self-determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many small nations that had been part of the Austrian-Hungarian empire were given independence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parts of the German Empire were given to the Britain and France</li> </ul>
League of Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The League of nations was created – 42 countries joined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The American Senate refused to join</li> <li>Isolationism became their policy</li> </ul>
Stop future wars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Countries in the League of Nations agreed to work to keep peace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson felt that the Treaty of Versailles was so harsh that Germany would seek revenge and another war would follow</li> </ul>

### David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain

<u>Aim</u>	<u>Evidence this was achieved</u>	<u>Evidence that it wasn't achieved</u>
Revenge and reparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The war guilt clause pleased people</li> <li>Reparations helped rebuild damage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lloyd George worried the treaty was too harsh</li> </ul>
Retain naval supremacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The German army was heavily reduced. Britain was once again confident that they 'ruled the seas'</li> </ul>	
Retain trade with Germany		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The German economy was crippled so it couldn't trade with anyone</li> </ul>
Reduce the German Empire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the end of the First World War the British Empire was at its biggest having gained from the collapse of the German Empire</li> </ul>	



# The League of Nations



## How was the league structured?

<u>The Assembly</u>	<u>The Council</u>	<u>Permanent Court of International Justice</u>	<u>The Secretariat</u>	<u>Special Commissions</u>
Met once a year to discuss and vote on matters. All member nations had one vote. Decisions had to be unanimous. It decided on who could join, election of judges and deciding what the leagues money could be spend on	A committee that took major decisions, it met once a year. Britain, France, Italy and Japan were members. The council had the power to veto.	15 judges met at the Hague in the Netherlands to settle international arguments e.g. over frontiers or fishing rights. Judges were elected by the Assembly.	The permanent 'civil service' of the League, in charge of administration and organisation. It was a body of experts from different areas responsible for carrying out the decisions of the league.	Special groups put together to tackle issues the League worried about. They included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Labour Organisation</li> <li>• Disarmament commission</li> <li>• Health Organisation</li> <li>• Slavery commission</li> </ul>

## What were the strengths and weaknesses of the League?

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All nations involved had signed an agreement that recognised the organisation</li> <li>○ It had a vast membership</li> <li>○ Economic sanctions and condemnation were daunting punishments for many countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Many important countries did not join the League. The USA for example never joined. This undermined the League as a global organisation and meant that if a country faced economic sanctions it could still trade with some of the world's most powerful countries</li> <li>○ The League had no army, which meant that it could not force people to obey it</li> <li>○ The structure was very complicated. It confused people and slowed action</li> <li>○ Decisions had to be unanimous, which meant the decision making was slow</li> </ul>

## Did the League of Nations help people?

	Aim	Success	Failure
International Labour Organisation	Bring workers together to improve conditions	1922- banned white lead paint 1928 – 77 countries had minimum wage	1919 – failed to adopt banning of under 14s working
Commission for Refugees	Return PoW and support refugees	1921 – freed 427,000 out of 500,000 PoW still imprisoned for WWI	1933 – attempted to appoint a High Commissioner for refugees but Germany refused this
Slavery Commission		Organised raids on slave trader camps in Sierra Leone, 200,000 freed	
Economic and Financial Committee		Financial experts attempted to help Austria and Hungary	Commission couldn't cope following global depression of 1929
Organisation for communication and transport	Regulated transport developed during the war to keep people safe	Introduced shipping lanes which meant fewer collisions	
Health Commission		International campaign to kill mosquitos which spread disease. This organisation was later named WHO (World Health Organisation)	
Permanent central Opium Board	To stop the cultivation and distribution of opium	Companies had to have certificates to say they were allowed to import opium for medicinal purposes	Some historians claim that certain members of the League were not really dedicated to stopping the sale of opium as they made money from it

## How successful was the League in the 1920s?

Following the loss of the European empires after WWI, disputes erupted over where the borders of new countries should be, some countries threatened war over this. People turned to the League of Nations.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>What happened?</u>	<u>Was the League successful?</u>
1920	Vilna	Many in people in Vilna (Capital of Lithuania) wanted to be Polish. A Polish army took control of the city and Lithuania asked the League for help. The League told Poland to remove its army, but it refused. France and Britain refused to help.	No – the League had failed to settle the dispute. Poland took Vilna.
1921	Upper Silesia	Germany and Poland wanted control of Upper Silesia (because of iron and steel production). A vote was organised to decide who would own it. Germany won 60% but the Poles complained to the League. They decided to split Upper Silesia into regions according to who voted. Both Germany and Poland agreed however neither were fully satisfied. Germany complained to the League (as they had lost $\frac{3}{4}$ of their coal mines in the area). The League agreed to award Germany the right to import coal at a discontent price.	Yes – the League had reached an agreement which was accepted. No – both countries disliked the agreement and in 1925 relations between the two countries worsened
1921	Aland Islands	Both Sweden and Finland claimed the Aland Islands, which were between the two countries. The League investigated each country's claim and decided they should go to Finland however they weren't allowed to build forts. Sweden agreed.	Yes – the League had successfully avoided war.
1923	Corfu	An Italian general investigated the borders of Greece and Italy however was murdered. Mussolini demanded the murderers be executed and Italy be paid compensation. Mussolini invaded Corfu. Greece appealed to the League but Mussolini was not happy and appealed to the Conference of Ambassadors to undermine the League. Greece was forced to apologise and pay.	No – the League had proven they could be undermined and overturned by other international groups
1925	Bulgaria	When Greek soldiers were killed on the Bulgarian border they invaded. Bulgaria appealed to the League. The League ordered Greece remove its troops and pay compensation. Greece felt the League was hypocritical after the Corfu incident but they agreed.	Yes – the League ensured Greece obeyed but it's a small country
1929	Wall Street	The USA was plunged into depression and this had a global effect. Some people turned to extremist parties like the Nazis.	No – League couldn't stop new parties

## How did the international agreements help the League of Nations?

**Locarno Treaties 1925** – Germany and France formed a treaty which said that they would work together to settle disputes. Britain, Italy, Belgium and Czechoslovakia also joined and agreed not go to war. People saw this as an end to German resentment, but some see it as a failure for the League of Nations.

**Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928** – 65 countries agreed to not use war as a way to solve disputes. Countries acted independently from the League showing that the League wasn't needed

**The Rapallo Treaty, 1922** – Representatives from Russia and Germany met agreeing that money and land would be returned to Russia. This did not involve the League

**Washington Arms Conference 1921-2** –decided that the UK and USA could have the same size navy. Britain, France and Japan attended as individual countries not through the League.

## Why did international cooperation decline in the 1930s?

As a result of the Wall Street Crash families across the world were suffering and sought answers to their problems. This led to them turning to extremists such as the fascists in Italy and the Nazis in Germany. Hitler and Mussolini were not afraid to use violence, they were not invested in collective security. To fight aggressive dictators the League would need an army but countries were reluctant to supply this. They also couldn't impose economic sanctions on a country already suffering economically.

## What was the Manchurian crisis?



Manchuria is a region of China rich in natural resources. Japan was suffering from the Great Depression and wanted to gain more resources and space so looked to take control of Manchuria especially at a time when China was weak:

- Manchuria was close to Japan
- Japan already had companies in Manchuria
- Japan had previously claimed it in the past
- Japanese army was getting stronger
- The army took control of Japan

The Japanese army claimed the Chinese sabotaged the Manchurian railway and used this as an excuse to conquer Manchuria. They renamed it Manchukuo and put a puppet emperor in charge.

When China found that Japan had invaded Manchuria they turned to the League to investigate. However the league were reluctant to act because:

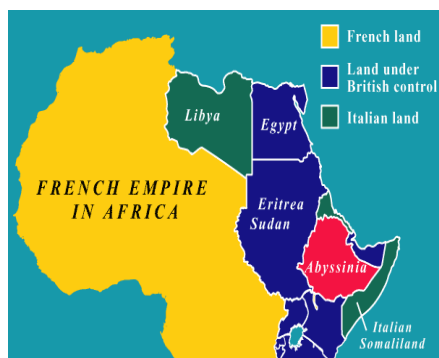
- The League didn't want conflict – many believed Japan was entitled to Manchuria
- Japan was a powerful member of the League and had claimed that they had been attacked first – this led to confusion

The League issued a moral condemnation and told Japan to withdraw its troops, but when Japan refused there was little they could do. The League put together a Commission of Inquiry, led by a British politician Lord Lytton. The Lytton report concluded that Japan was in the wrong and had overreacted and should have not invaded. Japan still ignored the findings and then invaded Jehol, another Chinese region. They then used these two areas as a base to invade the rest of the country in 1937. By 1938 most major cities were controlled by the Japanese army.

The League had failed. One of its own members had acted with aggression and the League had been too slow to react. This arguably led the likes of Hitler and Mussolini to question how they might also break the rules of the League.



## Why did Italy invade Abyssinia?



Mussolini wanted to invade Abyssinia (modern day Ethiopia) in Africa for a number of reasons:

- He wanted to rebuild the Roman Empire
- There were lots of natural resources
- Mussolini believed the League wouldn't intervene
- He was convinced Britain and France wanted him as an ally against Hitler after them forming the Stresa Front against Hitler. So he believed they wouldn't intervene

Mussolini invaded in October 1935, bombing tribal villages and using chemical warfare. Abyssinia only had a small army to defend itself. The Abyssinia emperor, Halie Selassie, addressed the League in Geneva warning of the effect its failure to deal with Mussolini would have. The League had once again failed because:

- Failure to close the Suez Canal: Britain and France didn't close the Suez Canal (which would've made it difficult for Mussolini to get troops to Abyssinia) because they didn't want to upset him
- Trade sanctions against Italy: When the League imposed trade sanctions against Italy it failed to ban steel, oil and coal as it felt this would damage their member's economies. These were resources that Mussolini needed for the invasion
- Trade sanctions: The League banned sales of arms to Abyssinia leaving it defenceless
- The Hoare-Laval Pact: A secret agreement suggested by British and French foreign ministers. They wanted to give Mussolini land in Abyssinia. The pact was leaked and there was public outcry, leading members had proven that they were willing to undermine the League for themselves

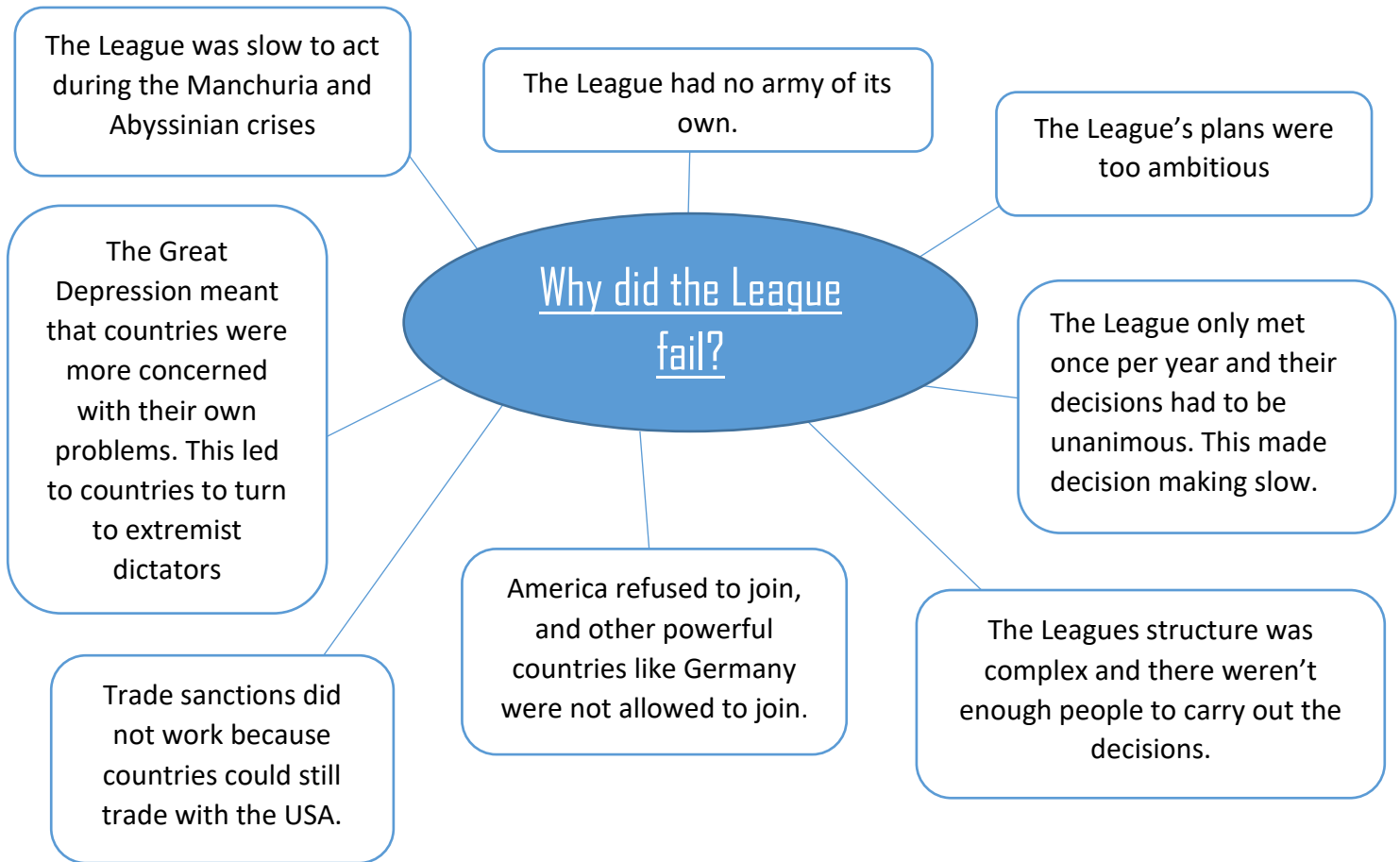
## What were the consequences for the League?

In 1936 Italy left the League. This left Britain, France and the USSR. However Britain and France had shown they were more interested in protecting themselves. Small countries knew the League would do nothing to protect them. From now on almost no one regarded the League as a serious or powerful organisation.

## Did the Manchurian and Abyssinian Crises lead to the collapse of the League?

<u>Why did the League collapse?</u>	<u>Evidence it was the Manchurian Crisis</u>	<u>Evidence it was the Abyssinian Crisis</u>
The Depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japans main export was silk - people did not buy it during the depression</li> <li>• Japan wanted to invade Manchuria as it was rich in natural resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mussolini promised to rebuild the Roman Empire – invading Abyssinia was a distraction from what was going in Italy</li> <li>• There were lots of resources in Abyssinia</li> </ul>
The League was powerless without an army	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When Japan ignored the Leagues warnings there was nothing the League could do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mussolini used chemical weapons on the Abyssinians who were left defenceless by the League</li> </ul>
Economic sanctions didn't work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the agreements between the USA and Japan, economic sanctions wouldn't have an impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Abyssinian army was left defenceless due to trade restrictions</li> </ul>
Britain and France dominated the League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They were reluctant to act in matter so far away.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Britain and France failed to close the Suez Canal</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lord Lytton took too long to investigate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Hoare-Laval Pact undermined the League.</li></ul>
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# The origins of World War II

## What did Hitler want?

Hitler became chancellor in 1933, he promised to solve unemployment and make Germany strong again. He aimed to:

- Overturn the Treaty of Versailles
- Rearm Germany and make the country strong again
- Take Lebensraum (living space in the east)
- Unite Volkdeutsche (German speaking people) in a Greater Germany
- Unite Austria and Germany (Anschluss)
- Destroy communism

## How did other countries react to Hitler's foreign policies?



### The reaction of Britain and France



Britain and France did not want to start another war, so they let Hitler get away with breaking the Treaty of Versailles, even though it was international law. This did this because:

- They needed time to rearm; their armies were not big enough to fight and win a war.
- Many people in Britain thought Hitler was being reasonable because the Treaty of Versailles was too harsh.
- They were concerned about the USSR and thought that Hitler could be a valuable ally against communism
- Countries could not afford to go to war because of the Depression
- People could remember the horrors of WWI; they did not want another war.

The policy followed by Britain and France from 1937 is known as appeasement: they tried to give Hitler what he wanted in the hope of preventing a war



### The reaction of the USSR and the USA



Stalin (leader of the USSR) was worried by Hitler's determination to destroy communism and by 1935 he was willing to put aside concerns about Britain and France in order to sign a mutual assistance treaty with France. Stalin would work with the allies to protect the USSR from Hitler.

The USA followed a policy of isolationism during the Depression. In a 1934 poll 70% of Americans said they did not want to get involved if a second war in Europe broke out.

## How did Hitler break the Treaty of Versailles?

<u>Event</u>	<u>Term Violated</u>	<u>Reaction</u>
<b><u>1922 Hitler leaves the Disarmament Conference</u></b> – Hitler pulled Germany out of the League of Nations after France refused to allow Germany to disarm to the same level as them	N/A	There was little the allies could do. Hitler claimed he acted in a reasonable way and it was the French who were unreasonable.
<b><u>1934 The Dollfuss Affair</u></b> – The Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss banned the Nazi Party in Austria fearing Hitler wanted to unite with Austria. Hitler ordered the Nazis to cause havoc in Austria and kill Dollfuss	Anschluss (union between Austria and Germany) was forbidden	Mussolini moved his army to the Austrian border in support of Austria. Hitler was not ready to fight so backed down.
<b><u>1935 The Saar Plebiscite</u></b> : A vote took place to decide whether France or Germany should control the Saar. 90% of people voted for Germany. Hitler used this as propaganda	This didn't break the treaty as the Saar was under the League for 15 years and then they could take a vote – this did happen	Hitler gained valuable resources, like the coalfields of the Saar. There was nothing anyone could do as the plebiscite was legal.
<b><u>1935 Rearmament</u></b> – Hitler held a rally where he announced that he had been rebuilding the German army and was reintroducing conscription. He also started to develop the Luftwaffe (an air force)	Germany had not been allowed an air force. There was to be no conscription and the army was only allowed 100,000 men	Britain, France and Italy agreed they would work together against Hitler as the Stresa front
<b><u>1935 Anglo German Naval Agreement</u></b> – Britain agreed to allow Germany to have a navy 35% the size of the British navy	Under the treaty Germany was only allowed 6 battleships and a navy of 15,000 men	Hitler realised that Britain was allowing him to break the terms of the Treaty of Versailles
<b><u>1936 – Remilitarisation the Rhineland</u></b> – Hitler wanted to take Lebensraum but he needed to protect his borders in the west believing he could be attacked by Britain and France.  In 1935 the French signed a pact with the USSR to assist each other if attacked. Hitler used this to claim Germany was attacked by the French and the USSR.  Troops entered the Rhineland on bikes and were greeted by civilians. Britain and France didn't stop this. Britain was feeling the effects of the Depression and felt Hitler was 'marching into his own back garden'. France was distracted by elections.	The Treaty said that Germany had to demilitarise the Rhineland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Britain and France began rearming – war was getting closer</li> <li>○ France started ignoring treaties to protect its borders</li> <li>○ Hitler signed the Rome-Berlin Axis with Mussolini</li> <li>○ Hitler signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan agreeing to work together against communism, Italy then joined this</li> <li>○ Hitler grew in confidence and turned his attention to how he would get around the other terms such as Anschluss</li> </ul>



## How did Hitler achieve Anschluss?

1919	The Treaty of Versailles prevented Germany and Austria uniting
1933	Hitler aimed to unite German speaking people and destroy the Treaty of Versailles
1934	Hitler had Austrian Nazis murder Dollfuss, the Austrian Chancellor, but backed down when Mussolini moved troops to the Austrian border
1938	Austrian Nazis planned to get rid of the new chancellor, Schuschnigg, but police discovered and stopped this plot. He still felt vulnerable. He met with Hitler and agreed to give key positions in the Austrian government to Nazis in return for Hitler's support
	Hitler's puppet, Seyss-Inquart, was appointed as Minister for the Interior, with full power over the police in Austria. He now had full control of the Austrian police force, who turned a blind eye to Nazi terrorist attacks on the Austrian government
	Schuschnigg planned a plebiscite to prove that the people of Austria did not want to be ruled by Hitler, but Hitler demanded that this be delayed and then forced Schuschnigg to resign
	Hitler made Seyss-Inquart the new chancellor. Seyss-Inquart was a Nazi 'puppet' – Hitler controlled him. He claimed that Austria was in a state of chaos and asked Hitler to restore order, and so on 12 March Nazi forces entered Austria. Crowds of Austrians gathered in the streets to cheer the Nazi soldier's arrival.
	The plebiscite was held and the Nazi's won 99% of the vote

## How did the people react to Anschluss?



Austria: 99% of people voted in favour of Anschluss, but polling stations were heavily policed by Nazi 'storm troopers', and the 'yes' box on the ballot form was much larger than the 'no' one!



Britain: Some British people had decided that the Treaty of Versailles was too harsh on Germany, and since they thought that Germany and Austria were essentially the same country, they felt that Hitler should be allowed to unite the two.



France: two days before Hitler's invasion the whole government had resigned. France was in no position to get involved.



Czechoslovakia: The Czech people feared that Hitler's policy of Lebensraum would mean that they would be invaded next. Britain and France agreed that they would protect Czechoslovakia if Hitler



Germany: Hitler was able to use Anschluss as a great propaganda victory. The German people were delighted to be uniting with their Austrian neighbours and could see that Hitler was achieving his foreign policy aims of Volkdeutsche

Anschluss meant that Hitler's next steps on the road to war were more easily achieved: he could now use the Austrian army; he could access the east much more easily through Austria; and the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia was now bordered by Germany (and Austria) on three sides.

## What was the Sudeten crisis?

Czechoslovakia had been created at the end of the First World War. Hitler felt that the invasion of Czechoslovakia would be another step towards destroying the Treaty of Versailles.

About 20% of the Sudeten population was German. Hitler claimed they were being persecuted and used this as an excuse to attack.



The Sudetenland was a good base from which to launch an attack on Czechoslovakia. There was also lots of natural resources which could be used in Hitler's war effort.

The Sudetenland was surrounded by Germany on three sides making invasion easier

May 1938	Hitler made it clear he would fight for the Sudetenland, claiming that German speaking people were being treated badly by Czechs and needed protection. British and French politicians were worried about a potential invasion as they had agreed to support Czechoslovakia and declare war.
15 <sup>th</sup> September	Chamberlain flew to meet Hitler, he wanted to appease Hitler to prevent war. He agreed to allow Hitler to take the Sudetenland so long as his actions were peaceful. Chamberlain then met with the Czechs to force them to agree to Hitler's terms
22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Chamberlain met Hitler again. Hitler changed his demands: the Sudetenland would be handed over to him by 1 <sup>st</sup> October and Hungary and Poland must also be given Czech land
29 <sup>th</sup> September	Chamberlain, Hitler, Mussolini and Daladier (the French president) met in Munich. They accepted Hitler's demands Chamberlain and Daladier said they had prevented war, as Hitler promised not to take any more land Chamberlain said he had guaranteed 'peace in our time' The Czechs were not consulted The USSR were not consulted. This made Stalin think that he could not trust Britain and France.
10 <sup>th</sup> October	Hitler invaded the Sudetenland. The Czechs saw this as a real military invasion. This broke the promises of the Munich conference.

## Why was the invasion of Czechoslovakia significant?

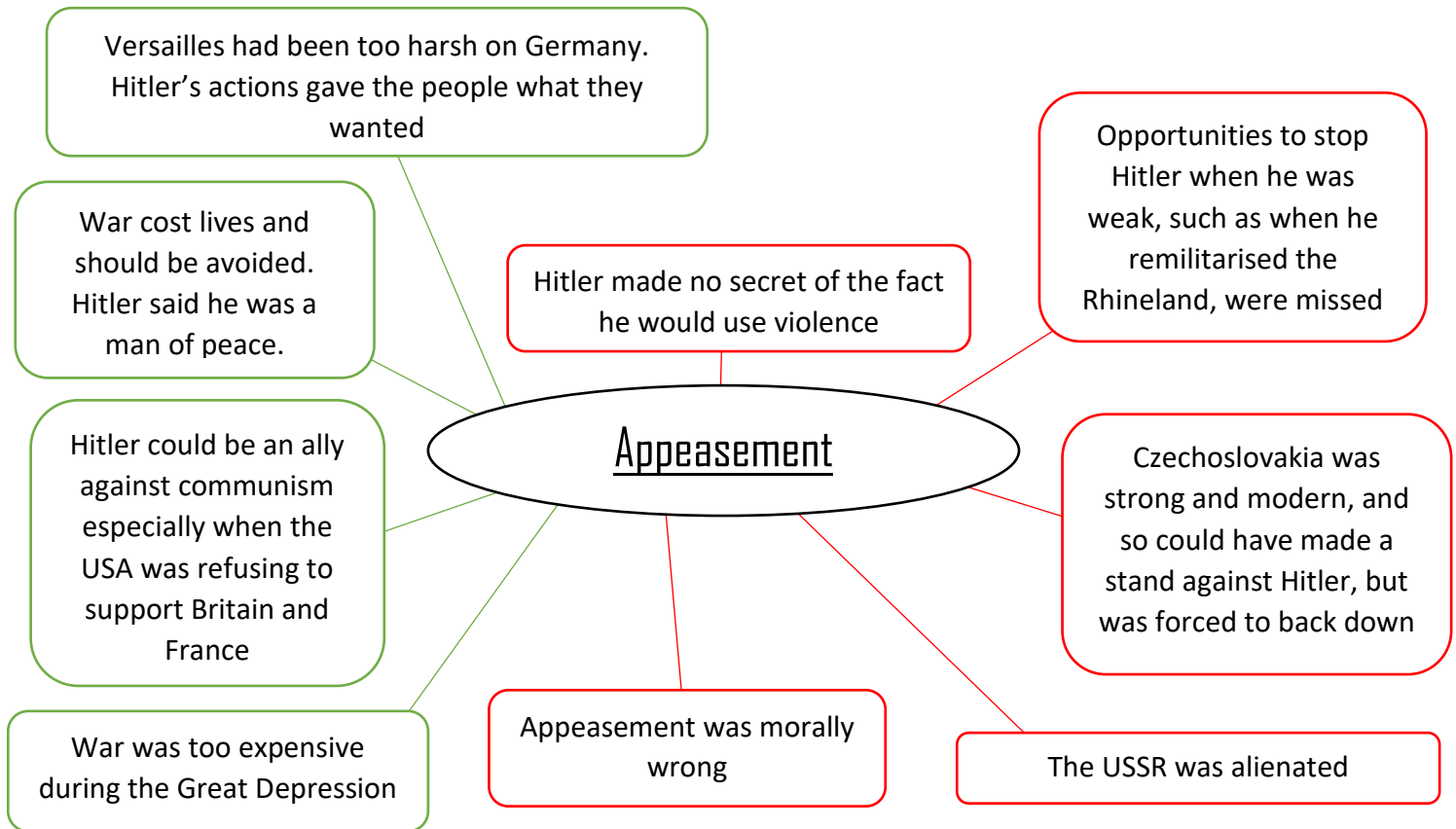
- This was the first time Hitler had invaded a country where he had no claim. There were no German speakers in Czechoslovakia outside of the Sudetenland and the country had not been German prior to the Treaty of Versailles.
- Britain and France had alienated the USSR and lost a valuable ally against Hitler
- Chamberlain had to admit his policy of appeasement had failed.
- Britain promised Poland it would guarantee its independence

## Was appeasement a good idea?

Many historians believe that appeasement was a big mistake whilst others say it was the only solution at the time.

### For

### Against



## How was Hitler able to invade Poland?

Hitler's next target was Poland – here he could continue Lebensraum and breaking the Treaty of Versailles. However the USSR considered Poland to be part of its sphere of influence, so invading meant Hitler would have a war on two front: Britain and France in the West and the USSR in the East. Hitler had to eliminate the threat of the USSR by signing a pact with them. The **Nazi Soviet Pact**:

- Meant Hitler could invade Poland without having a war on two fronts
- Britain and France would now face war with Germany without the USSR as an ally
- The USSR had a massive army, which would no longer be a threat to Germany

Stain wanted this because:

- He felt had been left out by Britain and France in the Munich Conference and thought they were weak for appeasing Hitler. He realised he couldn't rely on them to protect the USSR against Hitler
- Hitler seemed to respect the USSR and promised Stalin Polish territory which could act as a buffer

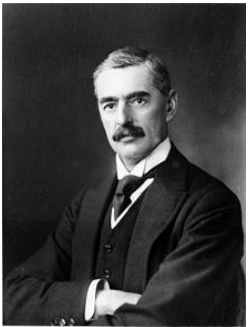
The British and French agreed to protect Poland if Hitler invaded and the Nazi Soviet pact made war inevitable. On 1<sup>st</sup> September, a German battleship attacked Danzig and the army marched into Poland.

# Who was responsible for the outbreak of the Second World War?



## Hitler

- Wrote Mein Kampf which suggested that to make Germany strong the Treaty of Versailles needed to be overturned.
- His aims included Lebensraum, building a greater Germany and destroying the Treaty this meant he would need to invade other countries
- Hitler broke the Treaty of Versailles which was international law
- Invaded Poland which led to Britain and France declaring war



## Chamberlain

- Missed opportunities to stop Hitler, because of appeasement – he failed to act when Hitler remilitarised the Rhineland. They also gave the Sudetenland to Hitler without consulting the Czechs
- Excluded Stalin from the Munich Conference, which alienated Stalin and prompted him to sign the Nazi Soviet Pact
- If Chamberlain had acted Hitler would have been forced to stop



## Stalin

- Signed the Nazi Soviet Pact despite Hitler wanting to destroy communism
- The size of the USSR's armed forces meant that Hitler a huge and powerful ally
- The pact meant that Hitler would not have to fight a war on two front, so he was able to invade Poland



## Mussolini

- Invaded Abyssinia which destroyed people's confidence in the League of Nations. He didn't intervene when Hitler carried out Anschluss, which convinced Hitler that he could do as he pleased.
- Signed the Anti-Comintern Pact and the Pact of Steel with Hitler

## Other factors:

- Japan – Invaded Manchuria, walked out of the League of Nations and signed pacts with Hitler
- The Big Three – They developed the Treaty of Versailles which was too harsh
- American Isolationism – this made the League weaker and made economic sanctions limited
- Fear of Communism – Britain and France allowed Hitler to grow strong as they thought Germany would be a buffer against communism
- The Great Depression – America demanded their loans back from Germany; this led to the collapse of German industry and more people voting for Hitler who was making many promises to them
- The weaknesses and collapse of the League of Nations – Hitler saw he could get away with invading other countries without being punished just as Japan had done in Manchuria and Mussolini in Abyssinia