



Year 6

The Rise of Hitler

Reading Booklet

Lesson Series:

- 1. The Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles**
- 2. The Rise of the Nazi Party**
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Name: _____

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Lesson 1 - The Armistice and The Treaty of Versailles

The Armistice was the agreement between Germany and the allies to end the fighting of World War One. Armistice day is remembered on 11th November every year; people wear poppies as a sign of remembrance and a two-minute silence is held at 11am.

In Germany, many people were shocked that their officials had agreed to an armistice. Six months later, the Treaty of Versailles was signed. This treaty blamed the Germans for starting the war and outlined punishments that would be imposed on the German nation. These punishments included an admission of guilt, returning land, limiting the size of the army and making a payment of £6 billion to contribute to the costs other countries faced as a result of the war.

Many German people were unhappy that their officials had agreed to the treaty. They blamed the government and Jewish people in the government and army for 'stabbing Germany in the back'. Many German people referred to the officials as the 'November Criminals'.

The American President Woodrow Wilson established the League of Nations in an effort to ensure international peace. Germany and Russia were excluded from the League, and despite being led by their President, the Americans did not join either, feeling that problems in Europe had little to do with them. Wilson's idea was that if nations could communicate more effectively, they would avoid armed conflict.



Lesson 2 - The Rise of the Nazi Party

Adolf Hitler was born in Austria. He left Vienna as a young man, possibly to avoid compulsory military service. During World War One he joined the German army, receiving awards for bravery.

The surrender of Germany in 1918 shocked him. He joined the German Workers Party (DAP) after the war, a party established with the aim of promoting workers' rights and German nationalism. The party became the National Socialist German Workers Party (known as Nazis) and in 1921 Hitler was elected leader.

The party had many aims: to unite German speaking people in one country, abolish the Treaty of Versailles, appoint one leader (the Führer) who would lead replacing democracy, promotion of the Aryan race, and believed Germany was in danger from Jews and Communists who had to be destroyed. The party also promised to give farmers ownership of the land they farmed and stop immigration. The party, now known as the Nazis, had their own private army known as Storm Troopers. This army was made up of unemployed men and former soldiers. They intimidated voters to vote for the Nazi party.



Lesson 3 - Life in Nazi Germany

The Nazis controlled many aspects of life in Germany. Men were soldiers, or worked in jobs that helped the state such as construction, engineering, mining and mechanics. They believed 'The mission of women is to be beautiful and bring children into the world.' (Joseph Goebbels- a Senior Nazi Politician).

Women needed to focus on Kinder (children), Küche (kitchen) and Kirche (church). They needed to wear plain clothes, wear their hair in plaits or buns, wear flat shoes, no make-up and not be too thin as it was thought this would prevent them giving birth. At age 10, boys needed to join the Hitler Youth and girls needed to join the League of German Maidens. These groups would prepare boys to be soldiers and girls to be mothers.

The Nazi party wanted to control young people's views through controlling education. Teachers had to teach Nazi politics, Aryan ideas and PE. Race lessons taught German children that particular groups of people (including Eastern Europeans, Gypsies, disabled people, gay people and Jewish people) were less than humans. Hitler

blamed Jews for everything that was wrong in the world and thought that their financial successes were their attempts to gain power and dominate Germany.

The Nazis commanded people to avoid Jewish businesses. Books by Jewish authors were burned, Jewish people were sacked from their employment, Jews and Germans could not marry and Jewish children could not go to school.



Lesson 4 - Kristallnacht and the Refugee Crisis

Kristallnacht, or 'Night of the Broken Glass' is the name given to the events of the night of 9th November 1938. Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues were attacked by rioters and the authorities did nothing to prevent the destruction.

The name 'kristallnacht', or crystal night, comes from the shards of broken glass that lay on the streets across Germany after the attacks. Over 7,000 homes and businesses were destroyed, 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and taken to concentration camps. Ninety Jewish people were killed.

Prior to this, thousands of Jewish people had been trying to leave Germany. The Nazis had said that every Jewish person needed a 'Jewish first name' so they could be identified; if their name was not on a list of approved names, they would be given the name 'Israel' for men and 'Sarah' for women. The Nazis announced that every Jewish person must have their passports marked with a 'J'. They then targeted Russian Jews and expelled those who held a Russian passport. They then did the same to Polish Jews. Poland refused to accept all the Polish Jews, who had been expelled from Germany, and they ended up living in refugee camps along the border.

Seventeen-year-old Herschel Grynszpan was living in France when his Polish-Jewish parents were expelled from Germany. He was angry about the Nazis treatment of his parents, went to the German Embassy in Paris and shot a Nazi official. Two days later, when he died, the rioting began. The Nazis said that Kristallnacht was not a government action but was the action of Germans who were expressing their

dissatisfaction with the Jewish community. They then blamed Jews for the riots and fined them for the damages done to buildings. Despite the Nazis claim that the events were a result of German dissatisfaction, many Germans condemned the destruction and opposed the anti-Jewish Nazi policies.



Lesson 5 - The outbreak of The Second World War

On 1st September 1939, the Nazis invaded Poland. Hitler wanted to regain land he'd lost and rule Poland. He also claimed his Aryan race needed more living space. On invading Poland, Hitler used a strategy known as 'blitzkrieg' meaning 'lightning war' which resulted in extensive bombings to destroy communication lines, railways, and key military locations before using a huge land invasion with tanks and troops. Roughly 1.5 million German soldiers, 2,000 aeroplanes and 2,500 tanks entered Poland.

Three days later, the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, announced over the radio on September 3rd, 1939 that Britain was at war with Germany. The British knew Hitler wanted to expand his territory and they feared he had plans for European Wide domination. Over the coming months, Neville Chamberlain was criticised for not leading Britain to take a more active part in the war. In 1940, he resigned, offering his successor, Winston Churchill, his full support. During the war, there was an all-party coalition government in an effort to put political differences aside and unite to defeat Germany.

