

Atherton High School

History Department



AQA GCSE History Study Booklet

Name-

Teacher-



Germany 1890 - 1945 Democracy and Dictatorship

Booklet Two - Germany and the Depression

The exam board expect you to have knowledge and understanding of the following: -

The Impact of the Depression:

- The growth in support of the Nazis and other extremist parties (1928-32)
- The role of the SA (Nazi Army) - What made Hitler appealing

The Failure of Weimar Democracy

- Election results • The role of Papen and Hindenburg
- Hitler success in becoming Chancellor of Germany;

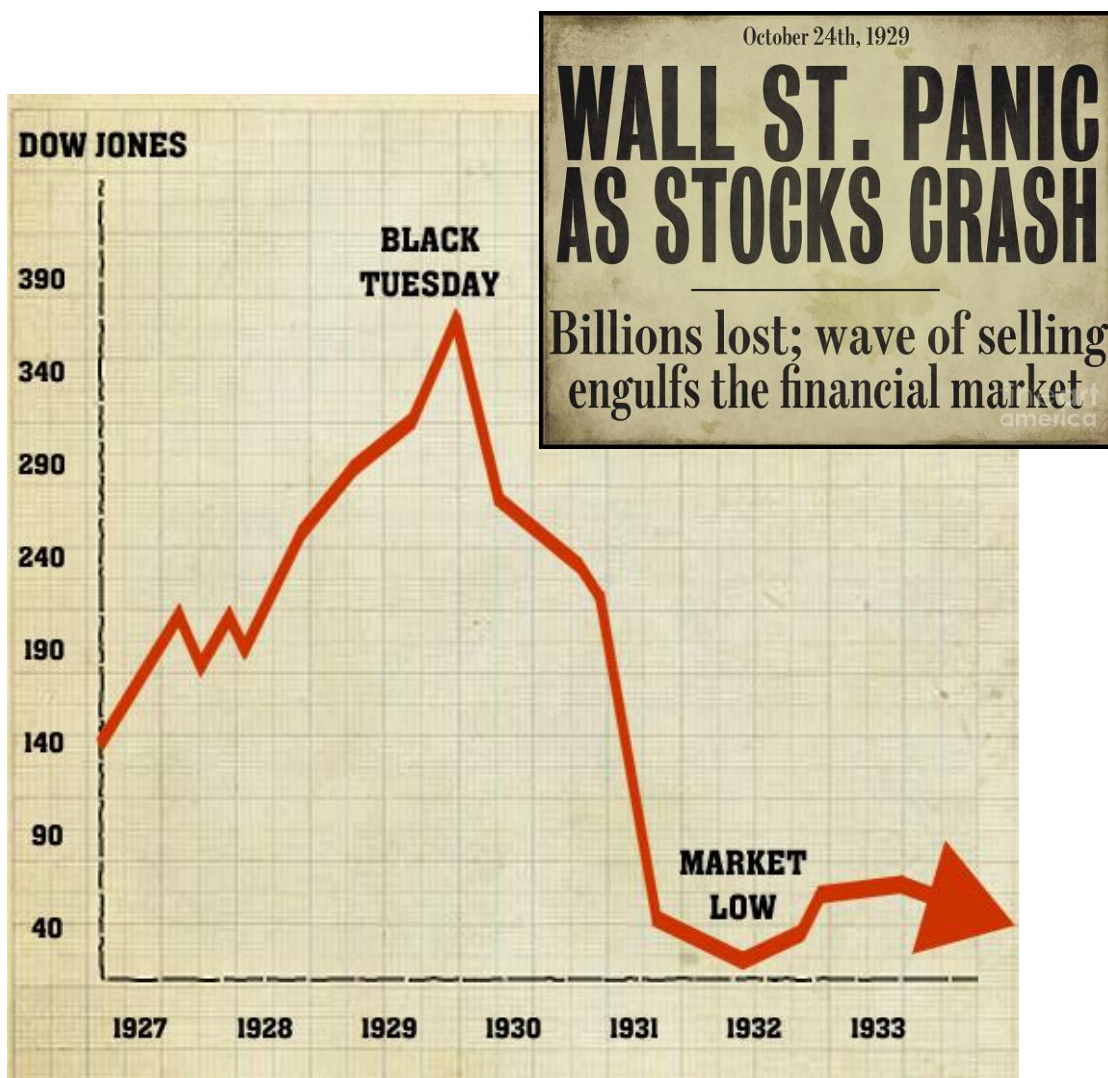
The Establishment of Hitler's Dictatorship

- The Reichstag Fire, The Enabling Act • Elimination of Political Opposition including Trade Unions • Ernst Rohm and the Night of the Long Knives • Hitler becoming Fuhrer.



What caused the Depression?

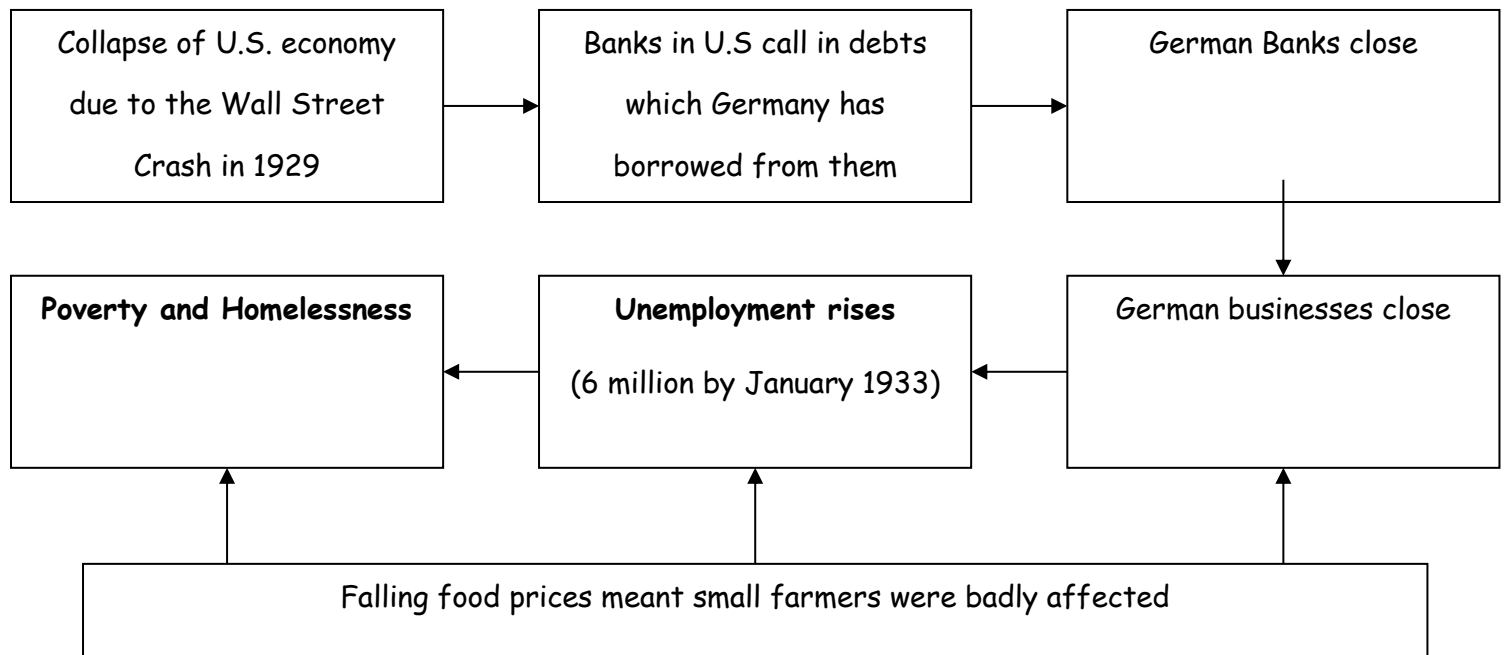
America had become rich after the First World War, through manufacturing and selling their goods around the world. Many Americans bought **shares** in companies, hoping to make more profit. Some even borrowed money from banks so they could buy shares. However, many Americans did not make as much money as they had hoped. In October 1929, shares were sold quickly, which created a panic. This meant others felt they had to sell their shares. This created a drop in the value of shares. In the end many people lost money and were ruined. This became known as the '**Wall Street Crash**'. The **crash** started the Great Depression and stock prices did not reach the same level until late 1954.



The Great Depression

In October 1929, Stresemann died and, shortly after, the USA stock market collapsed in the Wall Street Crash. Germany was hit hard.

Diagram showing the effects of the Wall Street Crash on Germany



The Weimar government and the Depression

The Weimar government tried to fight against the Depression. But there was hardly any successful action.

- The government could not spend more on helping the poor. It was not able to print more money. After the hyperinflation of 1923 this was not an option.
- **So, the government raised taxes.** This gave it more money to help the poor, but was a problem for the businesses and companies being taxed.

- **The government reduced the wages of government workers.** This gave the government more money for the poor, but workers found it hard to live.

- **The government reduced unemployment benefit,** which was a big problem for the growing numbers of unemployed. This also made it difficult for people to manage.

These actions were not popular inside or outside the government. (People in the government and ordinary people did not like the actions)

TASKS:

1. List the ways in which the Weimar government tried to fight the Depression and the problems each one caused.

<u>What the government did</u>	<u>Problem this caused</u>
*	*
*	*
*	*

2. Were these actions popular? Explain

3. Match the words and meanings

Communism	A ruler with total power over a country, usually someone who has gained control by force
Democracy	German Parliament
Dictator	A type of system where individual people do not own land, factories or machinery. Instead the government or the whole community owns these things. Everyone is supposed to share the wealth they make, all classes are equal.
Reichstag	'rule by the people' - people choose the leaders by voting - and where everyone is treated equally with the same rights

The Growth of the Nazi Party

When Hitler went to prison the Nazi Party was banned. When he was let out in 1924 it was re-formed. Even so, the Nazis were not yet a strong political group. Hitler had decided while he was in prison that the best way for the Nazis to seize power was not by a putsch but legally, in elections. At first the Nazi Party found it difficult to get support. Germany's economy was recovering under Gustav Stresemann's leadership and people were less willing to listen to the Nazis. They began to lose seats in the Reichstag. (German Parliament) as shown in the following election results: -

- 1924 (May) 32 seats
- 1924 (December) 14 seats
- 1928 12 seats

However, Hitler worked hard at gaining the Nazis more support. He set up meetings and **mass rallies** to increase membership. He wanted as many people as possible to hear him make rousing (exciting) speeches. Membership rose from 27,000 in 1925 to 100,000 in 1928.



TASK - Are the following statements true or false?

1. Hitler was let out of prison in 1924. _____
2. The Nazi Party was not allowed to reform. _____
3. The Nazis found that it was easy to gain support from the German people. _____
4. The election results figures show that support for the Nazis party was falling during the 1920s. _____

The Growth in support for Extreme Parties, including the Nazis from 1928 - 1932

Unemployment and hunger changed the way many Germans thought and behaved. More and more Germans **began to listen to extremist political parties** that criticised the government and promised **radical solutions** to solve the crisis. **The communists were especially popular among the working class, with their ideas that all wealth should be shared equally among the workers.** The Nazis also got **more and more support.**

In this time of emergency, Hitler's ideas now mattered more to many people in Germany. Here are some of them.

- Is the Weimar Government indecisive? Then Germany needs a strong leader!
- Are reparations adding to Germany's problems? Then kick out the Treaty of Versailles
- Is unemployment a problem? Let the unemployed join the army, build Germany's **armaments** and be used for public projects like road building.



Factors as why Hitler and the Nazis popularity grew.

Factor 1 - The Depression

After the **Wall Street Crash**, which led to the Great Depression. Germany was particularly badly affected. American bankers and businesses lost huge amounts of money, this meant that they asked Germany to repay the loans and money they had borrowed. The result was economic collapse in Germany. Unemployment went up, within three years over 6 million Germans were out of work.

This was just the push that Hitler needed to send voters his way.

Factor 2 - Germans unhappy with Weimar Government

The Weimar politicians could not agree on how to help the unemployed and get Germany out of the Depression. Decisions taken by **Chancellor Brüning** to seize land from the rich to help the poor, lost support and he had to resign. For many Germans, democracy was not working. Hitler played on the German people's feelings that the Weimar Government was indecisive.

Factor 3 - The appeal of Adolf Hitler

Hitler himself had a lot to do with his increasing popularity. He had a charismatic personality and could make people believe that he could be trusted to make Germany a great nation. As a powerful and inspiring speaker he was able to fill his audiences with hope.



Factor 4 - Fear of the rise of other extremist parties e.g.

Communists

Germany had suppressed the communist Spartacist Rising in early 1919 (see booklet one). However, after the Wall Street Crash, the Communist Party had seen its support increase, especially amongst the poor and working class. The middle and upper classes felt threatened by this. Also the communists did not believe in religious organisations, which worried church goers. Hitler promised to fight communism. He sent the **Nazi Army, SA (also known as Stormtroopers)** to fight with communists.

Factor 5 - Nazi Party structure, methods and tactics

Hitler realised after the failure of the Munich Putsch, that he needed to change **tactics**. He decided to win power legally through winning votes at elections. This was to be done through a combination of intimidation and persuasion.

More followers were recruited to the Nazi party, with **100,000 men in the SA by 1931, this grew to 400,000 by 1932.**

Hitler used the SA to beat up opponents (enemies), especially the Communists, and smashed up their election meetings. This made it very difficult for the Communists to run a free election campaign. They were also used to intimidate voters at election time.

Joseph Goebbels was in charge of **propaganda**, which was used to influence Germans in their way of thinking. This was done through

posters, cinemas, newspapers, millions of leaflets and new technology such as radios. Hitler also used his speeches and **mass rallies** to raise support (see above).

The **Hitler Youth** was also set up to encourage young followers to support the Nazis. They organised fun camping trips that would appeal to young people.

Task

Put into your own words the five factors that helped the growth of the Nazi Party (summarise - do not copy)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

So now the Nazis were becoming popular - Who would vote for them and why?

Farmers - they had been hit hard by the Depression and the Weimar Government had done nothing for them. They also saw communists as a threat if they took their farms from them. The Nazis hated the communists and would deal with them. They also promised high price for crops.



Women - The Nazis said that women had a very important role in family life and promised to deal with the worries that women had about the decline in **moral values** (see culture section in previous booklet).



Young Voters - They wanted to make Germany strong again. Hitler's speeches about ripping up the Treaty of Versailles, making jobs available through building hospitals and motorways and strengthening the military appealed to them.



Middle Classes/Upper Class - Business owners and workers such as doctors and bankers wanted a strong government that could make decisions. They thought the Weimar was weak and indecisive. Hitler and the Nazis showed order and discipline. The middle/upper classes were also worried about the the threat of communists taking over their businesses and way of life. Hitler promised that businesses could do what they liked and he would like to use their factories to make products such as weapons. This would make them money and make Germany strong again. **Hitler also promised to deal with the communists as the SA were not afraid of them.**



TASKS

1. Complete this chart about what people believed

Group	believed that Hitler would:
Farmers	
Women	
Young People	
Middle/Upper class	

Party	May 1928	September 1930	July 1932	November 1932
Nazi Party	12	107	230	196
National People's Party (DNVP)	73	41	37	52
People's Party (DVP)	45	30	7	11
Centre Party (Zentrum)	62	68	75	70
German Democratic Party (DDP)	25	20	4	2
Social Democratic Party (SPD)	153	143	133	121
Communist Party (KPD)	54	77	89	100

2. Look at the table above

What does the table show about support for the Communist Party?

What does the table show about support for the Democratic parties?

What does the table show about support for the Nazi Party between May 1928 and July 1932?

What does it show about support for the Nazis between July 1932 and Nov 1932?

How did Hitler become Chancellor of Germany?

In contrast to the strong campaign of the Nazi Party, the Social Democrats and the other parties who supported the Weimar government did not appear to offer much to the German people.

President Hindenburg disliked the Nazi Party and its leader. He refused to make Hitler, Chancellor, despite the fact that after the July 1932 elections the Nazis were the largest party in the Reichstag (see the table above). Instead, he used his emergency powers to appoint the leader of the smaller Centre Party, **Franz von Papen**, as Chancellor. However, one of Hindenburg's advisors, **Kurt von Schleicher**, told him that the army did not like **von Papen** and



might rebel unless he was replaced. Hindenburg was forced to back down but again he did not choose Hitler.

In December 1932 Hindenburg asked **Kurt von Schleicher** to become Chancellor. Von Schleicher failed to get much support in the Reichstag and resigned after only eight weeks. This left another opening. Who would become Chancellor now?

Failure of Weimar Democracy from 1933

Hindenburg persuaded Hitler to accept von Papen as Vice Chancellor and put von Papen's supporters into the government. In this way Hindenburg expected to be able to control Hitler.

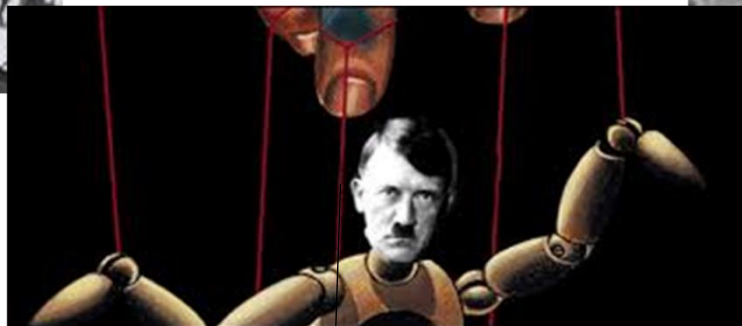


Paul von
Hindenburg -
President of
Germany

In January 1933, in a deal between Hindenburg and Papen - Hitler was made Chancellor of Germany. They thought they would be able to control him. They made sure that only three out of twelve people who made up the new government were Nazis



Franz von
Papen - Vice
Chancellor
of Germany



Hindenburg had underestimated Hitler's political ability. Hitler accepted the arrangement but immediately called another election to the Reichstag. He wanted to get full control of the Reichstag by making the Nazis the **majority** party. But how was he going to achieve this?

Reichstag Fire - 27th February 1933

The Reichstag building in Berlin was destroyed by fire. A Dutch communist, **Marinus von Lubbe** was arrested and **blamed for the fire**. The Nazis claimed that this was the start of a Communist plot to take over Germany. That night 4000 Communist leaders were arrested by the police. The next day **Hitler persuaded Hindenburg** to grant him **emergency powers**. This gave the



police the power to arrest people and hold them for as long as they wanted, without trial. Thousands of people who opposed the Nazi party were arrested. The Nazis also banned meetings held by their political opponents and closed down their newspapers.

5th March 1933 - New Elections

The Nazis used the police and the **SA** to put pressure on their political opponents. More than 50 opponents of the Nazis were killed and many more were injured. The Nazis used radio to broadcast their anti-Communist message. This helped **the Nazis** achieve their best ever election result, with 44 per cent of the vote. However, they **had to join with the Nationalist Party** who controlled 52 seats in the Reichstag; **this gave the Nazis a majority.**

23rd March 1933 - The Enabling Law

Hitler still wanted more. The **Enabling Law** would give Hitler the all the power and to pass laws without going through the Reichstag or the President. In order to achieve this passing this law, he needed to get two-thirds of the Reichstag to support it. They had to be persuaded to give up their power and hand it to Hitler! How did he achieve this?

First the 81 members of the Communist Party were banned from voting. The Centre Party were persuaded to vote in favour of the law as Hitler promised to protect the Catholic Church. Only the Socialist Democrats voted against it. The **Enabling Law** was passed by 444 votes to 94. Hitler now had the power to pass any law without consulting the Reichstag.

The **Weimar Republic and the democracy** it brought to Germany **had ended.** The Reichstag had voted itself out of existence.

Germany was now a dictatorship. All important decisions would be made by Hitler and his closest advisers.

7th April 1933 - Power put into practice

With the new powers that Hitler had, he put Nazis in charge of all local government, councils and the police. The **Gestapo** (secret police) was formed and the **first concentration camp at Dachau** was opened for political prisoners.

2 May 1933 - Trade Unions taken over

Trade union offices were taken over and union leaders arrested. All trade unions were merged into one organisation, the new **GERMAN LABOUR FRONT (DAF)**. The DAF was controlled by the Nazis.

July 1933 - All political parties banned

A law was introduced that banned people from forming new political parties. By this stage the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party had already been banned. Other political parties had broken up. This new law meant that **new parties could not be set up to challenge the Nazis**. There was now only one party in Germany.

1934 - 29-30 June - Night of the Long Knives

The last threat to Hitler's power came from within his own party in the form of the **SA**. Even though he had created this army for his own purposes, Hitler now considered them dangerous for a number of reasons:

- The SA was undisciplined, and its members often acted like thugs. This was giving the Nazis a bad image which could damage its support.
- The SA wanted more power in return for its help in forcing the Enabling Law through the Reichstag. Its leader, Ernst Rohm, wanted the government to control industry. This would have lost the support of leading businessmen, who were important Nazi followers.
- Rohm wanted the SA to take control of the German army, which could make Rohm even more powerful than Hitler.

Army leaders feared being taken over by the SA and resented the violence used. On the **Night of the Long Knives**, SA leaders were dragged from their beds, taken to Nazi headquarters and shot dead. **Rohm too was arrested. When he refused to commit suicide, he was shot in prison.** Other

Ernst Rohm - Scars are from WW1 wounds.



opponents were also killed, for example, von Schleicher, the former Chancellor.

The Night of the Long Knives sent a warning to the rest of Germany about how ruthless Hitler was in his pursuit of power.

2nd August 1934 - Death of Hindenburg and the Army Oath

Hitler was still only Chancellor. Hindenburg was President, although Hitler had managed to take away most of his political power.



When Hindenburg died, Hitler made himself President as well as Chancellor. Hitler was now the undisputed head of the government.

He was now the **Fuhrer!**

On the same day, the German army took an **oath** of personal loyalty to Hitler. Hitler was now Supreme Commander of the armed forces. All



German soldiers swore to obey Hitler and to risk their life for him at any time.

TASK 1 - fill in the gaps

Hitler wanted full control of Germany. In February 1932, there was a fire at the _____.

The Nazis blamed this on the _____ and said they were a threat to Germany. This resulted in Hindenburg giving Hitler emergency powers.

Now Hitler arrested anyone who opposed him.

Next he held elections, and won with 44% of the votes. After this Hitler wanted to pass the Enabling Law

which would give him total power. He managed to pass this by banning the communist party and making promises to the

Catholic church. The Enabling Law passed by 94% to 4% votes. Hitler then formed the Gestapo and opened

the first concentration camps for political prisoners. Next he banned all trade unions and other political parties.

The only threat left was the SA. Hitler was worried that Ernst Röhm would take over. To deal with this, on the Night of the

Long Knives, members of the SA, including Röhm were arrested. Afterwards Röhm was shot.

Hitler was able to take total control on the death of Hindenburg.

He then made himself Chancellor and made the army take a personal oath of loyalty.

Fuhrer, Röhm, 94, Emergency powers, Gestapo, SA, banning, elections, Night of the Long Knives, Army, Chancellor, Oath, arrested, Reichstag, 44%, communists, shot, Catholic, von Papen, 44%, Enabling, Trade, concentration, death.

TASK 2



Source A - the front cover of *Le Charivari*, a French magazine, on 11 August 1934. The caption reads, 'The butcher of Berlin'.

What is Hitler holding? _____

What is Hitler covered in and surrounded by? _____

Who do you think is on the floor? _____

Which event do you think this image is referring to?

Do you think the magazine supports Hitler? Explain your answer (use your answers to the above questions to help you explain).

CHALLENGE TASK 3 - Now come to a judgement with explanation on which aspect you think made Hitler's aim of becoming Fuhrer possible (ideas are in the box below, you may have thought of your own. Some are short/long term causes)

There are many reasons why Hitler managed to take total control in 1933. I think the main reason was _____

This is the most important reason because without this then

Death of Hindenburg, The Great Depression, Death of Stresemann, Propaganda, German feeling towards Treaty of Versailles, Role of the SA

How much can you remember? Try to answer the following questions
How many points can you get? (All answers are 1 point, unless stated
otherwise)

Questions for the Points Test

1. What happened in October 1929 which had devastating effects on Germany?

2. Write down 4 consequences/effects of the Great Depression on Germany (4 points)

3. Write down 3 things that the Weimar government did to try to help solve the problems caused by the event above. (3 points)

4. What rose to 6 million in Germany because of the event that occurred in question one?

5. Which two political parties in Germany gained more support during the years after the event that occurred in question one? (2 points)

6. Who was in charge of propaganda for the Nazi Party?

7. What is a Mass Rally?

8. How many men were in the SA (Nazi Army) by 1932?

9. What did President Hindenburg decide to do because of the deepening crisis in Germany? (2 points)

10. Who had the most seats in the Reichstag in November 1932?

11. Which four groups were likely to vote for the Nazis? (4 points)

12. Which two people did Hindenburg choose as Chancellor, rather than Hitler first? (2 points)

13. On what date did Hitler become Chancellor of Germany?

14. What was set on fire in 1933? _____

15. Who was blamed for starting the fire?

16. Who did Hitler use to put pressure on his political opponents? (2 points)

17. Why did the Nazi Party have to join the Nationalists? (2 points)

18. How many seats did the Nationalists have?

19. What was the name of the act that gave Hitler power to do what he liked?

20. When did this act come into force?

21. What was the name of the Nazi secret police?

22. Where was the first concentration camp opened?

23. What happened to the Trade Unions?

24. Why were new political parties banned? (2 points)

25. List three reasons why Hitler considered the SA dangerous (3 points)

26. What was the name of the event that occurred on 29th 30th June 1934?

27. What happened to Ernst Rohm? (2 points)

28. When did President Hindenburg die?

29. Write down two consequences of Hindenburg's death (4 points)

Marks out of _____ / 49

Key words

Armaments - military weapons and equipment

Cabinet - members of government in charge

Chancellor - The person in charge of the German government (like the Prime Minister in Britain)

Coalition - a government when several parties work together

Concentration camp -

Depression - a time when businesses fail, factories close, people lose jobs.

Dictator - a leader who has total control and makes all decisions

Der Fuhrer - German for leader

Election - when people vote

Gestapo - Secret police for the Nazis

Hitler Youth - Boys aged 10-18 who joined the Hitler Youth, similar to Scouts

Majority - to have the most members in a parliament

Mass Rally - large group of people who come together to listen to others speak.

Oath - solemn promise - a promise that cannot be broken

Police State - control of the people by fear of being arrested

Propaganda - information, to put across a certain point of view and to control what people think. It is often used to 'brainwash' people.

Radical - changes that go against the usual/traditional ways.

SA (Stormtroopers) - Nazi Army

Shares = portions of a business or company which you can buy. The value of these shares can go up and down.

Trade Union - organisations set up to protect the rights of workers in certain trades or professions.

Wall Street Crash - drop in the value of shares on the New York Stock Exchange on Tuesday October 29, 1929, now known as Black Tuesday.