

Weimar and Nazi Germany - Edexcel

Origins 1918 - 1919

What was the legacy of WWI on Germany?	Germany had little money left and people were starving by the winter of 1918-19. 2 million dead soldiers, 4 million injured.
When and why did the Kaiser abdicate?	9 th November 1918, because he had lost the support of the military.
Who signed the surrender if the Kaiser had abdicated?	Friedrich Ebert, the Chancellor.
How was the Weimar Republic set up?	Elections in January 1919 for politicians to write a constitution by August 1919.
What were the strengths of the Weimar Constitution?	Everyone over the age of 20 had the vote. Proportional representation meant that the <i>Reichstag</i> accurately represented the people's votes
What were the weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution?	Proportional representation meant that governments were a compromise between different parties. Article 48 gave the President power to ignore the <i>Reichstag</i> .
Why was the Weimar Republic unpopular?	Blamed for the end of the war. Not strong enough for the right wing or fair enough for the left wing.
What was the "stab in the back" theory?	The theory that the politicians betrayed Germany by surrendering at the end of WWI.

Challenges 1919-1923

What were the key terms of the Treaty of Versailles?	Land: lost colonies and land in Europe Army: restricted to 100,000 men Money: \$33 billion reparations Blame: accept sole responsibility for WWI
Who were the Spartacists?	Communists who tried to overthrow the new Weimar government.
Who were the Freikorps?	Unemployed soldiers who wanted a right-wing government. Used by the Weimar government to put down the Spartacists.
What was the Kapp Putsch?	Freikorps led by Wolfgang Kapp tried to overthrow the Weimar government. They were defeated by the workers going on strike
What caused the Occupation of the Ruhr?	Germany didn't repay its reparations payments so France & Belgium invaded.
What were the consequences of the Occupation of the Ruhr?	Workers in the Ruhr went on strike. The Weimar government printed more money to pay them. This caused hyperinflation. The government looked weak, which made the Nazis think that their Munich Putsch would work.
What damage did hyperinflation do?	People's savings became worthless. The economy became unstable because the prices of everything kept increasing.

Recovery 1924 - 1929

Who was Gustav Stresemann and what did he do?	Chancellor in 1924, solved hyperinflation by starting a new currency and international agreements.
What was the Rentenmark?	New currency to replace the worthless Reichsmark after hyperinflation.
What did the Dawes and Young plans do?	Plans with America in 1924 and 1929 to reduce reparations payments.
What impact did American loans and investment have?	Loans from American banks allowed German businesses to recover, 1924-1929
What did the Locarno Pact do?	Germany agreed to its new borders and accepted the Treaty of Versailles.
What did joining the League of Nations do for Germany?	Restored its international prestige, and made it appear like countries could trust Germany again.
What did the Kellogg-Briand Pact achieve?	Germany, France and the USA promised to not use war to resolve disputes – increased trust in Germany.

Changes 1924-1929

How did people's wages change?	People had, on average, higher wages and more disposable income so they could spend it on culture.
How did housing change?	Many new houses were built to tackle shortages in housing. New houses were higher-quality with indoor plumbing.
What if you were unemployed?	The Weimar government introduced unemployment benefits if people lost their jobs so they wouldn't be in poverty.
How did women's position change?	Women had more access to work, and more independence, as well as full political rights and legal equality with men.
How did art develop?	Otto Dix – expressed horror of war and social inequality, experimental and challenging.
What was Weimar architecture like?	Bauhaus – very modern, straight lines, concrete, steel.
What did Weimar cinema achieve?	Fritz Lang – expressionism, science fiction, special effects (<i>Metropolis</i> , 1927)

Development of Nazis 1920-1922

What was Hitler's role in the German Workers' Party?	Joined the small party in 1919, became a part of their recruitment drive with his powerful speeches and became their second-in-command by and head of propaganda 1920.
When did it become the Nazi Party?	Changed name to the National Socialist German Workers' Party in 1920 based on Hitler's suggestion.
What was included in Hitler's 25-Point Programme?	Nazi policies, strongly opposed to Weimar politicians, democracy and Jews. Their aims for a strong Germany.
What did the SA do in the Nazis' early years?	Acted as security and crowd control for Nazi meetings, as well as disrupting and intimidating their political opponents (Communists)
When did Hitler become leader of the Nazi Party?	Elected leader of the party in 1921. Convinced party members to give up their right to elect their leader in January 1922.

Munich Putsch & More 1923-1929

What happened in the Munich Putsch?	Hitler and 600 SA members stormed into a meeting of Bavarian government officials in a beer hall in Munich. They declared they were taking over and forced the officials to support them. However, the army and police were still in control of the city. 14 Nazis and 4 policemen were shot dead, and Hitler was arrested.
Why were the Nazis unpopular, 1924-28?	They had been found guilty of trying to overthrow the government, and the Weimar Republic was in its "golden age" and strong and popular.
How did the Nazis change, 1924-28?	They decided to focus on winning support across Germany and win elections instead of a violent revolution. They were banned from elections for 2 years.
What was the impact of <i>Mein Kampf</i> ?	Hitler wrote his book in prison and used it to publicise his views. They were similar to the 25-point plan, but expanded and more extreme.
What happened at the Bamberg Conference?	The nationalist wing of the Nazi Party – who wanted strong government, invading their neighbours and more anti-Semitic policies – won against the socialist wing – who wanted benefits for workers.

Support for Nazis 1929-1932

Why did unemployment increase after 1929?	The Wall Street Crash and resulting Great Depression made American banks tell German businesses to pay their loans back. German businesses lost money, so many Germans lost their jobs
What was the impact of increasing unemployment?	Weimar government unemployment benefits struggled to deal with so many unemployed. Taxes went up. Benefits went down. People became homeless.
How well did the Weimar government deal with unemployment?	Weimar government was split as different parties didn't agree on how to deal with the crisis of unemployment. Moderate parties didn't work together, so people turned to more extreme options.
How popular was Communism as a solution to these problems?	The Communists (KPD) became the third-largest party in German elections. They wanted to fix the problems by confiscating all private property and sharing it between the workers.
Why did people start to vote for Hitler and the Nazis?	Middle-class voters who feared the Communists but still wanted radical solutions saw the Nazis as a way to get a strong government without giving up private property.
How did the Nazis use propaganda in elections?	Hitler's speeches were powerful and popular. They used posters to promise people "work, freedom and bread," as well as targeted posters for women, businesses and workers
What did the SA do in elections, 1929-32?	They intimidated rival political parties but also projected an image of strength and discipline with their uniforms and marching, which made the Nazis seem stronger.

Hitler Becoming Chancellor 1932-1933

What happened in the 1932 Presidential election?	At first nobody gets a majority, so it becomes a two-way vote between Hitler and Hindenburg. Hindenburg wins, but Hitler becomes a national political figure.
Why did Brüning resign?	He banned the SA and tried to buy up land from wealthy landowners. The ban on Nazi organisations made Hitler angry and the plan to buy up land made wealthy Germans angry as well. Hindenburg was a wealthy landowner, so Brüning lost the confidence of the President.
Why did von Papen become Chancellor?	He was a wealthy friend of Hindenburg. They hoped that the Nazis would support him in a coalition of smaller parties if they removed the ban on the SA.
What happened in the July 1932 Reichstag elections?	The Nazis became the biggest party in the Reichstag (230 seats). However, Hindenburg refused to make Hitler Chancellor because he didn't trust him.
What happened in the November 1932 Reichstag elections?	The Nazis lost some seats (down to 196) but they remained the largest party in the Reichstag. Von Papen resigned and Hindenburg made von Schleicher Chancellor.
What did von Schleicher do as Chancellor?	He had no support in the Reichstag or with the public so he asked Hindenburg to suspend the Constitution and start a military dictatorship. Hindenburg refused.
Who made Hitler Chancellor?	Hindenburg ran out of options. Von Papen convinced Hindenburg to make Hitler Chancellor and von Papen vice-Chancellor to control him.

Creating a dictatorship 1933-1934

How did the Reichstag Fire give the Nazis more power?	Blamed the Communists, used emergency powers to ban the Communist Party. Called an election, won 288 seats in Reichstag.
What did the Enabling Act do?	Gave the Nazis the power to pass laws without the Reichstag and overrule the Constitution.
How did the Nazis remove political opposition?	Arrested trade union leaders, banned trade unions, made strikes illegal, banned all non-Nazi political parties.
What was the problem with the SA after 1932?	They were 3 million men, loyal to their leader Ernst Röhm instead of Hitler. Röhm wanted more socialist policies than Hitler.
What happened on the Night of the Long Knives?	The leadership of the SA, including Röhm, were arrested and killed. Other rivals including former chancellor von Schleicher and socialist-wing Nazi Gregor Strasser were killed.
How did Hindenburg's death give Hitler more power?	The offices of Chancellor and President were merged into one: Führer. A public vote was held, and thanks to pro-Nazi propaganda, 90% of people voted in favour of giving Hitler full power.

Why did the Army swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler?	The army had feared the SA would replace them. Eliminating the SA made the army thankful to Hitler as they saw him as defending the army from the SA.
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The Police State 1933-1939

Who were the Gestapo?	The Secret State Police, to identify anyone who criticised or opposed the Nazi government and arrest them. Relied on informants.
What did the SS do?	The Nazis' private police force. Enforced ideological purity in the Nazi Party. Given control over all other police and security services.
What was the role of the SD?	Security Force, monitoring opponents of the Nazis. Kept an index of all opponents of the Nazi party at home or abroad.
Who were put in concentration camps?	At first, political opponents – Communists, Socialists, trade unionists. Later, 'untermenschen' – Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals.
How did the Nazis change the legal system?	Judges had to be members of the Nazi Party's National Socialist League for the Maintenance of the Law. Trial by jury was abolished. New "People's Court" with secret trials. Death sentences expanded.
How did the Nazis control the Catholic Church?	Agreement with Pope Pius XI, the <i>Concordat</i> , where the Nazis wouldn't interfere with Catholic churches or schools, and Catholic priests wouldn't interfere in German politics.
How did the Nazis control Protestant churches?	Set up their own <i>Reich Church</i> to unify pro-Nazi Protestants. Started to change doctrine – Jewish teachings from the Old Testament of the Bible excluded from Reich Church services.

Controlling & Influencing Attitudes 1933-1939

Who was Joseph Goebbels?	Minister of People's Enlightenment and Propaganda, in charge of media, sport, culture and art policy.
What was censored under the Nazis?	Criticism of the Nazi Party's policies. Newspapers were censored, film scripts had to be approved before they were filmed, radios were made so they couldn't tune in to foreign stations.
What did the Nazis use for propaganda?	Rallies – thousands of people at Nuremberg to hear Hitler speak Film – Leni Riefenstah's <i>Triumph of the Will</i> film of Nazi rallies. Radio and press - Nazi opinions given far more exposure
How did the Nazis use the Berlin Olympics?	As a symbol of Nazi strength and tradition. The opening ceremony was used to glorify Germany. German success in the events was celebrated as a success for Nazism.
What culture and art was allowed in Nazi Germany?	Much more "traditional" than previous Weimar experimental art. Emphasis on folk and classical music instead of jazz

Opposition, Resistance, Conformity 1933-1939

How popular was the Nazi regime?	The Nazi Party had a high level of acceptance among most Germans, thanks to propaganda and censorship, and successful economic policies.
What did Protestant churches do to oppose the Nazis?	Martin Niemöller set up the Pastors' Emergency League and the Confessing Church, to oppose the Reich Church. Niemöller was arrested and imprisoned in Sachsenhausen concentration camp.
What did the Catholic Church do to oppose the Nazis?	The Pope realised the Nazis were not holding to their side of the Concordat and released a letter, <i>With Burning Anxiety</i> , read in all Catholic Churches on Palm Sunday, criticising the Nazis.
Who were the Swing Youth?	German teenagers from middle-class families who were fans of American clothes, films and music including swing jazz. Organised illegal dance parties of up to 6,000 young people.
Who were the Edelweiss Pirates?	German teenagers from working-class families who resented the military discipline of the Hitler Youth and wanted more freedom.

Nazi Policies towards women 1933-1939

What were Nazis' view of women and the family?	Kinder, Küche, Kirche. Children, kitchen, church. A woman was to stay at home and raise her husband's children in a traditional way.
How did the Nazis encourage marriage?	Loans of up to 8 months wages for young couples to marry and for the woman to give up work.
How did the Nazis encourage motherhood?	For each child born ¼ of the loan was written off. Women were given medals for having more children.
How did the Nazis work to reduce women in the workplace?	Propaganda to encourage women to be wives and mothers. Women banned from work as teachers, doctors, civil servants, lawyers, judges.
How did Nazis want women to dress?	Traditionally, modestly, without make-up. Never official laws, but heavily encouraged through propaganda.
How did Nazi policy towards working women fail?	By the end of the 1930s industry was expanding so fast the Nazis needed women to return to work in factories

Nazi Policies towards the young 1933-1939

What was the aim of Nazi youth policy?	Indoctrinate youth into Nazi ideas. Train them as the soldiers and mothers of the future.
What did the Hitler Youth do?	Educate boys about Nazi ideology, make them fit and healthy through camping and sports, and train them in military skills like maps and guns.
What did the League of German Maidens do?	Educate girls about Nazi ideology, make them fit and healthy through camping and sports, and train them in domestic skills like cooking.
How did Nazis change the curriculum in schools?	New subjects like Race Studies were added. Amount of time for PE was doubled. Different curriculums for boys and girls (cooking compulsory for girls). Nazi bias in all subjects.
How did Nazis control teachers in schools?	Nazis had power to sack teachers and headteachers. All teachers had to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. All teachers had to join the Nazi Teachers' League which provided training and political education for teachers.

Employment and Living Standards 1933-1939

What was the RAD?	<i>Reichs Arbeits Dienst</i> – National Labour Service. Low-paid work and food for unemployed workers. Manual labour – repairing roads, draining marshes.
What did the autobahns do?	Provided high-speed transport around Germany. 3,500km finished by 1938. Improved construction industry and employed 125,000 men.
How did rearmament impact unemployment?	Army expanded from 100,000 to 900,000 men by 1939. Jobs for weapons and equipment manufacturers as well to arm the army.
Who were the "invisible unemployed"?	Jews, women and members of the RAD were not counted as unemployed. Part time workers were counted as full-time.
How did employment improve standards of living?	Wages by 1939 were 20% higher than in 1933. More people were employed. Prices rose as well so not everyone was better off.
What did the Labour Front (DAF) do?	Replaced trade unions. Regulated standards in the workplace. However, controlled by the Nazis so allowed working hours to increase.
What was Strength Through Joy (KdF)?	A division of the DAF that gave German workers benefits – holidays, theatre performances, the <i>Volkswagen</i> subscription scheme.
What did Beauty of Labour (SdA) achieve?	Better toilets, changing rooms, showers and canteens for workers. However, workers had to build these themselves for no extra pay.

Persecution of Minorities 1933-1939

What did the Nazis believe about race?	They believed that "Aryan" people – Germans – were the superior <i>herrenvolk</i> - "master race." Others were <i>untersmenschen</i> – "sub-human," or <i>lebensunwertes</i> – "unworthy of life."
What was eugenics?	The science of selective breeding – that you could produce 'better' human beings by selecting the 'best' parents and not allowing 'unsuitable' people to breed.
How were Slavs treated by the Nazis?	German children were taught Slavs were <i>untersmenschen</i> , and that their countries in Eastern Europe should be taken over by Germany.
What did the Nazis do to "Gypsies" (Roma)?	Arrested. Sent to concentration camps. Banned from travelling in groups. Lost German citizenship.
How did the Nazis attack homosexuals?	Strengthened laws against homosexuality. Sent homosexual prisoners to concentration camps. Encouraged voluntary castration.
What did Nazis do to the disabled?	Forced sterilisation for disabled people. Over 5,000 children with disabilities up to the age of 17 killed by drugs or starvation.
How did anti-Jewish persecution begin?	Jews banned from government jobs, inheriting land and joining the army. Boycott of Jewish businesses enforced by the SA.
What did the Nuremberg Laws do?	Removed citizenship from Jewish Germans, taking away their right to vote or have a passport. Banned marriage between Jews and Germans.
What happened on Kristallnacht?	A Polish Jew shot a German in Paris. Joseph Goebbels turned it into a nationwide campaign of violence against German Jews. Police were ordered to ignore violence against Jews. 100 Jews killed. 814 shops, 171 homes, 191 synagogues destroyed. 20,000 Jews sent to concentration camps. Germany's Jews fined 1 billion marks.