

World War One and Two



Causes of World War One

1. Long-term causes of war

On 28 June 1914, a Serbian shot an Austrian. Within six weeks, many of the countries of Europe had become involved in a war that was to cause the deaths of 10 million soldiers, but was the assassination the only cause of war?

Four underlying causes of war

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand signalled the rapid slide into world war, but this wasn't the only cause. There were **underlying causes** in the run-up to the First World War.

In the 1930s, historians argued that there were four underlying long-term causes of the First World War:

- **Nationalism** - the belief that your country is better than others. This made nations assertive and aggressive.
- **Imperialism** - the desire to conquer colonies, especially in Africa. This brought the powers into conflict - Germany wanted an empire. France and Britain already had empires.
- **Militarism (Arms Race)** - the attempt to build up a strong army and navy gave nations the means and will to make war.
- **Alliances** - in 1882, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance. This alarmed, France, Britain and Russia. By 1907, they had all joined the Triple Entente. Europe was divided into two armed camps, to help each other if there was a war.

2. The path to war

During 1900-1914, the great powers of Europe clashed a number of times. Each of these events **increased** international tension and rivalry, and made war more likely. War was going to come sooner or later.

Events

Key events 1899-1914

Event	Description
1. Boer War 1899-1902	Germany opposed Britain's attempt to defeat the Boers in South Africa.
2. First Moroccan crisis 1905-1906	Kaiser Wilhelm promised to support the sultan of Morocco against France's attempts to take over the country.
3. 'Daily Telegraph' article 1908	In a newspaper interview, Kaiser Wilhelm said the English were mad and the Germans hated them. This caused great offence in Britain.
4. Bosnia 1908	Austria annexed [Annexed : To join with or take over, so the less powerful country becomes part of the more powerful.] Bosnia in the Balkans. This annoyed Serbia,

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Event	Description
	which wanted to take over the area. Russia wanted to help Serbia, but had to back down.
5. Dreadnought crisis 1909	Scared by the growing German navy, the British people demanded that the government build eight of the new Dreadnought battleships.
6. Agadir 1911	There was a revolution in Morocco, so France sent an army to take over. Kaiser Wilhelm sent the gunship 'Panther', but Britain and France forced him to back down.
7. Balkan Wars 1912-1913	Serbia and other countries in the Balkans conquered most of Turkey's land in Europe. Serbia became a powerful country, and said Austria-Hungary was its next target.
8. Assassination of Franz Ferdinand 1914	The heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary was shot by Gavrilo Princip, a young Serb terrorist, in Sarajevo in Bosnia.

Question

Think about the events that increased tension across Europe and the consequences of these events. Can you think which event(s):

1. Made the British public hate the Germans.
2. Made France think that Germany wanted to destroy its empire.
3. Showed that the British thought Germany wanted to challenge the British navy.
4. Made Austria-Hungary determined to destroy Serbia.
5. Made Russia determined to support the Serbs.
6. Made Austria-Hungary frightened of Serbia.
7. Made Britain think Germany wanted to destroy its empire.
8. Made Germany determined to stand up to France and Britain.

Answer

1. The **Boer War**, the '**Daily Telegraph**' article and the **Dreadnought crisis** made the British public hate the Germans.
2. The **first Moroccan crisis** and **Agadir** made France think that Germany wanted to destroy its empire.
3. The **Dreadnought crisis** showed that the British thought Germany wanted to challenge the British navy.
4. **Bosnia**, the **Balkan Wars** and the **assassination of Franz Ferdinand** made Austria-Hungary determined to destroy Serbia.
5. **Bosnia** made Russia determined to support the Serbs.
6. The **Balkan Wars** made Austria-Hungary frightened of Serbia.
7. The **Boer War** made Britain think that Germany wanted to destroy its empire.
8. **Agadir** made Germany determined to stand up to France and Britain.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** tension and rivalry increased in Europe between 1900 and 1914.
2. **How** each of the eight incidents helped to increase the likelihood of war.
3. **Which** of the eight incidents was the greatest threat to peace.
4. **How** the German Empire tried to expand.

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5. **How** the balance of power changed in the Balkans in the years before 1914.
6. **Why** rivalry developed between Britain and Germany, 1890-1914.

3. Assassination at Sarajevo

The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife was **critical** in setting off the chain of events that led to the First World War. Not only was it a bad day for the Archduke and his family, but also a bad day for Europe.

The assassination - the basics



1. Sarajevo was in Bosnia, the province that - to Serbia's anger - had been annexed [**Annexed: To join with or take over, so the less powerful country becomes part of the more powerful.**] by Austria-Hungary in 1908.
2. Archduke Franz Ferdinand was heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary. He was inspecting the army in Sarajevo with his wife Sophie. The royal couple arrived by train at 9.28am.
 3. Seven young Bosnian Serbs planned to assassinate Franz Ferdinand as he drove along the main road in Sarajevo, the Appel Quay.
 4. The first conspirator who tried to kill Franz Ferdinand threw a bomb at his car. He missed and was arrested.
 5. The Archduke escaped unhurt. He decided to abandon the visit and return home via a different route to the one planned.
 6. No one had told the driver the route had changed. On the way back, therefore, the driver turned into Franz Josef Street, following the published route and, when told of his error, stopped the car to turn around.
 7. Unfortunately, the car stopped in front of Gavrilo Princip, one of the conspirators, who was on his way home thinking he had failed.
 8. Princip pulled out a gun and shot at Franz Ferdinand, hitting him in the jugular vein. There was a tussle, during which Princip shot and killed Sophie. By 11.30am, Franz Ferdinand had bled to death.

Extra facts

Here are some extra facts about the assassination:

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1. Franz Ferdinand was inspecting the army in Sarajevo with his wife Sophie and it was their wedding anniversary. The Austrian Emperor Franz Josef had **forbidden** him to be seen in public with her on other state occasions because she was a commoner.
2. That day - 28 June 1914 - was also **Serbia's National Day**. Franz Ferdinand's visit was a direct insult to the Serbs.
3. The conspirators got their guns and bombs from the **Black Hand**, a Serb terrorist organisation.
4. In Franz Josef Street, the car pulled up in front of Schiller's grocery store.
5. After shooting Franz Ferdinand, Princip tried to shoot **Potiorek**, the Austrian governor of Sarajevo, who was sat in the front seat. However, during the tussle he shot and killed Sophie instead.

Look at the source below.



Historical sources can be misinterpreted

This photograph is an example of the **problems of historical sources**. It is often shown in books as showing the arrest of Princip, but it probably shows the arrest of Cabrinovic.

4. The outbreak of war

If it was a Serbian who shot an Austrian, why did Germany, Russia, France and Britain become embroiled in a war? The European countries became involved in the war because of the **alliances** they had formed with each other - they had promised to support each other in the event of war and war was upon them.

Key dates

This list of dates shows how Europe slid into war after the murder of Franz Ferdinand.

1914 - the build-up to war

Date	Event
July 5th	The Austrian government asks the German government if it will support Austria in a war against Russia, if Russia supports Serbia. The Germans say they will support whatever the Austrian government decides to do - the so called 'blank cheque'.
July 23rd	The Austrian government sends the Serbian government an ultimatum.
July 25th	The Serbians accept all the conditions except one - that Austrian police should be allowed into Serbia.
July 28th	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

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Date	Event
July 30th	The Russian army is mobilised.
August 1st	Germany declares war on Russia.
August 3rd	Germany declares war on France and, following the Schlieffen Plan, attacks Belgium.
August 4th	Britain keeps the promise made in a treaty of 1839 to defend Belgium, and declares war on Germany.

Source analysis

Source A

The powder-keg was already full. The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand put the match to it by giving Austria the opportunity she was determined to take, of crushing Serbia in war. The Austrian ultimatum sent to Serbia (July 23) was followed within five days by a declaration of war against Serbia in spite of the conciliatory answer given by the Serbs.

The Austrians were determined on war and the Germans made no effort to stop them. Russian mobilisation (July 30) was followed by German mobilisation. Germany declared war on Russia (August 1) and on France (August 3). The German ultimatum to Belgium, demanding free passage for German troops through Belgium, brought in Britain on August 4, 1914.

PJ Larkin, European History for Certificate Classes (1965). (An old school pupils' examination revision book.)

Source B



'A Chain of Friendship'

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Question

Look at Source A and Source B and think about the key dates involved in the steps to war.

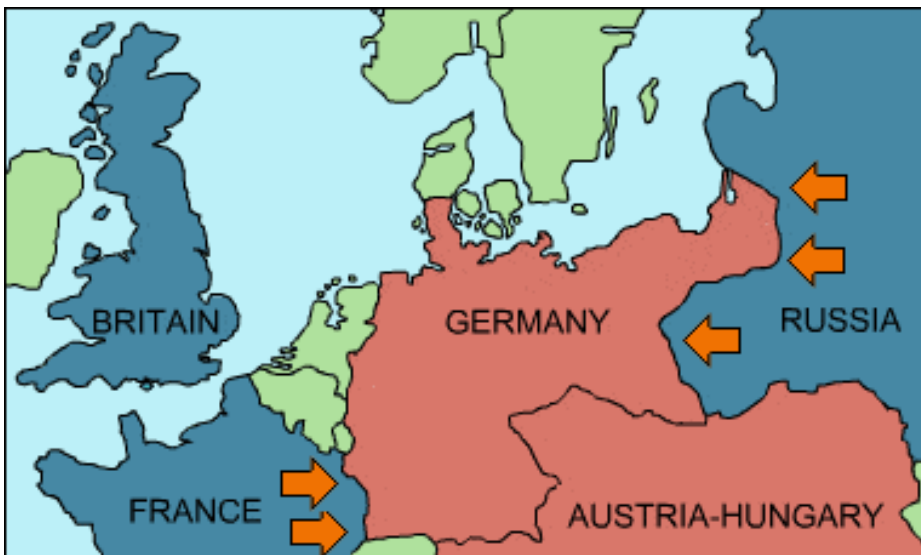
1. Compare the key dates carefully with the details of the textbook account (Source A), listing the points at which the key dates supports or contradicts the textbook.
2. Compare the key dates with the details of the cartoon (Source B), listing the points at which the key dates supports or contradicts the cartoon.

Answer

- The cartoon shows what the nations were committed to each other by their treaty alliances in July 1914. However, it does not describe the actual events accurately. Although in the event Austria did attack Serbia, Russia did mobilise against Austria, and Germany did attack Russia, the cartoon is incorrect to show France and Britain then attacking Germany. France came into the war because Germany declared war on it, and Britain came into the war to defend Belgium, not Russia.
- Source A is correct.

The Schlieffen Plan

Germany had been preparing for war long before 1914. In fact, Germany had started drawing up a plan for war - the Schlieffen Plan - in 1897. It took nine years to finalise, but it was based on the theory that Germany would be at war with France and Russia at the same time. It did not prepare for many of the events that occurred in July and August 1914. It was based on the belief that, if the country went to war, Germany would be faced with a **war on two fronts** with France and Russia.



This map shows the war faced by Germany on two fronts

The plan assumed that **France was weak** and could be beaten quickly, and that **Russia** was much stronger, but would take **longer to mobilise** its army.

The plan began to go wrong on 30 July 1914, when Russia mobilised its army, but France did not. Germany was forced to invent a pretext to declare war on France (3 August 1914).

Things got worse when **Britain declared war on Germany** on 4 August 1914 because, in a Treaty of 1839, Britain had promised to defend Belgium.

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Extra facts

- The plan was the work of the German army chief-of-staff **Alfred von Schlieffen**.
- It took **nine years to devise** - it was started in 1897, presented in 1905, and revised in 1906.
- The plan imagined a huge hammer-blow at Paris, using 90 per cent of the German army, swinging down through Belgium and northern France, to **take out France in a quick, decisive campaign**.
- It was a **plan of attack** - for Germany, mobilisation and war were the same thing.
- It was Germany's **only** plan for war.
- It **did not** plan for a situation where Germany was at war with Russia, but not with France. When the German chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg asked: "Is the Fatherland in danger?", the German general Moltke declared: "Yes".
- In the event, **Russia took only ten days to mobilise**, and Moltke was forced to send some troops to the eastern front, which weakened the main attack on Paris.
- When the German army asked permission to go through Belgium on 2 August 1914, the Belgians refused, so the **German army had to fight its way through Belgium**. This slowed it down and tired the soldiers.
- Britain's decision to **uphold the 1839 Treaty with Belgium** amazed the Germans. "For a scrap of paper, Great Britain is going to make war?" said the amazed Bethmann-Hollweg.
- In the event, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) arrived to resist the Germans, and held them up at the **Battle of Mons** on 23 August 1914. With his army exhausted and many of his best forces killed, Moltke was defeated at the battle of the Marne on 6-10 September 1914. "Sir, we have lost the war," he told the Kaiser.

Was Germany to blame?

Immediately after the war, the **Treaty of Versailles blamed Germany** for 'all the loss and damage' of the war. During the 1920s, however, Germans vigorously denied this, and - during the period of appeasement [**Appeasement**: *The policy of pacifying an aggressor through giving in to their demands, thus maintaining peace.*] in the 1930s - many people were prepared to **blame other factors**:

- Sydney Bradshaw Fay laid the emphasis on the **underlying tensions** of nationalism, imperialism, militarism and alliances.
- The British prime minister Lloyd George blamed the war on the **failure of the politicians** who, he said, lacked the ability to negotiate their way out of war.

After the Second World War, historians were **less prepared to excuse Germany**. In the 1960s, the German historian Fritz Fischer argued that the German leaders had a 'will to war', that they wanted to expand German power, and they wanted the situation in Europe to deteriorate into war. This is the view still held by many historians today.

Treaty of Versailles

1. The conference and the Big Three

In January 1919 delegates from 32 countries met in Paris to make peace after the First World War - the peace they hoped would 'end all wars'. The conference was dominated by David Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau and Woodrow Wilson, the leaders of Britain, France and America, often known as the 'Big Three'.

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The conference and the Big Three

Delegates from 32 countries met in January 1919, but the conference was dominated by the **Big Three** - Lloyd George (Britain), Clemenceau (France) and Wilson (USA). The delegations made presentations to them, after which the Big Three made their decision.

Negotiations were difficult. Each of the Big Three wanted such different things, that by March 1919 it looked as though the conference was going to break up.

Lloyd George saved the conference. On 25 March 1919, he issued the **Fontainebleau Memorandum**, and persuaded Clemenceau to agree to the League of Nations and a more lenient peace treaty that would not destroy Germany. Then he went to Wilson and persuaded him to agree to the War Guilt Clause.

The Germans were shown the proposed Treaty of Versailles. There was **no negotiation**. The Germans published a rebuttal, arguing that the treaty was unfair, but they were ignored. On 28 June 1919, the delegates met at the **Hall of Mirrors** in the Palace of Versailles, near Paris, and **forced** two Germans to sign the treaty.

Expectations of the peace treaty

The Armistice of 11 November 1918 was greeted with great joy. The **people of Europe** wanted lasting peace, and also to make Germany pay for the damage done, and revenge.

The **Germans** had expected that the peace treaty would be based on President Wilson's **Fourteen Points**. The six key principles of the Fourteen Points were:

1. Setting up a League of Nations
2. Disarmament
3. Self-determination for the people of Europe - the right to rule themselves
4. Freedom for colonies
5. Freedom of the seas
6. Free trade

The **Big Three** expected to base the peace treaty on the **terms of the armistice**, which were much harsher:

1. German army disbanded, and Germany to give up its navy.
2. Allied troops to occupy the Rhineland.
3. Reparation for damage done and war losses.

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What did the Big Three want?



The Big Three: Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Wilson (l - r)

The conference was initially planned as a pre-meeting of the big three to decide what terms they were going to ask from Germany at an official peace conference, but the pre-meeting quickly became the meeting where the decisions were made.

The problem was the big three had different ideas about what the terms of the treaty should be.

Wilson's aims:

- To end war by creating a League of Nations based on his Fourteen Points.
- To ensure Germany was not destroyed.
- Not to blame Germany for the war - he hated the Guilt Clause.

Clemenceau's aims:

- Revenge and to punish Germany.
- To return Alsace-Lorraine to France.
- No League of Nations.
- An independent Rhineland.
- Huge reparations.
- To disband the German army so that Germany would never be strong enough to attack France again.

Lloyd George:

- A 'just' peace that would be tough enough to please the electors who wanted to 'make Germany pay', but would leave Germany strong enough to trade.
- Land for Britain's empire.
- To safeguard Britain's naval supremacy.

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2. Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28 June 1919 and consisted of 440 Articles setting out the terms for Germany's punishment. The treaty was greeted with **shock and disbelief** in Germany.

Key terms

Move your mouse over the interactive map below to learn the main clauses of the treaty.

The treaty set out 440 Articles detailing Germany's punishment. These were the most important:

Key articles

Article number	Description
1-26:	The Covenant of the League of Nations - Germany was not allowed to join.
42:	The Rhineland was demilitarised - the German army was not allowed to go there.
45:	The Saar, with its rich coalfields, given to France for 15 years.
51:	Alsace-Lorraine returned to France.
80:	Germany forbidden to unite with Austria.
87:	Lands in eastern Germany - the rich farmlands of Posen and the Polish corridor between Germany and East Prussia - given to Poland.
100:	Danzig made a free city under League of Nations control.
119:	All Germany's colonies taken and given to France and Britain as 'mandates'.
160:	The German army restricted to 100,000 men.
181:	The German navy restricted to six battleships and no submarines.
198:	Germany not allowed to have an air force.
231:	Germany was responsible for causing all the loss and damage caused by the war.
232:	Germany would have to pay reparations, to be decided later - eventually set at 132 billion gold marks.

The terms of the treaty can be classified into three groups:

- territorial - provisions that took land away from Germany
- military - provisions that limited Germany's armed forces
- financial and economic

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Other treaties 1919-1923

Four other treaties were made with the countries that had helped Germany during the war.

The Treaty of Versailles, however, was the template for these treaties, which were drawn up by officials (not by the big three) and which simply **followed the principles** of the Treaty of Versailles:

1. The defeated countries had to **disarm**.
2. They had to **pay reparations**.
3. They **lost land**.
4. **New countries** were formed.

The terms of the treaties

Here are the main provisions of each treaty - showing 1) terms of disarmament, 2) amount of reparation, 3) land lost, 4) new countries formed - starting with the Treaty of Versailles.

Germany: Treaty of Versailles (28 June 1919)

- 100,000 soldiers, six battleships, no airforce
- 132 billion gold marks to be paid in reparations
- Posen, Polish corridor, Alsace-Lorraine, all colonies
- Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania

Afterwards: The Dawes and Young Plans re-scheduled Germany's payments.

Austria: Treaty of Saint Germain (10 Sept 1919)

- 30,000 volunteers, no navy
- reparations agreed, but never set
- the Austro-Hungarian empire was dismantled, Tyrol lost to Italy
- Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania

Afterwards: Austria went bankrupt before the amount of reparations could be set.

Hungary: Treaty of Trianon (4 June 1920)

- 35,000 volunteers, three patrol boats
- 200 million gold crowns
- The Austro-Hungarian empire was dismantled
- Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania

Afterwards: Hungary could not pay the reparations, so its payments were suspended.

Bulgaria: Treaty of Neuilly (27 Nov 1919)

- 20,000 volunteers, four torpedo boats, no air force
- 2.25 billion francs
- Land to Yugoslavia, Romania and Greece
- n/a

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Afterwards: Bulgaria paid its reparations.

Turkey: Treaty of Sèvres (10 Aug 1920)

- 50,000 soldiers, seven sailboats and six torpedo boats
- None
- Smyrna and East Thrace to Greece, Rhodes to Italy
- Kurdistan, Armenia, Hejaz (Arabia). Iraq and Palestine became British mandates. Syria became a French mandate

Afterwards: Turkish nationalists, led by Kemal Attaturk, rebelled and rejected the treaty.

Revision tip

To help you remember, copy or print out the terms of the treaties, cut them up, shuffle them, then see if you can put them back together again correctly.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the Treaty of Versailles said.
2. **What** the territorial, military and financial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were.
3. **What** the Germans thought of the treaty.
4. **Why** the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles made the Germans so angry.
5. **How** the treaty-makers of 1919-1923 treated the defeated countries.
6. **What** the main features of Eastern Europe were as decided by the peace-makers of 1919-1923.

3. Opinions of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles was **unpopular**, not only with the Germans, but also with the people who had drawn it up. Even at the time, the peace-makers left the conference feeling that they had **failed** to make a treaty that would keep the peace, and historians have ever since blamed the Treaty of Versailles for helping to cause the Second World War.

Opinions summary

This table summarises how Versailles was 'the hated treaty'

	Germans	British	French	Americans
League of Nations	Hated it	OK	Hated it	Hated it
Guilt Clause	Hated it	OK	OK	Hated it
German army reduced	Hated it	Hated it	OK	Hated it
Reparations	Hated it	Hated it	OK	Hated it
German lost land	Hated it	Hated it	Hated it	Hated it

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Germany

The Germans hated **everything** about the treaty:

1. They were angry that they had not been allowed to negotiate.
2. 'Deutsche Zeitung', a German newspaper, vowed: "We will never stop until we win back what we deserve."
3. Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, leader of the German delegation at Versailles said Article 231- the war-guilt clause - was: "a lie". Germany officially denied the war-guilt clause in 1927.
4. There was a revolution (the Kapp Putsch) against the treaty in Berlin in 1920.
5. Germany hated reparations. It had to be made to pay in 1921, defaulted in 1923 and eventually Hitler refused to pay altogether.

Britain

Britain gained some German colonies and the German navy was destroyed **but**:

1. Lloyd George thought the treaty was too harsh, saying: "We shall have to fight another war again in 25 years time."
2. The British diplomat Harold Nicolson called it: "neither just nor wise" and the people who made it: "stupid".
3. The economist John Maynard Keynes prophesied that reparations would ruin the economy of Europe.

France

France got Alsace-Lorraine, German colonies, harsh reparations and a tiny German army **but**:

1. Many French people wanted an independent, not a demilitarised, Rhineland.
2. Most French people did not think the League of Nations would protect them against Germany.

America

Woodrow Wilson got the League of Nations, and new nation-states were set up in Eastern Europe **but**:

1. Wilson thought the treaty was far too harsh.
2. Self-determination proved impossible to implement - neither Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia survived as united countries.
3. Many Americans did not want to get involved in Europe, and in 1920 the American Senate refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles, or join the League of Nations.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the different countries hated or liked the different provisions.
2. **Why** all of the victors did not get everything they wanted.
3. **Whether** the Treaty of Versailles was a failure.
4. **How successfully** the peace-makers of 1919-1923 arranged the re-organisation of Eastern Europe.
5. **Whether** the treaties could be justified at the time.
6. **Whether** you agree with the statement: "No one could criticise the aims of the peace-makers or the good intentions of the principles they tried to follow."

League of Nations

1. Aims, organisations and powers

The Covenant of the League of Nations was built into the Treaty of Versailles at the end of the First World War. The League was Wilson's dream for a **new world order** - a new way of conducting foreign affairs that would abolish war and keep the world safe, but less than a quarter of a century later Wilson's dream lay in ruins.

Aims, strengths and weaknesses - the basics

The League of Nations was set up by the Treaty of Versailles.

- Its **aims** were to stop wars, encourage disarmament, and make the world a better place by improving people's working conditions, and by tackling disease.
- Its **organisation** comprised an assembly, which met once a year; a council, which met more regularly to consider crises; a small secretariat to handle the paperwork; a Court of International Justice; and a number of committees such as the International Labour Organisation and the Health Committee to carry out its humanitarian work.
- Its main **strengths** was that it had set up by the Treaty of Versailles, which every nation had signed, and it had 58 nations as members by the 1930s. To enforce its will, it could offer arbitration through the Court of International Justice, or apply trade sanctions against countries that went to war.
- Its main **weaknesses** were the fact that it was set up by the Treaty of Versailles (which every nation hated); that its aims were too ambitious; that Germany, Russia and the USA were not members; that it had no army; that its organisation was cumbersome; and that decisions had to be unanimous.

The Covenant of the League of Nations

The League of Nations was set up by the first 26 clauses of the Treaty of Versailles - called '**The Covenant of the League of Nations**'. The table below is a summary.

Summary of the key articles

Article	Details
3. Set up the assembly - a meeting of all members of the League.	42 countries were members (rising to 58 in 1934). The USA, USSR and Germany - the three greatest powers in the world - were not members.
4. Set up the council (Britain, France, Italy and Japan, plus four other countries elected by the assembly), which met four to five times a year and in times of crisis.	Allowed the League to respond quickly to crises. However, the council members were not the most powerful countries in the world, and were not prepared to use their armies. Also sometimes council members were involved in the trouble.
5. Said that agreements of the assembly and council had to be unanimous.	Made it very hard to get anything done.
6. Set up the Secretariat.	Too small to handle the vast work of the League.
8. Promised to seek disarmament.	Conferences in 1923 and 1932-33 failed.

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Article

Details

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. The League shall... safeguard the peace of nations.' | Over-ambitious? |
| 13. Planned for the arbitration of disputes. | Only worked if both sides agreed. |
| 14. Set up the Court of International Justice. | Could advise on international law and arbitrate in disputes, but had no power to enforce its decisions. |
| 15. Planned for trade sanctions against any country that went to war. | Trade sanctions damaged the countries of the League as well as the country that had gone to war. |
| 22. Set up the Mandates Commission to look after the former colonies of Germany and Turkey. | The mandates were administered by France and Britain, two council members. |
| 23. The League promised to improve conditions for workers, stop drug trafficking, help trade and control disease. | Over-ambitious? |

Revision tip

It will help you learn the facts if you identify as you study it:

- **three** key aims of the League
- **five** main parts of the League's organisation
- **two** powers by which the League planned to stop wars
- **four** strengths of the League
- **eight** weaknesses of the League

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** the organisation of the League hoped to keep the peace.
2. **What** were the strengths and weaknesses of the League.
3. **Whether** the League's aims were too ambitious
4. **Whether** the League was more strong than weak, or more weak than strong.

2. The League's successes and failures

The League of Nations has been commonly regarded in history as a **dismal failure**. Although it did suffer major failures during the 1920s and 1930s, its **successes** must not be overlooked and its drive to wipe out world disease was taken on by the United Nations and continues today.

Summary

In the 1920s, the League was very successful in its work for a **better world** - it took half-a-million PoWs [PoWs: *Prisoners of War*] home, helped Turkish refugees, attacked slave traders and drug sellers, and supported measures against leprosy and malaria.

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It was also quite successful in settling **border disputes** - for example, it settled a dispute between Sweden and Finland over the Aaland Islands, and stopped a war between Greece and Bulgaria.

However, when it was faced with a **strong nation** prepared to ignore it - for instance Italy in 1923 over Corfu - the League could do nothing.

Events and outcomes

The League's successes and failures

Name	Date	Description	Outcome
1. Prisoners of war	1920	The League took home half a million First World War prisoners of war.	✓
2. Aaland Islands	1921	Sweden and Finland accepted the League's arbitration to give the Aaland Islands to Finland.	✓
3. Poland	1921	The Poles invaded Vilna (the capital of Lithuania). The League ordered Poland to withdraw. Poland refused; the League could do nothing	✗
4. Turkey	1922	The League set up camps and fed Turkish refugees.	✓
5. Corfu	1923	Mussolini ignored the League's orders to pull out of Corfu, and made Greece pay money to Italy.	✗
6. Disarmament	1923 and 1932	Disarmament talks failed, because Germany demanded as many weapons as everyone else.	✗
7. Austria	1923	The League sent economics experts to help Austria when its government went bankrupt.	✓
8. Bulgaria	1925	Greece obeyed the League's orders to pull out of Bulgaria in 1925.	✓
9. Kellogg-Briand Pact	1928	Sixty-five countries signed a treaty to end war - but then they just ignored it.	✗
10. Slaves	1926	The League approved the Slavery convention; altogether, the League freed 200,000 slaves.	✓
11. Drugs	1936	After more than ten years of work, 26 League nations signed an international convention to combat the drugs trade - a law that is still in force.	✓
12. Disease	1920s	The League worked to prevent malaria and leprosy.	✓
13. Jobs	1920s	The International Labour Organisation failed to persuade countries to adopt a 48-hour week.	✗

Revision tip

Use the table of the League's actions (on the previous page) to make two lists:

the League's failures & the League's successes

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Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Whether** the League managed to stop disputes between countries in the 1920s.
2. **Whether** the League was very successful in its work for a better world in the 1920s.
3. **Whether** the League was a success or a failure overall in the 1920s.

3. Manchuria and Abyssinia

The Manchurian and Abyssinian crises shook people's confidence in the League and proved that the League had **no real power** or authority over its members.

Two important events

In the early 1930s, two events destroyed people's belief in the ability of the League to stop wars. In both situations, the League did not act quickly enough or made poor decisions about how to suppress the aggressor nation. This served to show that smaller countries could **not** expect protection from the League and that aggressors (such as Hitler) had **nothing** to stand in their way.

- By February 1932, **Japan** (a member of the League's Council) had **invaded and conquered Manchuria**. It took the League nearly a year to send a commission and declare that Japan ought to leave - whereupon Japan left the League. The League couldn't send an army, and it needed America's support to impose sanctions successfully. In the end, it did nothing.
- In 1935, **Italy invaded Abyssinia**. Although the Abyssinian emperor Haile Selassie went to the League himself to ask for help, all the League did was to ban arms sales, which did Abyssinia more harm than Italy. A League commission offered Italy part of Abyssinia, but Italy invaded anyway. Far from stopping Italy, Britain and France tried to make a secret pact to give Abyssinia to Italy.

Manchuria

In September 1931, the Japanese claimed that Chinese soldiers had sabotaged the **Manchurian railway** in Korea, which Japan controlled. Japan attacked and by February 1932, had brutally conquered Manchuria.

Meanwhile, in January-March 1932, **Japan attacked and captured the city of Shanghai** in China itself. In March 1932, China appealed to the League of Nations.

In April 1932, a League delegation led by Lord Lytton arrived in Manchuria to see what was happening, and in October 1932 it declared that **Japan should leave**. In February 1933, a special assembly of the League voted against Japan, so the Japanese walked out.

The League, however, **could not agree on sanctions**, and Britain and France were not prepared to send an army. Not only did the Japanese stay in Manchuria, but in July 1937 they also invaded China.

Abyssinia

In December 1934, a **dispute about the border** between Abyssinia and the Italian Somaliland flared into fighting.

In January 1935, **Haile Selassie**, the emperor of Abyssinia, asked the League to arbitrate.

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In July 1935, the League **banned arms sales** to either side, and in September 1935, it appointed a five-power committee to arbitrate.

In October 1935, the League's committee suggested that Italy should have some land in Abyssinia.

Instead, Italy's 100,000-strong army **invaded Abyssinia**. The Italian troops used poison gas and attacked Red Cross hospitals.

Britain and France refused to intervene. In December 1935, news leaked out about the **Hoare-Laval Pact** - a secret plan made by the foreign secretary of Britain and the prime minister of France to give Abyssinia to Italy.

In the end, the League did almost nothing. By May 1936, Italy had conquered Abyssinia.

Effects of the Manchurian and Abyssinian Crises



'The Doormat' - David Low

This cartoon by the British cartoonist David Low attacks the weakness of the League in the face of Japan. A Japanese soldier walks all over the League, while League officials bow to him and the British foreign secretary John Simon powders the League's nose using a 'face-saving kit'.

It is as important that you know the **effect** the two crises had on the League, as it is that you know the story of the events themselves:

1. It became clear that if a strong nation was prepared to ignore the League, the League could do nothing about it.
2. The League's delays and slowness made it look scared.
3. Sanctions were shown to be useless.
4. Everybody realised that Britain and France were not prepared to use force.
5. The four major powers - Japan, Italy, Britain and France - all betrayed the League.
6. Smaller nations realised that the League could not and would not protect them.
7. Britain and France decided that the League was useless to stop war, and followed instead the policy of appeasement [**Appeasement**: *The policy of pacifying an aggressor through giving in to their demands, thus maintaining peace.*].
8. Hitler was encouraged to move ahead with his plans.

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Failures in the 1930s

As well as the Manchurian and Abyssinian crises, the League failed at many points during the 1930s

Dates and events 1932-1939

Date	Event
1932-1933	Japan attacks and conquers Manchuria. The League objects, but can do nothing.
1933	Hitler announces that Germany is leaving the League.
1935-1936	Italy attacks and conquers Abyssinia. The League objects, but can do nothing.
1935	Hitler renounces the Treaty of Versailles and starts re-arming in defiance of the League.
1936	The League's Disarmament Conference fails.
1936	German army re-occupies the Rhineland in defiance of the League.
1937	Italy leaves the League.
1938	Germany informs the League that Germany and Austria are uniting, in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles.
1938	Munich Agreement - Britain and France, ignoring the League, follow the policy of appeasement and give Hitler the Sudetenland.
1939	The fascists win the Spanish Civil War and Spain leaves the League
1939	Second World War

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

- **How far** the David Low cartoon is an accurate interpretation of what happened in the Manchurian crisis.
- **Which** did the greater damage to the League - the Manchurian or the Abyssinian crisis.
- **How** you would put the eight consequences to the League in rank order of the damage they did to the League.
- **Why** the League failed - especially, think about how each of these factors harmed the League:
 1. the League's cumbersome organisation
 2. the League's over-ambitious aims
 3. the League weak powers
 4. America and the USSR never joined
 5. France and Britain
 6. the effects of the economic depression
 7. the failures of the League
 8. Germany, Italy and Japan
 9. **Whether** the League died (ie failed from within), or whether it was killed (ie destroyed from outside).
 10. **Which** were the most important factors in the failure of the League and why.

Road to World War Two

1. Chamberlain and appeasement

During the 1930s, Britain and France followed a policy of appeasement [**Appeasement**: *The policy of pacifying an aggressor through giving in to their demands, thus maintaining peace.*] - they **gave Hitler what he wanted** in order to **keep the peace**. So why did Britain and France keep on giving in to Hitler's demands?

Why appeasement?

Chamberlain believed the Munich Agreement would appease Hitler

As the League of Nations crumbled, politicians turned to a new way to keep the peace - appeasement. This was the policy of giving Hitler what he wanted to stop him from going to war. It was based on the idea that **what Hitler wanted was reasonable** and, when his reasonable demands had been satisfied, he would stop.

Although historians recognise appeasement in the actions of Britain and France before 1938, the Sudeten Crisis of 1938 is the key example of appeasement in action. Neville Chamberlain was the British prime minister who believed in appeasement.

In 1938, Germans living in the border areas of Czechoslovakia (the Sudetenland) started to demand a union with Hitler's Germany. The Czechs refused. Hitler threatened war. On 30 September, in the Munich Agreement - without asking Czechoslovakia - Britain and France **gave** the Sudetenland to Germany.

The story of the Sudetenland

12-13 September 1938:

- Hitler encourages Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten Nazis, to rebel, and demands a union with Germany.
- When the Czech government declares martial law, Hitler threatens war.

15 September 1938:

- Chamberlain goes to see Hitler at Berchtesgaden.
- Without consulting Czechoslovakia, he promises to give Hitler all the areas where more than 50 per cent of the population is German. Then he persuades France to agree.

22-23 September 1938:

- Chamberlain goes to Bad Godesberg to tell Hitler about the decision, but Hitler now demands ALL the Sudetenland. Chamberlain refuses; it looks like war.
- Chamberlain calls the crisis 'a quarrel in a faraway country, between people of whom we know nothing'.

30 September 1938:

- At Munich, France and Britain agree to give Hitler the Sudetenland.

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- Chamberlain waves 'a piece of paper' with Hitler's statement that he does not want to go to war. German troops march into the Sudetenland, and are welcomed as heroes.

Reasons for appeasement

There were many reasons why Chamberlain appeased Hitler, but here are the main ones:

1. The **British people wanted peace** - they would not have supported a war in 1938.
2. Many of **Hitler's complaints appeared reasonable** at the time - especially about the Treaty of Versailles.
3. **Chamberlain wanted a strong Germany** to serve as a barrier against expansion by communist Russia.
4. **Britain's armed forces were not ready for a war**, and they could not have helped Czechoslovakia anyway.
5. **Many people admired Hitler**. In 1938, the American magazine 'Time' declared him 'Man of the Year'.
6. Chamberlain remembered the **slaughter of the First World War**; he thought another war would destroy civilisation.

Participants in the Munich Crisis

Five countries were involved in the Munich Crisis of September 1938. Click on the countries to find out more. Study this carefully.

Results of appeasement

Here are the main ones:

- **Czechoslovakia was weakened**. Poland and Hungary took other land.
- **Britain gained a year to build up its armed forces**, but so did Hitler.
- **Hitler decided that Britain and France were afraid of him**, and that they would not stop him whatever he did.
- **Russia** decided that Britain and France would never stand up to Hitler, and that war with Germany was inevitable.
- The people of Britain realised that they had been **duped**, and decided that war was inevitable.
- It improved the **war morale** of the British people, who knew they had done everything possible to avoid war.

Invasion of Czechoslovakia

German troops marched into Czechoslovakia on 15th March 1939

On 15 March 1939, German troops marched into Czechoslovakia. They took over Bohemia, and established a protectorate [**Protectorate**: Any state or territory protected and partially controlled by a stronger one.] over Slovakia.

Hitler's invasion of Czechoslovakia was the end of appeasement:

- It proved that Hitler had been lying at Munich.
- It showed that Hitler was not just interested in a 'Greater Germany' (the Czechs were not Germans).

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- On 17th March, Chamberlain gave a speech saying that he could not trust Hitler not to invade other countries.
- On 31st March, Chamberlain guaranteed to defend Poland if Germany invaded.

Why Chamberlain abandoned appeasement

Chamberlain made the Munich Agreement with Hitler to prevent war, but, in the year after September 1938, there were **six factors** pressurising him to abandon his policy of appeasement.

Two categories of factors

Things happening in Europe

November 1938: Kristallnacht - attacks on the Jews in Germany.

March 1939: Czechoslovakia - Hitler invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia.

May 1939: Pact of Steel: an alliance was formed between Germany and Italy to help each other in times of war.

Things happening in Britain

Churchill's speeches: attacked appeasement as "a defeat without a war".

October 1938: Oxford by-election - Chamberlain's Conservatives won, but the anti-appeasement candidate got lots of votes.

Lack of trust: Britain was building up its armed forces throughout 1938 and 1939.

Revision tip

Read this famous statement by Neville Chamberlain broadcast on the radio on 27 September 1938. Looking at the reasons for appeasement in this section (page 3), which do you think weighed heaviest on Chamberlain's mind as he spoke?

How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is, that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here, because of a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing...

However much we may sympathise with a small nation confronted by a big and powerful neighbour, we cannot in all circumstances undertake to involve the whole British Empire in war simply on her account. If we have to fight, it must be on larger issues than that. I am myself a man of peace to the depths of my soul; armed conflict between nations is a nightmare to me... War is a fearful thing, and we must be very clear before we embark on it, that it is really the great issues that are at stake.

Neville Chamberlain

There is often no right or wrong answer to questions about appeasement, which is very much a matter of **opinion**. However, when you consider what is known for sure about Chamberlain's position, remember:

- Britain's armed forces could not have helped Czechoslovakia. Notice how Chamberlain calls Czechoslovakia "a faraway country" (point 4 in list of reasons for appeasement).
- Chamberlain remembered the slaughter of the First World War (6). This is the main point of the quote, especially "I am myself a man of peace to the depths of my soul; armed conflict between nations is a nightmare to me... War is a fearful thing".
- It could be argued that he was empathising with the reluctance of the British people to go to war (1), when he called digging trenches and trying on gas masks "horrible, fantastic, incredible" and

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said: "...we must be very clear before we embark on it, that it is really the great issues that are at stake".

However, there is NO evidence that Chamberlain thought Hitler was reasonable (2), or that he wanted a strong Germany (3), or that he admired Hitler (5). In fact, the tone towards Hitler is hostile: "...we may sympathise with a small nation confronted by a big and powerful neighbour".

2. The Nazi-Soviet Pact

In April 1939, Russia, Britain and France met to form an alliance to defend Poland - but by August 1939, Russia had **swapped sides** and made a pact with Germany! Through the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Stalin and Hitler agreed not to go to war with each other and to split Poland between them.

Summary

Everybody realised that **Hitler's next target was Poland**, so Chamberlain promised to defend Poland. But how? Britain was too far away to help and only had a small army.

In April 1939, Stalin suggested an **alliance of Russia, France and Britain** against Germany. Hitler would not have been able to invade Poland if taking that action would have meant war with Russia. However, negotiations **dragged on** into August because:

- Chamberlain did not like communist Russia.
- Poland would not let Russian troops go into Poland.
- Stalin did not trust that France and Britain would resist Germany.

Out of the blue, on 23 August 1939, Hitler made the **Nazi-Soviet Pact** with Stalin - a promise not to go to war with each other and (secretly) a promise to invade Poland and split it between them.

What did the West think of the Nazi-Soviet Pact?

Source A

Below is a David Low cartoon from September 1939 satirising the Nazi-Soviet Pact.



Rendezvous by David Low

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Question

What are the key features of the cartoon and what do they mean?

Answer

The cartoon shows:

1. Hitler and Stalin pretending to like each other.
2. Really they hate each other.
3. A figure (representing Poland) lying dead on the floor between Stalin and Hitler.
4. Both wear guns and military uniforms, and Germany's weapons (on the left) are in the background.
5. Dark clouds all around.

The world was amazed by this alliance of opposites, but, at the time:

- Stalin needed time to re-arm for when Hitler did invade Russia.
- Stalin would have to go to war if he allied with Britain and France, but could have half of Poland without a war if he allied with Hitler - it was an easy choice to make.

It was a marriage of convenience, until Hitler broke his promise and invaded Russia in 1940.

Think about this by reading Source B below - a passage written by an American journalist who lived in Europe at the time.

Source B

For sheer cynicism, the Nazi dictator had met his match in the Soviet despot ... the sordid, secret deal ... The Soviet despot for years had cried out at the 'fascist beasts' and called for peace-loving states to band together to halt the Nazi aggression.

William Shirer, "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich" (1959)

Question

Can you see any similarities between Source A and Source B?

Answer

Shirer echoes the idea represented in the cartoon that Russia and Germany had hated each other for years, and the cartoon's other idea that they were just pretending to like each other for their "sordid" deal.

Read Source C below written by two modern historians

Source C

The pact left Britain and France to fight Germany alone. Hitler did not really believe they would go to war over Poland, but almost had second thoughts when Britain's reaction to the Pact was the signing of a formal alliance with Poland on 25 August 1939. This time Britain and France would not be able to back

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down ... But the Anglo-Polish alliance did not change anything. It only took a few days for Hitler to recover his nerve and order that Poland be invaded on 1 September.

Nigel Kelly and Greg Lacey, Modern World History (2001)

Question

Find **three** ways Source C suggests the Nazi-Soviet Pact brought war nearer.

Answer

The pact brought war nearer because:

1. It left Britain and France to fight Germany alone, and Hitler did not really believe they would go to war over Poland.
2. It led Britain to sign an alliance with Poland on 25 August 1939, so they could not back down.
3. It encouraged Hitler to recover his nerve.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** Stalin chose an alliance with Nazi Germany, rather than an alliance with France and Britain.
2. **Why** the Nazi-Soviet pact astonished the world, and was called by one historian "the greatest diplomatic bombshell of the century".
3. **How** the Nazi-Soviet Pact brought war nearer.

3. Who was to blame for WW2?

In January 1933, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany and immediately began to **challenge** the Treaty of Versailles and adapt an aggressive foreign policy, which led to war. Some historians argue that Britain and France were to **blame** for the Second World War because they did not stand up to Hitler.

Summary

It is easy to blame Hitler for starting the war.

Hitler's aims were aggressive, and he openly stated them in his book "Mein Kampf" in 1924:

1. Destroy the Treaty of Versailles.
2. Create a Greater Germany (a country of **all** the German people).
3. Lebensraum (living space) to conquer land for Germany in Eastern Europe.

Once he came to power, Hitler set about doing exactly what he had said he would do. For each of his actions between 1935 and 1939, can you see which aim(s) he was fulfilling by undertaking:

- 1935 - Rearmament
- 1936 - Remilitarisation of the Rhineland
- 1938 - Anschluss [**Anschluss**: *The union of Austria with Germany that took place in 1938.*] with Austria
- 1938 - The annexation of the Sudetenland

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- 1939 - The invasion of Czechoslovakia
- 1939 - The invasion of Poland

More detail

Hitler's actions 1933-1939

Date	Event	What happened
1933	League of Nations	Hitler leaves the League of Nations.
1934	Austria	Hitler tries to take power in Austria. Austrian Nazis murder the chancellor, Dolfuss. Italy moves its army to the border and Hitler backs down.
1935	Saar	As planned in the Treaty of Versailles, the people of Saar (which had been given to France for 15 years) vote to return to Germany.
1935	Rearmament	Hitler increases the size of the German army to half a million members. Britain, France and Italy do nothing.
1935	Anglo-German Naval Treaty	Britain helps Germany break the Treaty of Versailles by signing an agreement to allow Germany a navy one-third of the size of Britain's.
1936	Rhineland	German troops re-occupy the Rhineland. They are given orders to retreat if France offers any resistance. France does nothing.
1936	Guernica	Hitler tests his armed forces when German bombers, which are helping the Fascists in the Spanish Civil War, bomb the Spanish town of Guernica. Civilians in Britain and France are frightened.
1937	Anti-Comintern Pact	Alliance of Germany, Japan and Italy against communism
1938	Anschluss	Hitler occupies Austria. First, Hitler encourages the Austrian Nazis to demand a union with Germany. Then he invades when the Austrian chancellor announces a vote to see what Austrians want. After the German invasion, 99 per cent of Austrians vote "Ja". Britain and France do nothing.
1938	Sudetenland	Hitler bullies France and Britain into giving him the Sudetenland.
1939	Czechoslovakia	Hitler invades Czechoslovakia and takes control.
1939	Poland	Hitler invades Poland and provokes the Second World War.

Four factors - the basics

Was Hitler to blame for the Second World War? However, it is easy but too simplistic to blame Hitler for causing the Second World War. Over the years, historians have focussed on **four** factors that brought war:

- **The Treaty of Versailles** was unfair and made Germany determined to destroy it.
- **The League of Nations** was too weak to keep the peace.
- **Hitler's policies** were aggressive. Hitler went on until there was a war to stop him.
- **The Nazi-Soviet Pact** released Hitler to go to war in 1939.

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Four factors in detail

The Treaty of Versailles

Created an anger in Germany that made many Germans support Hitler when he promised to destroy the Treaty. Also, it was so unfair that it undermined the confidence of western politicians to resist Hitler's demands, which many of them agreed with.

League of Nations

It was supposed to keep the peace, but it failed. It was too ambitious and badly organised. The group was betrayed by America, Britain and France and it was destroyed by Japan and Italy.

Hitler's policies

It is easy to argue that Hitler's actions pushed a Europe, which was desperate to be reasonable, into war. His invasions of Czechoslovakia and Poland went beyond correcting the mistakes of Versailles.

Nazi-Soviet Pact

Some historians argue that Hitler would not have gone to war in 1939 if he had been faced with fighting Britain and France in the west and Russia and Poland in the east. Stalin gave Hitler the green light for war.

Revision tip

Look back through the pages of this topic - Road to the Second World War - sorting the evidence that supports the idea that the Second World War was Hitler's War, and the evidence that suggests that other factors were involved in causing the outbreak of war. Come to an opinion.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** Hitler broke the Treaty of Versailles, 1933-1939.
2. **How** Hitler achieved the three aims in his foreign policy, 1933-1939.
3. **How** other countries reacted to Hitler's aggression.
4. **When** was the 'point of no return'.

How each of these might be argued to have played a part in causing the war:

- Treaty of Versailles
- League of Nations
- appeasement
- Nazi-Soviet Pact

Who was most to blame:

- Chamberlain
- Stalin
- Hitler

The Cold War

Causes of the Cold War

1. Ideological differences - Stalin vs Truman

The US President Roosevelt died in 1945. He was replaced by Truman who was strongly anti-Communist and, as the war came to an end, the relationship between America and Russia fell apart.

Summary

In 1945, Harry S Truman became president of the USA, determined to confront Communism. He is reported to have told his advisers:

The Russians only understand one language - how many armies have you got? I'm tired of babying the Soviets.

Harry S Truman, 1945

But this was not the only cause of trouble. Historians believed that the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and America was also wrecked by the **huge differences** between the two countries in:

- **Politics** - America was capitalist, Russia was communist.
- **Lifestyle** - America had freedom and a two-party democracy; Russia had secret police and a one-party state.
- **Aims** - America wanted Germany to recover as a trading partner; Russia wanted to weaken Germany and create a buffer zone of friendly states around Russia.

The collapse of the wartime alliance led to a Cold War between the two superpowers.

America and Russia compared

It will help in your exam if you are able to describe the huge differences between America and Russia:

Comparison of America and Russia

America	Russia
1. The richest country in the world.	1. The biggest country in the world.
2. A democracy with free elections, led by an elected president.	2. A one-party state led by a dictator . There were elections, but you could only vote for the Communist Party.
3. Freedom of speech and belief.	3. State control : censorship, secret police, terror and purges.
4. Capitalism - private ownership and the right to make money.	4. Communism - state ownership of the means of production, and the belief that wealth should be shared.
5. Led by Truman , who believed that Communism was evil.	5. Led by Stalin , who believed that capitalism was evil.
6. Had the atomic bomb - but was	6. Had the biggest army in the world - but was angry that Truman

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America

Russia

scared of Russia's conventional army.

had not warned that he was going to drop the atomic bomb.

7. **Feared the spread of communism** throughout the world.

7. Was **angry because America and Britain had invaded Russia** in 1918-19 to try to destroy communism.

8. Angry about the **Nazi-Soviet Pact** that was a major factor in starting the Second World War.

8. Believed that America and Britain had delayed opening the **second front** (attacking France) to let Germany and Russia destroy each other on the eastern front.

9. Wanted **reconstruction** - to make Germany a prosperous democracy and a trading partner.

9. Wanted to wreck Germany, take huge **reparations** for the damage done during the war, and set up a buffer of friendly states around Russia to prevent another invasion in the future.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain the following:

1. **Why** the USA and the USSR were suspicious of each other in the years after the Second World War.
2. **What** the Cold War was.
3. **Why** Roosevelt's death was a turning point in the Cold War.

The Yalta and Potsdam conferences

The Yalta and Potsdam **conferences** were called to help the Allies decide what would happen to Europe, and in particular Germany, at the end of the Second World War. This Revision Bite will help you understand the decisions made at these two important conferences and the differences that emerged between the allied leaders.

2. Yalta and Potsdam - the basics

Yalta - February 1945: Germany was not yet defeated, so, although there were tensions about Poland, the big three - Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill - managed to agree to **split Germany** into four zones of occupation, and to allow **free elections** in Eastern European countries. Russia was invited to join the United Nations, and Russia promised to join the war against Japan when Germany was defeated.

Potsdam - July 1945: Germany had been defeated, Roosevelt had died and Churchill had lost the 1945 election - so there were **open disagreements**. Truman came away angry about the size of reparations and the fact that a communist government was being set up in Poland. Truman did not tell Stalin that he had the atomic bomb.

Differences between Yalta and Potsdam

It will help if you are able to describe the huge differences between Yalta and Potsdam - the issues were the same, but the goodwill to overcome them was gone, because the countries no longer needed to stick together. Note how not all the broken promises were by Stalin:

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Comparison of Yalta and Potsdam

Yalta



Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin

Germany to be split into **four zones**.

Germany will pay **reparations**.

A **government of 'national unity'** to be set up in Poland, comprising both communists and non-communists.

Free elections in the countries of eastern Europe. This part of the agreement was called the **Declaration of Liberated Europe**.

Russia would help against Japan when Germany was defeated.

Potsdam



Attlee, Truman and Stalin

Arguments about the **details of the boundaries** between the zones.

Disagreements about the **amount** of reparations Russia wanted to take. It was agreed that Russia could take whatever it wanted from the Soviet zone, and 10 per cent of the industrial equipment of the western zones, but Britain and the US thought this was too much.

Truman was angry because **Stalin had arrested** the non-communist leaders of Poland.

America and Britain were alarmed because **communists were coming to power** in the countries of Eastern Europe.

Truman dropped the atomic bomb so that Japan would surrender before Russian troops could go into Japan. America had the bomb in July 1945, but Truman did not tell Stalin about it. When he saw how he had been tricked, Stalin was furious.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** the Yalta Conference was different to the Potsdam Conference.
2. **Why** the agreements of Yalta dissolved into the disagreements of Potsdam.
3. **Why** Roosevelt's death was a turning point in the Cold War.

3. Soviet power in Eastern Europe

What was Churchill talking about when he mentioned an '**Iron Curtain!**' in his speech at Fulton, Missouri in 1946? This Revision Bite will help you understand how Eastern Europe fell to Communism and became allied to Stalinist Russia.

Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe

Twenty million Russians died during the Second World War, so Stalin said he wanted a **buffer zone** of friendly states around Russia to make sure that Russia could never be invaded again.

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Stalin was planning the takeover of Eastern Europe. During the war, Communists from the occupied countries of Eastern Europe escaped to Moscow and set up Communist governments in exile there. As the Red Army [**Red Army**: *The Russian army.*] drove the Nazis back, it occupied large areas of Eastern Europe and Churchill in the so-called **percentages agreement** - agreed that Eastern Europe could be a Soviet "sphere of influence".

In the countries that the Red Army "**liberated**", communist-dominated governments took power. The Communists made sure that they controlled the army, set up a secret police force, and began to arrest their opponents. Non-Communists were gradually beaten, murdered, executed and terrified out of power. By 1949, **all** the governments of Eastern Europe, except Yugoslavia, were hard line Stalinist regimes.

In 1946, in a speech at Fulton in the USA, Churchill declared that an **Iron Curtain** had come down across Europe, and that Soviet power was growing and had to be stopped. Stalin called Churchill's speech a "declaration of war". In 1947, Stalin set up **Comintern** - an alliance of Communist countries designed to make sure they obeyed Soviet rule.

Soviet takeover of power

It will help if you are able to describe some details of the Soviet takeover of power:

Communism in Eastern Europe 1945-194

Country	Date	Method
Albania	1945	The Communists immediately took power.
Bulgaria	1945	In the 1945 elections, a Communist-led coalition was elected, but the Communists executed the non-Communists.
East Germany	1945	East Germany was the Soviet zone of Germany. In 1949, they set up a Communist-controlled state called the German Democratic Republic.
Romania	1947	In the 1945 elections, a Communist-led coalition was elected to power. The Communists gradually took over and in 1947 they abolished the monarchy.
Poland	1947	Stalin had promised to set up a joint Communist/non-Communist government at Yalta, but then he invited 16 non-Communist leaders to Moscow and arrested them. Thousands of non-Communists were arrested, and the Communists won the 1947 election.
Hungary	1947	The non-communists won the 1945 elections with Zoltan Tildy as president. However, the Communists' leader, Rakosi, took control of the secret police (the AVO), and executed and arrested his opponents. Tildy was forced to resign and Cardinal Mindzenty, head of the Catholic Church, was imprisoned. By 1948, Rakosi had complete control of Hungary.
Czechoslovakia	1948	A coalition government was set up and led by the non-Communist Benes. However, the Communists' leader Gottwald made sure they controlled the radio, the army and the police. Gottwald became prime minister and set up a secret police force. Non-Communists were arrested. In 1948, Communist workers went on strike, the non-Communist minister Masaryk committed suicide and Gottwald took over the government.

Modern World History Notes

Revision tip

Question

To help you remember the Soviet takeover of power, find the countries where...

1. Non-Communists were arrested.
2. The Communists used the radio.
3. The Communists took part in a coalition government at first, but plotted to take over.
4. Non-Communists were executed.
5. The Communists used the secret police to gain power.
6. Communists won power in an election.
7. The Catholic Church was attacked.

Answer

1. Non-Communists were arrested in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.
2. The Communists used radio in Czechoslovakia.
3. The Communists joined a coalition government at first, but plotted to take over Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia.
4. Non-Communists were executed in Bulgaria and Hungary.
5. The Communists used the secret police to gain power in Hungary and Czechoslovakia
6. Communists won power in an election in Poland.
7. The Catholic Church was attacked in Hungary.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How Stalin** achieved power in Eastern Europe.
2. **Whether** the Fulton speech caused the Cold War.

4. The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan

In 1947, two important events occurred: firstly, President Truman warned the American Congress that it was America's job to **contain Communism** - this became known as the Truman Doctrine - and secondly, General George Marshall came up with a plan to help Europe **recover** from the war using American money - this became known as the Marshall Plan. In this Revision Bite, you will learn about these policies.

Events 1947

By 1947, Greece was one of the few countries in Eastern Europe that **hadn't** turned communist. The Communist rebels in Greece were prevented from taking over by the British Army.

America was becoming **increasingly alarmed** by the growth of Soviet power. So, when the British told Truman they could no longer afford to keep their soldiers in Greece, Truman stepped in to take over. In March 1947, he told the American Congress it was America's job to stop communism growing any stronger. This was called the **Truman Doctrine**. It is often said that Truman advocated **containment** (stopping the Soviet getting any more powerful), but Truman did not use this word and many Americans spoke of "**rolling back**" communism.

Modern World History Notes

In June 1947, General George Marshall made a visit to Europe to see what was needed. He came away thinking Europe was so poor that the whole of Europe was about to turn Communist. Marshall and Truman asked Congress for \$17 billion to fund the European Recovery Programme nicknamed **the Marshall Plan** - to get the economy of Europe going again. Congress at first hesitated, but agreed in March 1948 when Czechoslovakia turned Communist. The aid was given in the form of food, grants to buy equipment, improvements to transport systems, and everything "from medicine to mules". Most (70 per cent) of the money was used to buy commodities from US suppliers: \$3.5 billion was spent on raw materials; \$3.2 billion on food, feed and fertiliser; \$1.9 billion on machinery and vehicles; and \$1.6 billion on fuel.

Stalin **forbade** the Cominform countries to apply for Marshall Aid.

Revision tip

To help you remember the information in this Revision Bite, make a list of **ten** keywords.

This is really a matter of opinion, but ten possible words would be: Greece, alarmed, Truman Doctrine, containment, rolling back, Communism, Marshall, European Recovery Programme, Czechoslovakia, Cominform.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the following were: Truman Doctrine, containment, Marshall Plan.
2. **Why** America offered Marshall Aid to Europe, and **Why** Stalin rejected it for Communist countries.
3. **What** part the Marshall Plan played in worsening relations between the USA and the USSR.

5. Who was to blame?

In this section, Causes of the Cold War, we have covered **why** it started - the underlying factors after the Second World War, ideological differences, Soviet expansion after the war, and American policies that aimed to stop Communism. But who do Historians **blame** for the Cold War?

Who was to blame?

Historians have changed their views about who was to blame for the Cold War over the years:

Soviet historians

- They blamed the United States.

The Traditionalists

- All western writers before the 1970s, and many since, blamed the Cold War on the Soviet Union and its "attempt to impose its ideology on the rest of the world".

The Revisionists

- In 1959 the historian William Appleman Williams was the first to suggest that America was to blame.

Modern World History Notes

- The Revisionists said America was engaged in a war to keep countries open to capitalism and American trade.
- Revisionists said that Truman's use of the atomic bomb without telling Stalin was the start of the Cold War.

The Post-Revisionists

- John Lewis Gaddis first published this idea in 1972.
- The post-revisionists argued that **neither** Russia or America was to blame, but that the Cold War was the result of misunderstandings on both sides, and the failure to appreciate each other's fears.

After the collapse of Communism

- Russian historians such as Zubok and Pleshakov have been able to study the Soviet Union's secret files for the first time.
- These files show that Soviet leaders during the Cold War were genuinely trying to avoid conflict with the USA. This puts more of the blame back on America.
- Modern historians stress the Cold War as a clash between capitalism and communism.

As part of your revision, look back over all the pages in this section and think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Which** country was more to blame for the start of the Cold War: the USA or the USSR.

Developments in the Cold War 1948-1961

1. The Berlin Blockade and airlift

In this Revision Bite you will learn about the **causes** of the Berlin Blockade crisis of 1948 - how Stalin was eventually forced to **abandon** the plan that could have cost the lives of thousands living in divided Berlin or started another war.

Summary of the Berlin crisis

How Germany was divided in 1945

In 1945, the Allies decided to **split Germany** into four zones of occupation. The capital, Berlin, was also split into four zones. The USSR took huge reparations from its zone in eastern Germany, but Britain, France and America tried to improve conditions in their zones.

In June 1948, Britain, France and America united their zones into a new country, West Germany. On 23 June 1948, they introduced a new currency, which they said would help trade.

The next day, Stalin cut off all rail and road links to west Berlin - the **Berlin Blockade**. The west saw this as an attempt to starve Berlin into surrender, so they decided to supply west Berlin by air.

The Berlin Blockade lasted 318 days. During this time, 275,000 planes transported 1.5 million tons of supplies and a plane landed every three minutes at Berlin's Tempelhof airport.

On 12 May 1949, Stalin **abandoned** the blockade.

Modern World History Notes

Causes and results of the Berlin Crisis of 1948

Important dates and events

Date	Event
January 1947	Britain and the USA join their two zones together into Bi-zonia (two zones).
December 1947	London Conference: America, Britain and France meet to discuss Germany's future . Russia is not present.
January 1948	Russia starts to stop western literature being sold in the Soviet zone.
March 1948	The USA offers Marshall Aid. Stalin forbids Cominform countries to take part.
April 1948	Russia imposes a partial blockade of west Berlin - Allied transport into the city has to apply for a permit and is inspected.
1 June 1948	America, Britain and France announce they wanted to create a new country of West Germany.
23 June 1948	America, Britain and France introduce a new currency - this causes economic chaos in the Russian zone as everyone tries to get rid of their old money and change to the new currency.

Results of the Berlin Crisis of 1948

1. Germany was divided into the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the Democratic Republic of Germany (East Germany) until 1990.
2. The Iron Curtain became permanent.
3. The Cold War broke out into open confrontation, and the two superpowers began an Arms Race.
4. In 1949, the Allies set up the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as a military alliance to resist Soviet Russia.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** the Allies divided Germany in 1945.
2. **Why** there was a crisis in Berlin in 1948.
3. **What** happened in the Berlin Blockade and airlift of 1948.
4. **How** the Berlin airlift is a good example of the Cold War.
5. **How** the Berlin crisis of 1948 affected the Cold War.

Modern World History Notes

2. The Korean War

The decade after the Second World War saw Communism spread to the Far East, eventually dividing Korea. The Korean War lasted three years and peace was only achieved when the use of the atomic bomb was threatened.

The problem in Korea

In 1945, Korea was split along the 38th parallel between a **communist north** led by Kim IL Sung, and a **non-communist south** led by Syngman Rhee.

But communism was **growing** in the Far East. In 1949, the Communists had taken power in China. The US developed the '**domino theory**' - the idea that, if one country fell to communism, others would follow like a row of dominoes. Then, in 1950, a report by the American National Security Council ('**NSC68**') recommended that the US stop containment and start to roll back communism.

The war

- In 1950, after getting the support of Russia and China, Kim IL Sung invaded South Korea.
- The North Korean People's Army (NKPA) easily defeated the Republic of Korea's army (the ROKs).
- By September, the NKPA had conquered almost the whole of South Korea.
- The USA went to the United Nations and got them to send troops to defend South Korea.
- The Russians couldn't veto the idea because they were boycotting the UN at the time.
- In September, UN troops, led by the US General MacArthur, landed in Korea and drove the NKPA back.
- By October, the UN forces had almost conquered all of North Korea.
- In November 1950, Chinese People's Volunteers attacked and drove the Americans back.
- They recaptured North Korea, and advanced into South Korea.
- The Americans landed more troops and drove the Chinese back to the 38th parallel, where Truman ordered General MacArthur to stop and sacked him when he disagreed.
- The war went on as border clashes until 1953 when America's new president, Eisenhower, offered peace, but threatened to use the atomic bomb if China did not accept the offer.

Recently, historians have shown that the Korean crisis **almost** led to a third world war - many US advisers wanted to use the atomic bomb.

Source analysis

Source A

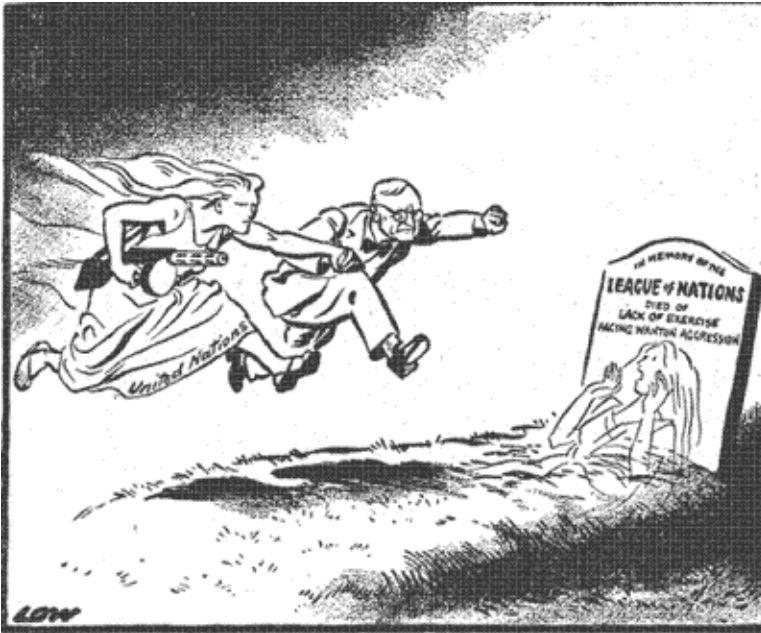
"Of the 16 countries contributing forces, the USA provided 50 per cent of land forces, 93 per cent of air forces, 86 per cent of naval forces. The UN gave the USA unlimited authority to direct military operations. US president Truman, not the UN, appointed General MacArthur as commander-in-chief of UN forces. MacArthur reported to the US President and took orders from him. The war threatened to become one between the USA and China. The USA even considered using nuclear weapons against China."

James Mason with Angela Leonard, Modern World History to GCSE (2001)

Modern World History Notes

Source B

This drawing by the British cartoonist David Low, published in the Daily Herald on 30 June 1950, shows Truman and the United Nations rushing to Korea's aid.



A cartoon by David Low

Question

Use your knowledge of the facts to decide whether Sources A and B agree or disagree about America's involvement in the Korean War?

Answer

Source A stresses the leading role played by the Americans. It infers that the Korean War was an American war against communism.

Source B shows the war as military action by the United Nations (carrying the gun), helped by Truman.

3. International tension

When Stalin died, it looked like a **new era** was beginning between East and West. The new Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev advocated a peaceful co-existence - so did relations improve between East and West?

1953-1960 - changes

In 1953, Stalin died and **Nikita Khrushchev** became the Soviet leader. He was a jolly man, who said to prevent the most destructive war in history, there needed to be "peaceful co-existence" between the superpowers. He said Stalin was a terrible tyrant and he wanted to "**de-Stalinise**" Eastern Europe.

Everyone hoped that it would **improve** East-West relations.

Modern World History Notes

It did not. In fact, the period 1953-1960 was the time of **greatest danger** in the Cold War. America and Russia competed with each other in the arms race, in sport, and in the space race.

Why did 'peaceful co-existence' make the Cold War more dangerous?

1. Khrushchev's statement that he wanted to "de-Stalinise" Eastern Europe led to **anti-Soviet rebellions** in 1956 in Poland and Hungary, and Khrushchev sent in Russian troops to re-establish Soviet control.
2. Russia and America waged an **arms race**, developing H-bombs and ICBMs [**ICBMs: Intercontinental ballistic missiles.**].
3. Khrushchev set up the **Warsaw Pact** in 1955 - a military alliance of communist countries - to rival NATO [**NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization - a military alliance of western powers that was originally created to provide a counterforce to the Soviet armies of Eastern Europe.**]. America responded by increasing the number of NATO troops in Germany.
4. Russia and America **competed** in every way possible - eg in sport, and in the space race. Russia launched the first satellite - Sputnik - in 1957, and sent the first man into orbit - Yuri Gagarin - in 1961. Alan Shepard became the first American to fly in space in 1961, and President Kennedy promised to put a man on the moon by 1969. This was not just a propaganda war, it was a clash of ideologies as both sides tried to prove that their way was best.
5. America responded **aggressively**. Senator McCarthy led a series of public trials of suspected Communists - the so-called witch-hunts.
6. Both sides **spied** on each other. The Americans also used U2 spy planes to spy on Russia.

4. The Hungarian Revolution

Hungary had been controlled by Russia since 1945. The death of Stalin brought people in many Eastern European countries the **hope** of freedom and change, but as the 1956 uprising in Hungary proved, this was not to be the case.

Hungarian revolution

1. The death of Stalin led many Hungarians to hope that Hungary also would be 'de-Stalinised'. In July 1956, the 'Stalinist' Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, Rakosi, fell from power.
2. During October 1956, students, workers and soldiers in Hungary attacked the AVH (the secret police) and Russian soldiers, and smashed a statue of Stalin.
3. On 24 October 1956 Imre Nagy - a moderate and a westerniser - took over as prime minister.
4. Nagy asked Khrushchev to move the Russian troops out. Khrushchev agreed and on 28 October 1956, the Russian army pulled out of Budapest.
5. For five days, there was freedom in Hungary. The new Hungarian government introduced democracy, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion. Cardinal Mindszenty, the leader of the Catholic Church, was freed from prison.
6. Then, on 3 November 1956, Nagy announced that Hungary was going to leave the Warsaw Pact. However, Khrushchev was not going to allow this. He claimed he had received a letter from Hungarian Communist leaders asking for his help.

Modern World History Notes

7. At dawn on 4 November 1956, 1,000 Russian tanks rolled into Budapest. They destroyed the Hungarian army and captured Hungarian Radio the last words broadcast were "Help! Help! Help!".

8. Hungarian people - even children - fought the Russian troops with machine guns. Some 4,000 Hungarians were killed.

9. Khrushchev put in Russian supporter, Janos Kadar, as prime minister.

Causes and effects of the Hungarian Revolution

Causes of the Hungarian Revolution

1. Khrushchev's policy of '**de-Stalinisation**' caused problems in many Eastern European Communist countries, where people hated the hard-line Stalinist regimes that Russia had put in place. There was also trouble in Poland in 1956, and Khrushchev had to send in Russian troops.
2. The Hungarians were **patriotic**, and they **hated** Russian control, especially:
 - The secret police called the AVH in Hungary.
 - Russian control of the economy, which had made Hungary poor.
 - Russian control of what the schools taught.
 - Censorship and lack of freedom.
3. The Hungarians were **religious**, but the Communist Party had **banned** religion, and imprisoned Cardinal Mindszenty.
4. Hungarians thought that the United Nations or the new US president, Eisenhower, would **help them**.

Effects of the Hungarian Revolution

1. **Repression in Hungary** - thousands of Hungarians were arrested and imprisoned. Some were executed and 200,000 Hungarian refugees fled to Austria.
2. **Russia stayed in control behind the Iron Curtain** - no other country tried to get rid of Russia troops until Czechoslovakia in 1968.
3. **Polarisation of the Cold War** - people in the West were horrified - many Communists left the Communist Party - and Western leaders became more determined to contain communism.

5. The U2 incident

By the late 1950s tension had **increased** between the two superpowers, the USSR and USA. A summit was arranged in Paris to try to sort things out, but shortly before it was due to take place an American U2 **spy plane** was shot down over Russia and the summit **collapsed**.

The U2 incident and the Paris summit of 1960

By the end of the 1950s, there was **massive** tension in the Cold War:

- The **arms race** - both sides accepted the need for some kind of Nuclear Test Ban treaty.
- **Berlin** - the Russians were furious that many East Germans were fleeing to the west through West Berlin.
- **Cuba** - the Americans were worried because Fidel Castro, a Communist, had seized power there in 1959.
- A **summit** meeting was arranged for Paris to try to sort things out.

Modern World History Notes

On 1st May 1960 - thirteen days before the summit - an American U2 spy plane was **shot down** over Russia and the pilot, Gary Powers, was captured. At first, the Americans tried to say that it was a **weather plane**, but they were forced to admit that it was a **spy plane** when the Russians revealed that much of his plane had survived, and that they had captured Gary Powers alive.

When the summit met on 14 May, the first thing Khrushchev did was to demand that the US president, Eisenhower, **apologise**. When Eisenhower refused, Khrushchev went home.

The Cold War had just become substantially **more** dangerous.

Effects of the U2 incident

1. The Paris meeting **collapsed** and there was no Test Ban Treaty.
2. There was **no discussion** about the problem of Berlin - which, ultimately, led to the Berlin Wall.
3. The incident was seen as a **defeat for the US** - so they elected John F Kennedy as president because he promised to get tougher with the Russians.

6. The Berlin Wall

By the 1960s Berlin was still divided - the USSR controlled the East and the USA guaranteed freedom in the West. Thousands of refugees escaped to West Berlin each day - much to the **embarrassment** of the USSR - so in 1961 Khrushchev closed the border and ordered the construction of a wall to stop people leaving.

The problems in West Berlin

West Berlin was a worry and an embarrassment for the Soviet Union in 1961:

- Nearly **2,000 refugees a day** were fleeing to the West through west Berlin - hardly proof of the Soviet claim that the Communist way of life was better than capitalism!
- Many of those leaving were **skilled and qualified workers**.
- The Soviets believed (rightly) that West Berlin was a centre for **US espionage**.

At the Vienna Summit of June 1961, therefore, Khrushchev demanded that the US **leave** West Berlin within six months. Kennedy refused and instead guaranteed West Berlin's freedom.

On 13 August, Khrushchev **closed the border** between East and West Berlin and started building the Berlin Wall. At first, the Russians regarded it as a propaganda success, but as time went on, it became a propaganda disaster - a **symbol** of all that was bad about Soviet rule.

Modern World History Notes
The Berlin Wall as a symbol

Source A

A photograph of the Berlin Wall.



The Berlin Wall shortly after its construction

Source B

In 1963, President Kennedy visited West Berlin and made his famous 'I am a Berliner' speech next to the Berlin Wall:

There are many people in the world who really don't understand what is the great issue between the free world and the communist world - let them come to Berlin!

There are some who say in Europe and elsewhere we can work with the communists - let them come to Berlin!

All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin. And, therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words 'Ich bin ein Berliner' ['I am a Berliner'].

President Kennedy, 1963

Revision tip

To help you revise this section, try to think of **three** ways that the Berlin Wall was a **symbol** of the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s.

Modern World History Notes

Answer

1. It was a concrete version of the Iron Curtain.
2. It symbolised the divided world.
3. It showed that the difference was a real-life physical division.
4. It showed that the difference was a military confrontation.
5. It was a concrete symbol of the ideological divisions between the "free world" and the "communist world".
6. It was concrete proof that capitalists could never work with communists.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the Berlin Wall was built.
2. **What** the Berlin Wall tells us about the nature of the Cold War in the 1960s.

7. The nature of the Cold War 1948-1961

The period 1948-1961 certainly saw some **major changes** in the Cold War - the death of Stalin and a new Soviet leader; the growth of Communism in the Far East; the assertion of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe; the increased use of espionage between the USA and USSR; and the physical separation of east and west in Berlin.

Opinions

Historians have looked at the Cold War in many different ways over the years. Here are some statements about the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s from modern school textbooks:

A. "Between 1949 and 1963, the Cold War developed with a series of major crises."

B. "When Stalin died in 1953, there was a slight improvement in relations between East and West, although problems still existed."

C. "Khrushchev's blustering vigour, his love of travel and of argument and his willingness to take risks left their mark on these years."

D. "The wall not only divided Berlin. Over the following years, it became a symbol of division - the division of Germany, the division of Europe, the division of communist East and democratic West. The Communists presented the wall as being a protective shell. The West presented it as a prison wall."

E. "The Americans believed that it was their duty, and necessary to US security, to resist the expansion of communism wherever it occurred. During the 1960s, this led them to the brink of nuclear war."

F. "It soon became clear to the capitalist states that, despite co-existence, Khrushchev was determined to show that communism could compete with, and beat, the West."

G. "The Cold War was a mixture of a religious crusade in favour of one ideology or the other and the most ruthless power politics."

Modern World History Notes

Revision tip

Question

To help you revise this section, take each statement in turn and think about what it is claiming about the **nature** of the Cold War during these years. Then, using the Revision Bites in this topic, decide whether you agree or disagree with it.

Answer

- A. Suggests that the Cold War was a real war, only with a series of crises (instead of a series of battles).
- B. Suggests that Stalin was to blame for many Cold War tensions, for example through his use of 'salami' tactics (the elimination of opposition to Communism in eastern Europe piece by piece), and as a result of his actions in Poland. Consequently the Cold War waned after his death in 1953.
- C. Suggests that Khrushchev's actions and character were a cause of the confrontations (eg the Kitchen debate and Cuba).
- D. Says that the Berlin Wall was a symbol of the Cold War, but also suggests that the Cold War was a result of mutual misunderstandings - each side had its own take on what was happening (eg The Communists presented the wall as being a protective shell. The West presented it as a prison wall).
- E. Suggests that the Cold War was the USA's fault, because it tried to resist communism (eg Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Korea, NSC68, U2 incident).
- F. Suggests that the Cold War was the result of the USSR's attempt to defeat capitalism (eg Warsaw Pact, Hungary, Cuban missile bases).
- G. Suggests that the Cold War was a war of ideas - a war of different political religions (the ideological differences between America and Russia).

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Whether** there was a thaw in the Cold War after 1953.
2. **What** features characterised the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s.

Cuban Missile Crisis

1. Causes of the Cuban Missile Crisis

In October 1962 the existence of the world was threatened. Experts examining photographs of Cuba taken by U2 spy planes saw what they believed to be evidence that the Russians were building **nuclear missile sites** in Cuba.

It was the beginning of a **confrontation** that took the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust.

Causes summary

In 1962, the Cold War was at its coldest. The Russians had built the **Berlin Wall** the previous year. Kennedy who had been elected because he promised to get tough with the Communists felt that Khrushchev had

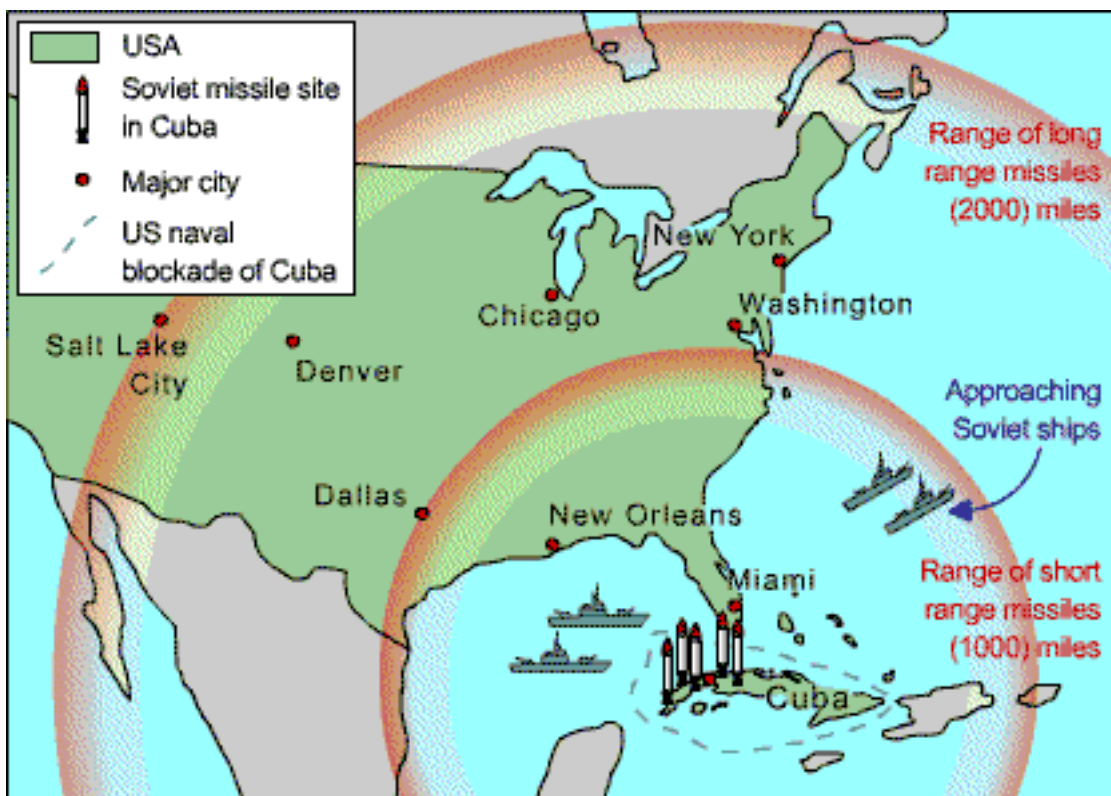
Modern World History Notes

got one over on him at the **Vienna Summit** in 1961. In April 1962, the Americans put nuclear missiles in Turkey.

Also, in 1959, a rebel named **Fidel Castro** took power in Cuba, an island just 90 miles away from Florida. Before Castro took over, the government - led by Colonel Batista - had been a corrupt and right-wing military dictatorship, but the Americans had many business interests in Cuba.

When Castro came to power, however, he **nationalised American companies** in Cuba. In retaliation, the Americans **stopped all aid** to Cuba, and **all imports** of Cuban sugar. This was a blow to Castro as sugar was the **mainstay** of the Cuban economy. Castro was forced to look to the USSR for help, and, in 1960, the USSR signed an **agreement** to buy 1 million tonnes of Cuban sugar every year. Castro, who had not been a Communist when he took power, became a Communist.

America was **alarmed**. In April 1961, with Kennedy's knowledge, the CIA funded, trained, armed and transported 1,300 Cuban exiles to **invade Cuba**. They landed at the **Bay of Pigs** and made an attempt to overthrow Castro. The invasion was a **disaster**, and President Kennedy was humiliated.



A map showing the range of missiles fired from Cuba

In September 1961, Castro asked for - and Russia publicly promised - **weapons** to defend Cuba against America. Which is why on 14 October 1962, the Americans discovered the **missile sites** in Cuba. These sites brought every town in the US within **range** of Soviet nuclear missiles. President Kennedy called a meeting of the National Security Council and on 22 October went on TV to tell the American people that they were under threat.

The crisis had begun.

Modern World History Notes
Kennedy versus Khrushchev

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the USA and the USSR clashed over Cuba in 1962.
2. **What** the issues were - on both sides - in the Cuban missile crisis.
3. **Who** you would blame for the Cuban missile crisis.

2. The Cuban Missile Crisis

The **threat** of nuclear war became increasingly apparent. It was vital that Kennedy and Khrushchev came to some sort of **agreement** - the future of the world depended on it.

Crisis summary

President Kennedy did not dare to invade Cuba, because that action could have started a world war - yet he could **not** let the missile sites be completed. With his advisers, he decided on a **naval blockade** to prevent Russian ships delivering the missiles for the Cuban sites.

Khrushchev warned that Russia would see the blockade as an **act of war**. Russian forces were put on **alert**; US bombers were put in the air carrying **nuclear bombs**; preparations were made to **invade** Cuba. There was **massive tension** in both Washington and Moscow. Everybody thought the world was going to come to an end. Secretly, the Americans suggested a **trade-off** of missile bases - US bases in Turkey for Russian bases in Cuba.

The Russians made the first public move. The ships heading for Cuba **turned back**, and Khrushchev sent a telegram offering to **dismantle** the Cuban bases if Kennedy lifted the blockade and promised not to invade Cuba. Then, as though having second thoughts, he sent a second letter **demanding** the dismantling of the Turkish bases. At the vital moment, a US U2 spy plane was shot down.

However, Kennedy ignored the U2 attack and **agreed** publicly to the first letter, and secretly to the second. The crisis was over.

More detail

One week in October 1962

Day	Events
Monday 22 October	Kennedy announces a naval blockade of Cuba. B52 nuclear bombers are deployed, so that one-eighth of them are airborne all the time. Kennedy warns of a full retaliatory response, if any missile is launched from Cuba.
Tuesday 23 October	Khrushchev explains that the missile sites are "solely to defend Cuba against the attack of an aggressor".
Wednesday 24 October	Twenty Russian ships head for Cuba. Khrushchev tells the captains to ignore the blockade. Khrushchev warns that Russia will have "a fitting reply to the aggressor".
Thursday 25 October	The first Russian ship reaches the naval blockade. It is an oil ship and is allowed through. The other Russian ships turn back. Secretly, the US government floats the idea of removing the missiles in Turkey in exchange for those in Cuba.

Modern World History Notes

Day	Events
Friday 26 October	Russia is still building the missile bases. In the morning, Kennedy considers an invasion of Cuba. It seems that war is about to break out. But at 6pm, Kennedy gets a telegram from Khrushchev offering to dismantle the sites if Kennedy lifts the blockade and promises not to invade Cuba.
Saturday 27 October	However, at 11am Khrushchev sends a second letter, demanding that Kennedy also dismantles American missile bases in Turkey. At noon on the same day, a U2 plane is shot down over Cuba. It looks as if a war is about to start after all. At 8.05pm, Kennedy sends a letter to Khrushchev, offering that if Khrushchev dismantles the missile bases in Cuba, America will lift the blockade and promise not to invade Cuba - and also dismantle the Turkish missile bases (as long as this is kept a secret).
Sunday 28 October	Khrushchev agrees to Kennedy's proposals. The crisis is over.
Tuesday 20 November	Russian bombers leave Cuba, and Kennedy lifts the naval blockade.

Repercussions of the crisis

Speaking many years later, Khrushchev claimed that he had **won** the Cuban missile crisis. He had **achieved** both his aims - America **never bothered Cuba again** (which is still a Communist country) and the **US missile sites in Turkey were dismantled** in November 1962.

The world did not see it that way at the time, because the Turkey deal was kept secret, the West saw Kennedy as the **hero** who had faced down Communism.

Meanwhile, Khrushchev **lost prestige**. China broke off relations with Russia and, in 1964, he was forced to **resign** as Soviet leader.

Lasting effects of the crisis



'OK Mr President, let's talk'

On 29 October 1962, this cartoon was published in the 'Daily Mail'. The caption read: 'OK Mr President, let's talk'.

Modern World History Notes

The message of the cartoon was clear - the world had avoided a nuclear war, but it was time for reason. In fact, both leaders had frightened themselves. Soon afterwards:

- In 1963, a **telephone hotline** was set up to give instant contact between the two leaders if there was a crisis.
- In 1963, a **Nuclear Test Ban Treaty** was signed.
- In 1968, the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty** was signed - the superpowers promised not to supply nuclear technology to other countries.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the results of the Cuban crisis were.
2. **Who** won the Cuban crisis - Kennedy or Khrushchev.
3. **How well** the Illingworth cartoon represents the Cuban crisis.

End of the Cold War

1. The Prague Spring

For four months in 1968 Czechoslovakia broke free from Soviet rule, allowing freedom of speech and removing some state controls. This period is now referred to as the Prague Spring but why did it only last four months?

Events in Czechoslovakia 1968

1. There were no riots or demonstrations but, during 1967, students and writers were complaining about the lack of freedom, and the poor performance of the Czechoslovak economy.
2. But when Antonin Novotny, the Czechoslovak president, asked **Leonid Brezhnev**, the Soviet leader, for help, Brezhnev did not support him.
3. Novotny fell from power and on 5 January 1968, Alexandr Dubcek - a reformer - took over as leader of the Communist Party (KSC).
4. In April 1968, Dubcek's government announced an Action Plan for what it called a new model of socialism - it removed state controls over industry and allowed freedom of speech.
5. For four months (the Prague Spring), there was freedom in Czechoslovakia. But then the revolution began to run out of control. Dubcek announced that he was still committed to democratic communism, but other political parties were set up.
6. Also, Dubcek stressed that Czechoslovakia would stay in the Warsaw Pact, but in August, President Tito of Yugoslavia, a country not in the Warsaw Pact, visited Prague.
7. At a meeting in Bratislava on 3 August 1968, Brezhnev read out a letter from some Czechoslovakian Communists asking for help. He announced the Brezhnev Doctrine - the USSR would not allow any Eastern European country to reject Communism.
8. On 20 August 1968, 500,000 Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia. Dubcek and three other leaders were arrested and sent to Moscow.

Modern World History Notes

9. The Czechoslovakians did not fight the Russians. Instead, they stood in front of the tanks, and put flowers in the soldiers' hair. Jan Palach burned himself to death in protest.

10. Brezhnev put in Gustav Husak, a supporter of Russia, as leader of the KSC.

Causes and effects of the Prague Spring

Causes of the Prague Spring

1. The policy of **détente** encouraged the uprising. Romania had also broken free of Russian control, and was improving relations with the West.
2. The **Czechs hated Russian control**, especially:
 - Russian control of the economy, which had made Czechoslovakia poor.
 - The censorship and lack of freedom.
3. Some Czechs thought the USA would **help** them.

Effects of the invasion of Czechoslovakia

1. **Czechoslovakia returned to communist control** and Russian troops were stationed there. Half the leadership of the KSC, along with the directors of many firms (especially publishing companies) were sacked and 47 anti-communists were arrested.
2. **Russia stayed in control behind the Iron Curtain**. The **Brezhnev Doctrine** stated that Iron Curtain countries would not be allowed to abandon communism, "even if it meant a third world war".
3. **Increase of the Cold War**. People in the West were horrified and so were many communist countries, especially Romania and Yugoslavia.

Revision tip

Question

To help you remember this story, compare its details with the story of the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, listing the similarities and differences.

Answer

Similarities

- Same causes - hostility to Russian control, repression, poor economic performance/poverty.
- Change started when Russia refused to support the old regime.
- Rakosi = Novotny, Nagy = Dubcek.
- Brief period when the new government introduced reforms and freedom of speech.
- Russia got scared when Hungary planned to leave the Warsaw Pact; Tito visited Czechoslovakia.
- A letter from some Communists asking for Russia's help was used as the excuse to invade.
- Russia invaded with overwhelming force.
- Kadar = Husak.
- The West failed to help either Nagy or Dubcek.

Modern World History Notes

Differences

- Started with riots in Hungary, but not in Czechoslovakia.
- Czechoslovakia was much more planned than Hungary; Dubcek's government had a proper Action Plan.
- Nagy announced he was going to leave the Warsaw Pact; Dubcek stressed that he would stay in the Warsaw Pact.
- The Hungarians introduced democracy; Dubcek stressed that he wanted communism, albeit "democratic communism".
- Four months of freedom in Czechoslovakia; five days of freedom in Hungary.
- The Catholic Church took a lead in events in Hungary, but not in Czechoslovakia.
- Hungary fought back; Czechoslovakia had passive resistance.
- Some 4,000 Hungarians executed, while 47 Czechoslovaks were arrested.
- Dubcek was arrested; Nagy was executed.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** there was a revolution in Czechoslovakia in 1968.
2. **What** happened in the Prague Spring.
3. **Why** the Russians crushed the Czechoslovakian Revolution.
4. **How** the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia affected East-West relations.

2. Détente

The policy of détente refers to the time in the 1960s-1970s when the two superpowers **eased tension** and tried to **cooperate** to avoid conflict in the Cold War. A number of events happened during this time period that illustrate this new policy.

Key achievements 1960s-1970s

In the late 1960s and 1970s, both superpowers talked a lot about 'détente'. Key achievements included:

Achievements in détente

Date	Event
1968	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: powers with nuclear weapons agreed not to give any other countries nuclear technology.
1971	The US table tennis team played in China.
1971	The US dropped its veto and allowed China to join the United Nations.

Modern World History Notes

Date	Event
1972	The US President Nixon visited China .
1972	Russia and America signed the SALT1 Treaty (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) agreeing to limit their anti-ballistic missiles and bombers.
1975	The Helsinki Agreement recognised Soviet control over Eastern Europe, concluded a trade agreement, and Russia promised to respect human rights.
1975	Russian and American spacecraft docked in space.

Causes and limitations of détente

Causes of détente

1. America was shocked by the Vietnam War and wanted to stay out of world affairs. There was also a vociferous CND [**CND: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament**] movement in the West.
2. The arms race was very expensive for both superpowers.
3. The price of oil rocketed in the 1970s, and both superpowers experienced economic problems.

Modern World History Notes

Limitations of détente

1. The Non-Proliferation Treaty did not stop other countries developing nuclear weapons (eg China, and perhaps South Africa and Israel).
2. Neither Russia or America kept to the SALT1 agreement. Neither side reduced their conventional weapons. Further talks were much less successful and a SALT2 Treaty in 1979 added little.
3. In the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, America supported Israel, and Russia supported Egypt and Syria.
4. The Helsinki Agreement achieved nothing - it confirmed the Iron Curtain and Russia ignored its promises about human rights.
5. Table tennis and space meetings were just one-off propaganda stunts.
6. Brezhnev said that Communists would still try to destroy capitalism. Some historians suggest that Nixon only went to China to drive a wedge between Russia and China

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the USA tried to improve relations with China in the 1970s.
2. **What** détente achieved in the 1970s.
3. **How far** détente was successful in the 1970s.
4. **Whether** there was any genuine détente between East and West in the 1970s.

3. The collapse of communism

The decline of Communism was not a result of American policies and the Cold War, but more to do with the **problems** faced by the USSR at home and abroad. This Revision Bite lists events that led to the decline and fall of Communism, and the end of the Cold War.

The end of the Cold War

In 1979, the Soviet Union **invaded Afghanistan** to try to prop up the communist government there, which was being attacked by Muslim Mujaheddin fighters. This immediately caused a rift with America, which boycotted the 1980 Olympics.

In 1980, **Ronald Reagan** became president of the USA. As a strong anti-communist, he called the Soviet Union the "**evil empire**" and increased spending on arms. The US military developed the neutron bomb, cruise missiles and a Star Wars defence system using space satellites.

By 1985, the Soviet Union was in trouble. In 1985, **Mikhail Gorbachev** became leader of the USSR.

- He **withdrew** from Afghanistan.
- He realised that the USSR could not afford the arms race, and opened the **START** (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) with the USA. He signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987.
- He began to **reform** the Soviet system by allowing perestroika (competition in business) and glasnost (freedom).

As in 1956 and 1968, a relaxation by the Soviet government encouraged **revolutions** in Eastern Europe only this time, the USSR did not have the means or the will to impose military control.

- Free elections held in Poland in June 1989 were won by Solidarity, originally a banned trade union, and Lech Walesa became the first non-communist president of Poland.
- Revolutions in other Eastern European countries quickly followed - notably the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

Modern World History Notes

- In 1991, Gorbachev fell from power and the Soviet Union was dissolved.

Problems facing the USSR in the 1980s

- Afghanistan had become "Russia's Vietnam".
- Russia could not afford the arms race.
- The Soviet economy was backwards - factories and mines were decrepit and out of date.
- Backward industry was causing increasing environmental problems - eg pollution, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion of 1986, and the Aral Sea dried up.
- Many people were much poorer than the poorest people in the capitalist West - unrest about shortages was growing.
- Crime, alcoholism and drugs were out of control in Soviet towns.
- The Soviet system had become corrupt and out of date - instead of dealing with problems, the government just covered them up (eg Chernobyl, 1986).
- Many people were dissatisfied with the Soviet police state and censorship.

Revision tip

Consider these two statements:

- Increasing détente between the two sides after the Cuban Missiles Crisis gradually brought the Cold War to an end.
- The Cold War did not gradually thaw out. It continued with unabated ferocity until 1985, when the Soviet Union ended things by unilaterally collapsing.

Look back through the pages covering the end of the Cold War, sorting the different evidence to support the two statements.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** the invasion of Afghanistan worsened relations between the USA and USSR.
2. **How** détente collapsed in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
3. **Why** détente collapsed in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
4. **How** Reagan and Gorbachev were able to improve relations between America and Russia.
5. **Why** communism in Central and Eastern Europe collapsed.
6. **How important** Solidarity was in the collapse of communism.
7. **How far** Gorbachev was responsible for the collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.
8. **How far** Reagan was responsible for the collapse of communism.

Germany 1918 - 1939

Weimar

1. Weimar - strengths and weaknesses

The Weimar Republic comprised all the essential elements of a perfect democracy. But was it perfect or was it flawed?

The Weimar Republic

After Germany lost the First World War, the Kaiser fled and a new democratic government of Germany was declared in February 1919 at the small town of Weimar. It was too dangerous to make a declaration in Berlin where there had just been a revolt by a Communist group called the Spartacists. The Weimar Republic was a genuine attempt to create a perfect [democratic](#) [**Democratic:** *Something that follows the principles of democracy which advocate majority rule and fair process, usually involving elections*] country.

The Weimar Republic looked like the perfect democracy, but it had **two great weaknesses** - proportional representation and Article 48.

The perfect democracy?

These features of the Republic served to ensure that it was the perfect democracy:

- A **Bill of Rights** guaranteed every German citizen freedom of speech and religion, and equality under the law.
- All men and women over the age of 20 were given **the vote**. This was even better than Britain where only women over 30 could vote.
- There was an **elected president** and an **elected Reichstag** (parliament).
- The **Reichstag made the laws** and appointed the government, which had to do what the Reichstag wanted.

However, hidden in the detail were **two flaws** that eventually destroyed the Republic:

- **Proportional representation** - instead of voting for an MP, like we do in Britain, Weimar Germans voted for a **party**. Each party was then allocated seats in the Reichstag exactly reflecting (proportional to) the number of people who had voted for it. This **sounds** fair, but in practice it was a disaster it resulted in dozens of tiny parties, with no party strong enough to get a majority, and, therefore, no government to get its laws passed in the Reichstag. This was a **major** weakness of the Republic.
- **Article 48** - this said that, in an emergency, the president did not need the agreement of the Reichstag, but could issue [decrees](#) [**Decrees:** *Laws passed by one minister in a parliament, which have not been approved by the majority parliament.*]. The problem with this was that it did not say what an emergency was, and in the end, it turned out to be a back door that Hitler used to take power **legally**.

Modern World History Notes

Revision tip

Make sure that you learn the two great weaknesses of the Weimar Republic.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the Weimar Constitution of 1919 said.
2. **How** good the Weimar Constitution was.

2. Weimar - problems 1919-1923

The Weimar Republic faced opposition from the outset in 1919, after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Economic hardship affected the whole nation and led to uprisings and assassinations.

Key problems

The Weimar Republic was created at a time of confusion and chaos after Germany had lost the First World War. Many people felt that Germany had received a very harsh deal in the [Treaty of Versailles](#) [**Treaty of Versailles**: *The peace treaty signed by the Allies and Germany at the end of the First World War, on 28 June 1919.*] and they resented the government for signing it and agreeing to its conditions.

The Weimar Republic faced violent uprisings from various groups, not to mention devastating economic problems.

Germany between 1918 and 1919 was in chaos. People were starving, the Kaiser had fled and people hated the government for signing the armistice in November 1918 - they called them the **November criminals**. Bands of soldiers called Freikorps refused to disband and formed private armies. It was not a good start for the Republic.

There was continuous violence and unrest:

- In March 1920, there was a rebellion - the **Kapp Putsch** - that aimed to bring back the Kaiser .
- Nationalist terror groups **assassinated 356 government politicians**.
- Many of the people in Germany were [communists](#) [**Communists**: *Supporters of the Communist movement or party.*], who wanted to bring in a Russian-style communist government. There were a number of **communist uprisings**. For instance, in 1919 the Spartacists rebelled in Berlin.

The Weimar government's main crisis occurred in 1923, when the Germans failed to make a [reparations](#) [**Reparations**: *Monetary compensation from one country to another for having started a war.*] payment on time, which set off a train of events that included:

- a French invasion of the Ruhr
- a general strike
- runaway inflation - hyperinflation
- a number of communist rebellions
- an attempted Nazi putsch in Munich

Modern World History Notes

Violence in the Weimar Republic

- In Jan 1919, 50,000 **Spartacists** rebelled in Berlin, led by the Communists Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Leibknecht.
- In 1919, **communist workers' councils seized power all over Germany**, and a Communist People's Government took power in Bavaria.
- March 1920, the right-wing nationalist Dr Wolfgang **Kapp** took over Berlin. The army refused to attack him; he was only defeated when the workers of Berlin went on strike.
- In 1920, after the failure of the Kapp Putsch, a Communist paramilitary group called the **Red Army rebelled in the Ruhr**.
- Nationalist terrorists **assassinated 356 government politicians**, including Walter Rathenau, the foreign minister, and Matthias Erzberger who had been finance minister. The judges, many of whom preferred the Kaiser's government, consistently gave these terrorists light sentences, or let them go free.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** were the main problems faced by the Weimar Republic in the period 1919-23?
2. **Why** the Weimar Republic was in danger of collapse, 1919-23.
3. **How great** was the danger of collapse facing the Weimar republic, 1919-23.
4. **Which** of the Weimar government's problems were a result of losing the First World War.
5. **Which** of the Weimar government's problems were caused by anger about the Treaty of Versailles.

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Modern World History Notes

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5. **Which** of the Weimar government's problems were caused by anger about the Treaty of Versailles.

4. Weimar - crisis of 1923

The 1923 crisis began when Germany missed a reparations payment. This situation spiralled out of control and once again the German people were unhappy and in financial difficulty, so uprisings occurred throughout the country.

Summary

In 1923 the **Weimar Republic nearly collapsed**. Put the events in the correct order to see how the situation escalated out of control.

Modern World History Notes

Hyperinflation

The sudden flood of **paper money** into the economy, on top of the **general strike** - which meant that no goods were manufactured, so there was more money, chasing fewer goods - combined with a weak economy ruined by the war, all resulted in **hyperinflation**.

Prices ran out of control - eg a loaf of bread, which cost 250 marks in January 1923 had risen to 200,000 million marks in November 1923. **German's currency became worthless.**

There are lots of almost amusing stories about people's wages and examples of just how fast inflation pushed prices up during the crisis:

- People collected their wages in suitcases.
- One person, who left their suitcase unattended, found that a thief had stolen the suitcase but not the money.
- One boy, who was sent to buy two bread buns, stopped to play football and by the time he got to the shop, the price had gone up, so he could only afford to buy one.
- One father set out for Berlin to buy a pair of shoes. When he got there, he could only afford a cup of coffee and the bus fare home.

But remember:

- Some people made fortunes during the crisis. One man borrowed money to buy a herd of cattle, but soon after paid back his loan by selling one cow.
- People on wages were safe, because they renegotiated their wages every day.
- Pensioners on fixed incomes and people with savings were the most badly hit. One woman sold her house with the intention of using the money to live on. A few weeks later, the money wasn't even enough to buy a loaf of bread.

Rebellions

Unsurprisingly, the hardships created by hyperinflation led to many uprisings as groups struggled to take power from Weimar.

- A nationalist group called **Black Reichswehr** rebelled in Berlin.
- A fascist group called the **Nazis** attempted a [putsch](#) [**Putsch**: *A small revolt against a government.*] in Munich.
- **Communists** took over the governments of Saxony and Thuringia
- **Communists** also took over the Rhineland and declared it independent.

Revision tip

Remember that a question about **how** the events of 1923 affected the German people will need a very different answer to a question about **what happened** in Germany in 1923.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** there was a crisis in Germany in 1923.
2. **Why** Germany suffer hyperinflation in 1923.

Modern World History Notes

3. **How** hyperinflation affected Germany in 1923
4. **How close** the Weimar Republic came to collapse in 1923.

Important: think carefully about what the question is asking before you answer. A question on **why** hyperinflation happened, or even how it affected people, will need a very different answer to a question on **what** hyperinflation was.

5. Nazi beliefs

The crisis of 1923 led to ordinary Germans supporting more extreme parties such as the Nazis, which only began in 1919 as a small political group. The Nazis appeared to offer a better future and something for everyone which gave them **widespread appeal**.

Nazi ideology

In 1919, Adolf Hitler joined a small right-wing group called the **German Workers' Party**. He took over as its leader, and changed its name to the **National Socialists** (Nazis).

The party developed a **25-Point Programme**, which - after the failure of the Munich Putsch in 1924 - Hitler explained further in his book 'Mein Kampf'.



The infographic is a red-themed graphic explaining Nazi ideology. It features a map of Central Europe with Germany, Austria, and parts of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary highlighted in yellow, with a red arrow pointing east. A portrait of Adolf Hitler in a brown uniform with a swastika armband is on the right. The text is organized into several sections: 'Lebensraum' (living space), 'Führer' (single leader), 'Social Darwinism' (Aryan race superiority), 'Autarky' (economic self-sufficiency), and 'Germany was in danger' (from Communists and Jews). Symbols for the swastika, hammer and sickle, and Star of David are used to represent these concepts.

Lebensraum
the need for 'living space' for the German nation to expand.

A strong Germany
the Treaty of Versailles should be abolished and all German-speaking people united in one country.

Führer the idea that there should be a single leader with complete power rather than a democracy.

Social Darwinism
the idea that the Aryan race was superior and Jews were 'subhuman'.

Autarky the idea that Germany should be economically self-sufficient.

Germany was in danger from Communists and Jews, who had to be destroyed

Modern World History Notes

The Nazi ideology:

- **Lebensraum** - the need for 'living space' for the German nation to expand.
- **A strong Germany** - the Treaty of Versailles should be abolished and all German-speaking people united in one country.
- **Führer** - the idea that there should be a single leader with complete power rather than a democracy.
- **Social Darwinism** - the idea that the Aryan race was superior and Jews were 'subhuman'.
- **Autarky** - the idea that Germany should be economically self-sufficient.
- **Germany was in danger** - from Communists and Jews, who had to be destroyed.

The appeal of the Nazis

In the 1920s, the Nazis tried to be **all things to all people**. The 25-Point Programme had policies that were:

- **Socialist** - eg farmers should be given their land; pensions should improve; and public industries such as electricity and water should be owned by the state.
- **Nationalist** - all German-speaking people should be united in one country; the Treaty of Versailles should be abolished; and there should be special laws for foreigners.
- **Racist** - Jews should not be German citizens and immigration should be stopped.
- **Fascist** - a strong central government and control of the newspapers.

The Nazis did **not** appeal to:

- working men who voted Communist
- intellectuals such as students and university professors

They **were popular** with:

- nationalists and racists
- farmers
- lower middle-class people such as plumbers and shopkeepers who were worried about the chaos Germany was in
- rich people worried by the threat from Communism

Nazi Propaganda

Hitler put Josef Goebbels in charge of Nazi [propaganda](#) [**Propaganda**: *A type of advertising for an idea or cause, produced by supporters or opponents of that idea or cause. It is usually produced to influence how the people of a nation think.*]. Methods of campaigning that the Nazis used in the 1920s included radio, mass rallies, newspapers (eg 'Der Sturmer'), Hitler's speeches, and posters.

The Nazis used **crude slogans** to introduce these ideas and to make them appeal to the ordinary people of Germany.

Modern World History Notes

Poster 1



Work means bread

Question

Look at the posters above. These slogans were targeted at specific groups - can you work out who these slogans were meant to appeal to?

Answer

Poster 1: Unemployed people

Poster 2: Mothers and women

Poster 3: Racists (the picture shows a fat Jewish employer controlling German workers' lives)

Poster 4: Rich people (because they feared that the Communists would nationalise their farms and factories)

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the Nazis believed.
2. **How** the Nazis tried to appeal to different groups of people.

Modern World History Notes

6. The Munich Putsch 1923

In November 1923, Hitler tried to take advantage of the crisis facing the Weimar government by instigating a **revolution** in Munich. It seemed like the perfect opportunity, but poor planning and misjudgement resulted in failure and the subsequent imprisonment of Adolf Hitler.

Summary

At first, the Nazis were just a terrorist group. Hitler assembled a large group of unemployed young men and former soldiers, known as the **storm troopers** (the SA), which attacked other political groups. Hitler hoped to take power by starting a **revolution** [**revolution**: A complete or radical change. In political terms, revolution involves a radical change in government.].

During the crisis of 1923, therefore, Hitler plotted with two nationalist politicians - **Kahr** and **Lossow** - to take over Munich in a revolution.

Hitler is angered as Kahr and Lossow call off the rebellion

Hitler collected his storm troopers and told them to be ready to rebel.

But then, on 4 October 1923, **Kahr and Lossow called off the rebellion**. This was an impossible situation for Hitler, who had 3,000 troops ready to fight.

Hitler waved a gun at Kahr and Lossow

On the night of 8 November 1923, Hitler and 600 storm troopers burst into a meeting that Kahr and Lossow were holding at the local **Beer Hall**. Waving a gun at them, Hitler forced them to agree to rebel - and then let them go home. The SA took over the army headquarters and the offices of the local newspaper.

16 Nazis were killed in the scuffle

The next day, 9 November 1923, Hitler and his Nazis went into Munich on what they thought would be a triumphal march to take power.

However, Kahr had called in police and army reinforcements. There was a short scuffle in which the police killed 16 Nazis.

Hitler fled, but was **arrested** two days later.

Why did Hitler attempt the Munich Putsch in 1923?

1. By 1923, the Nazi party had 55,000 members and was **stronger than ever before**.
2. The **Weimar Republic was in crisis** and about to collapse.
3. In September 1923, the **Weimar government had called off the general strike**, and every German nationalist was furious with the government.
4. Hitler thought he would be **helped by important nationalist politicians** in Bavaria.
5. Hitler had a **huge army of storm troopers**, but he knew he would lose control of them if he did not give them something to do.
6. Hitler hoped to **copy Mussolini** - the Italian fascist leader - who had come to power in Italy in 1922 by marching on Rome.

Modern World History Notes

Results of the Munich Putsch

The Munich Putsch was a **failure**. As a result:

1. The **Nazi party was banned**, and Hitler was prevented from speaking in public until 1927.
2. **Hitler went to prison**, where he wrote 'Mein Kampf'. Millions of Germans read it, and Hitler's ideas became very well-known.
3. Hitler decided that he would never come to power by revolution; he realised that he would have to **use constitutional means**, so he organised:
 - the Hitler Youth
 - propaganda campaigns
 - mergers with other right-wing parties
 - local branches of the party, which tried to get Nazis elected to the Reichstag
 - the SS as his personal bodyguard, which was set up in 1925 It was this strategy of **gaining power legitimately** that eventually brought him to power.

Revision tip

To become familiar with these events, identify the facts and arguments you would use to support these statements about the Munich Putsch:

- 'It was a squalid little failure that we would ignore nowadays if Hitler hadn't eventually come to power.'
- 'Hitler would have had no chance of ever gaining power without the failure of the Munich Putsch.'

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** happened in the Munich Putsch.
2. **Why** Hitler attempted the Munich Putsch in 1923.
3. **How** the Nazi Party was affected by the Munich Putsch.

Think carefully about what the question is asking before you answer. A question on **why** the Munich Putsch happened will need a very different answer to a question on **what happened** in the Munich Putsch, or **how** the Munich Putsch affected the Nazi party.

7. How did the Weimar Republic survive?

In 1923 the Weimar Republic was teetering at the brink of a very large cliff with problems such as hyperinflation, attempted revolutions and public discontent, pushing it increasingly towards the edge. How could the Republic possibly survive?

Gustav Stresemann and Charles Dawes

In 1923, the Weimar Republic was on the **verge of collapse**, but, surprisingly, the crisis was the start of a period of stability and success. The period 1923-1929 was a time when the economy boomed and cultural life flourished in Germany.

This dramatic turnabout happened because Germany was saved by two people - Gustav Stresemann and Charles Dawes.

Modern World History Notes

Gustav Stresemann had been a nationalist, but he realised that something needed to be done to save Germany. The most important thing he did in 1923 was to organise the **Great Coalition** of moderate, pro-democracy parties in the Reichstag. At last, Germany had a government that could make laws! Under Stresemann's guidance, the government called off the strike, persuaded the French to leave the Ruhr and even got the rest of the world to allow Germany to **join the League of Nations** in 1926.

Stresemann also introduced **reforms to help ordinary people** such as job centres, unemployment pay and better housing.

Charles Dawes was the US budget director. In 1923, he was sent to Europe to sort out Germany's economy. Under his advice, the **German Reichsbank was reformed** and the old money was called in and burned. This ended the hyperinflation. Dawes also arranged the Dawes Plan with Stresemann, which gave Germany **longer to pay reparations**. Most importantly, Dawes agreed to America **lending Germany 800 million gold marks**, which kick-started the German economy.

Weimar culture

You **must** know the names of the following leaders of the German cultural flowering of the 1920s:

- **singer/actress** Marlene Dietrich
- **architect** Gropius the leader of the [Bauhaus](#) [**Bauhaus**: *The influential German school of Modernist art and design 1919-1933. It was shut down by the Nazis.*] movement
- **artists** Paul Klee and Otto Dix
- **writer** Erich Maria Remarque who wrote 'All Quiet on the Western Front'
- **film-maker** Fritz Lang

Was Weimar stable during 1923-1929?

Despite all the successes, many historians believe that the stability of the Weimar republic was illusory:

1. The **Great Coalition collapsed** before the end of 1923, and the [Reichstag](#) [**Reichstag**: *German parliament in Berlin.*] returned to chaos. When the crisis came, it was unable to respond.
2. The nationalists and fascists did not win many seats in the Reichstag, but they were **allowed to exist and campaign**, so they were just waiting for the right opportunity to attempt a takeover again.
3. Everything depended on **American money** - if that stopped, Germany was ready to return to crisis.

Revision tip

Make a list of all the **facts** from this revision bite, and divide them into two sections:

1. Things that **caused** the Weimar period's success.
2. Things that are **evidence** of that success.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the Weimar Government survived in 1923.
2. **What** the achievements of the Weimar period were.
3. **To what extent** the Weimar government recovered after 1923.
4. **Whether** Stresemann or Dawes was more important to Weimar Germany's success.
5. **Whether** Weimar Germany was a success in the period 1923-1929.

Modern World History Notes

8. Hitler's rise to power

Hitler's rise to power cannot be attributed to one event, but a mixture of factors including events happening outside Germany, the strengths of the Nazi party, and the weaknesses of other parties within Germany. Hitler used these factors to his advantage and in 1933 he legitimately gained power to become chancellor.

Summary

Wall Street Crash

In 1929, the **American Stock Exchange collapsed**, and caused an [economic depression](#) [**Economic depression:** *The slowing of economic activity, which usually results in high unemployment, a sharp drop in prices and a fall in production.*]. America **called in all its foreign loans**, which destroyed Weimar Germany. Unemployment in Germany rose to 6 million.

The government did not know what to do. In July 1930 Chancellor Brüning cut government expenditure, wages and unemployment pay - the worst thing to do during a depression. He could not get the Reichstag to agree to his actions, so **President Hindenburg used Article 48 to pass the measures** by decree.

The Nazis gain support

Anger and bitterness helped the Nazis to gain more support.

Many **workers turned to communism**, but this frightened wealthy businessmen, so they financed Hitler's campaigns.

Many middle-class people, alarmed by the obvious failure of democracy, decided that the country needed a strong government. Nationalists and racists blamed the [Treaty of Versailles](#) [**Treaty of Versailles:** *The peace treaty signed by the Allies and Germany at the end of the First World War, on 28 June 1919.*] and [reparations](#) [**Reparations:** *Monetary compensation from one country to another for having started a war.*].

By July 1932, the Nazis held 230 seats

In 1928, the Nazis had only 12 seats in the Reichstag; **by July 1932 they had 230 seats and were the largest party.**

The government was in chaos. President Hindenburg dismissed Brüning in 1932. His replacement - Papen - lasted six months, and the next chancellor - Schleicher - only lasted two months. Hindenburg had to use Article 48 to pass almost every law.

Hitler handed power on a plate

In January 1933, Hindenburg and Papen came up with a plan to get the Nazis on their side by offering to make Hitler vice chancellor. He refused and **demand to be made chancellor**. They agreed, thinking they could **control him**.

In January 1933, Hitler became chancellor, and immediately set about making himself **absolute ruler** of Germany using Article 48.

Modern World History Notes

Reasons why Hitler rose to power

1. **Hitler was a great speaker**, with the power to make people support him.
2. The **moderate political parties would not work together**, although together they had more support than the Nazis.
3. The **depression of 1929** created poverty and unemployment, which made people angry with the Weimar government. People lost confidence in the democratic system and turned towards the extremist political parties such as the Communists and Nazis during the depression.
4. The **Nazi storm troopers** attacked Hitler's opponents.
5. **Goebbels' propaganda campaign** was very effective and it won support for the Nazis. The Nazis targeted specific groups of society with different slogans and policies to win their support.
6. Hitler was **given power** in a seedy political deal by **Hindenburg and Papen** who foolishly thought they could control him.
7. German people were still **angry** about the **Treaty of Versailles** and supported Hitler because he promised to overturn it.
8. **Industrialists** gave Hitler money and support.

Revision tip

The previous eight suggestions about why Hitler rose to power fall into three categories:

1. outside events
2. strengths of Hitler and the Nazi party
3. weaknesses of other political parties

To familiarise yourself with them, work out which reasons fall into which category.

Now put them in order of importance. This is just your **opinion**, so there is no right or wrong answer, but make sure you have a **reason** for putting each factor in the ranking order you have chosen for it.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** Hitler came to power in 1933.
2. **Why** Hitler came to power in 1933.
3. **How important** Hitler was in the Nazis' rise to power.
4. **Why** the Weimar Republic collapsed

9. Was Weimar doomed?

Was Hitler's success because of Weimar's failure? Was the Weimar constitution to blame or was Weimar doomed from the start?

Arguments

Throughout this section (Germany - Weimar), we have been assessing **how successful** the Weimar Republic was. It was beset by problems in the early years, but the stability and prosperity enjoyed by Germany during the period 1924-1929, suggests that it was successful to a degree.

Modern World History Notes

However, throughout this time, Hitler and the Nazi party came to prominence and eventually **gained control** in 1933.

It is arguable that the problems which beset the Weimar Republic from the start finally 'got it in the end':

- The **vilification** of the government as the **November Criminals** continued even into the 1930s, when Hitler referred to the government as the November Criminals in his election speeches.
- The **weakness of the Reichstag** governments because of proportional representation continued right to the very end, and lay behind the Hindenburg/Papen deal with Hitler in January 1933.
- Hitler used Article 48 to **destroy the Republic** after January 1933.

Yet:

- The Republic **lasted 13 years** - the world in 1933 was very different to 1919, so there was no simplistic cause-and-effect.
- The Republic was **very successful** during the period **1923-1929**. When the pro-democracy parties organised themselves properly, the Republic could be very strong.
- The Republic would have survived if Hindenburg and Papen hadn't made Hitler chancellor; the **Nazis had not done as well** in the November 1932 elections as they had in July 1932, and some historians believe that their appeal was beginning to wane.

The historian AJP Taylor said that there was nothing wrong with the Weimar Republic per se: he blamed the stupid men who lacked the will to maintain democracy the politicians of the Centre and Social Democratic parties, and particularly Hindenburg and Papen for Hitler's rise to power.

Revision tip

- 'The Weimar Republic had flaws that made its failure inevitable.'
- 'Hitler's accession as chancellor was the result of weak politicians, not a weak Republic.'

Look back over the facts and ideas you have studied in this unit, and see if any of them lend support for either of these ideas.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the Weimar Republic was doomed from the start.
2. **Whether** it was inevitable - or simply bad luck - that Hitler came to power in 1933.

Nazis

1. How Hitler consolidated power 1933-1934

In January 1933 Hitler became chancellor of Germany and by August 1934, he had declared himself Führer - the leader of Germany. What happened during this time that allowed Hitler to take the ultimate position of authority?

Modern World History Notes

Summary

Dates and events 1933-1934

Date	Event
27 Feb 1933	Reichstag Fire - the Reichstag [Reichstag : German parliament in Berlin.] building is set on fire. A Dutch Communist, van der Lubbe, is caught red-handed in the burning building.
5 Mar 1933	General Election - only 44 per cent of the population vote for the Nazis, who win 288 seats in the Reichstag.
23 Mar 1933	Enabling Act - the SA [SA : Also known as Storm Troopers or Brownshirts. A military style organisation of the Nazi party formed in 1921 under Hitler.] intimidates all the remaining non-Nazi deputies. The Reichstag votes to give Hitler the right to make his own laws.
26 April 1933	Local government is reorganised - the country is carved up into 42 Gaus, which are run by a Gauleiter. These Gaus are separated into areas, localities and blocks of flats run by a Blockleiter. Hitler sets up the Gestapo.
2 May 1933	Trade unions are abolished and their leaders arrested.
20 June 1933	Concordat - Hitler makes an agreement with the Pope who sees him as someone who can destroy communism. This agreement allows Hitler to take over political power in Germany as long as he leaves the Catholic Church alone.
14 July 1933	Political parties are banned - only the Nazi party is allowed to exist.
24 April 1934	People's Courts - Hitler sets up the Nazi people's courts where judges have to swear an oath of loyalty to the Nazis.
30 June 1934	Night of the Long Knives - some SA leaders are demanding that the Nazi party carry out its socialist agenda, and that the SA take over the army. Hitler cannot afford to annoy the businessmen or the army, so the SS [SS : Also known as the Blackshirts. A German police/ military style organisation created to serve as the personal bodyguards of Adolf Hitler. In Hitler's Germany they eventually controlled the intelligence, security and police forces, and extermination of those they considered undesirable.] murders perhaps 400 of the SA members, including its leader Röhm, along with a number of Hitler's other opponents.
19 Aug 1934	Führer - when Hindenburg dies, Hitler declares himself jointly president, chancellor and head of the army.

Modern World History Notes

More details

If you are asked about **how** Hitler consolidated his power, remember that the question is not just about describing what happened and what Hitler did. You should explain **how** Hitler's actions helped him to consolidate his power - it is more about the effects of what he did. The table below describes how certain events that happened between 1933 and 1934 gave Hitler the opportunity to consolidate power.

Events and results 1933-1934

Event	Result
	Hitler used the fire to his advantage in two ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It gave him an opportunity to imprison many communist leaders, which stopped them campaigning during the election.2. It allowed the Nazis to say that the country was in danger from the communists during its election campaign.
Reichstag fire	
	Both these actions helped the Nazis to win more seats in the election.
	When the courts convicted Dutch Communist van der Lubbe, but did not convict other Communist leaders, Hitler was furious and replaced the courts with the Nazi People's Courts.
General election	Although it did not give the Nazis the majority that Hitler had hoped for in the Reichstag, it gave them enough seats - after Hitler had arrested all the communist deputies and the other parties had been intimidated by the SA - to get the Enabling Act passed, which is all Hitler needed to do.
Enabling Act	Arguably the critical event - it gave Hitler absolute power to make his laws.
Local government	This put the Nazis in control of local government, and allowed the Gestapo to rule by terror .
Trade unions	Abolishing the trade unions allowed Hitler to destroy a group that might have opposed him. It also gave Hitler the opportunity to set up the German Labour Front , which gave him control over German workers.
Concordat	Hitler's agreement with the Pope was a temporary truce that allowed Hitler to ban the Catholic Zentrum party without opposition from the Catholic Church.
Political parties	Banning political parties made Germany a one-party state and destroyed democracy in the country.
	After this action, Germans could no longer get rid of Hitler in an election.
People's Courts	These were set up to give Hitler greater control over the judgements made in courts. Hitler was furious because the courts did not sentence the communists to death for starting the Reichstag fire.
Night of the Long Knives	This destroyed all opposition within the Nazi Party. It gave power to the brutal SS. It also showed the rest of the world what a tyrant Hitler was.
Führer	This formally made Hitler the absolute ruler of Germany.

Modern World History Notes

Many historians believe that Nazi Germany only appeared to be a dictatorship. In fact, officials were left to make most of the decisions themselves, and the Nazi government was badly-organised, and chaotic.

Hitler and the army

It is important to note that in 1934, the army was not subject to Hitler's authority. At this point, he still needed the army's support, which is why he destroyed the SA in the Night of the Long Knives.

In 1938, army leaders hoped Hitler's plan to conquer the Sudetenland would fail and give them an opportunity to [depose](#) [**Depose**: *To remove a ruler or monarch.*] him. When he succeeded, their attempt to get rid of him fell apart, and Hitler dismissed the chief of staff and 60 other generals. Thereafter, the army was also subservient to Hitler.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** Hitler consolidated his power, 1933-1934.
2. **How** Hitler changed Germany from a democracy to a dictatorship.
3. **Which** event marked the end of the Weimar Republic - the Enabling Act or the banning of political parties.

The question 'Why Hitler came to power' (ie how he became chancellor in January 1933) is **completely different** to 'How did Hitler consolidate his power' (ie how he took absolute power in 1933-1934). Make sure you do not misinterpret questions, which may not be worded so clearly. The key is to look carefully at the dates in the question.

2. The structures of control in the Nazi state

Hitler introduced many policies and measures to ensure the Nazis remained in control, once he declared himself Führer. These measures dealt with political opponents, as well as ordinary people, who suddenly found their private, social and working lives controlled by the Nazis.

Seven key structures

The Nazi party aimed to control every aspect of people's political, social and working lives. It maintained control through a mixture of [propaganda](#) [**Propaganda**: *A type of advertising for an idea or cause, produced by supporters or opponents of that idea or cause. It is usually produced to influence how the people of a nation think.*] and intimidation.

Government

1. Government (political)

The way Hitler consolidated power in 1933-1934 meant that the Nazis had absolute control of national and local government.

Religion

2. Religion (social)

Hitler believed that religion was a threat to the Nazis' control over people's minds, so he tried different ways to reduce the power of the church over people.

Modern World History Notes

Culture

3. Culture (social)

Hitler ordered Nazification - the imposition of Nazi values - on **all aspects** of German life.

Work

4. Work (working)

Dr Robert Ley, head of the [DAF](#) [**DAF**: *German Labour Front*], boasted that he controlled workers' lives from the 'cradle to the grave'.

Education and youth

5. Education and youth (working)

The lives of young people were controlled both in and out of school to turn them into fanatical Nazis.

Terror

6. Terror (method of control)

Germany became a country where it was unsafe to do or say anything critical of the government.

Propaganda

7. Propaganda (method of control)

Josef Goebbels controlled the Propaganda Ministry, which aimed to brainwash people into obeying the Nazis and idolising Hitler.

This page summarises the main aspects of life where the Nazis took control, and the methods they used to maintain control. The rest of of this Revision Bite will look into these aspects in more detail.

Political life

Government

The following points allowed Hitler to gain control of the government:

- Enabling Act
- Local government reorganised
- Political parties banned
- Hitler became Führer

When you have a lot of information to remember, it sometimes helps to make up a mnemonic - a sentence or word - to remind you of what you should be thinking about for this topic. If you rearrange the points above, the first letters of each point spell out the word **HELP**.

Modern World History Notes

Social life

Religion

The following points are examples of how the Nazis took control of religion:

- Non-Nazi Catholic priests and Protestant pastors such as Martin Niemöller and Dietrich Bonhöffer were sent to concentration camps.
- Jews and Jehovah's Witnesses were openly persecuted.
- Hitler set up a state Reich Church, which banned the Bible and the cross.
- Nazis encouraged people to revive the old Viking myths and ceremonies.

Culture

The Nazis dictated what people were allowed to do in their social and private lives:

- Artists had to produce acceptable paintings that portrayed Nazi values.
- Jazz music was banned.
- Books written by Jews were publicly burned.
- Homosexuals were persecuted; they did not fit the Nazi image of the ideal family.
- The Olympic Games of 1936 were a huge Nazi propaganda success.

Education and work

Education and youth

Measures were imposed to make sure that schools and youth associations became Nazified:

- Non-Nazi teachers and university professors were sacked; teachers had to join the National Socialist Teachers' League.
- Textbooks were re-written to include Nazi political and racial ideas.
- History was taught to glorify Germany.
- There was a concentration on physical fitness.
- Girls were taught cookery, boys were taught science and maths.
- The Hitler Youth was compulsory; it indoctrinated boys and prepared them for war.
- The Nazi Girls' youth organisation - the BDM - was compulsory; it indoctrinated girls and prepared them for church, children and cooking.

Work

The following points are examples of how the Nazis took control of workers lives:

- The RAD (National Labour Service) sent young men on public works.
- Hitler introduced conscription in 1936; most men went into the army after the RAD.
- The DAF (German Labour Front) controlled workers' conditions at work.
- The KdF (Strength through Joy) movement regulated their leisure time.

Modern World History Notes

Methods of control

Terror

The Nazi state intimidated and terrorised those who were opposed to it, using:

- [SS](#) [**SS**: Also known as the Blackshirts. A German police/ military style organisation created to serve as the personal bodyguards of Adolf Hitler. In Hitler's Germany they eventually controlled the intelligence, security and police forces, and extermination of those they considered undesirable.] and [Gestapo](#) [**Gestapo**: (Secret State Police.) A ruthless organisation that aimed to eliminate political opponents in Nazi Germany, and was responsible for the rounding up of Jews during the Nazi period and attempting to exterminate them.] investigations.
- Blockleiters in each block of flats and street informed on 'grumblers'.
- Arrests of thousands of people terrified opponents.
- Set up Nazi people's courts.
- Concentration camps.

Propaganda

The Propaganda Ministry worked hard to ensure that people were persuaded to adopt the Nazi point of view:

- Mass rallies at Nuremberg.
- Newspapers were censored.
- People's radios were sold very cheaply, but broadcasts were controlled.
- Films were controlled to make films that glorified war and pilloried the Jews.
- Loudspeakers in public places blared out Nazi propaganda.
- Cult of personality - Hitler's picture was everywhere, and he was portrayed as Germany's saviour.

Revision tip

Make up your own **mnemonics** to help you remember the sections on:

- religion
- culture
- education and youth
- work
- terror
- propaganda

It might help to re-write the main points in your own words.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** the Nazis controlled people's lives.
2. **What** were the main features of the totalitarian dictatorship in Nazi Germany.

Modern World History Notes

3. Women in the Nazi state

Hitler had very clear ideas about the woman's role in the Nazi state - she was the centre of **family** life, a housewife and mother. Hitler even introduced a medal for women who had eight or more children!

The role of women

The Nazis had clear ideas of what they wanted from women.

Women were expected to stay at home and look after the family. Women doctors, teachers and civil servants were forced to give up their careers. Even at the end of the war, women were never asked to serve in the armed forces.

Their job was to keep the home nice for their husband and family - their life should revolve round the three 'Ks':

- church
- children
- cooking

Goebbels said: "The mission of women is to be beautiful and to bring children into the world."

Hitler wanted a **high birth rate**, so the population would grow. The Nazis even considered making it law that families should have at least four children. Girls did keep fit in the [BDM](#) [**BDM**: *Bund Deutscher Madel - the German group for girls age 14+*] to make themselves healthy for childbirth, but they were discouraged from staying slim, because it was thought that thin women had trouble giving birth.

The **Law for the Encouragement of Marriage** gave newly wed couples a loan of 1,000 marks, and allowed them to keep 250 marks for each child they had. Mothers who had more than eight children were given a gold medal. Unmarried women could volunteer to have a baby for an [Aryan](#) [**Aryan**: *a person of European decent (not Jewish) often with blond hair and blue eyes - the Nazis viewed as the superior human race*] member of the [SS](#) [**SS**: *Also known as the Blackshirts. A German police/ military style organisation created to serve as the personal bodyguards of Adolf Hitler. In Hitler's Germany they eventually controlled the intelligence, security and police forces, and extermination of those they considered undesirable.*].

Women were supposed to emulate traditional German peasant fashions - plain peasant costumes, hair in plaits or buns and flat shoes. They were not expected to wear make-up or trousers, dye their hair or smoke in public.

Modern World History Notes

Source analysis



Family - by Wolf Willrich

Question

Study the painting by Wolf Willrich and identify five ways in which this family illustrates the perfect Nazi ideal.

Answer

Here are ten ways in which the painting represents the Nazi ideal:

1. The family has four children, and the mother has just had a baby.
2. The mother is caring for the baby.
3. She wears a plain dress.
4. She has her hair in a bun; she is not wearing make-up.
5. The mother is not skinny.
6. The family lives in a rural/farming environment.
7. The boy wears his Hitler Youth uniform and is making something out of the clay.
8. The younger sister plays with a doll - preparation for motherhood.
9. The elder sister has plaited hair (acceptable fashions), and gazes longingly at the baby (longing for motherhood).
10. The family have fair hair, athletic bodies and ruddy complexions - they are the ideal Aryans.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** successful Nazi policies towards women and the family were.

Modern World History Notes

4. Opposition

Those who spoke out against Hitler and his policies faced intimidation and threats from the [Gestapo](#) [**Gestapo**: (*Secret State Police*.) *A ruthless organisation that aimed to eliminate political opponents in Nazi Germany, and was responsible for the rounding up of Jews during the Nazi period and attempting to exterminate them.*], or imprisonment and in some cases execution. However, there were some brave individuals and groups who openly opposed Hitler and his policies - a few survived, but many were killed.

Who opposed Hitler?

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

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

Revision Tip

Try to create a mnemonic to help you remember the groups that opposed Hitler. Eg:

1. von Galen
2. 'With Burning Concern' - the Pope's message
3. White Rose Group
4. Reichsbanner
5. Edelweiss Pirates
6. Confessional Church
7. Kreisau Circle

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** different kinds of people opposed the Nazis and why.
2. **How much** opposition there was to the Nazi regime.
3. **How effectively** the Nazis dealt with their opponents.

Modern World History Notes

As well as the list of people who opposed Hitler, you must think about **why** they opposed him, and to what extent they succeeded.

5. Persecution

Hitler had firm racial policies and believed that non-Germans should not have any citizenship rights. There were many groups of people who were targeted by Hitler's policies, but none more so than the Jews.

Who did the Nazis persecute?

The Nazis believed that only Germans could be citizens and that non-Germans did not have any right to the rights of citizenship.

The Nazis racial philosophy taught that some races were *untermensch* (sub-human). Many scientists at this time believed that people with disabilities or social problems were genetic degenerates whose genes needed to be eliminated from the human bloodline.

The Nazis, therefore:

- Tried to eliminate the **Jews**.
- Killed 85 per cent of Germany's **Gypsies**.
- Sterilised **black people**.
- Killed **mentally disabled** babies.
- Killed **mentally ill** patients.
- Sterilised **physically disabled** people and people with **hereditary diseases**.
- Sterilised **deaf people**.
- Put **homosexuals, prostitutes, Jehovah's Witnesses, alcoholics, pacifists, beggars, hooligans and criminals** - who they regarded as anti-social - into concentration camps.

How the Nazis persecuted the Jews: key dates

1933

- Boycott of Jewish businesses.
- Jewish civil servants, lawyers and teachers sacked.
- Race Science lessons to teach that Jews are [untermensch](#) [**Untermensch**: A German word for a person who is considered inferior.].

1935

- 'Jews not wanted here' signs put up at swimming pools etc.
- **Nuremberg laws** (15 September) Jews could not be citizens. They were not allowed to vote or to marry a German.

1938

- Jews could not be doctors.
- Jews had to add the name Israel (men) or Sarah (women) to their name.
- Jewish children forbidden to go to school.
- **Kristallnacht** (9 November) - attacks on Jewish homes, businesses and [synagogues](#) [**Synagogues**: These are places of Jewish worship and community.].

Modern World History Notes

1939

- Jews were forbidden to own a business, or own a radio.
- Jews were forced to live in ghettos.

1941

- Army Einsatzgruppen squads in Russia started mass-shootings of Jews.
- All Jews were forced to wear a yellow star of David.

1942

- Wannsee Conference (20 January) decided on the **Final Solution**, which was to gas all Europe's Jews. The main death camps were at Auschwitz, Treblinka and Sobibor.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** the Nazis persecuted many groups in German society.
2. **How** the Nazis persecuted many groups in German society.

6. Economic policies and benefits

Many German people had suffered during the First World War and the Depression, so welcomed Hitler's economic policies with open arms. There was full employment, new public works and ordinary workers even had the opportunity to purchase a car to drive on the new [autobahns](#) [**Autobahns**: German motorways].

Economic policy summary

Hitler's economic policy had four main ideas.

1. **Full employment** - the idea that everyone should have a job. By 1939, there was virtually no unemployment in Germany.
2. **Beauty of Work** - the Nazis set up the SdA (Beauty of Work) to help Germans see that work was good, and that everyone who could work should. In fact - because the Nazis had abolished the trade unions, banned strikes, and given more power to the industrialists - real wages fell and hours were longer under Hitler.
3. **Re-armament** begun in 1935 - the idea of 'guns before butter'.
4. **Autarky** - there was an unsuccessful attempt at making Germany self-sufficient.

The good life in Nazi Germany

Despite the loss of political and religious freedom, **life improved in Germany for many ordinary people** who were prepared to 'toe the line' and look the other way.

- Everybody had a job, and a wage. To people who had been unemployed and starving, 'work and bread' was a wonderful blessing worth every civil liberty they lost.
- The Nazis set up KdF (Strength through Joy), which gave workers rewards for their work - evening classes, theatre trips, picnics, and even free holidays.
- The Nazis devised a scheme to allow workers to buy a Volkswagen Beetle car for a small weekly payment.

Modern World History Notes

- The autobahns improved transport and travel.
- People appreciated the public works - eg new schools and hospitals.
- The streets were safe and there was no crime.
- Germany was strong and successful in world affairs.
- Nazi rallies provided colour and fun.
- Nazi Youth groups provided activities and holidays for young people.
- Nazi ideology gave people hope and confidence.

How Hitler increased employment

Hitler introduced many policies to fulfil his goal of full employment:

- He **stopped paying reparations** and invested the money in German companies.
- He began a huge programme of **public works** including planting forests, and building hospitals and schools. He also built public buildings such as the 1936 Olympic Stadium. The construction of the autobahns created work for 80,000 men.
- **Rearmament** created jobs in the armaments industry.
- The introduction of **national service** meant all young men spent six months in the [RAD](#) [**RAD**: *The labour service in which young men in Germany had to do a six-month compulsory stint.*] and then they were conscripted into the army. By 1939, 1.4 million men were in the army, so they were not counted as unemployed.
- Many **Jews were sacked** and their jobs given to non-Jews.
- Many **women were sacked** and their jobs given to men.

Did Germany become self-sufficient?

The policy of [autarky](#) [**Autarky**: *(A closed economy.) Hitler's ideology that wanted Germany to cease trade with the outside world and rely entirely on its own resources.*] was a **failure**. In 1937, Göring was made Economics Minister with the job of making Germany self-sufficient in four years. However, the measures he introduced were not successful:

- Controls were put on imports, but, if anything, imports of luxuries increased.
- Scientists tried to make oil from coal and to find substitutes for rubber, petrol, cotton and coffee.
- Farmers were subsidised to produce more food, and food imports were reduced.

Revision tip and answer preparation

Revision tip

Create a diagram that illustrates the ten things that were good about life in Nazi Germany.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **To what extent** were Hitler's economic policies a success.
2. **How** Hitler's economic policies benefited the German people.

Russia/USSR 1905 - 1941

Revolutions

1. Long-term causes of the Russian Revolution

The Romanov dynasty had lasted 300 years but Nicholas II, who ascended the throne in 1894, turned out to be the last [tsar](#) [**Tsar**: *Russian monarch.*] of Russia. How did such an ancient monarchy collapse so spectacularly?

Summary

February or March - October or November? The Russian calendar was 13 days behind the rest of the world, so its February Revolution actually took place in March, and what was called the October Revolution happened in November!

This fact, of course, gives a clue as to why the Romanov dynasty fell in 1917 - it was **out of date**. In comparison, Italy and Spain had modernised their calendars in 1582!

All the institutions that supported the monarchy - such as the **Church**, the **nobility** and the faithful loyalty of the **peasants** - came from the Middle Ages.

Meanwhile, **new, modern forces** were threatening the monarchy such as the **middle class**, an **industrial working class** and **Marxism**.

In 1894, Nicholas II was an **autocrat**. He ruled alone and unquestioned, but he had a **weak personality**, and his power was increasingly based on the military might of the [Cossacks](#) [**Cossacks**: *Peasants from southern Russia who were renowned for their military skill - they were later employed by the Tsar.*] and on the **Okhrana** (the secret police). These were two-edged strengths - they kept him in power, but they made him increasingly unpopular.

More detail

- **Big** - Russia was too big to rule. In 1913, it stretched 4,000 miles from Europe to Alaska, and comprised 125 million people.
- **Backward** - Russia was backward. It had few roads and limited industrialisation. Most people were still peasants.
- **Weak** - Russia was militarily weak. It had lost a war with Japan in 1904.
- **Disunited** - Russia had many different nationalities, languages and religions.
- **Autocracy** - the government of Russia, which Nicholas ruled over alone, was far too much work for one man.
- **Proletariat** - Russia was industrialising and the workers, eg in St Petersburg, were poor and oppressed. On Bloody Sunday 1905, they went on a peaceful march to ask the tsar to help them, but the Cossacks attacked them.
- **Bourgeois** - the representatives of the new middle class industrialists. They called themselves the Kadets and wanted Russia to have a constitution like England's. In 1905, there was a revolution and they managed to force Nicholas to create a Duma (parliament), but it had no real power.

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- **Revolutionaries** - for instance, the Social Revolutionaries and the Marxists - split into the Mensheviks who wanted peaceful change and the Bolsheviks who wanted a revolution - committed acts of terrorism such as the murder of Prime Minister Stolypin in 1911.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** Russia was like before the First World War.
2. **What** the strengths and weaknesses of the Russian monarchy were before 1914.
3. **Who** opposed the tsar's government in Russia before 1914.
4. **How well** the tsar ruled Russia in the years leading up to 1914.

2. The 1905 Revolution

Tsar Nicholas II had a weak personality and a bad habit of not listening to his people - as demonstrated in 1905 when he ordered his [Cossacks](#) [**Cossacks**: Peasants from southern Russia who were renowned for their military skill - they were later employed by the Tsar.] to **open fire** on a **peaceful** demonstration. The events that occurred afterwards in response to the attack became known as the 1905 Revolution.

Summary

In 1904, Nicholas lost a war with Japan, which undermined his authority. In 1905, a **peaceful demonstration** of workers led by the priest Father Gapon was attacked by the Cossacks, in a bid to assert the Tsar's authority. The atrocity led to **strikes and riots** - sailors on the battleship 'Potemkin' mutinied. Workers and soldiers got together and set up committees called **Soviets** to represent them.

Nicholas survived - just! He published the '**October Manifesto**', which promised to create a **Duma** (parliament). This caused many middle-class people, called the Octobrists, to support him. He also lowered taxes on the poor and brought in Peter Stolypin as his prime minister. The [Okhrana](#) [**Okhrana**: The Tsar of Russia's security police 1881-1917.] tracked down and arrested many revolutionaries.

However, as soon as he felt powerful enough, Nicholas **stopped listening** to the Duma, but the Soviets survived.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** there was a revolution in 1905 - remember both long-term and immediate causes.
2. **How** Nicholas survived the 1905 revolution.
3. **How** the 1905 revolution weakened the tsar and helped the 1917 revolution.

3. The First World War and the February Revolution

The First World War had two main effects on Russia: firstly a huge number of men **lost their lives**, and secondly it caused **economic chaos**. On 8 March 1917 women in St Petersburg went on a strike for '**bread and peace**', starting the February Revolution.

Summary

The **First World War** proved the last straw for the tsar's government.

Russian troops were **slaughtered** in their millions.

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Nicholas made things worse by going to the front to lead the army. This made him responsible for the defeats in most people's eyes. It also left the government in the hands of the tsar's wife, the tsarina, and the monk, Rasputin.

The war effort caused **economic chaos**.

By February 1917, people in the towns were **starving** and **freezing**.

The revolution was started by the women - on 8 March 1917 they went on a march **demanding bread**, which turned into rioting.

The tsarina called in the **troops**. However, on 12 March they **mutinied** and started to help the rioters.

Workers and soldiers set up the **Petrograd Soviet** to coordinate the revolution.

The tsar went to pieces and was unable to make any decisions.

When the Duma realised the government was collapsing, it set up a **provisional government**, and on 15 March forced the tsar to [abdicate](#) [**Abdicate**: To give up a claim (often a claim to a monarchy)].

Ten extra details

1. In February 1914 the Deputy Minister of the Interior and former head of police sent a memo to the tsar warning him that a **war against Germany** - even if Russia won - would **destroy the monarchy**.
2. The **tsarina was German**. Most Russians believed that she was helping the Germans to win by ruining Russia from within.
3. The **huge casualties** in the war - 9 million dead or wounded by 1917 - lost the tsar the support of the soldiers, so they turned against him when they were asked to put down the riots.
4. Taking 15 million men to fight in the army **ruined Russia's agriculture**. There were not enough workers to take in the harvest.
5. The war effort **clogged up the railways with military transport**, so food couldn't get into the towns.
6. On 13 March at the **Kronstadt naval base**, the sailors mutinied and murdered hundreds of their officers.
7. On 4 March, workers at the huge **Putilov armaments factory** in St Petersburg went on **strike**. Many historians say that this was the real start of the **February Revolution**.
8. The February Revolution was a genuine **popular revolution**, with spontaneous uprisings all over the country against the existing government - it was **not** planned by a particular rebel group or fuelled by a particular ideology.
9. On 10 March, with bread riots out of control, the tsarina wrote to the tsar blaming **hooligans** for the trouble. Her letter shows how **out of touch** the government was with reality.
10. The **tsar tried to get back** from the front on 13 March, but it was too late. None of the soldiers were loyal and his train could not get through to St Petersburg.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** the First World War affected Russia/the tsar.
2. **The story** of the February Revolution.
3. **What** were the short-term causes of the February Revolution of 1917?
4. **What** did the tsar do to make a bad situation worse?
5. **How** the First World War helped cause a revolution.

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4. What was to blame?

The February Revolution of 1917 brought the 300-year-old Romanov dynasty to an end. What caused the uprising?

Why did the monarchy collapse?

In 1917, the Russian monarchy collapsed.

There are three main theories as to why:

1. **Russia** was old-fashioned and weak - it collapsed because it was unsuitable.
2. The **First World War** - its huge problems and disasters overturned a monarchy that had, so far, managed to survive.
3. **The stupidity of the tsar** - his decisions and actions cost him his throne.

Writing for an academic website, the historian Philip Mosley suggested:

The immediate cause of the February Revolution of 1917 was the collapse of the Tsarist regime under the gigantic strain of World War I. The underlying cause was the backward economic condition of the country, which made it unable to sustain the war effort against powerful, industrialized Germany.

Philip E Mosley, late Professor of International Relations, Columbia University

Notice how he doesn't choose one of the three factors as being the cause of the Revolution. Instead, he suggests that the revolution was caused by a **mixture** of all three factors working together - the underlying weaknesses of the government meant that, when he was faced by problems during the First World War, the tsar could not cope with them and fell from power. You may wish to take this as your overview conclusion of the causes of the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia.

Revision tip and answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How much** the Russian Revolution of February 1917 was the tsar's fault.
2. **Which** was the most significant factor in bringing about a revolution.

Bolsheviks

1. Provisional Government and its problems

The Provisional Government replaced the tsar's government that collapsed during the revolution in March 1917. Did the Provisional Government achieve any major reforms and pull Russia out of an unpopular war?

Problems

In March 1917, when the tsar's government collapsed, the members of the [Duma](#) [**Duma**: *The Russian parliament.*] set up the **Provisional Government**, led by Alexander Kerensky.

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The Provisional Government never really ruled Russia. Right from the start, it had to share power with the **Petrograd Soviet**, which had a rule (Order No.1) that its members should only obey the Provisional Government if the Soviet agreed with it. For this reason, March to November 1917 is sometimes called the period of **Dual Government** in Russia.

Disastrously, the Provisional Government - because it was only a temporary government - **did not really carry out any major reforms**. All it did was abolish the Okhrana and press censorship, and allow political freedom. This gave the government's opponents - such as Lenin's **Bolsheviks** [**Bolsheviks: Russian revolutionary group originally led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Bolsheviks gained power in Russia in 1917, and became the dominant political party there.**] - the freedom to attack the government for the problems it was not solving.

The main problem of the Provisional Government was that it **tried to continue the war**. In June 1917, it organised an attack on Austria. When the attack failed, people began to turn against the government. Instead, they started to follow Lenin whose welcome message was: '**Peace, bread, land**'.

Failures

1. The Provisional Government had to **share power** with the Petrograd Soviet. Members of the Soviet **always** rejected the Provisional Government.
2. The Provisional Government did **nothing to stop the war**. In fact, as desertions increased, it set up death squads to hunt down and execute deserters. The soldiers came to hate the Provisional Government.
3. The Provisional Government was unable to end the **shortages of food and fuel** in Petrograd. This was because it continued the war, which was causing the shortages. The workers came to hate the Provisional Government.
4. The Provisional Government did **nothing to solve the land problem**. In the countryside, peasants started taking over the land of the nobles, many of whom had run away. The Provisional Government sent soldiers to take the land back by force. The peasants came to hate the Provisional Government.
5. The Provisional Government did **little to deal with its opponents**. Even after the Bolsheviks rebelled in July 1917, it allowed Lenin to preach his popular message of 'all power to the Soviets'. People came to despise the Provisional Government.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the Provisional Government did, March-November 1917.
2. **How** successfully the Provisional Government dealt with its problems, March-November 1917.
3. **Why** the new Provisional Government quickly came to be hated.
4. **Why** the Russian people found Lenin and his message **very** attractive in 1917.

Lenin and the Bolshevik revolution

'The February revolution was **spontaneous**; the October revolution was **planned**.' You may well have heard or read other statements like this about the two Russian revolutions of 1917, but what is the evidence?

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The story of the October revolution

Peace, land, bread

April: the German government helps the Bolshevik leader **Lenin** return to Russia. He publishes the '**April Theses**', offering people: 'Peace, bread, land', and proclaims: 'All power to the Soviets'.

July: the Bolsheviks try to take power in a revolution called the July Days, but are defeated.

Bolsheviks

August: a pro-tsarist, General Kornilov, leads a revolt against the Provisional Government. The government has to ask the Bolsheviks for help to defeat him. As a result, the Bolsheviks become so popular that:

September: the Bolsheviks take control of the Petrograd Soviet, and the prominent Bolshevik Leon Trotsky, leader of the Red Guards, becomes its president.

Kronstadt sailors

6th November: late at night, Trotsky's Red Guards helped by the Kronstadt sailors move quickly to take over the bridges and the telephone exchange. They cut off Petrograd from the rest of Russia.

Aurora fires a shell

7 November: next, the Red Guards take over government buildings, the banks and the railway station. Finally, at 9.40pm, signalled by a shell fired from the cruiser Aurora, they move in and take over the Winter Palace, the headquarters of the Provisional Government. There is no resistance.

Why did the Bolsheviks succeed in November 1917?

1. **The failure of the Provisional Government** - the Provisional Government had lost all support. When it was attacked, no one lifted a finger to help it.
2. **Appeal of the Bolsheviks** - Lenin's message of 'Peace, bread, land' was **just** what the people - who were sick of war, hunger and hardship - wanted. Also, the Bolsheviks were popular because they had defeated Kornilov.
3. **Organisation** - the Red Guards, organised by the brilliant Trotsky, were well-trained and ruthless. They took over the government almost bloodlessly and almost without anyone noticing.

Source analysis

What was the nature of the Bolshevik takeover?

Communist writers - and Soviet film-makers such as Eisenstein - always tried to suggest that the Bolsheviks were swept to power in a huge wave of popular enthusiasm:

Source A

The revolution of 1917 was a proletarian revolution; it was the shining proof of the proletariat's political capacity to constitute itself as a ruling class and to move towards the organisation of a communist society... Workers of the world, unite!

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Manifesto of the Communist Left to the workers of Europe, 1944

Historians nowadays, however, think that the Bolshevik revolution was the work of a small group of fanatical revolutionaries who succeeded mainly because the Provisional Government was so unpopular:

Source B

October was the result of one man, Lenin, who had to drag not merely the toilers but his own party into a battle that few had enthusiasm for. The masses did not take action for themselves. The October revolution was a con.

David Barnsdale runs websites on History, the Green Party and spelling reform.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** happened in the November 1917 Bolshevik takeover.
2. **Why** the Bolshevik takeover of November 1917 succeeded.
3. **How far** the Bolshevik takeover of November 1917 was a popular revolution.
4. **Who** was more important in the Bolshevik takeover, Lenin or Trotsky.

2. Life in Lenin's Russia

Life **improved** for many ordinary people in Lenin's Russia. But Russia was now a **dictatorship** [**Dictatorship**: A country ruled by one person, who makes all the laws and decisions for that country.] and anyone who openly criticised Communism risked losing their life.

Five aspects of the communist state

The **Bolsheviks** [**Bolsheviks**: Russian revolutionary group originally led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Bolsheviks gained power in Russia in 1917, and became the dominant political party there.] wanted to set up a Communist state. This comprised **five** aspects:

1. **Peace** - as promised, Lenin made the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany although it meant that Russia lost vast amounts of its best industrial and agricultural land in Poland and the Ukraine.
2. **Communist economy** - the Bolsheviks gave the land previously owned by the nobles to the peasants, and factories were handed over to workers' committees.
3. **Communist laws** - the Bolsheviks banned religion; brought in an eight-hour day for workers, as well as unemployment pay and pensions; abolished the teaching of history and Latin, while encouraging science; and allowed divorce.
4. **Communist propaganda** - there was a huge campaign to teach everyone to read. Agit trains' went around the country showing communist newsreels and giving lectures to teach peasants about Communism.
5. **Dictatorship** - Lenin dismissed the Constituent Assembly, which was the parliament that the Provisional Government had arranged, and declared the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' (which was really, the dictatorship of Lenin). A secret police force called the **Cheka** arrested, tortured and killed anybody who tried to destroy the Communist state.

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What is Communism?

Here are eight things Communists believed:

1. The ideas of [Karl Marx](#) [**Karl Marx**: German 19th-century scholar, who founded Marxism (key theory of Communism).].
2. People should contribute to the public wealth according to their ability, but receive according to their needs.
3. The means of production should be owned equally by the whole community (hence communism), not as in capitalism where individuals (who might be very rich) own the means of production and leave the rest of society to be poor and oppressed wage slaves.
4. A deterministic interpretation of history, which said that society must inevitably develop through successive stages of slavery, feudalism, then capitalism, ending up with the violent overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a communist society.
5. They should work to overthrow capitalism throughout the world by means of a revolution by the proletariat (workers).
6. Class was a feature of capitalist society, and should be destroyed and replaced by a society of equals.
7. The economy should be planned - controlled by the government.
8. Lenin changed Marx's ideas to add that a Communist government first had to be a dictatorship which was essential in order to bring in the communist state safely.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** life changed for Russians under the Bolsheviks.
2. **Whether** life improved under the Bolsheviks.
3. **What** kind of state the Bolsheviks tried to establish in 1917.

3. The civil war

The [Bolshevik](#) [**Bolshevik**: A member of the Russian revolutionary group originally led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Bolsheviks gained power in Russia in 1917 and became the dominant political party there.] takeover was not welcomed by everyone. Those who had been loyal to the tsar and foreign powers were **alarmed** by the revolution so they joined together under the banner of the **Whites** to defeat the Bolsheviks.

Summary

The Bolshevik takeover **angered many Russians** who had been prepared to accept the Provisional Government. It alarmed the US, Britain and France because the Bolsheviks had declared that they wanted to cause revolutions all over the world. All these Whites now **united** to try to destroy the Bolsheviks.

The war lasted three years. Atrocities were committed on both sides and captured soldiers were usually executed.

At first, it looked as though the Bolsheviks would lose - but they survived.

- Lenin dismissed the Constituent Assembly and ruled by decree.
- Trotsky organised and inspired the Red Army.
- The Bolsheviks brought in a very strict War Communism, which organised the whole population to provide supplies for the war effort.

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- The Bolsheviks instituted a Red Terror that killed anyone who opposed them - strikers were shot, and Trotsky even arrested the families of Red generals to keep them loyal.

Meanwhile, the Whites were **disunited**, and could not agree on their aims or co-ordinate their attacks.

Who were the Whites?

- **The Czech Legion** were a group of Czech prisoners-of-war who escaped and travelled up and down the Trans-Siberian railway attacking the Bolsheviks.
- **Britain, France and America** sent some troops, and lots of money and supplies.
- **General Miller**, with help from the Americans and British, captured Archangel in late 1918 and set up a tsarist government there.
- **Admiral Kolchak** had 100,000 men, the entire treasury of Nicholas II, and military supplies from America, Britain and France. In early 1919, he advanced, but his officers were more interested in cocaine and vodka than battle, and his armies collapsed when the Bolsheviks counter-attacked. Kolchak was captured by the Czechs, and handed over to the Bolsheviks, who executed him.
- **General Yudenich** had 16,000 men, tanks and the offer of 100,000 Finnish troops. The Finns went home when Kolchak refused to promise Finland independence. Yudenich attacked in October 1918 he got so close to Petrograd that his men could see the trains pulling out of the station. But then Trotsky turned up and inspired the people - 100,000 Red Guards and ordinary workers armed themselves with rifles and fought off the tanks. Yudenich resigned and went into exile.
- **General Denikin**. In July 1919, White armies, numbering 150,000 soldiers and led by General Denikin and General Wrangel, attacked northwards from the Black Sea and got to within 250 miles of Moscow. But then they ran out of money. Denikin quarrelled with Wrangel. Ukrainians refused to fight with Russians. The White Terror was so terrible that the peasants flocked to join the Reds. In October 1919, the Reds counter-attacked and drove them back. The Whites defeated and penniless - became a poor mass of naked humanity fleeing for its life'. Denikin escaped to France.
- **General Wrangel** made a last stand in the Crimea, but was defeated in 1920.

Creation of the Soviet Union

You will also need to know about the creation of the Soviet Union.

- After winning the civil war, as the Bolsheviks captured the different areas of the former Russian Empire, they organised them into socialist republics governed by a soviet eg the Ukraine.
- In 1922, Lenin organised these into a united state - the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).
- In 1924, the USSR agreed a constitution - each Republic sent representatives to a Congress of Soviets in Moscow. The Central Executive Committee of the Congress became the supreme governing body of the state, and the members of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee ran the government in between meetings of the Congress.
- Only one party was allowed - the Communist Party.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** happened in the civil wars.
2. **Why** the Bolsheviks won the civil war.

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4. The NEP

After the civil war, Lenin revised his economic policy and introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP). Through this, peasants were allowed to sell some of their produce for profit and small traders were allowed to run businesses.

The NEP: how successful was Lenin's attempt to set up a Communist state?

In 1921, the Kronstadt sailors - who had been the [Bolsheviks](#) [**Bolsheviks**: Russian revolutionary group originally led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Bolsheviks gained power in Russia in 1917, and became the dominant political party there.] fiercest supporters - **mutinied**, demanding an end to War Communism. Trotsky put down the rebellion, but Lenin was worried - if the Kronstadt sailors had been pushed too far, how long would it be before the rest of the country rose up and threw out the Bolsheviks? The civil war was won. It was time to pull back.

Lenin brought in what he called the **New Economic Policy**. Peasants who had been forced to hand over **all** their produce to the war effort - were allowed to keep some to **sell for profit** - some (the [kulaks](#) [**Kulaks**: Wealthy Russian farming peasants, who strongly opposed collectivisation - Stalin killed many.]) became quite rich. Small traders called Nepmen were allowed to set up businesses. At the same time, local nationalities who had been forced to follow a strict Communist line were **allowed** to bring back their own language and customs. Churches, mosques and bazaars were re-opened.

The economy picked up, and people were **much happier**. But many old Bolsheviks said Lenin had **sold out to capitalism**, and left the party.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **Why** Lenin introduced the NEP.
2. **How** the NEP changed Communist Russia.
3. **Whether** the NEP was a success.
4. **Whether** the NEP was the mark of Lenin's failure, or of his success.

Stalin

1. Stalin's takeover of power

It would be easy to assume that the natural successor to Lenin (who died in 1924) would be Leon Trotsky, often regarded as the second in command. But Joseph Stalin, the secretary of the Communist Party, got the job - why?

Struggle for power

A **struggle for power** developed between Stalin, the secretary of the Communist Party, and Trotsky, the brilliant Commissar for War. In a way, the struggle was about what the Soviet Union would become, for Trotsky believed in encouraging world revolution, whereas Stalin advocated Communism in one country' and said Russia had to establish its power before there was any attempt to spread revolution.

Stalin was a master of **political trickery**. He used his position as secretary to put his supporters on the Central Committee of the party. He even told Trotsky the wrong date for Lenin's funeral, so Trotsky turned

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up a day late. And so it was Stalin who became party leader in 1924. Trotsky was dismissed, then exiled and murdered in 1941.

Stalin takes control

Stalin did not stop with eliminating Trotsky.

- In 1927, he removed the left-wing Communists old Bolsheviks such as Kamenev and Zinoviev who had opposed the NEP - from the [Politburo](#) [**Politburo**: *The central policy-making committee of the Russian Communist party.*].
- Two years later, he claimed that the NEP was uncommunist, and got right-wing Communists such as Rykov and Tomsky thrown out of the Politburo.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** Stalin came to power in Communist Russia in 1924.
2. **Why** Stalin, and not Trotsky, emerged as Lenin's successor.

2. Stalin - purges and praises

During the 1930s, Stalin set about **purging** Russia of anyone who he considered a threat or disloyal. What was life like for ordinary people in Stalin's Russia?

Purges and praises

Political purges

In 1934, **Kirov**, the leader of the Leningrad Communist Party, was murdered, probably on Stalin's orders. Stalin used this episode to order massive purges by which anybody suspected of **disloyalty** was murdered, sent to prison camps, or put on public show trials at which they pleaded guilty to incredible crimes they could never have done.

The **Communist leadership was purged** - 93 of the 139 Central Committee members were put to death. The **armed forces were purged** - 81 of the 103 generals and admirals were executed. The **Communist Party was purged** - about a third of its 3 million members were killed. Photographs and history books were changed to eliminate even the memory of people who had been arrested.

Ordinary people

By the end of the 1930s, the **Great Terror** had spread to ordinary people - anybody who looked as though they had a will of their own. Some 20 million ordinary Russians were sent to the [gulag](#) [**Gulag**: *Russian labour-prison camps.*] - the system of labour camps mostly in Siberia - where perhaps half of them died. The Christian Church and the Muslim religion were forbidden. Ethnic groups were persecuted, and **Russification** - the acceptance of Russian language and customs - was enforced throughout the Soviet Union. People who had annoyed their neighbours were turned in to the **NKVD** (the secret police) and arrested, never to be seen again.

Praises

Everybody had to **praise Stalin**, all the time. Newspapers credited him with every success. Poets thanked him for bringing the harvest. People leapt to their feet to applaud every time his name was mentioned. His

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picture was everywhere parents taught their children to love Stalin more than themselves. They **dared not** do anything else.

Why did Stalin do it? He needed to create unity, and certainly strong control was needed to modernise Russia. He was also at least homicidally **paranoid**. However, by 1939, he had set up a personal **totalitarian dictatorship** where - on one word from him - the entire Soviet Union did exactly what he said.

1936 Constitution

You will also need to know about the **1936 Constitution** - also known as Stalin's Constitution:

- The 1936 Constitution changed the name of the Central Executive Committee to the Supreme Soviet.
- The Supreme Soviet was empowered to set up Commissions, which administered most of the government.
- The leader of the Presidium was declared to be the Head of State.
- The 1936 Constitution thus focussed power in Stalin's hands.
- It also gave everyone some good things such as rights to vote (but only for the Communist Party), to work, to rest and leisure, to health protection, to care in old age and sickness, to housing and education.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** Communist rule developed under Stalin.
2. **What** the nature of Stalin's dictatorship was.
3. **Why** Stalin ordered the purges.
4. **How** Stalin controlled the Soviet Union.
5. **Whether** Stalin's control over the Soviet Union was complete by 1941.

3. Stalin - collectivisation

Stalin's Five-year Plans dealt with industrial production, but something needed to be done about the food supply so Stalin introduced collectivisation. After years of resistance and **famines** Stalin eventually executed those who resisted, or sent them to labour camps.

Collectivisation in practice

Stalin advocated collective farms

By the end of the 1920s, it was clear that Russian agriculture was inadequate. Although the [kulaks](#) [**Kulaks: Wealthy Russian farming peasants, who strongly opposed collectivisation - Stalin killed many.**] were relatively wealthy and successful, the thousands of tiny, backward peasant farms were not producing enough to feed the population.

In 1927, Stalin declared that the way forward was for people in each village to voluntarily unite their farms into one collective farm. This [kolkhoz](#) [**Kolkhoz: A collective farm.**] would be able to afford machinery, be more efficient, and be able to create a surplus to send to the towns.

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the peasants burned their farms

After two years, when everyone had ignored his idea **and** there had been a famine, Stalin made collectivisation compulsory.

The peasants **hated** the idea, so they burned their crops and killed their animals rather than hand them over to the state. There was another famine in 1930.

kulaks were sent to the gulag

Stalin relaxed the rules for a while, but in 1931 he again tried to enforce collectivisation.

Again there was the same resistance and another, worse famine.

Stalin blamed the kulaks, and declared war on them. They were executed or sent to the [gulag](#) [**Gulag**: *Russian labour-prison camps.*].

by 1939, 99 per cent of land had been collectivised

By 1939, **99 per cent** of land had been collectivised 90% of the peasants lived on one of the 250,000 kolkhoz. Farming was run by government officials. The government took 90 per cent of production and left the rest for the people to live on.

Why did Stalin collectivise the farms?

- He wanted more food to feed the workers in industry.
- He needed a surplus of food to sell overseas to bring money into the country.
- He needed people to leave the land and go to work in industry.
- He wanted an excuse to destroy the kulaks, who believed in private ownership, not communism.

How successful was collectivisation?

1. Stalin achieved **most** of his aims:
 - Grain production rose to nearly 100 million tonnes in 1937, although the numbers of animals **never** recovered.
 - Russia sold large quantities of grain to other countries.
 - Some 17 million people left the countryside to go to work in the towns.
 - The kulaks were eliminated.
 - The peasants were closely under the government's control.
2. However, the human cost was **immense**:
 - Perhaps 3 million kulaks were killed.
 - There were famines in 1930 and 1932-3 when 5 million people starved to death.

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **How** agriculture changed under Stalin.
2. **Why** Stalin introduced collectivisation.
3. **Whether** Stalin's agricultural reforms were successful.

Modern World History Notes

4. Stalin - the Five-year Plans

Stalin realised that if Russia was to become a key player in the global market, the country needed to industrialise rapidly and increase production. To do this, Stalin introduced the Five-year Plans.

Summary

Stalin's chief aim was to **expand industrial production**. For this, he developed three **Five-year Plans** between 1928 and 1938. **Gosplan**, the state planning agency, drew up targets for production for each factory. The first two plans concentrated on **improving heavy industry** - coal, oil, steel and electricity.

Some keen young Communists, called Pioneers, went into barren areas and set up new towns and industries from nothing. There were champion workers called **Stakhanovites**, named after a coal miner who broke the record for the amount of coal dug up in a single shift. Education schemes were introduced to train skilled, literate workers.

The Soviet Union also gave **opportunities to women** - crèches were set up so they could also work. Women became doctors and scientists, as well as canal diggers and steel workers.

At the same time, many of the workers were slave workers and [kulaks](#) [**Kulaks**: *Wealthy Russian farming peasants, who strongly opposed collectivisation - Stalin killed many.*] from the [gulag](#) [**Gulag**: *Russian labour-prison camps.*]. Strikers were shot, and wreckers (slow workers) could be executed or imprisoned. Thousands died from accidents, starvation or cold. Housing and wages were terrible, and no consumer goods were produced for people.

But the improvements in production between 1928 and 1937 were phenomenal:

- **Coal** - from 36 million tonnes to 130 million tonnes
- **Iron** - from 3 million tonnes to 15 million tonnes
- **Oil** - from 2 million tonnes to 29 million tonnes
- **Electricity** - from 5,000 million to 36,000 million kilowatts

Key achievements

Other key achievements you need to know of are:

- Turkestan-Siberian Railroad
- The Dneiper Dam
- The Belomor Canal

As part of your revision, think about the arguments and facts you would use to explain:

1. **How** industry changed under Stalin.
2. **Why** Stalin introduced the Five-Year Plans.
3. **How** successful Stalin's economic changes were.
4. **How** the role of women changed under Stalin.

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5. Stalin - monster or necessary evil?

Stalin's Russia was strong enough to defeat the irresistible Nazi armies, and to become for the next half-century one of the two superpowers on the world stage. Yet Stalin was a leader who instituted a terror that reputedly sent 10 million people to death. So was Stalin a monster, or a necessary evil for Russia's survival?

Opinions of Stalin

In 1956, three years after Stalin's death, Nikita Khrushchev gave a speech stating that:

'He killed thousands of Communists. He was changeable, irritable and brutal, a very distrustful man, diseased with suspicion. His rule was one of torture and oppression.'

Nikita Khrushchev

That year, when it was finally **ok** to say what you felt about Stalin, the German writer Klaus Menhert went around asking people what they felt about Stalin. This is what four of them said:

- "The blood-sucker! Just think of the number of people whose lives he ruined."
- "Who won the war for us? Who raised Russia from a backward country to the most powerful state in the world?"
- "Of course, some bad things happened under his rule, but there were a hell of a lot more good things."
- "He murdered the best of our people because he was determined to be the sole boss."

Revision tip

Look back through the pages in this topic - Stalin - and find the evidence that suggests:

- **Either** that Stalin was a necessary evil - cruel, but the genius who was needed to modernise and save Russia.
- **Or** that Stalin was an out-and-out monster who achieved little and hurt millions. You will find that there is evidence for **both** views.

Answer preparation

As part of your revision, think about the **arguments** and **facts** you would use to explain:

1. **What** the impact of Stalin's rule on the people of the Soviet Union was.
2. **How** the Soviet people were affected by the changes Stalin enforced.
3. **Whether** Stalin was a good thing or a bad thing for the Soviet Union.