

Germany from Weimar to Hitler 1919-1945

Headings	Notes
THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC 1919-1933	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the First World War came to an end the German Kaiser (emperor) fled and the German government declared a republic.• Its democratic Constitution was drawn up in the city of Weimar, so it was called the 'Weimar Republic'.• But the Weimar Republic faced major political, economic and social problems, which it could not solve. This enabled Hitler to rise to power in 1933 and destroy German democracy.
FOUNDED IN DEFEAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first act of the new republican government was to sign Germany's surrender in November 1918. Many Germans considered this an act of treachery 'a stab in the back' by the 'November criminals') even though the German army could not have continued fighting.• The Peace Conference began in Paris in January 1919.• The Germans were not invited to take part in the negotiations. The victorious Allies simply agreed the terms of the Treaty of Versailles among themselves, then presented them to the German government who were forced to accept them.
THE TERMS OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the west, Germany lost territory to France, Belgium and Denmark. It was also forbidden to have any soldiers in the Rhineland on the border with France (demilitarisation of the Rhineland).• In the east, West Prussia went to Poland (the Polish Corridor) cutting East Prussia off from the rest of Germany. The German city of Danzig was made a free city under League of Nations control.• Germany was forbidden to unite with Austria.• Germany lost all its colonies.• Germany was disarmed. Its army was limited to 100,000 men and it was to have no military aircraft, no submarines, and Germany was only six small warships.• Germany was forced to accept the blame for starting the war ('the guilt clause').• Because of its 'guilt', Germany was to pay reparations to other states. No agreement on the amount was reached in Paris, so a commission was set up to consider it. It reported in 1921, with a bill for £6,000 million.
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IMPACT OF THE VERSAILLES TREATY ON GERMANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Germans were shattered by severity of the Versailles terms. They deeply resented having no part in the negotiations, calling it 'a <i>diktat</i>'.• They also resented disarmament, the loss of territory and above all the 'guilt clause' with the reparations.• Many, like Hitler, blamed the Weimar politicians who signed it. They thought that these democratic politicians were too weak to stand up for the interests of Germany.
POLITICAL WEAKNESSES OF THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Weimar Republic had a very democratic Constitution. It had a Reichstag (Parliament) elected by all men and women using proportional representation (PR), and a President elected by all voters every seven years.• But the President had power to declare an emergency when he could rule by decree without consulting the Reichstag. This was used many times in the Weimar Republic and undermined respect for democracy.• PR voting produced many political parties ranging from extreme left (Communist) to extreme right (anti-democratic Nationalists and Nazi).• That resulted in all governments being short-lived coalitions there were 19 between 1919 and 1933, This made it impossible for them to deal with the problems the Weimar Republic faced.• From 1930. as the crisis caused by the Great Depression grew, the President used his emergency powers to nominate governments that did not have the backing of the Reichstag.
1919-1921: POST-WAR INSTABILITY OVERCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After the war Germany was very unsettled. The Allied navies blockaded the country until mid-1919, causing starvation.• Strikes and bread riots became common as prices rose, but wages did not keep pace. Many factories closed. Unemployed workers imitated Lenin by setting up 'soviets' to take them over.• In several parts of Germany, communists or right-wing groups attempted to take power, but by the end of 1920, all had been defeated.
1921-1924: THE GREAT INFLATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The German economy was just beginning to recover in 1921 when it was hit by the bill for £6,000 million in reparations.
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STRESEMANN AND THE RECOVERY OF THE GERMAN ECONOMY 1924-1929	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He turned a blind eye to the German army's secret rearmament. • In the 'Stresemann years' the German economy recovered, unemployment fell to 500,000 and Weimar seemed secure. • Stresemann died in October 1929, just before the Wall Street Crash began the Great Depression.
THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN GERMANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the Wall Street Crash, US banks (which were on the brink of collapse) recalled their loans to Germany. • Brüning, the leader of the Centre Party, was Chancellor from 1930 to 1932. He made things worse by following the economists' advice to reduce government spending and cut wages. • German factories closed and unemployment rose quickly (three million in 1930; six million by 1932). • Despairing Germans were very afraid. They saw their livelihoods being destroyed for a second time in ten years and many blamed the weakness of the democratic Weimar system. • In growing numbers they voted for the extreme anti-democratic parties – Communists on the left, Nazis on the right. • The Great Depression gave Hitler his chance to seize power.
THE RISE OF HITLER AND THE FALL OF THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC 1919-1923: START OF THE NAZI PARTY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolf Hitler was an Austrian who joined the German army in 1914. When the war ended in 1918 he went to Munich where he joined a small right-wing party. • He quickly became the leader (Führer) and renamed them the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazis). Like Mussolini, he also set up a uniformed (brown shirts) private army, the Storm Troopers (SA), led by Ernst Röhm. • In November 1923, during great inflation, Hitler tried to seize power in Munich (the Munich Putsch). The Nazis were defeated by the army, which stayed loyal to Weimar.
HITLER'S IDEAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitler was sent to jail for a year where he wrote Mein Kampf. This book showed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His hatred of Jews, communists, democrats and the Versailles Treaty. • His belief that Germans were a 'master race', designed by nature to rule 'lesser people' like the Slavs (Poles, Czechs, Russians, etc.)
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HITLER'S IDEAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• His plans: (a) to destroy the Versailles Treaty, (b) to unite all Germans into a great Third Reich (empire) and (c) to conquer Slav lands in Eastern Europe for Germans to live in (Lebensraum).
1925-1929: SPREAD OF THE NAZIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• By the time Hitler was freed in 1925, Mussolini had shown that democracy could be destroyed from within. This influenced Hitler who set out to copy him.• He linked the Nazis up with similar groups around Germany• He set up an elite group, the SS (Schutzstaffel) to act as his bodyguard. It was led by Heinrich Himmler.• Joseph Goebbels, a genius at propaganda, organised colourful demonstrations and marches to attract attention to their ideas.• In 1928, the Nazis fought the general election, but only won 12 seats (out of 608) due to the improved economic situation.• In 1929, Hitler got nationwide publicity with his campaign against the Young Plan in which Germany agreed to pay reduced reparations.
1929-1932: THE GREAT DEPRESSION HELPS THE NAZIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Depression helps the Nazis convinced many Germans that democracy had failed to protect them. They turned to the anti-democratic parties that promised quick change.• In the 1930 election, the Nazi Party got five million votes and the Communists got one million.• Brüning, the Chancellor, wanted to cut wages and government spending on welfare. but he could not persuade the Reichstag to agree. He got President Hindenburg to impose the cuts by decree.• Hitler toured Germany, making speeches attacking Brüning. He offered simple explanations for the Depression: it was all the fault of the Versailles Treaty, of bankers, of communists, of Jews and of weak democratic politicians. Only a 'strong government' (i.e. a Nazi dictatorship) would solve economic problems and restore German self-respect and power.• At meetings, SS and SA thugs beat up opponents and rioted with communist 'red guards'. Germans longed for order.
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1932: THE YEAR OF THREE ELECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three elections in 1932 helped Hitler to power:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In March, Hitler stood for President against the 80-year-old Hindenburg. Amid violence from the SS and the SA, he got 37% of votes.• Afterwards, Brüning wanted to ban the SA, but Hindenburg sacked him instead and invited a right-wing noble, Von Papen, to be Chancellor (Prime Minister) although he had little support in the Reichstag.• In July, von Papen called a general election. The Nazis won 230 seats; the Communists won 89 (out of 608).• Now two anti-democratic parties had more than half the seats in the Reichstag. Throughout the summer, they refused to work with other parties to form a coalition government to deal with the country's economic crisis:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hitler would not talk to other parties unless he was made Chancellor, but Hindenburg would not appoint him.• Stalin thought the Depression would kill capitalism and ordered German communists not to prop up democracy by forming a coalition with the socialists.• When no government was formed by November, von Papen called another election. Some voters deserted the Nazis because they had failed to provide a government and they won only 186 seats.
JANUARY 1933: HITLER BECOMES CHANCELLOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After the Nazis lost seats, von Papen felt he could control Hitler. In January 1933, he persuaded Hindenburg to let him become Chancellor.• It seemed to be a safe strategy, as only two other Nazis were made Ministers. But one of those Ministers oversaw the police, and he enrolled members of the SS and SA in the police force.
JANUARY—APRIL 1933: ENDING DEMOCRACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hitler at once called another election for March. The SA and SS were now free to attack communists and socialists.• In February the Reichstag building burnt down. Communists were blamed (possibly unjustly) and banned.
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JANUARY—APRIL 1933: ENDING DEMOCRACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In spite of considerable violence and intimidation, the Nazis only got 44% of votes.• Hitler then asked the Reichstag to pass the Enabling Act. It declared that Germany was in danger and gave the government special emergency powers to save it.• All parties, except the Social Democrats, voted for it. It was the end of Weimar democracy.
THE NAZI STATE: SETTING UP A DICTATORSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under the Enabling Act, press and radio were censored and forced to publish Nazi propaganda.• All other political parties were banned and trade unions replaced by the Nazi controlled 'labour front' that fixed wages and working conditions.• A secret police, the Gestapo, was set up to hunt opponents of the Nazis.• Thousands of communists, socialists and anti-Nazi Germans were rounded up and sent to concentration camps.• Heinrich Himmler and the SS controlled the concentration camps. In 1934, Himmler took control of the Gestapo too.
30 JUNE 1934: 'NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Himmler and Röhm, the leader of the SA, were rivals for power.• Röhm really believed the Nazis planned a socialist revolution and was disappointed when Hitler changed very little in the economy.• He began to criticise Hitler. He also boasted that the SA, which had two million men by 1934, would replace the German army.• This worried Hitler. He needed army support to stay in power and he feared that Röhm was becoming too powerful.• He made a deal with the army and the SS to eliminate Röhm and the SA.• On 30 June 1934 (known as the 'Night of the Long Knives'), the Gestapo murdered Röhm and about 400 leading SA men and others Hitler considered a threat.• In August 1934, President Hindenburg died, Hitler then combined the offices of president and Chancellor into a new one of Führer from then on, all soldiers had to take an oath of loyalty to Der Führer (the Leader).
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THE NAZI STATE: TOTALITARIANISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Like Mussolini's Italy, Nazi Germany was a totalitarian state which demanded the total loyalty and obedience of all citizens.• The SS and the Gestapo spied on everyone. People were encouraged to betray neighbours, friends, even family.• Special courts, with Nazi judges, were set up to try dissidents who were sent to concentration camps.• Germany was reorganised on the 'leadership principle', which Hitler claimed was more efficient than democracy.• Elected councils were replaced by Nazi officials (Gauleiters) who were appointed by Hitler and answerable to him.• In operation, this was an inefficient, corrupt system. Nazi officials were either too afraid to make independent decisions or got away with corruption that people were too afraid to expose.• Long-term this could have destroyed Germany, but the Nazi regime lasted too short a time for it to become a major problem.
CASE STUDY: NAZI PROPAGANDA AND THE NUREMBERG RALLIES GOEBBELS AND NAZI PROPAGANDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Propaganda was central to the Nazi system. From the 1920s this was run by Joseph Goebbels.• In 1933, Hitler made him Minister for Propaganda. He imposed censorship on the press and controlled all public meetings, as well as films and radio.• In 1933, he organised the mass burning of books by Jews and modern writers the Nazis disliked.• He saw the value of radio as a means of propaganda, arranging for the Production of cheap radios so that Germans would get the Nazi message in their own homes.• He also used film, employing the best directors and film stars to make propaganda films, praising Nazi achievements of attacking Jews, communists and other enemies of the Nazis.• He drove Jews out of public life and organised the propaganda against them which made the Holocaust possible.• He organised the Nuremberg Rallies as demonstrations of Nazi power.
THE NUREMBERG RALLIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Nuremberg Rallies began as Nazi Party Congresses held in Nuremberg every year from 1927.• Nuremberg was chosen because it was in the centre of Germany and had a sympathetic local government.
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THE NUREMBERG RALLIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The rallies involved the SA marching with their swastika banners, torchlight processions and Hitler's speeches.• After Hitler came to power in 1933, the rallies were renamed Congresses of the German People to symbolise how the Nazi Party represented all Germans.• They became huge, highly organised demonstrations of Nazi policies and power which lasted for several days.• Hitler had his architect, Albert Speer, design the rallies. He treated them like giant theatrical events intended to convey the Nazi message.• The rallies centred on Hitler's arrival, his appearances and his speeches. The SS, the SA, the army and the Hitler Youth marched in his honour and listened, awestruck, while he spoke.• Speer built a Congress Hall seating 60,000 and planned a stadium to hold 400,000, which Hitler hoped would be his monument to the future. It was never completed.• Each rally had a different theme, usually linked to some Nazi achievement, e.g. 1933 was the the '<i>Rally for Victory</i>' because the Nazis had come to power and 1938 was the '<i>Rally for Greater Germany</i>' because Austria was taken over.• Important announcements of policy were made at the rallies. At the 1935 rally, the anti-Semitic policy known as the 'Nuremberg Laws' was announced. It stripped German Jews of citizenship and forbade intermarriage between Jews and Germans.• Although hundreds of thousands of Germans attended the rallies, Hitler had documentary films made of them so that those who did not attend could still participate. The most famous of these films was <i>Triumph of the Will</i>, made in 1934 by Leni Riefenstahl.• The last Nuremberg Rally was planned for 1939 under the title '<i>Rally for peace</i>'. It was cancelled at short notice when Hitler started the Second World War by invading Poland.• After the war, the Allies held the trials of leading Nazis for war crimes at Nuremberg (the Nuremberg Trials) to symbolise the defeat of the policies the Nazis had proclaimed there.
THE NAZI STATE, 1933-1945	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Nazis believed artists must serve the state. Artists were told to be 'realistic' and 'heroic' and experimental work was forbidden.
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ART AND LITERATURE UNDER THE NAZIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 1933, Goebbels organised the burning of books by modernist or Jewish writers.• Paintings by modern masters like Picasso and Van Gogh were destroyed, though some Nazi leaders secretly saved some for themselves.• Albert Speer (architect) designed huge buildings in the classical style to celebrate Nazi triumphs.
EDUCATION AND YOUTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nazis targeted young people so as to ensure the future of their ideas.• Boys were enrolled in the Hitler Youth and trained as soldiers. They were taught to be unquestioningly loyal to the Führer. By 1935, 3.5 million boys were enrolled in the Hitler Youth.• Girls joined the League of German Maidens. They were taught domestic skills and encouraged to have children for Germany.• Teachers had to join the Nazi Party and teach loyalty to the Führer. Schoolbooks were rewritten and the Nazi version of German history (which was anti-Semitic) became part of the curriculum.
CHURCH AND STATE IN NAZI GERMANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hitler and the Nazis despised Christianity because it encouraged people to love each other. They wanted to replace it with the kind of paganism that they imagined ancient Germans practised.• Despite this, the leaders of the main Christian churches accepted Nazi rule, fearing communism more.
THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES AND THE NAZIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• German Protestants were divided into 28 different churches. They had a tradition of obedience to the state, and in 1933 agreed to unite into the Nazi controlled state Church, the Reichskirche.• Some Protestants refused to accept the Reichskirche. In 1934, Martin Niemöller and Karl Barth helped to form the Confessional Church which was independent of Nazi Control.• When they protested about anti-Semitism in 1936, the Gestapo arrested Niemöller and many other clergymen. Some were executed, most sent to concentration camps. Niemöller remained in Dachau until 1945.• Dietrich Bonhoeffer. a Protestant theologian, returned to Germany from the US at the start of the war. He linked up with anti-Nazi groups, was arrested and executed in 1943.
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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE NAZIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although the Catholic Church, With the Pope outside Germany, was in a stronger position to resist the Nazis, it did little to oppose their policies.• In July 1933, the Vatican made a Concordat (treaty) with the Nazis. In return for keeping control its schools, the church agreed to keep out of politics.• As the Nazis tightened their grip, the Church became alarmed about their youth policies, their interference in education and their creation of the Reichskirche. Individual bishops and priests protested.• Pope Pius XI also became concerned about Hitler's anti-Semitism, which he attacked in an encyclical (letter) Mit Brennender Sorge (<i>With Burning Anger</i>) in 1937.• Pius XI died in 1939. His successor, Pius XII, was Papal Ambassador in Berlin in the 1930s and saw the ruthlessness of the Nazis. He did not attack them, fearing the effect it would have on German Catholics.• In fact, the Nazis did not arrest the bishops who protested when they had popular support and Pius's failure to condemn the treatment of the Jews has damaged his reputation.• Individual Catholics did protest and many were executed or sent to concentration camps.
THE NAZI ECONOMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The poor state of the German economy with six million unemployed was the main reason the Nazis came to power.• Hitler appointed a banker, Hjalmar Schacht, as Finance Minister. Private companies were left alone, but they had to follow orders from the state.• To create jobs, the Nazis organised big public works projects, building schools, hospitals and motorways. Young people enrolled in Labour Battalions to work on them.• Hitler's rearmament of Germany also created work in arms factories, and when conscription was reintroduced in 1935 many men were enrolled in the army.• The removal of Jews and trade unionists also increased the number of jobs available to those Germans who accepted Hitler.• Unemployment fell fast, wages rose, and by 1939 most Germans felt much better off under Hitler than under Weimar.
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'SELF-SUFFICIENCY' (AUTARKY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From the start, Hitler planned a war. He knew that in order to win, Germany must be self-sufficient in food and raw materials.• He dismissed Hjalmar Schacht (Reich Finance Minister) in 1937 because he had not achieved this. A committee chaired by Herman Goering drew up a four-year plan for 'self-sufficiency' (autarky).• Huge investments were made in research and development as scientists tried to find substitutes for petrol, wool, rubber, etc.• These researches were only partially successful, and by 1939 Germany was still importing a fifth of its food and a third of its raw materials.• Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 was partly an attempt to gain control of its oil and other raw materials.• In 1942, Albert Speer reorganised the arms industry using slave labour and raw materials from the countries Germany conquered. This enabled Germany to fight on until 1945.• The Nazis achieved a limited success with their economic policies, but it was based on high state spending that could not have continued over a long period.• Other countries, like the US and Britain, also solved the economic problems of the Depression, but without destroying democracy.
ANTI-SEMITISM IN NAZI GERMANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 1933, there were only about 500,000 Jews in Germany (out of 80 million Germans), but Hitler claimed they were a threat to his 'master race'.• From 1933, anti-Semitism became official state policy and the pressure against Jewish people increased step by step.• At first Nazis beat up individual Jews, organised boycotts of Jewish businesses and expelled them from schools, universities and the civil service.• In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws took away their German citizenship and forbade intermarriage with non-Jews.• Hitler seems to have hoped Jews would emigrate under pressure, but only rich or famous Jews (e.g. Freud and Einstein) were welcome elsewhere. Most Jewish people were not well off, some were old, others children. Other countries did not want a flood of penniless refugees in the middle of the Depression.
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JOSEPH GOEBBELS (1897-1945)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• He believed that if something (even a blatant lie) is repeated often enough, people will come to believe it.• From 1933, he was Minister for Propaganda, able to censor newspapers, magazines, books, public meetings, art, music, films, and radio.• During the Second World War he continued to claim victory, even when defeat was inevitable.• Just before Hitler committed suicide, he appointed Goebbels as Chancellor, but he refused to accept and committed suicide with his wife and children in the Berlin bunker.
LENI RIEFENSTAHL (1902-2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After an early career as a dancer and actress, Riefenstahl began to work as a film director.• After hearing Hitler speak in 1932, she came to admire him and agreed to make a short documentary on the 1933 Nuremberg rally.• She first turned down a request to film the 1934 rally, and only agreed when she was given unlimited control over how it was made.• With a generous budget and a large film crew, she produced <i>Triumph of the Will</i>.• It is both an original and innovative piece of film-making and a brilliant example of Nazi propaganda. It won many international awards, but was banned for many years after the Second World War.• In 1936, she filmed the Berlin Olympic Games. She was the first to put cameras on rails and the film, Olympics, was a major influence on the way modern sporting events are shown.• After the Second World War she was cleared of war crimes but her connection with the Nazis for her to work as a film director again.
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EXAM QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From your study of Nazi Germany, what did you learn about two of the following: church-state relations; the Nuremberg rallies; anti-Semitism and the Holocaust? (HL 2022 DP)• Why did Italy and/or Germany embrace dictatorship in the inter-war period? (HL 2022)• Which had the greater social and economic problems during the inter-war period, Britain or Germany? Argue your case, referring to both. (HL 2020)• During the period 1920-1945, how did anti-Semitism and the Holocaust affect Europe? (HL 2020)• During the inter-war years, what were the characteristics of fascist regimes in Europe? (HL 2019)• How did Hitler and the Nazi party secure absolute control over Germany in the period 1920-1938? (HL 2018)• [DBQ] What did the Nuremberg Rallies and/or Joseph Goebbels contribute to Nazi propaganda? (HL 2016)• What were the social and economic problems facing Germany, 1920-1939, and how were they dealt with? (HL 2015)• How did church-state relations develop under Mussolini and Hitler? (HL 2014)• What were the characteristics of fascist regimes in Europe in the inter-war period? (HL 2013)• How did anti-Semitism and the Holocaust affect Europe, 1920-1945? (HL 2012)• What were the main characteristics of the Nazi state in Germany, 1933-1939? (HL 2011)• How successfully did German governments deal with the social and economic problems of the period 1920-1939? (HL 2010)• What were the main developments in church-state relations under Hitler and Mussolini? (HL 2010)• How did dictators use propaganda and/or terror to maintain their power? (HL 2009)• Which had the greater social and economic problems during the inter-war years, Britain or Germany? Argue your case, referring to both countries. (HL 2008)• What were the main characteristics of the Nazi state in Germany between 1933 and 1939? (HL 2007)• During the inter-war period, what conditions in Europe contributed to the growth of fascist regimes? (HL 2006)

Weimar Germany in Crisis 1919-1923

Treaty of Versailles

1. The terms were harsh, particularly the reparations.
2. The Treaty didn't take into consideration Germany's weak position & sought to punish her more.
3. Many Germans hated and resented the loss of territory. The reparations were very harsh (£6,600million in 1921).
4. The 'Guilt Clause' humiliated the country.
5. Many Germans believed they had been 'Stabbed in the back'.

Economic problems

1. After 4 years of war Germany was devastated. The country needed to be re-built.
2. Returning soldiers needed jobs but there was poverty & unemployment.
3. After the war Germany was bankrupt.

Political Difficulties

1. Proportional representation led to many political parties and frequent changes of government.
2. It was very difficult to establish stability or even get laws passed.
3. It wasn't their fault but the Weimar government tended to get the blame for the Treaty of Versailles.
4. The discontent gave rise to political extreme groups.

Divisions in Society

1. There were huge political divisions in German society.
2. Opinion was polarised with left-wing extremists (Spartacists and socialists), and right-wing extremists, (nationalists and conservatives) both getting a lot of support.
3. The Spartacists Rebellion 1919 (left-wing)
4. The Munich Communist Soviet 1919 (left-wing)
5. The Kapp Putsch 1920 (right-wing)
6. The assassination of Foreign Minister Rathenau 1922 (killed by right-wing army officers)
7. Hitler's failed Munich Putsch 1923 (right-wing)

Growing Economic Crisis

1. Post-war economic recession beginning in 1920.
2. Germany suffered from inflation.
3. In 1921 Germany was faced with the Reparations bill. They paid until 1923.
4. When Germany could no longer keep up with repayments French & Belgian troops invaded the Ruhr (the most important industrial region in Germany).
5. People in the area refused to co-operate. Passive resistance led to further decline of the area's industry, more unemployment & poverty.
6. The Weimar Government responded by printing more money but this led to hyperinflation.

The Nazis Attempt to Seize Power

1. When the French invaded the Ruhr Hitler saw an opportunity and decided to try and seize power.
2. He planned to first take the Bavarian government and then march on Berlin.
3. Hitler took over a Bavarian government meeting but couldn't get enough support
4. His attempted coup was stopped by armed police.
5. The attempted coup became known as the Munich Putsch.

The Weimar Republic 1924-1933

The Stresemann Period 1923-1929

1. The golden years of the Weimar Republic
2. Stresemann German Chancellor (Prime Minister) in 1923 – then appointed Foreign Minister 1923-1929.
3. Wanted to portray himself as a 'good' German.
4. He wanted to fulfil the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
5. From this he hoped Britain and France would revise the Treaty.

Economic Recovery

1. Stresemann urged workers in the Ruhr to return to work.
2. The new German currency (the Rentenmark) established by Stresemann and regulated by the central bank solved the problem of hyperinflation.
3. Confidence returned to the German economy.
4. Worldwide economic recovery meant that there were new markets for German goods abroad.
5. The economy prospered and unemployment was low.
6. As prosperity increased support for the extremists like Communists and Nazis declined.
7. Moderate pro-Weimar parties tended to win elections.
8. Dawes Plan 1924 which made the reparations payments easier (French troops left the Ruhr as a consequence).

International Developments

1. Worldwide economic recovery meant that there were new markets for German goods abroad.
2. American Banks loan money to Germany to re-build economy.
3. In 1925 Germany signs the Locarno Pact to settle border disputes resulting from World War One.
4. In 1926 Germany joined the League of Nations.
4. In 1929 the Young Plan replaced the Dawes Plan - reparations reduced by one quarter, Germany given 58 years to pay.

Collapse of German Economy

1. Stresemann died in October 1929
2. Three weeks later the Wall Street Crash causes worldwide economic crisis.
3. American banks recall their loans to Germany.
4. German economy plunged back into crisis.

Germany in Crisis

1. The Great Depression ruined Germany's economic revival.
2. Demand for Germany exports slumped.
3. Unemployment rose from 1.3 million in 1929 to 6 million by 1932.
4. Chancellor Muller resigns.
5. Three party Alliance (Catholic Centre Party, Social Democratic Party and People's Party) collapses after new Chancellor, Brüning, introduces severe cutbacks on public spending.
6. Brüning uses 'emergency powers' under Article 48 of the Constitution to push through cutbacks.
7. Widespread public opposition to cutbacks leading to increased support for Communist Party and Nazis.

Collapse of Democracy

1. Hitler promises to stop the 'Red Tide' (Communists) and receives support from industrialists like Fritz Thyssen.
2. Hitler receives 13 million votes in 1932 Presidential election but is defeated by sitting President Hindenberg.
3. Brüning forced to resign as Chancellor and is replaced by Von Papin.
4. General Election in July 1932 sees the Nazis win 230 seats (37% vote).
5. Widespread political unrest, rioting and political murders.
6. General Election in November 1932 sees the Nazis lose 34 seats while the Communists make gains.
7. January 1933 Hitler becomes Chancellor.

The Rise of the Nazi Party

The Beginning of the Nazis

1. In 1919 Hitler joined the German Workers Party as a spy for the German Government.
2. In 1920 the party changes its name to NSDAP (Nazis) and adopts the 25 point programme (nationalist and anti-semitic)
3. Hitler became leader in 1921 and adopted the swastika emblem.
4. Hitler then set up the SA (brownshirts) as private "army" under the leadership of Ernst Rohm.
5. The Brownshirts break up left-wing meetings and attack communists and anti-Nazis.

The Munich Putsch 1923

1. When the French invaded the Ruhr Hitler saw an opportunity and decided to try and seize power.
2. He planned to first take the Bavarian government and then march on Berlin.
3. He was supported by a right-wing politician, Ludendorff, and declared himself President of Germany.
4. Hitler took over a Bavarian government meeting but couldn't get enough support
5. His attempted coup was stopped by armed police.
6. The attempted coup was easily put down.

Aftermath of the Munich Putsch

1. Hitler tries to escape but was later arrested and charged with treason.
2. He used his trial to make long public speeches which were widely and sympathetically reported.
3. He gets a very lenient sentence of 5 years in Landsberg Prison from the sympathetic judge.
4. While in prison he writes "Mein Kampf"

'Mein Kampf'

Main Ideas –

1. The Aryan race is the master race (Herrenvolk).
2. Aryans should have "lebensraum" (living space) in a new German Empire (expanding to the East).
3. All other races inferior (especially Jews).
4. Treaty of Versailles should be reversed, and Germany and Austria should unite (Anschluss).

Support for the Nazis Declines

1. Germany did well under Stresemann - support for extremists declined.
2. Hitler serves only 9 months in prison after his 5 year sentence is reduced.
3. During this time the Nazi Party splits and support declined dramatically.
4. In 1924 the Nazis win 24 seats in the Reichstag.
4. Hitler decides to reform the party on his release in December 1924 in order to place it under his complete control.
6. In 1928 the Nazis lose more seats and now have 12 seats in the Reichstag (2.6% vote).

Hitler Reorganises the Nazis

1. In 1925 Hitler re-launched the NSDAP .
2. Power was concentrated in the leader.
3. Special sections set up for students, teachers, youth and farmers.
4. Party branches in all major towns - soon 100,000 members.
5. Hitler decided to use elections and works to exploit the weaknesses in German democracy and the constitution to gain power rather than through revolution.
6. The Nazis work to get support from industrialists – both financial and political. Industrialists see the Nazis as a bulwark against communists and trade unions.

The Nazis in Power

Gleichschaltung (Co-ordination)

1. All aspects of life brought under the control of the Nazi Party.
2. Germany officially known as the 'Third Reich'.
3. Hitler declares the Third Reich will last a thousand years.
4. Hitler establishes a totalitarian regime.

Intimidation and Violence

1. During March 1933 election the SA fight street battles with the Communists.
2. Public meetings are broken up
3. Local police work with SA.
4. After the Reichstag fire 4000 Communists are arrested.
5. Hitlers new powers also see imprisonment without trial of opponents.

Night of the Long Knives

1. On 30 June 1934
2. Hitler saw the SA and its leader Rohm as a threat - they numbered over 2 million.
3. Rohm also wanted to take over the army.
4. SS arrest leaders of the SA and other political figures e.g. von Schleicher.
5. Rohm was executed along with 90 others.

Death of Hindenburg

1. Hindenburg dies on 2 August 1934
2. Hitler immediately takes over his role as President.
3. Hitler declares himself to be *Fuhrer* (Leader) of Germany.
4. German armed forces swear oath of allegiance to Hitler (in return for stopping the SA from taking over the army).

Centralisation of Government

1. Trade Unions banned and replaced by the Nazi Labour Front.
2. Legal profession is purged of non-Nazis.
3. New Nazi People Courts established.
4. The State Police placed under the control of Heinrich Himmler (leader of the SS).
5. The SS and the Gestapo used to hunt down opponents of the Nazi regime.

Education

1. History re-written to fit Nazi ideology. Lessons concentrate on the origins of the Nazi Party and the history of the Aryan Race.
2. Biology stressed the importance of racial purity.
3. Physical training emphasised in rebuilding the Master Race.
4. Religion phased out of schools.
5. Teachers purged to ensure support for Nazis.

Youth Movements

1. Hitler Youth for Boys – emphasis on physical training and military drills.
2. League of German Maidens for girls – emphasis on *Kinder, Kirche und Kuche* (Children, Church and Kitchen).
3. By 1934 Hitler Youth had 3.5 million members. Initially attracted working class boys, but then became dominated by the sons of the middle class and the wealthy.

Women in Nazi Germany

1. They were taught their role was as a good wife and mother and their place was in the home.
2. Law for the Encouragement of Marriage (1933) which gave newly weds a loan of 1000 marks to encourage having children.
3. 10 commandments for choice of spouse (1934) which encouraged people to marry Germans and keep race pure.
4. Not allowed to wear make-up, have hair dyed or have perms
5. Only to wear flat shoes and no trousers allowed
6. No slimming as thought unhealthy - would upset child-bearing
7. No smoking as seen as 'un-German'
8. Long hair or put in bun or plaits
9. Women dismissed from the professions in 1934
10. By 1936 women could not be judges or sit on jury
11. Nazis Banned contraception and abortion
12. The racially 'unpure' were sterilised.

Hitler's Economic Policy

Economic Situation

1. Unemployment over 6 million in 1932
2. Germany relied heavily on overseas trade for vital raw materials and food supplies.
3. German economy relied heavily on American investment which stopped after the Wall Street Crash
4. Prior to the Wall Street Crash, Hitler predicted economic disaster
5. Some people thought he might be able to solve the financial crisis.
6. Hitler wanted to make Germany self-sufficient (autarky)
7. In the 1933 Election Hitler promised to eliminate unemployment
8. German economy beginning to recover as Hitler gained power.

Nazi Economic Policies

1. On 2nd May, 1933, Adolf Hitler ordered the Sturm Abteilung (SA) to arrest Germany's trade union leaders. Trade unions replaced by the Nazi Labour Front (DAF).
2. A pay freeze was introduced in 1933 and this was enforced by the Labour Front.
3. Wages were now decided by the Labour Front and compulsory deductions made for income tax, and for its Strength through Joy programme.
4. The Labour Front issued work-books that recorded the worker's employment record and no one could be employed without one.
5. The government banned the introduction of some labour-saving machinery.
6. Employers had to get government permission before reducing their labour force.

Economic Expansion

1. The Nazi government gave work contracts to those companies that relied on manual labour rather than machines – the autobahn (motorway) programme.
2. Investment in military re-armament. Thousands of Germans worked in factories producing weapons.
3. Conscription into the German armed forces reduced the numbers of unemployed.
4. Hitler also encouraged the mass production of radios. Used to reduce unemployment and for Nazi propaganda.
5. Youth unemployment was dealt with by the forming of the Voluntary Labour Service (VLS) and the Voluntary Youth Service (VYS), these planted forests, repaired river banks and helped reclaim wasteland.
6. Women in certain professions such as doctors and civil servants were dismissed, while other married women were given 1000 marks to stay at home.
7. In the summer of 1935 Adolf Hitler announced the introduction of Labour Service (RAD). All men aged between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five had work for the government for six months. Later women were also included in the scheme and worked as teachers and domestic servants etc.

Strength through Joy

1. Encourage workers to work as hard as they could for Germany and the Nazis.
2. Offered cheap holidays and a car to win the support.
3. Nazis built sports facilities, paid for theatre visits and financially supported travelling cabaret groups.
4. Although the German worker paid for these benefits through compulsory deductions, the image of people being given holidays and subsidized entertainment was of great propaganda value to the Nazi government.
5. Leisure activities highly organized with a wide range of events and activities made available.

Results of Economic Policies

1. Unemployment had fallen from 6 million in 1933 to 300,000 by 1939
2. Industrial production in 1939 was above the figure for Weimar Germany before the 1929 Wall Street Crash.
3. By 1939, Germany still imported 33% of its required raw materials
4. Government income had been 10 billion Reichsmarks in 1928. In 1939, it was 15 billion. However, government spending had increased from 12 billion Reichsmarks in 1928 to over 30 billion in 1939.
5. From 1933 to 1939, the Nazi government always spent more than it earned so that by 1939, government debt stood at over 40 billion Reichsmarks.
6. Annual food consumption in 1937 had fallen for a wide range of products compared to 1927 figures.
7. Real earnings in 1938 were all but the same as the 1928 figure. (Real earnings are wages adjusted to allow for inflation).

Propaganda in Nazi Germany

What is Propaganda?

1. The Art of Persuasion
2. Persuading others that your military might is too great to be challenged
3. Your political might within a nation is too great or popular to challenge etc.
4. Hitler in Mein Kampf:
"Propaganda attempts to force a doctrine on the whole people. Propaganda works on the general public from the standpoint of an idea and makes them ripe for the victory of this idea"
5. Propaganda for the masses had to be simple, and appeal to the emotions

Nazi propaganda

1. 'Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda' – Josef Goebbels
2. Racism, Anti-Semitism and Anti-Bolshevism
3. Used art, music, theatre, films, books, radio, educational materials, and the press.
4. All journalists, writers, and artists were required to register with one of the Ministry's subordinate chambers for the press, fine arts, music, theatre, film, literature, or radio.

Goebbels Tasks

1. To ensure nobody in Germany could read or see anything that was hostile or damaging to the Nazi Party.
2. To ensure that the views of the Nazis were put across in the most persuasive manner possible.
3. Used the SS, the Gestapo and Albert Speer.
4. The SS and Gestapo hunted out those who might produce articles defamatory to the Nazis and Hitler.
5. Speer helped Goebbels with public displays of propaganda.

Burning Books

1. May 1933 - Goebbels organised the first of the infamous book burning episodes.
2. Books that did not match the Nazi ideal was burnt in public
3. Nazis ransacked libraries to remove the 'offending' books.
4. Bertolt Brecht said: *"Where one burns books, one eventually burns people"*

Film and Cinema

1. Films played an important role in disseminating racial anti-semitism, portraying Jews as "subhuman" creatures infiltrating Aryan society.
 2. Some films, such as "The Triumph of the Will" by Leni Riefenstahl, glorified Hitler and the National Socialist movement.
 3. "Festival of the Nations" and "Festival of Beauty," both depicting the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, fostered a sense of national pride in the successes of the Nazi regime.
 4. The Nazis controlled film production.
- Films released concentrated on certain issues
- the Jews
 - the greatness of Hitler;
 - the way of life for a true Nazi especially children,
 - World War Two approached, how badly Germans who lived in countries in Eastern Europe were treated.

Audiences for Propaganda

- Nazi propaganda before the start of World War II had several distinct audiences:
1. German audiences were continually reminded of the struggle of the Nazi Party and Germany against foreign enemies and internal enemies, especially Jews.
 2. Ethnic Germans in countries such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Soviet Union, and the Baltic states were told that blood ties to Germany were stronger than their allegiance to their new countries.
 3. Potential enemies, such as France and Britain, were told that Germany had no quarrel with the people of the country, but that their governments were trying to start a war with Germany.
 4. All audiences were reminded of the greatness of German cultural, scientific, and military achievements.

The Nuremberg Rallies

Why Nuremberg?

1. Hitler wanted to link the Nazis to the glories of Germany's past.
2. Nuremberg was an important medieval city.
3. The first official rally was held here in 1927 and was attended by 30,000 SA, SS, HJ.
4. Hitler made speeches condemning Weimar and the Nazi party planned for government.
5. Between 1933-38 the rallies became much more elaborate.

1933 'Rally of Victory'

1. The 1933 rally was the first of the monster rallies
2. 500,000 people took part and it took place in an airfield called the Zeppelin Field (11 sq. kms).
3. Hitler and Goebbels made speeches on "The Racial Question" and "World propaganda".
4. Leni Riefenstahl made the propaganda film 'Victory of Faith'

1934 'Rally of Unity and Strength'

1. The 1934 rally is the best remembered of all the rallies.
2. Promoted the Fuhrer cult;
3. Hitler's followers were encouraged to think of him as a demi-god and much of the pageantry and ritual is quasi-religious.
4. Leni Riefenstahl filmed the entire rally and made 'Triumph of the Will'.

'Triumph of the Will'

1. **Hitler's arrival** Hitler arrives by plane through clouded skies, descending god-like to meet the adoring crowds. Wagner's heroic music.
2. **The motorcade** Hitler is driven to his hotel greeted by cheering crowds.
3. **Scenes from the rally** The tent-city of workers and soldiers is a happy, purposeful place. Scenes and music shows blood brotherhood and male camaraderie.
4. The film is dominated by scenes showing massed rows of Nazis in half-profile mesmerised by their leader and endless swastikas, close-ups of Hitler and torch-lit processions.
5. Goebbels speaks about the importance of propaganda.
6. **Loyal Ceremony of the workers** the workers use their shovels as rifles and they form an army of 'work-soldiers'.
7. **Hitler reviews the troops** The film shows spectacular scenes depicting the growth of German military might.
8. **Hitler's speech at the evening rally** Hitler is a demagogue, able to rouse the audience with his oratory. His speech is punctuated by applause.

1935 'Rally of Freedom'

1. Celebrates reintroduced compulsory military service
2. 'Liberation' from Treaty of Versailles.
3. Nuremberg laws passed
4. Leni Riefenstahl made the propaganda film 'Day of Freedom: Our Armed Forces'

Nuremberg laws

1. Anti-Semitic laws already started before Rally
2. Nuremberg laws clearly define who was a 'Jew'
3. Jews could not marry German citizens
4. Jews were forbidden to have sexual relations outside marriage with non-Jews
5. Jews could not employ female German citizens under the age of 45.
6. Jews forbidden to display German flag.
7. Paved the way for widespread discrimination against Jewish people and led to the Holocaust.

1936 & 1937

1. **1936 'Rally of Honour'** - Celebrated German occupation of the Rhineland. This was regarded as restoring German honour.
2. **1937 'Rally of Labour'** - noted for Albert Speer's 'Cathedral of Light' display with 152 searchlights. A brother of the emperor of Japan attended boosting relations between the two countries.

1938 & 1939

1. **1938 'Rally of Greater Germany'** - Celebrating the annexation of Austria.
2. **1939 'Rally of Peace'** - scheduled to take place on 2 September 1939. Cancelled because Germany invaded Poland the day before the rally was due to take place.

Anti-Semitism and The Holocaust

Anti-Semitism

1. Jews killed Jesus
2. Cultural differences
3. Pogroms in Russia
4. Jews prominent in Professions and Business – led to envy and criticism
5. Jews associated with liberalism, radicalism and communism.
5. Eliminate Jews – eliminate capitalism and socialism.

The Nazis and race theory

1. Superiority of the Aryans
2. Assimilation of Jews would taint Aryan stock
3. Hitler blamed the Jews for Germany's troubles
4. Jews invented Marxism
5. Jews caused Germany's defeat in WWI
6. Jews caused humiliation of treaty of Versailles.

Did Hitler *plan* the Holocaust

1. Major Historical debate
2. Intentionalists - the Nazis' had a constant and unwavering intention to destroy European Jews
3. Functionalists - the Holocaust was reached by a 'twisted road' - many forces inside and outside Germany helped to bring it about

The Persecution of the Jews

1. April 1933 – Hitler organises a one-day boycott of Jewish shops and businesses
2. Jews banned from civil service
3. Nuremberg Laws 1935
4. Marriages between Germans and Jews were forbidden
5. Relations between Jews and Germans outside marriage were forbidden
6. Jews were not to employ Germans under the age of 45
7. Jews were deprived of citizenship.
8. 1936 – Jews could not vote
9. Wear Star of David.
10. 1938 – Jews barred from Law, Medicine and Business

Kristallnacht, 1938

1. Reprisal for an attack on a German embassy official in Paris.
2. More than 8,000 Jewish homes and shops were attacked.
3. 100 Jews killed and 20,000 arrested.
4. Goering blamed the Jews for the violence.
5. Jews fined one billion Reichmarks.
6. Many Jews, including Albert Einstein, emigrated at this time.
7. 400,000 Jews who could afford it leave Germany and Austria

Polish Jews

1. 10% of the population was Jewish
2. Nazi occupation of Poland leads to persecution of Jews
3. Jews forced into ghettos
4. Jews live in squalid conditions, wracked by disease.
5. 500,000 crammed into 1.3 square miles of Warsaw
6. By 1942 over 100,000 Jews died because of conditions
7. Nazis order 'non-productive' Jews to be resettled.
8. Sept 1942 – remaining 70,000 Jews die during and after the Warsaw Uprising

Concentration Camps

1. The 'Final Solution' – extermination of the Jews
2. Towns and villages emptied of Jews who would be executed and buried in mass graves
3. Extermination camps established in Poland
4. German companies set up slave-labour factories in camps
5. Two million Jews killed in Auschwitz using cyanide gas and the bodies cremated.
6. Bodies stripped of anything of value, clothes, hair gold fillings making the camps self-financing
7. 90% of Jews killed on arrival. Remainder used for slave labour.
8. Life expectancy of Jewish slave was three months
9. Six millions Jews die in Holocaust
10. Pro-Nazi historians deny the Holocaust took place.