



# Primary History

## Twentieth-century conflict

**Name:**

**Class:**

# Knowledge organiser

Vocabulary	
Appeasement	A political strategy to try and prevent war by giving an aggressor what they want
Artillery	Heavy guns that can fire at targets a long way away
Blockade	Blocking a country's ports with ships to stop them getting supplies
Bombardment	An attack with shells or mortars that goes on for a long time
Conscription	When people have to join their country's army; they are given no choice
Empire	A group of countries controlled by another country
Propaganda	Controlling news and media to present your side favourably
Rearmament	Equipping an army with new weapons
Reparations	Money to be paid by defeated countries in a war to pay for the damage their actions caused in the war
Treason	Betraying your country, acting against your government with the hope of changing it

Timeline of events	
1871	Germany unites into a great empire
1908	Austria-Hungary annexes Bosnia, upsetting Serbia
28 June 1914	Archduke Franz Ferdinand is assassinated by a Serbian terrorist
28 July 1914	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
30 July 1914	Russia, an ally of Serbia, mobilises its army
1 Aug 1914	Germany, an ally of Austria-Hungary, declares war on Russia
3 Aug 1914	Germany declares war on France and invades Belgium
4 Aug 1914	Great Britain declares war on Germany
7 May 1915	A German submarine sinks the <i>Lusitania</i>
1 July–18 Nov 1916	The Battle of the Somme
6 Apr 1917	USA enters the First World War, fighting alongside Britain and France
11 Nov 1918	An armistice is signed, ending the fighting
28 June 1919	Treaty of Versailles is signed
9 Jan 1923	France and Belgium occupy the Ruhr
1923	Hyperinflation crisis
29 Oct 1929	The Great Depression begins
7 Mar 1936	Hitler sends troops into the Rhineland
12 Mar 1936	Hitler annexes Austria
30 Sept 1938	Munich Agreement gives part of Czechoslovakia (Sudetenland) to Hitler
23 Aug 1939	Nazi-Soviet Pact
1 Sept 1939	Hitler invades Poland
3 Sept 1939	Britain and France declare war on Germany

Key figures	
Adolf Hitler	Leader of the Nazi Party and leader of Germany 1933–1945
Archduke Franz Ferdinand	Prince of Austria-Hungary
David Lloyd George	Prime Minister of Great Britain
Georges Clemenceau	Prime Minister of France
Neville Chamberlain	Prime Minister of Great Britain
Woodrow Wilson	President of the USA

## The two sides in the First World War

**The Allied Powers ('Allies')**  
France, Britain, Russia, United States and others

**The Central Powers**  
Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria and others

# Learning review

Lesson	Lesson question	You will learn...	Learning review
1	What were the different causes of the First World War?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How Germany was unified under Bismarck.</li> <li>• What the four MAIN causes of the First World War were.</li> <li>• What happened after Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated.</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2	Why were so many lives lost on the Western Front?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why new weaponry was important.</li> <li>• What conditions in the trenches were like.</li> <li>• What happened in the Battle of the Somme.</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3	Was the Treaty of Versailles fair?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the different aims of the 'Big Three' were.</li> <li>• What the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were.</li> <li>• How fair the Treaty of Versailles was.</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
4	How did Hitler rise to power?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why the Weimar Republic was unpopular.</li> <li>• Why the Nazi Party became popular after 1929.</li> <li>• Why Hitler was so popular with the German people.</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
5	What caused the Second World War?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How successful the League of Nations was at stopping conflicts.</li> <li>• How Hitler increased tensions in Europe.</li> <li>• What other countries did to try to prevent war.</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
6	Assessment: Could the Second World War have been avoided?		<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

# Lesson 1

## What were the different causes of the First World War?

The First World War, sometimes called 'The Great War' (1914–1918), did not have just one cause. The acronym MAIN is used for remembering the main causes:

- **Militarism** – leaders or governments using war to solve problems
- **Alliances** – agreements between countries to help each other
- **Imperialism** – the policy of gaining power by taking over countries
- **Nationalism** – being convinced that your country is better than any other country.

1. As you read through the texts in this lesson, see if you can spot any of the four words that spell MAIN. Mark them when you see them.

### German unification

Germany only became a single country in 1871. Before this, there were lots of separate states. The most powerful was a kingdom in the north called Prussia, which tried to persuade the states to join up into a single German **Empire**. Afraid that a German Empire would be too powerful, France declared war on Prussia in 1870. All the German states came together to fight; in 1871 they defeated France and took a lot of French land. Germany became a single country.



2. Why were relations between Germany and France not good in the 1870s? Write your answer.

## Alliances

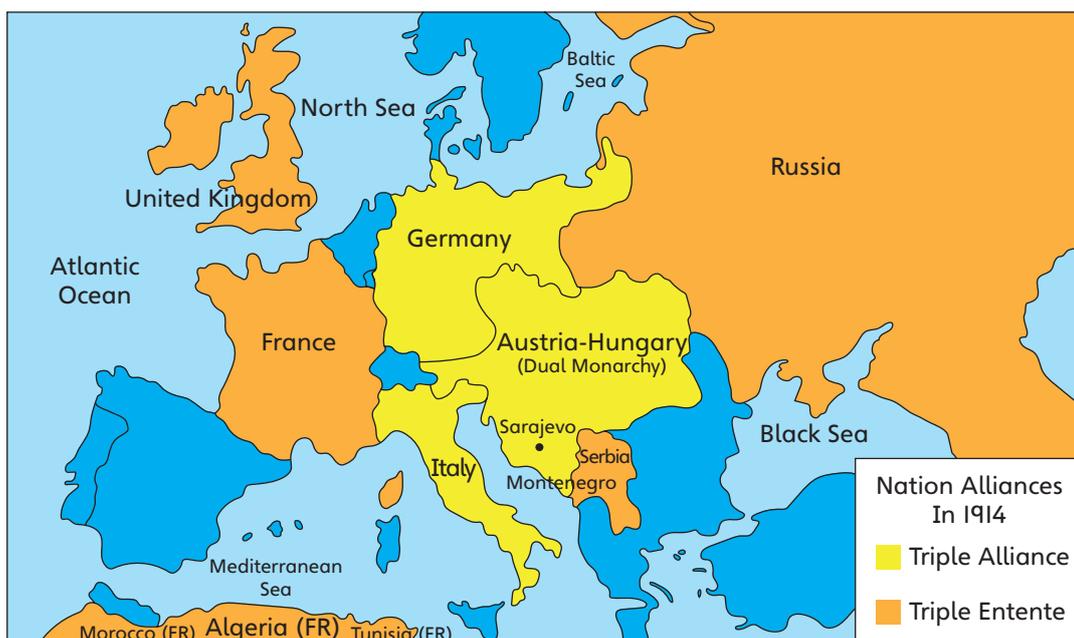
Otto von Bismarck became the first Chancellor (head of the government) of Germany in 1871. He began making alliances with other countries in Europe. One of the most important was between Austria-Hungary and Italy in 1888, called the Triple Alliance. Other countries in Europe were worried about how powerful Germany was becoming. France, in particular, wanted to make sure it could protect itself. It began to form alliances and treaties with other countries in Europe. In 1893 Russia and France signed the Dual Alliance and agreed to protect each other.



Otto von Bismarck

## Britain's alliance

Britain had the biggest navy in Europe and the world's biggest empire, but only a small army, so depended on its navy to protect itself and its overseas empire. When Germany started to build up its navy, Britain felt threatened – especially because Germany wanted to build up its empire, too. So Britain signed a treaty with France and Russia in 1904, known as the Triple Entente. Germany felt it was surrounded by enemies and worried that other countries were preparing to attack. Relations across Europe were very tense.



Map of Europe in 1914

## Trouble in the Balkans

There were also problems in the southern Eastern European countries known collectively as the Balkans. In 1908 Austria-Hungary took over the territory of Bosnia Herzegovina. Serbia was angry because many Serbs lived in Bosnia, and Serbia wanted them all to be part of a big Serb nation. As a result, a group of nationalist terrorists from Serbia planned an attack on the family that ruled Austria-Hungary.

## The shooting of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

On 28 June 1914, a 19-year-old Bosnian Serb called Gavrilo Princip shot the prince of Austria-Hungary, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, while he was visiting Bosnia. Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia for the assassination. Countries across Europe were forced to take sides. Germany promised to back Austria-Hungary, whatever it decided to do. Russia did the same for Serbia. Britain tried to calm tensions, but this did not work.

-  3. What country was Archduke Franz Ferdinand prince of? Write your answer.

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-  4. Who was on which side? Write your answer.

a. On one side was \_\_\_\_\_

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b. On the other side was \_\_\_\_\_

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## The First World War begins

Austria-Hungary made extreme demands on Serbia, which Serbia could not agree to. As a result, on 28 July 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Germany and Russia started to mobilise their armies. France was Russia's ally and was still angry about losing so much land to Germany in 1871, so it mobilised for war, too.

## Germany's plan

Germany knew that it would struggle to fight against Russia and France at the same time. It would have to split its army in two, to fight against Russia in the east and France in the west. However, it knew that Russia would take a long time to mobilise because it was such a big country. So, Germany planned to attack France quickly and defeat it before Russia had finished mobilising. Then it would fight Russia.

## Britain joins the war

Germany declared war on France on 3 August 1914. France's border with Germany was well defended, so the German army went through Belgium where the border with France was weaker. Britain had an old agreement with Belgium to defend it against attack. Once Belgium came under attack, Britain declared war on Germany.



5. Match each date in the timeline to the correct event. Draw a line between them.

28 June	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.
28 July	Britain declares war on Germany.
30 July	Russia starts to mobilise its troops.
1 August	Archduke Franz Ferdinand is assassinated in Bosnia Herzegovina.
3 August	Germany invades Belgium.
4 August	Germany declares war on Russia.



6. Which country do you think was most responsible for starting the First World War and why do you think this? Write your answer.

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# Lesson 2

## Why were so many lives lost on the Western Front?



### Quiz

1. Which three of these countries were members of the Triple Alliance? Tick the correct answers.

- a. Britain
- b. Germany
- c. Austria-Hungary
- d. Russia
- e. Italy

2. Which Archduke was assassinated in June 1914? Write your answer.

F\_\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did Britain join the war in 1914? Write your answer.

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4. Who was the first Chancellor of Germany in 1871? Write your answer.

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5. What does the acronym MAIN stand for? Use these definitions to help you. Write your answer.

**M** \_\_\_\_\_ leaders or governments using war as a solution to problems

**A** \_\_\_\_\_ agreements between countries to help each other

**I** \_\_\_\_\_ the policy of growing power by taking over countries

**N** \_\_\_\_\_ being convinced that there is something about your country that makes it better than any other country.

## The Western Front

There was fighting in many countries during the First World War. In Europe much of the fighting took place on the Western Front. The Germans had pushed a long way into Belgium and France, but by November 1914, British, French and Belgian soldiers stopped them. The armies faced each other along a 400-kilometre-long stretch of land that went from the English Channel to Switzerland. This was the Western Front.



The Western Front in the First World War

## Weaponry



Commonwealth\* cavalry soldiers in France during the First World War



First World War soldiers operating a machine gun

The fighting that took place on the Western Front was very different from fighting in previous wars. A huge range of weaponry was developed during the First World War, including machine guns, mobile **artillery**, tanks, poison gas, submarines and fighter aircraft. Previous wars had seen cavalry charges, where men on horses charged towards each other and fought with swords, rifles and bayonets. But one machine gun could kill hundreds of men – and horses – in seconds and sniper rifles were accurate over long distances. It was too dangerous to be out in the open,

\*The Commonwealth refers to countries that include the UK and states and territories previously colonised by Britain.

so the men on the Western Front dug long, deep pits, called trenches, to hide in and keep themselves safe from gunfire. Each side used artillery to try and break through the other side's trench defences. Trenches were easy to defend with machine guns, and difficult to attack. This made it difficult for either side to win much land, so both sides were stuck in deadlock for almost four years.



1. Which weapon do you think made the First World War particularly deadly? Why was this? Write your answer.

## The trenches

Trenches closest to the fighting were called the front-line trenches. Soldiers would spend about four days at a time in the front-line and then go back to the support and reserve trenches. The trenches had underground shelters where men could sleep and shelter during artillery **bombardments**. The sides of the trenches were held up with planks and sandbags. They had wooden walkways, called duckboards, so that soldiers could keep out of the mud.



Sandbags form the trench wall

## Life in the trenches

'As far as the eye could see was a mass of black mud with shell holes filled with water. Here and there broken duckboards, partly submerged in the quagmire [swamp] – here and there a horse's carcass sticking out of the water – here and there a corpse. The only sign of life was a rat or two swimming about to find food and a patch of ground.'

Private H. Jeary, Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment



2. Underline the words and phrases in the soldier's account that tell you the most about life in the trenches.

# The Battle of the Somme

The Battle of the Somme took place between 1 July and 18 November 1916. It was fought by British Empire and French troops against the Germans. Over a million men were killed or wounded in the five months of the battle, which succeeded in pushing the German army back just five miles. On the first day of the battle, 20,000 British Empire soldiers were killed with a further 37,000 injured. The Germans were waiting for the British troops to attack and as they approached, German troops mowed them down with machine-gun fire.



Soldiers from the Royal Irish Rifles on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 1 July 1916

## What did the Battle of the Somme achieve?

The Battle of the Somme is often seen as a terrible waste of life. But some historians say that the battle did achieve some important results that helped the Allies win the war:

- It meant that the Germans stopped attacks elsewhere in France.
- Germany also lost hundreds of thousands of men. As the war went on, it became harder and harder for Germany to replace killed or injured soldiers.
- The battle made the British army much more experienced and produced new tactics for attacking trench defences.



3. Complete the following sentences about the Battle of the Somme. Some historians believe the Battle of the Somme was a terrible waste of life because...

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Others argue that the battle achieved important results, such as...

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# Lesson 3

## Was the Treaty of Versailles fair?



### Quiz

1. Where was the Western Front? Tick the correct answer.
  - a. between the United Kingdom and France
  - b. between France, Belgium and Germany
  - c. between Russia and Germany
  - d. between Germany and Austria-Hungary

2. Name two new weapons used in the First World War. Write your answer.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What was used to hold up the trench walls? Write your answer.  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How many British Empire troops were killed in the first day of the Battle of the Somme? Tick the correct answer.

- a. 10,000
- b. 20,000
- c. 30,000
- d. 40,000

5. In what year did the Battle of the Somme take place? Tick the correct answer.

- a. right at the start of the war, in 1914
- b. right at the end of the war, in 1918
- c. in the middle of the war, in 1916
- d. after the USA joined the war, in April 1917

## The war ends

The First World War ended on 11 November 1918. Germany signed an armistice – an agreement to stop fighting. There were different reasons why the war ended.

## Naval blockade

The British navy stopped ships leaving and entering German ports. This meant that the Germans could not bring in food, oil and metal to build guns. This **blockade** was very successful, and it made it difficult for Germany to feed its people.

## The USA joins the war

The Germans used their submarines to sink ships bringing supplies to Britain. They wanted to blockade Britain. In May 1915 the Germans sank a ship called the *Lusitania* which had over 100 American passengers on board. This helped convince the USA to join the fight against Germany on the Western Front. In April 1917, the USA declared war on Germany. By the summer of 1918, two million US troops were fighting on the Western Front, armed with some of the best weapons and military vehicles in the world. This was a huge boost to the tired British and French soldiers.



1. Explain why the sinking of the *Lusitania* led to the USA joining the war. Write your answer.

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## The Spring Offensive

During the beginning of 1918 Germany launched a huge attack against France and Britain called the Spring Offensive. The Germans made significant progress, but then hundreds of thousands of American troops began to arrive. They helped the British and French stop the Spring Offensive. The second half of 1918 saw a sudden collapse of the German armies and the German navy refused to keep fighting. Germany's military leaders saw they could not win the war – their country was on the brink of starvation and collapse, and their army was too weak to defend Germany from attack.

2. Which factors led to Germany losing the war? Make a list, and then circle the one you think is the most important. Write your answer.

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3. How many people were killed in the war:
- from the Allies?
  - from the Central Powers?
  - altogether?

Write your answers in the table.

### Soldiers killed in the First World War

Country	Numbers killed (approximate)
<b>The Allies</b>	
Russia	2 million
France	1.4 million
British Empire	1 million
Italy	500,000
USA	100,000
Total for Allies	
<b>The Central Powers</b>	
Germany	2 million
Austria-Hungary	1.5 million
Ottoman Empire	770,000
Total for Central Powers	
Total for all	

# The Treaty of Versailles

Representatives from 32 countries got together at a palace called Versailles near Paris to agree a peace treaty to end the First World War. But none of the defeated (losing) countries attended. The main decisions were taken by the 'Big Three' countries who had won the war:



Clemenceau on the left, Wilson in the middle and Lloyd George on the right at the peace conference

- France – represented by the President, Georges Clemenceau
- The USA – represented by the President, Woodrow Wilson
- Britain – represented by the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George

## Aims of the 'Big Three'

Georges Clemenceau wanted to punish Germany as much as possible. France had suffered a great deal from the war and wanted to make sure that there was no way Germany could attack again. It was agreed to take a lot of land away from Germany on both the west and the east of the country. David Lloyd George didn't think that this was a good idea, and said that it could lead to more conflict in the future. For example, land in the east of Germany was given to Poland, so 1.5 million German-speaking people were no longer part of Germany.

Woodrow Wilson wanted an end to empires – he thought countries should be independent nations, like the USA. Wilson also wanted to create a 'League of Nations' to settle disputes between countries peacefully instead of fighting wars. The League of Nations was created in 1920 – but Germany wasn't allowed to be a member.



4. Do you think the defeated countries should have helped decide the peace treaties, to make them fairer? Write your answer.

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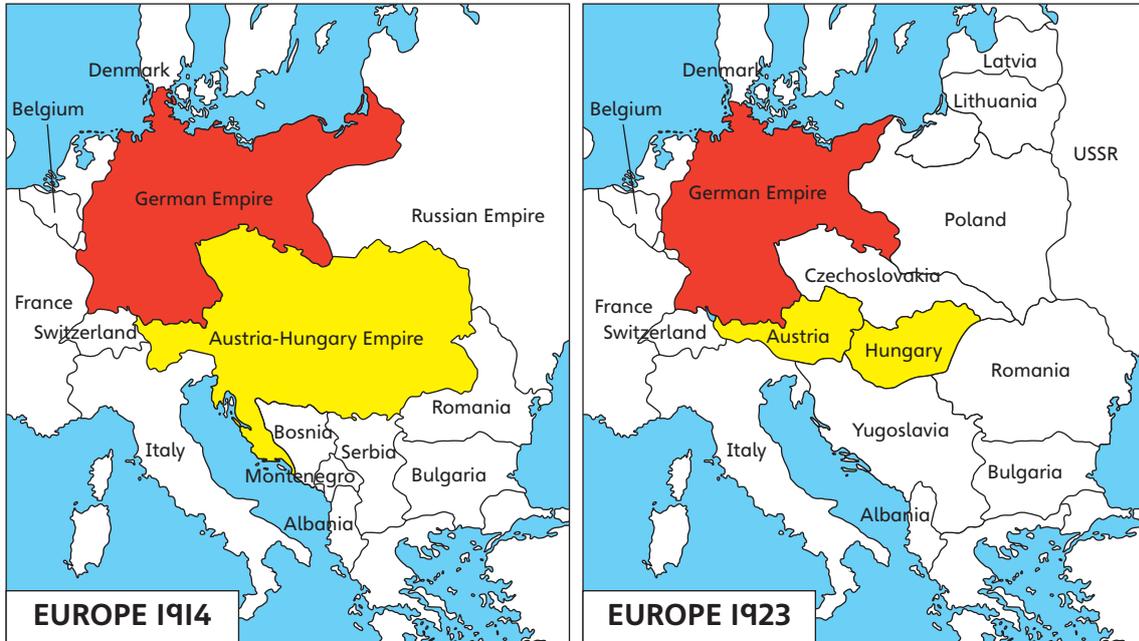
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## Loss of territory

The Treaty of Versailles took a lot of land from Germany. The Austria-Hungary Empire was broken up into independent countries and had all its overseas colonies taken away.



Germany and Austria-Hungary before the war, and what happened as a result of the Treaty of Versailles

## Military restrictions

The Big Three wanted to weaken the German military so that Germany would not be able to invade any countries to take back the land it had lost. The Treaty of Versailles said:

1. The German army could not have more than 100,000 men. **Conscription** was banned – all soldiers had to be volunteers.
2. The navy was limited to 15,000 men with six battleships and no submarines. Germany was not allowed to have military planes.
3. The Rhineland area of Germany was **demilitarised**. This meant that no German troops were allowed in this area of Germany that bordered France.

## War guilt

Clause 231 of the Treaty of Versailles said that Germany had to accept it was to blame for the war, together with its allies.

## Reparations

The Treaty of Versailles decided that Germany and its allies should pay **reparations** for the First World War. The total amount was £6.6 billion, with Germany having to pay a set amount every year until the debt was cleared (this finally happened in 2010). This was a huge amount of money at the time. David Lloyd George was concerned that reparation payments would destroy the German economy, and this would be a problem for trade across Europe.



5. Complete these sentences. Write your answer.

The Versailles Treaty was fair because the Big Three agreed that Germany...

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The Versailles Treaty was too harsh because...

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You could use some of these ideas in your answers:

- If Germany became too poor, it would not be able to trade with other countries.
- If Germany kept its strong armed forces, it would attack other countries to get its lands back.
- A smaller, weaker Germany would not be able to invade other countries.
- There were many different causes of the war: Germany wasn't to blame all on its own.
- Germany used horrible methods in the war, such as poison gas and killing innocent people.

# Unit progress check in

1. Read the statements below. Tick 'True' or 'False' for each one.
- a. Militarism was one of the four MAIN reasons for the First World War. True  False
  - b. Britain joined the war after Germany attacked British coastal towns. True  False
  - c. The Treaty of Versailles was agreed in France. True  False
2. The Western Front was between which three countries? Write your answer.
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3. How many lives were lost in the Battle of the Somme? Tick the correct answer.
- a. 1,000 soldiers
  - b. 10,000 soldiers
  - c. 1,000,000 soldiers
  - d. 5,000,000 soldiers

4. Match these sentence starters to the correct endings. Draw a line between them.

On the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 20,000	Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Bosnia Herzegovina.
On 28 June 1914, Archduke	Germany had to accept that it was to blame for the war.
On 11 November 1918, an	kill hundreds of soldiers at a time.
One of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles was that	British Empire soldiers were killed and a further 37,000 injured.
Machine guns were a relatively new weapon in 1914. They could	armistice was agreed to end the fighting.

5. Which organisation did US President Wilson want to set up after the First World War? Tick the correct answer.
- a. The League of Gentlemen
  - b. The United Nations
  - c. The United League
  - d. The League of Nations

# Lesson 4

## How did Hitler rise to power?



### Quiz

1. Which countries were called the Central Powers? Tick the correct answer.

a. France, Germany and the Ottoman Empire

b. Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire

c. Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia

d. France, Great Britain and Russia

2. Match each term with its definition. Draw a line between them.

reparations	when people have to join their country's army; they are given no choice
conscription	equipping an army with new weapons
rearmament	money to be paid by defeated countries in a war to pay for the damage their actions caused in the war

3. Name three things that the Germans could not get into the country due to the British blockade. Write your answer.

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4. Which countries made up the 'Big Three'? Write your answer.

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## The Weimar Republic

Germany became a republic, called the Weimar Republic, after the First World War. A new government was elected, and members of this government signed the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919. No Germans were happy about this, but the government had to sign it because the British blockade meant German people were starving.

## Objections to the Treaty of Versailles

The German people were very upset by the harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Germany did not have a say in the negotiations. Many Germans were furious with the Weimar government for signing the treaty. They could not believe that Germany had actually been defeated.

## Economic crisis

Because of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany had to pay reparations every year, but it had also lost some of its most important industrial areas. In 1923, Germany refused to pay reparations. French and Belgian troops marched into the Ruhr, Germany's main industrial area, and took control of it. They said they would take their reparation payments out of what Germany produced. The German army was too small to stop the occupation by France and Belgium. German workers refused to work for France's benefit – they went on strike. That meant Germany was producing even less – and now the government had to pay the strikers' wages. The German government printed more money.

This led to a major economic crisis in which German money lost all its value (called 'hyperinflation'). People's savings became worthless. Wages could not keep up with prices, so people really suffered.



Woman starting a fire with banknotes



1. List three reasons why Germans were upset about the Treaty of Versailles. Write your answer.

## Opposition to the Weimar government

There were many people who wanted to get rid of the Weimar government. Communists wanted Germany to put workers in charge of the country, sharing everything equally between everyone. Nationalists wanted to make Germany a powerful and influential nation again. Nationalists hated the Treaty of Versailles. They hated the Weimar government for signing it, and those Germans who had agreed to armistice in 1918, saying that the German army could have won the war had they not been 'stabbed in the back' by these 'November criminals'. There were riots against the Weimar government in 1919 and 1920 by both the Communists and the Nationalists.



This cartoon from 1919 supports the Nationalist myth that the German army had been winning the war, but was betrayed by political parties opposed to the Nazis, who had taken control of Weimar Germany



2. What did it mean when people said Germany had been 'stabbed in the back'? Write your answer.

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## The Nazi Party

In 1923, with Germany suffering from the hyperinflation crisis, a small, nationalist political party called the Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler, tried to overthrow the government. However, the attempt failed, and Hitler was jailed for **treason**. In prison he realised that he could not seize power by force. Instead, he would convince the German people to vote for a Nazi Party government.

## Nazi ideas

The Nazi Party not only thought Germany was the best country in the world, they believed Germans had special characteristics that meant they had the right to take what they wanted. The Nazis believed that there was a 'master race' that was superior to all other types of people – a racist belief. Nazis believed that this 'master race' was under threat from 'lower' types of people, including Black people, Roma people, Slavic peoples from Eastern Europe, and Jewish people. The Nazis, like other European Nationalists, blamed Jewish people for Germany being 'stabbed in the back' by other countries. This blaming of minority groups was based on old prejudices and invented stories (propaganda).

## The Great Depression

In 1929 American companies lost a lot of money, factories closed and a 'Great Depression' swept across the world. American banks demanded that Germany pay back their loans. The German economy collapsed. Millions of Germans lost their jobs. Life became very difficult for almost all Germans, and people became desperate. Support increased for extremist political parties who promised simple-to-understand solutions to the crisis.

- Hitler promised that he would end unemployment by creating jobs.
- The Nazi Party was strongly anti-Communist, which appealed to the middle- and upper-class Germans.
- Hitler blamed all of Germany's troubles on others – on the Treaty of Versailles, on the 'November Criminals' who had signed the armistice, and on Jewish people.



Members of the Nazi Party greeting Hitler with the 'Heil Hitler' salute

In the 1928 elections, the Nazi Party won just 12 seats in the German parliament. In elections in 1932, the Nazis won 230 seats. They were the biggest political party. In January 1933, Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. Now he was in control.

-  3. Why did people turn to the Nazi Party during the Great Depression? Write your answer.

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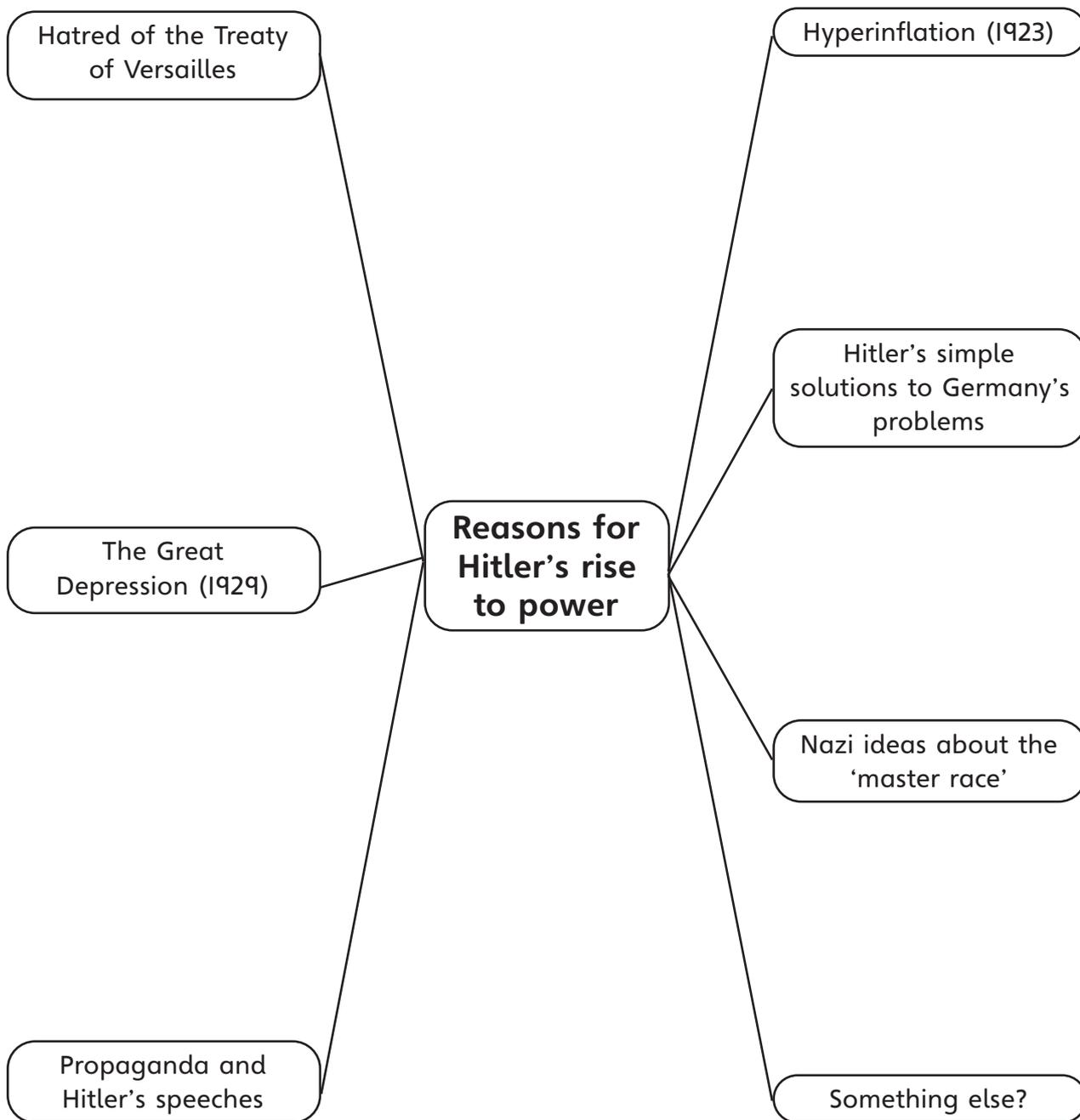
## Hitler's popularity

Hitler was extremely popular in Germany throughout the 1930s. People trusted him completely and saw him as Germany's saviour. There were different reasons for Hitler's popularity:

- **propaganda** – Hitler's media team were very skilful at creating an image of Hitler as a wise father for all German-speaking people.
- **public speaking** – Hitler was an amazing public speaker, and he specialised in making 'his sort' of Germans feel great about themselves and whipping up hate against Jews and other groups that the Nazis didn't like.
- **his background** – Hitler had fought in the First World War and received medals for his bravery. But he wasn't a military leader or from a rich family. He was an ordinary man.
- **his simple messages** – Germany's problems were extremely complicated, but Hitler made the solutions seem simple.



4. Write notes around this diagram to explain how the reasons helped Hitler get into power. Highlight the reason you think was the most important.



# Lesson 5

## What caused the Second World War?



### Quiz

1. Fill in the blanks to complete these sentences.

master    Germany    Jewish    superior

The Nazi Party thought \_\_\_\_\_ was the best country in the world, with the right to take what it wanted. The Nazis believed that there was a race of people, called the '\_\_\_\_\_' race, who were \_\_\_\_\_ to all other people. However, the Nazis thought this race was under threat from other people, including \_\_\_\_\_ people.

2. Who did Nazis and other Nationalists call the 'November Criminals'? Tick the correct answer.

- a. the Germans who had signed the armistice, ending the conflict of the First World War
- b. the judge who sentenced Hitler to prison for trying to seize control of Germany
- c. the Big Three, for imposing harsh terms on Germany in the Treaty of Versailles
- d. Communists

3. In which year did the Nazi Party gain 230 seats in the German parliament? Tick the correct answer.

- a. 1919
- b. 1924
- c. 1932
- d. 1939

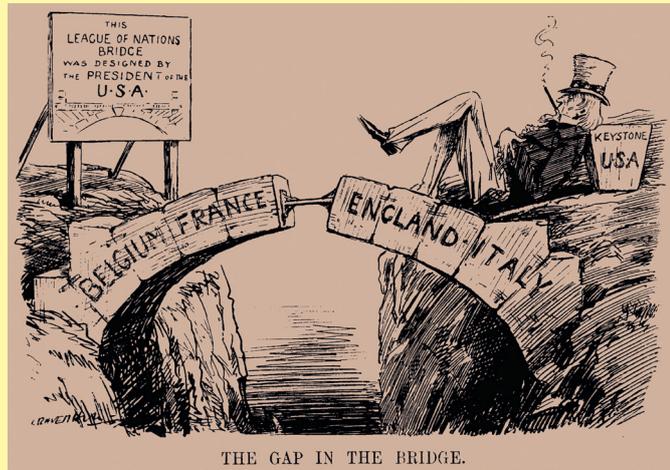
4. Give two reasons for Hitler's popularity. Write your answer.

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## The failures of the League of Nations

The League of Nations was set up in 1920 to provide a way for countries to settle arguments peacefully so there wouldn't be another world war. But the USA refused to join it, which was a major problem because only the USA had the money and power to get conflicts resolved. Due to the Great Depression during the 1930s, many countries had too many problems of their own to help sort out international issues. This meant serious problems for the League of Nations.



This cartoon from 1919 criticises the USA for setting up the League of Nations, but then not joining it, making the League very weak.

1. Give two reasons for the League of Nations' failure. Write your answer.

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## Hitler's foreign policy

Hitler became the leader of Germany after 1933, and was determined to make Germany powerful again. For the Nazis, this meant:

- taking back the territory Germany had lost after the First World War
- building up Germany's armed forces with **rearmament** and conscription
- uniting Germany and Austria
- taking new territory away from the Soviet Union – and defeating Communism.

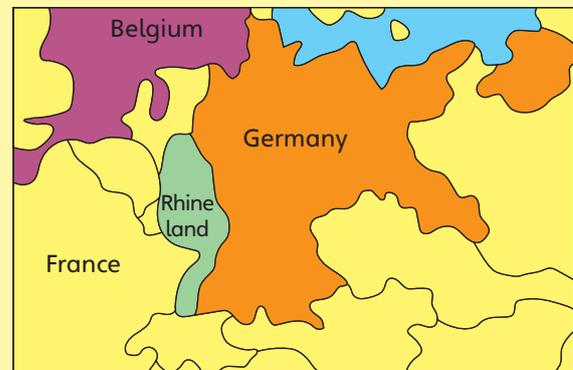
All these aims were very risky. They broke the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and risked war with other European countries.

## German rearmament and the Rhineland

Hitler acted carefully at first.

- He set about rearming the German army in secret.
- He increased the size of Germany's armed forces by letting unemployed people join the army. In 1935 he reintroduced conscription.
- He talked about defeating the Soviet Union. Britain and France were worried about the Soviet Union, so they liked the idea of a stronger Germany that could fight the Soviet Union and its threat of Communism.

Then, in 1936, Hitler thought he could get away with moving troops into the Rhineland area of Germany, which bordered France and Belgium. This was forbidden under the Treaty of Versailles, but Hitler was right. The League of Nations objected but took no action against Germany.



2. Imagine you are a French leader in 1936. Come up with one reason why you should not stop Hitler sending troops into the Rhineland, and one reason why you should. Complete these two sentences.
  - a. Our army is stronger than Germany's. We should stop Germany sending its troops into the Rhineland because...

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- b. Do we really want another war? If we invade the Rhineland to stop Germany, then...

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## Appeasement

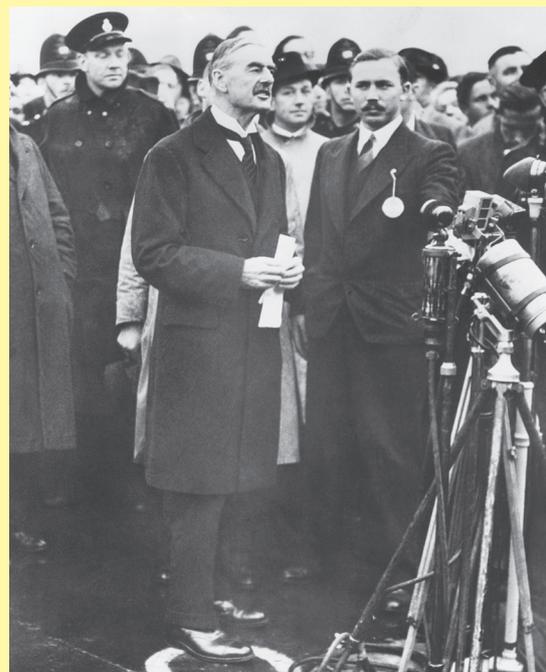
In 1938, Hitler made even bolder moves. Germany moved to bring Austria under Nazi control. Many Austrians supported the Nazis. Bringing Austria and Germany together was forbidden under the Treaty of Versailles, but Britain and France did not object.

Britain's government was following a policy of **appeasement**. There were different reasons for appeasement:

- The First World War had been so terrible that most people in Britain and France wanted to do everything possible to avoid another world war.
- British politicians thought the Treaty of Versailles had been unfair on Germany.
- British people wanted Germany to be strong so it could defend Europe from the Soviet Union.
- Britain was certain that the USA would not get involved in another world war. Could Britain win another war against Germany? It certainly needed time to rearm first.

## The Munich Agreement

A lot of German people lived in an area of Czechoslovakia called Sudetenland – it had been German before the Treaty of Versailles. In 1938, Hitler made it clear that he was planning to send soldiers into Sudetenland. This could have caused a war. The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, organised the Munich Agreement with Hitler. This agreed that Germany could have areas of Czechoslovakia where 50% or more of the population was German. Chamberlain believed he had prevented war.



Neville Chamberlain, his agreement with Hitler in his hand.

## The end of appeasement

In October 1938, Hitler ignored the Munich Agreement and went ahead and took over the whole of Czechoslovakia, not just the parts that had once been German. Now Britain and France could see that Hitler was not going to stop until he had achieved his aims for Germany to be the most powerful country and dominate all Europe. This was the end of appeasement. Britain and France did nothing to help Czechoslovakia, but they did sign an agreement to say they would help Poland if Hitler invaded. Poland had territory that used to be German before the Treaty of Versailles. In 1938, Britain began mobilising its armed forces. In 1939, conscription was introduced.



3. Read the statements below. Tick 'True' or 'False' for each one.

- |   |                               |                                |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. Appeasement is an aggressive political strategy that often ends in war.          | True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Appeasement was a popular strategy in Britain at first.                          | True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Britain wanted Germany to be strong again.                                       | True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. The Sudetenland is an area in Poland.  | True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. The British Prime Minister agreed that Hitler could have part of Czechoslovakia. | True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Hitler ignored the Munich Agreement.   | True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> |

## The Nazi-Soviet Pact

Hitler had always talked about his hatred of Communism and the Soviet Union. And the Soviet Union had been trying for years to agree alliances that would protect it from Germany. So it was a surprise when Germany and the Soviet Union announced a pact in 1939: an agreement that they would not attack each other. Hitler did not believe that Britain would go to war if Germany invaded Poland. But he thought that the Soviet Union might. So the Nazi-Soviet Pact was Hitler's way of invading Poland without risking war. (In 1941, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union anyway, breaking the pact.)



4. Give two reasons why the pact between Germany and the Soviet Union was a surprise. Write your answer.

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# The Second World War begins

In April 1939, Hitler demanded that the Polish hand over the part of the country where lots of German citizens lived. He believed that if he pressured Poland enough, Britain and France would come to another agreement like the Munich Agreement. He thought that Britain would avoid war at all costs. However, to Hitler's surprise Britain warned him that they would go to war if Germany invaded Poland. But Hitler still didn't believe this. On 1 September 1939 German troops invaded Poland. On 3 September 1939, Britain and France declared war on Germany. The Second World War had begun.



5. Study the reasons below for the Second World War. Put them into two groups. Write them in the table.

Things under Hitler's control	Things not under Hitler's control

- the USA not joining the League of Nations
- the Great Depression
- conscription brought back in Germany
- appeasement – Britain giving Hitler what he wanted
- the Treaty of Versailles
- troops returning to the Rhineland
- Germany's invasion of Czechoslovakia
- rearmament of Germany
- Germany invading Poland
- belief that Germany deserved more land

# Lesson 6

## Unit check out



Write an answer to this question: Could the Second World War have been avoided?

Key words		
agreement	guilt	Rhineland
alliance	hyperinflation	Sudetenland
armistice	invade	territory
blame	military	threat
defeat	'November criminals'	
extremist	responsibility	

<b>Title:</b> Could the Second World War have been avoided?	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When did the First World War end?</li><li>• How did the war end?</li><li>• What position was the world in?</li></ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Paragraph 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was the Treaty of Versailles?</li><li>• Why did so many Germans hate the Treaty?</li><li>• What would the outcome have been if the Treaty had been less harsh to Germany?</li></ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p><b>Paragraph 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was appeasement?</li><li>• How did appeasement encourage Hitler?</li><li>• What would have happened if Britain and France had been tougher on Germany?</li><li>• Why did appeasement seem a good idea?</li></ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>Paragraph 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who were Hitler and the Nazis?</li><li>• What were the Nazi ideas for Germany?</li><li>• How did the Nazis gain power?</li></ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>Extension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who was blamed for the First World War?</li><li>• How did France cause the Second World War?</li><li>• How did Germany cause the Second World War?</li></ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was the impact of all these factors?</li><li>• Which factor was the most influential in the start of the Second World War?</li></ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>





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*Published by Pearson Education Limited, 80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL.*

*www.pearsonschools.co.uk*

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*Produced by Oriel Square Limited*

*Typeset and illustrated by Jouve India*

*Developed at Reach Academy Trust and written by practising teachers and subject leaders*

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*First published 2022*

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