



Cambridge (CIE) IGCSE History



Your notes

Was Hitler's Foreign Policy to Blame for the Second World War?

Contents

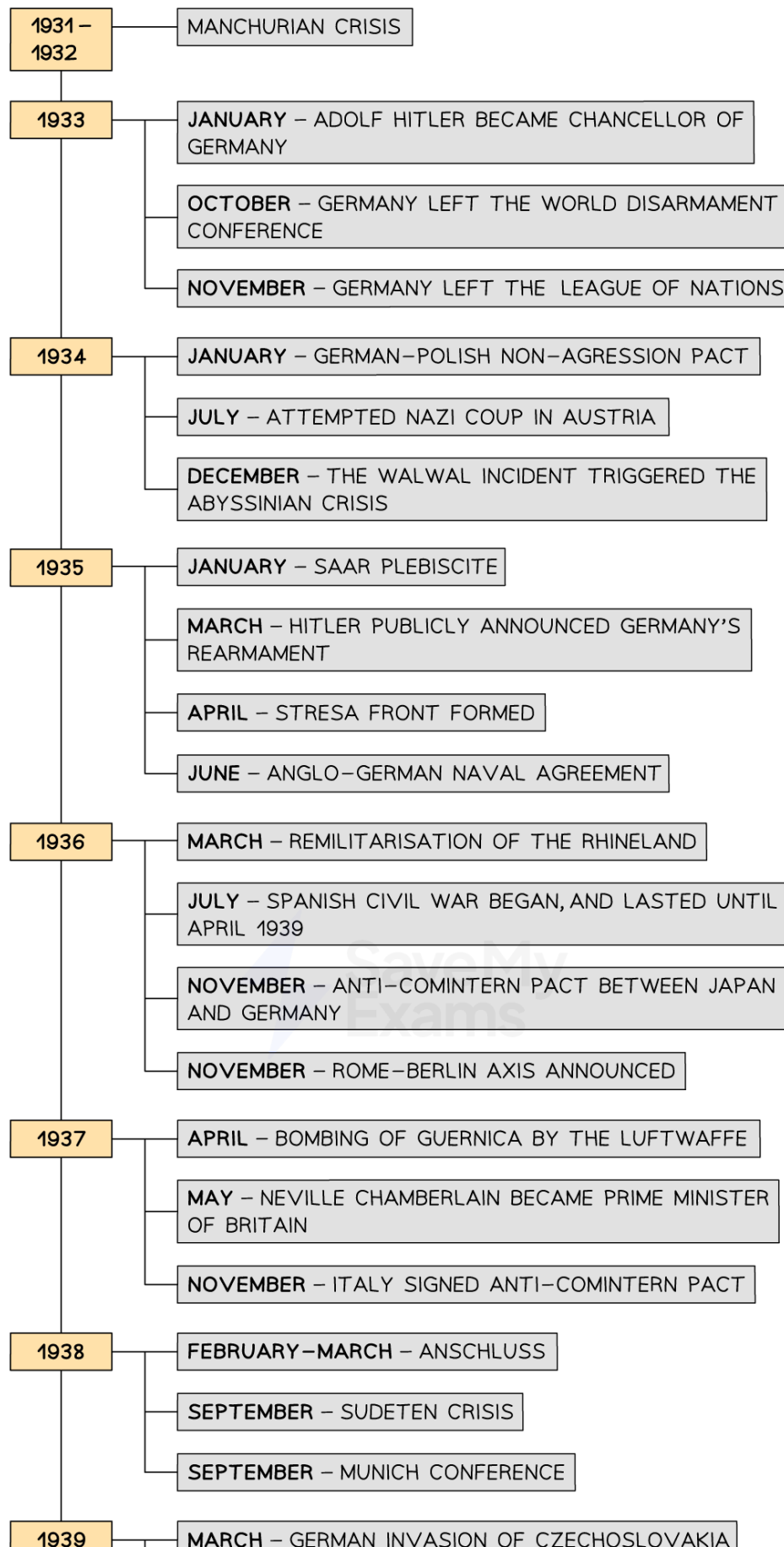
- * Context of the Second World War
- * The Long-Term Consequences of the Treaty of Versailles
- * Consequences of the Failures of the League of Nations in the 1930s
- * Was the Policy of Appeasement Justified?
- * How Did Appeasement Work in Practice?
- * The Importance of the Nazi-Soviet Pact
- * Why Did Britain & France Declare War on Germany?



Context of the Second World War – Timeline & Summary



Your notes





Your notes

MARCH – HITLER DEMANDED THE RETURN OF DANZIG

MARCH – BRITISH–FRENCH GUARANTEE OF POLAND

MAY – PACT OF STEEL BETWEEN ITALY AND GERMANY

AUGUST – NAZI–SOVIET PACT

SEPTEMBER – HITLER INVADED POLAND

SEPTEMBER – BRITAIN AND FRANCE DECLARED WAR ON GERMANY STARTING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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The Second World War began when Germany invaded Poland on **3rd September 1939**. This was only **21 years after the end of the First World War**. Germany was in an **alliance** with Italy and Japan, known as the **Axis powers**. Britain and France joined together as the **Allies**. The **USSR** had signed a **non-aggression pact** with Germany in **August 1939**. This is known as the **Nazi–Soviet Pact**. The USSR united with the Allies in 1941 when **Germany broke the pact and invaded Russia**. The USA did not enter the war until December 1941 after the **Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour**. They also joined the Allied forces.

There are different historical viewpoints on why the Second World War began in 1939. The **orthodox view is that Hitler caused the Second World War**. Many historians have argued that Hitler's foreign policy was intentionally aggressive. They state that he followed a **careful plan for expansion** in the 1930s. He broke the **Treaty of Versailles** through the **remilitarisation of the Rhineland and Anschluss** with Austria. These historians believe that Hitler prepared for the possibility of war. The evidence for this is Germany's large-scale **rearmament programme**.

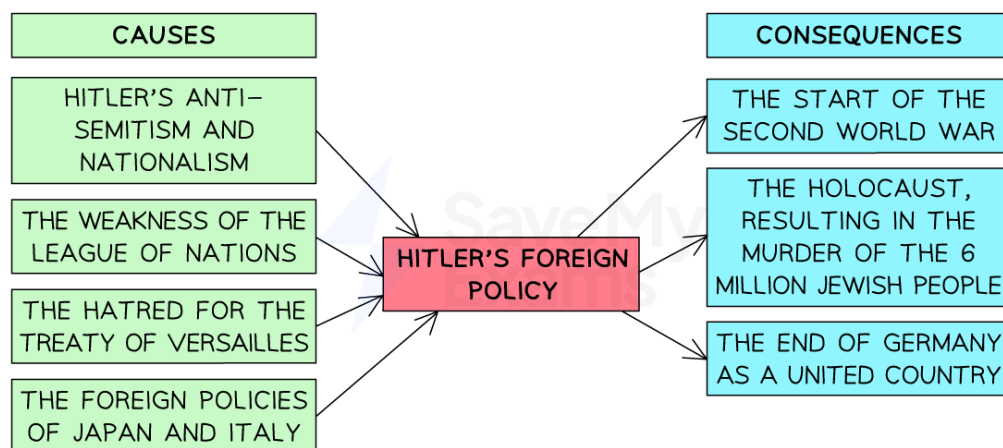
Another perspective of the Second World War **criticises other world leaders**. **Revisionist historians do not believe that Hitler wanted to start a war**. They argue that Hitler was a normal German leader in his foreign policy aims. **Hitler was an opportunist**. The **Great Depression** in the 1930s increased support for the Nazi Party. Key **League of Nations** members like Britain and France did not have the money or desire to stand up against aggressive nations. As a result, **the League was weak**. Many leaders exploited this weakness. Japan had invaded Manchuria in 1931. Italy had claimed Abyssinia in 1935. In a political environment of **militarism** and **nationalism**, Hitler's actions did not stand out. They were **similar to other extremist or autocratic leaders**. Revisionist historians believe that the **Treaty of Versailles caused the war**. The treaty was harsh enough to make many Germans hate it but weakly enforced. Both consequences allowed Germany to rebuild its power.

Some historians believe in **elements of both arguments**. They state that Hitler was a **strategist** with clear foreign policy aims. However, he would not have achieved these aims without the weakness of European leaders and the failure of the League of Nations.

Causes and Consequences of Hitler's Foreign Policy



Your notes



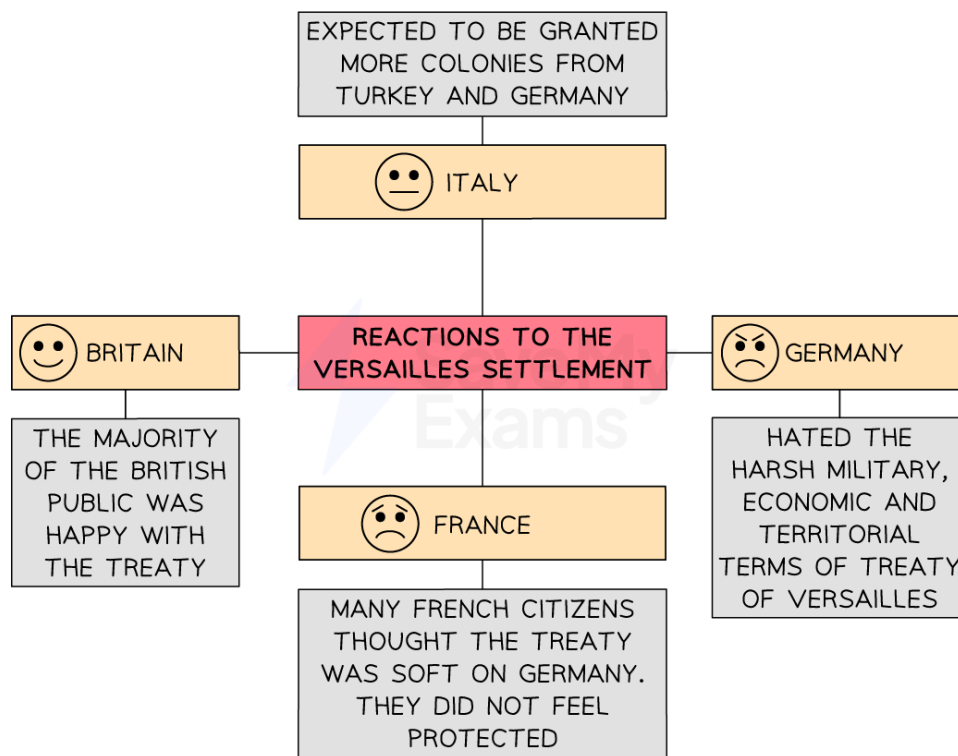
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A flow diagram showing the causes and consequences of Hitler's foreign policy



Europe's Reaction to the Treaty

- There was a **mixed reaction** in Europe to the Versailles Settlement in 1919



A concept map showing the initial reactions of European countries to the Versailles Settlement

- By **1923**, Europe's reaction to the Treaty of Versailles began to change
 - In Britain, the public thought that the treaty was **too harsh on Germany**
 - People began to **fear the USSR** more than Germany
 - Britain wanted a strong Germany to **defend Europe from communism**

November Criminals and the 'Dolchstoss'

- Many Germans argued that the **Weimar Republic should not have signed the Treaty of Versailles**
 - They believed that German politicians committed a '**dolchstoss**' - or a 'stab in the back'

- The politicians who signed the Treaty of Versailles were called '**November Criminals**'. This was because November was the month the government signed the armistice
- Many Germans felt **humiliated and weaker** than the rest of Europe
- The [Treaty of Versailles' territorial terms](#) increased **nationalism** in Germany
 - The **Polish Corridor separated Germany** into two
 - Around **4 million Germans lived in the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia**



Your notes

The Rise of Hitler

- The Treaty of Versailles had a [devastating impact on Germany](#)
 - **Reparations** caused **two economic depressions in a decade**
 - The German government **continued to follow the treaty's terms**
 - This caused public resentment
 - **Extremist** parties like the **KPD and the NSDAP gained support**
- The government arrested Hitler after he attempted the **Munich Putsch**
 - While in prison, **Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* ('My Struggle')**

A key belief in <i>Mein Kampf</i>	Summary of the belief
The superiority of the Aryan race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hitler believed the German race was the best in the world ▪ He was against Germans marrying Jewish people as he stated this weakened the Aryan race
<i>Lebensraum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Living space' in German ▪ A theory that Germany needed more territory so that the population could grow ▪ Germany should expand into Eastern Europe to destroy communism
Revise the Treaty of Versailles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hitler wanted to recover all of the land that Germany lost in the treaty ▪ Germany deserved a strong military. Hitler wanted to ignore the treaty and rearm
<i>Grossdeutschland</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Greater Germany' in German ▪ The idea that Germany should unite under one Reich (state)

- **All German speakers** should live together. This included **Anschluss** with Austria



Your notes

- Hitler believed that, when he gained power, it was **right to break the Treaty of Versailles** because:
 - Some of the **terms had already been reversed**
 - For example, the **Allies changed Germany's reparations** in the [Dawes and Young plans](#)
 - Other countries had **not kept promises made** at the Paris Peace Conference
 - The '**Big Three**' agreed to the **creation of the League of Nations**
 - The League aimed to encourage worldwide **disarmament**
 - Countries like France **refused to disarm**
 - Hitler feared the **power of the countries bordering Germany**
 - France had already invaded the Ruhr in 1923
 - Germany had **no air force and 100,000 soldiers**. It could not defend itself
 - Hitler had **public support**
 - In July 1932, the Nazi Party received **38% of the vote**
 - It became the biggest party in the **Reichstag**



A Nazi postcard, date unknown. It shows a ripped version of the Treaty of Versailles. The sun contains a swastika, the symbol of the Nazi Party. Image courtesy of the University of



A map in a 1935 book titled *Army, Navy and Air Force* by Hans Riegler. The map's caption stated: "With an insufficient military, Germany can be blockaded both by land and sea."



Worked Example

Describe the main aims of Hitler's foreign policy

4 marks

Answers:

Hitler wanted to create a Grossdeutschland (1). He wanted to incorporate all German speakers into Germany including through achieving Anschluss with Austria (1). He wanted to revise the terms of the Treaty of Versailles (1). He wanted to expand eastwards to achieve Lebensraum (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

This style of question does not require you to explain your answer. The Cambridge IGCSE gives you **a point for each relevant piece of information** that you write.

Therefore, do not spend any additional time trying to describe or explain each reason.



Your notes

How Did Hitler Break the Treaty of Versailles?



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A flow diagram showing the steps that Hitler took to reverse the Treaty of Versailles



Worked Example

Describe how Hitler broke the terms of the Treaty of Versailles

4 marks

Answers:

When Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, he broke many terms of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1933, he began to secretly rearm (1). In 1937, he tested out the Luftwaffe in the Spanish Civil War (1). In 1938, he successfully captured the Sudetenland (1). In 1939, he captured the whole of Czechoslovakia (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

In four-mark questions, ensure each detail you select is as specific as possible. The worked example above provides dates for each of Hitler's actions that broke the Treaty of Versailles.



Your notes

Consequences of the Failures of the League of Nations in the 1930s



Your notes

The Impact of Manchuria and Abyssinia

- In **1931**, Japan invaded the Chinese province of **Manchuria**
- In **1935**, Italy invaded the African country of **Abyssinia**
- Both incidents **encouraged Hitler's foreign policy** because:
 - Britain and France were selfish
 - The impacts of the **Great Depression** meant that **neither country wanted a war** with an aggressive nation
 - In both crises, they did not want to anger possible **allies** against Hitler
 - The League was **slow**
 - In the Manchurian Crisis, it took the League 18 months to react
 - The League was **weak**
 - **The USA was not a member**
 - Every time the League refused to act or reacted weakly, it damaged the League's reputation
 - **Hitler knew he could act without the League stopping him**
 - In the Manchurian Crisis, Japan ignored the League and faced no consequences
 - In the Abyssinian Crisis, the League placed economic sanctions on Italy but did nothing to stop Mussolini's use of chemical warfare

Germany Leaves the League

- Germany **left the League of Nations** in November 1933. This freed Hitler to pursue an aggressive foreign policy
- Hitler's **rearmament programme** began
 - This gave Hitler the necessary military force to invade other countries
- Many people in Britain believed that **Germany was right to rearm** because:
 - The **Treaty of Versailles had been too harsh** on Germany
 - Other countries were rearming
- Hitler could **openly display his military strength**
 - Nazi Germany used **rallies** to:
 - Advertise the strength of the German army



Your notes

- Show Germany's lack of respect for the military restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles
- The **1935 'Rally of Freedom'** at Nuremberg reintroduced **compulsory** military service
 - Celebrated Nazi film-maker Leni Riefenstahl made the film *Day of Freedom: Our Armed Forces* on the rally
- Hitler's **early militarism was not successful**
 - In **1934, Hitler attempted to annex Austria**
 - **Mussolini sent troops** to the Austrian border to prevent this
- By **1939**, there were around **1.4 million men in the German armed forces**
 - Spending on **armaments** increased from 3.5 billion marks in 1933 to 26 billion marks by 1939
 - Employment in aircraft construction increased from 4,000 people in 1933 to 72,000 people by 1935



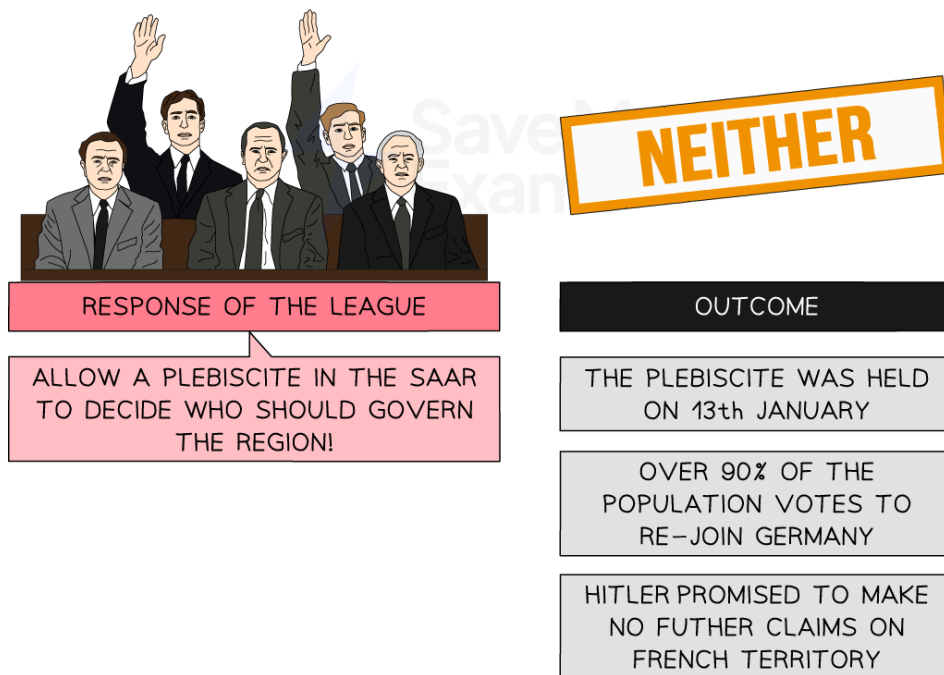
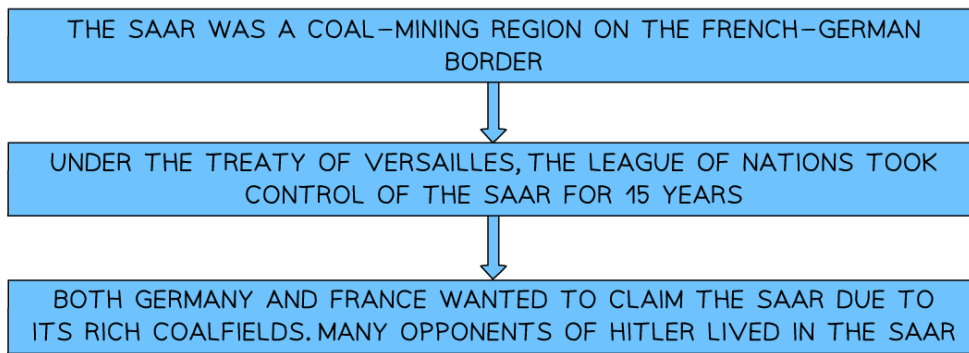
Examiner Tips and Tricks

The focus of this topic in the exam is whether Hitler's foreign policy was to blame for the Second World War. Building up the military is usually done to prepare for war. However, Hitler's rearmament programme may have just been a scare tactic. What is important is how the League allowed Hitler to break the Treaty of Versailles' military restrictions openly. If the League had reacted more harshly to Hitler, it may have stopped his aggressive foreign policy.

The Saar, 1935



Your notes



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A flowchart showing the reasons for a dispute over the Saar region, the League's reaction and the eventual outcome

What were the Impacts of the Saar Plebiscite?

- The plebiscite was a **propaganda victory for Hitler**
 - It showed the level of support for his policies, even in a region with Nazi opponents
- However, the League resolved a dispute legally
 - The League had stuck to the 15-year time limit set in the Treaty of Versailles
 - France and Germany had not gone to war
 - The people of the Saar achieved their aim of rejoining Germany
- Hitler wanted to use his popularity to **fulfil his idea of a Grossdeutschland**
 - To fulfil this, Hitler needed to capture land lost in the treaty
 - The League wanted to avoid war at all costs

- Hitler could **increase his rearmament programme**
 - The Saar provided Hitler with **key natural resources** for the rearmament industries
 - The League of Nations aimed to encourage disarmament



Your notes



A German badge created in 1934. The inscription states: “The Saarland is German”. The hand on the right represents the Saarland. The hand on the left represents Germany

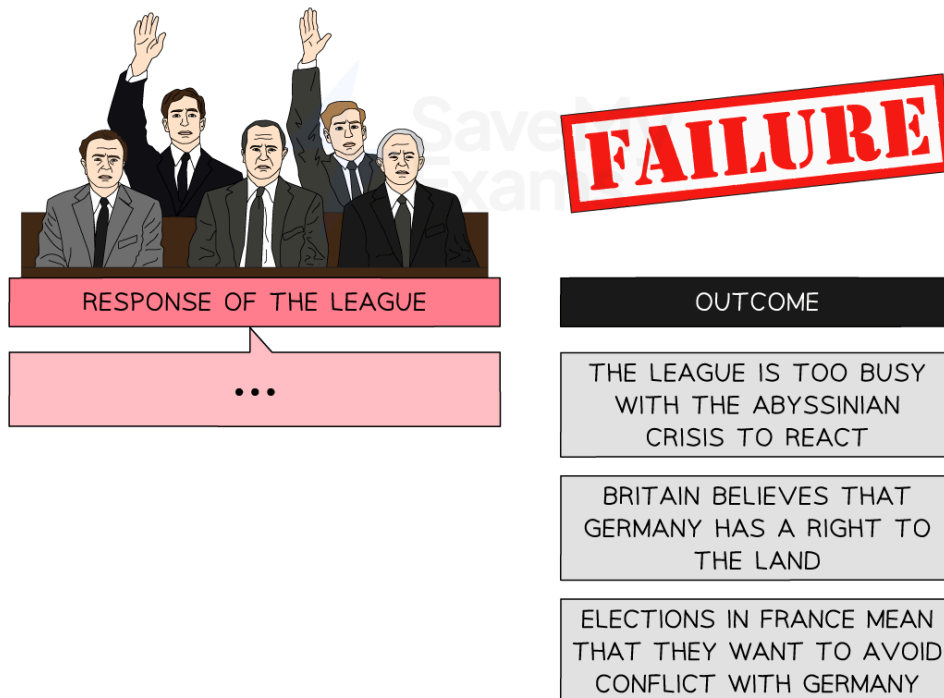
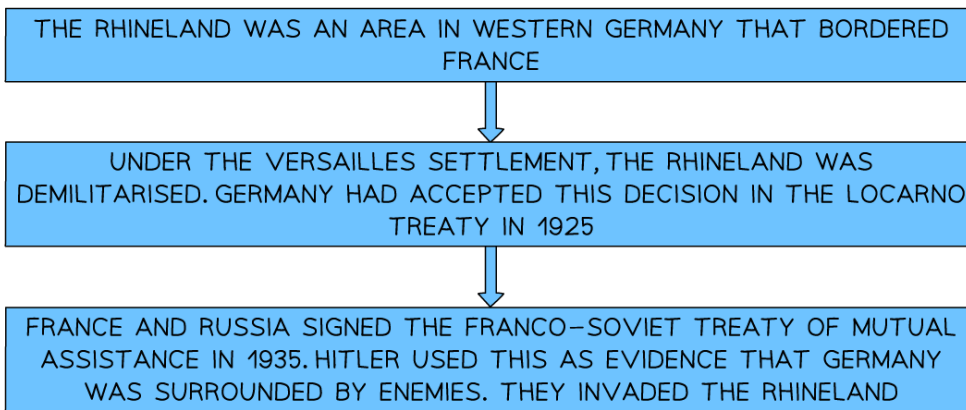


A German stamp created three days after the Saar Plebiscite. The writing at the top of the stamp reads: “The Saar comes home!”

Remilitarisation of the Rhineland, 1936



Your notes



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A flowchart showing the reasons for Hitler's invasion of the Rhineland, the League's reaction and the eventual outcome

How was the Remilitarisation of the Rhineland a Failure for the League of Nations?

- After the 1936 invasion, Hitler **built up his defences along the French border**
 - Germany constructed the **Siegfried Line**, a complex system of **fortifications**
 - The League of Nations had allowed Hitler to get away with breaching the Treaty of Versailles
- Hitler **gained more confidence**
 - Hitler knew he could expand Germany without consequences



Your notes

- Historians believe that this was the **League's last opportunity to stop Hitler** without a world war
- Hitler developed a strategy to **manipulate the League**
 - After the invasion, **Hitler signed a 25-year non-aggression pact** with France and Britain
 - Hitler had **no intention of keeping the pact**
 - It made Germany seem **less aggressive** than it was



A map showing how far Hitler had extended Germany's territory by 1936



Worked Example

Why was the remilitarisation of the Rhineland important to Hitler?

6 marks

Partial answer:

The remilitarisation of the Rhineland was important because it reversed part of the Treaty of Versailles (1). The treaty insisted on the demilitarisation of the land to protect France from invasion. However, the Rhineland was German land that Hitler wanted to make German again (1). Therefore the remilitarisation of the Rhineland was important for restoring Germany's pride. Hitler believed that Germany had the right to put troops on its own territory (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

In Paper One, 'explain why' questions are worth either six or ten marks. For full marks in this question, an examiner is looking for **two fully explained reasons** as to why the remilitarisation of the Rhineland was important for Hitler. Use the PEE structure in your answer:

- **P** – Make a **point** about the question
- **E** – Use **evidence** that supports the point that you have made
- **E** – **Explain** why this evidence made the remilitarisation of the Rhineland important. Avoid repeating the point again. Explain how this factor caused Hitler to place his troops on the Rhineland despite the risks of upsetting the League



Your notes

The Spanish Civil War

- **Civil war** broke out in Spain in **July 1936** between:
 - The **left-wing** Spanish **government**
 - **Right-wing nationalist** rebels led by **General Franco**

European Reactions to the Spanish Civil War

Country	Reaction to the Spanish Civil War	Reason for reaction
Britain	Created a Non-Intervention Committee to avoid fighting in the war	To avoid causing a bigger European war
France	Created a Non-Intervention Committee to avoid fighting in the war	Nationalist sympathisers in France could cause a civil war in the country
Germany	Sent weapons and aircraft to support right-wing rebels	To test out the new Luftwaffe and form an alliance with Mussolini
Italy	Sent weapons and aircraft to support right-wing rebels	To expand Italy's power and influence in Europe
USSR	Sent weapons and aircraft to support left-wing government	To stop the development of another fascist state in Europe

How was the Spanish Civil War a Failure for the League of Nations?

- The conflict killed **750,000 people**
 - This went against the League's mentality of stopping the use of war
- **General Franco won in 1939**
 - Fascism had won against democracy



Your notes

- Hitler and Mussolini formed a tighter bond
 - They signed the **Rome–Berlin Axis alliance in 1937**
- Germany developed **devastating military tactics**
 - Hitler tested the **concept of blitzkrieg, or 'lightning war'**, in the conflict
 - The Luftwaffe developed new bombing techniques
 - On **26th April 1937**, German and Italian bombers bombed the city of **Guernica**
 - Over three hours, they destroyed the city and **killed hundreds of civilians**
 - The Nazi's aerial bombing **shocked world leaders** and their populations
 - **Britain and France increased their rearmament programmes**
 - People worried about the consequences of war
 - Many civilians wanted to avoid war at all costs



Worked Example

Study Source A.

Why was this photo published in 1937? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge

7 marks

Source A: A photograph taken of Guernica by an unknown photographer in 1937. The image is captioned: "Spain, Guernica. - Ruins of destroyed buildings after German air raid of the "Legion Condor"





Your notes

Partial answer:

The photograph may have been published to show the aggression of Germany and Italy (1). In the Spanish Civil War, Hitler and Mussolini supported the right-wing nationalist rebels led by Franco. Hitler sent the Luftwaffe to experiment with new bombing techniques. Italian and German air forces bombed Guernica on 26th April 1937 (1). The picture shows the devastation to the city with multiple buildings in ruins (1). The picture highlights the dangerous nature of these two countries and how they purposefully attacked a civilian population (1).



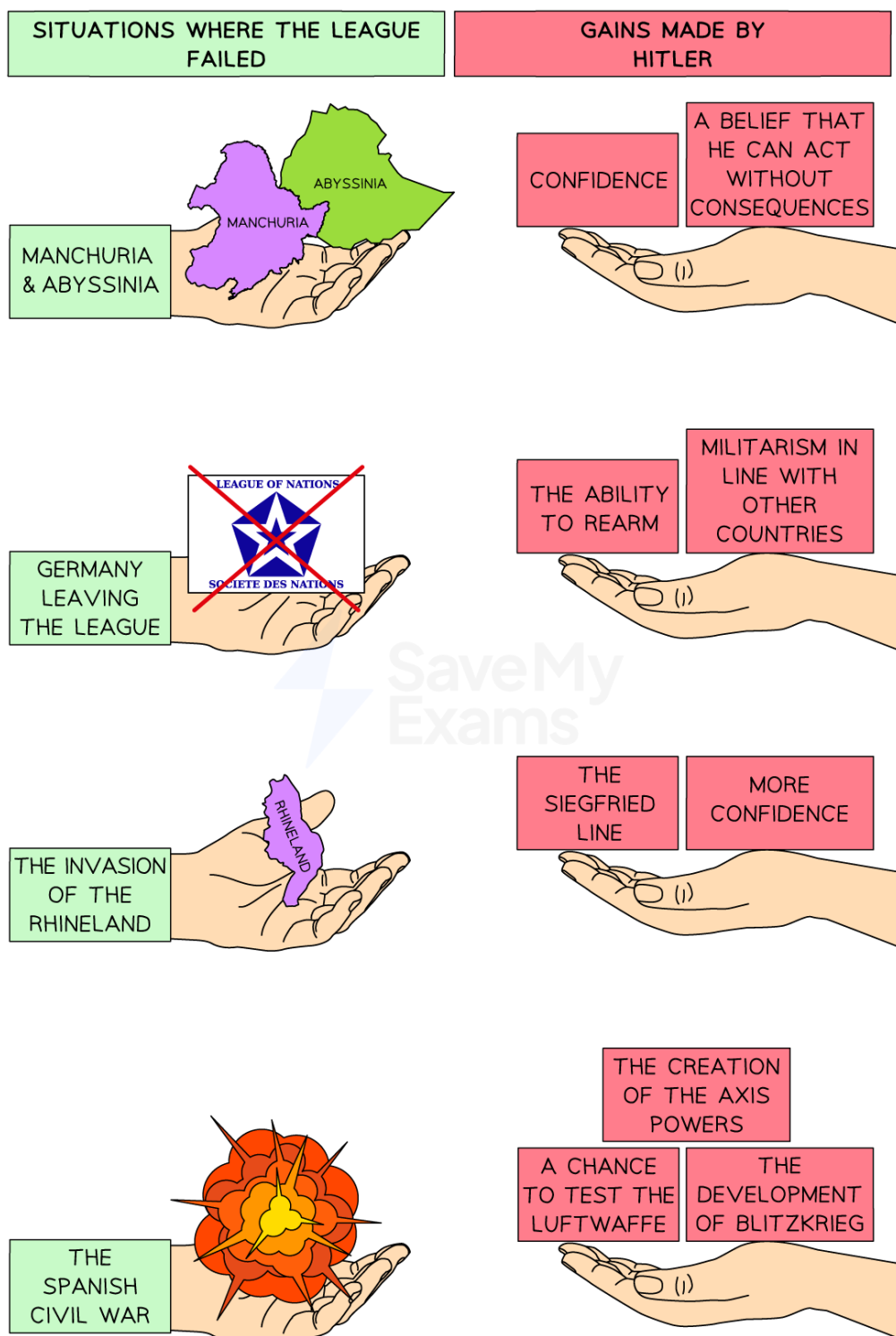
Examiner Tips and Tricks

This style of question in Paper Two needs you to consider:

- What the **message of the source** is. Identify the event it refers to and if it is presenting it positively or negatively. In this example, the photographer wants to show the devastation caused by the Italian and German aerial bombings.
 - **Knowledge of the event.** This picture assumes that the reader knows about the bombing of Guernica in 1937. Add relevant own knowledge of these events to support your answer.
 - The **purpose** of the picture. This source gives limited information on who took the picture and where it was published. However, a photographer would only take an image like this to show the public the reality of this event.
-
- The League's actions in the 1930s unintentionally gave Hitler success and opportunities:



Your notes



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An illustration showing what Hitler gained from each of the League of Nations' failures in the 1930s



What was Appeasement?

- **Appeasement was the policy of giving in to demands to avoid war**
 - Followers of appeasement use **diplomacy and treaties** to make allowance for aggressive nations
 - **Britain and France** followed the policy of appeasement in the 1930s
- Many historians associate appeasement with **Neville Chamberlain**
 - Like many other politicians, Chamberlain had **lost family members in the First World War**
 - His brother was killed in action in 1915
 - The First World War had horrified Chamberlain and the British public
 - He would **do anything to avoid another world war**
 - **In 1937, Chamberlain became the British Prime Minister**
 - During this time, he attempted to appease Hitler's foreign policy aims
- Not all British politicians agreed with appeasement
 - **Winston Churchill was a strong opponent of appeasement**
 - He stated that:



An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last

Motivations for Appeasement



Your notes

ARGUMENTS FOR APPEASEMENT



NEVILLE
CHAMBERLAIN

HITLER CAN STOP THE SPREAD
OF COMMUNISM

BRITAIN NEEDS TIME TO REARM

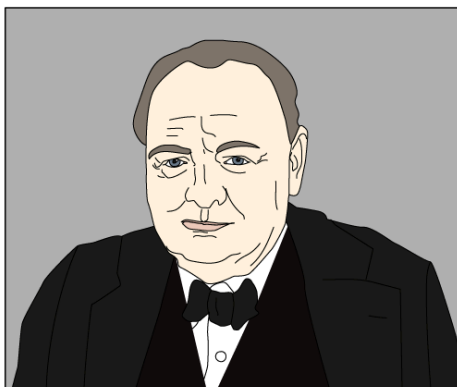
HITLER IS JUST TAKING BACK
WHAT THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES
UNFAIRLY TOOK FROM GERMANY

THE PUBLIC DO NOT WANT
ANOTHER WORLD WAR

BRITAIN CANNOT AFFORD A WAR
DUE TO THE DEPRESSION

HITLER WILL STOP HIS DEMANDS
SOON

ARGUMENTS AGAINST APPEASEMENT



WINSTON
CHURCHILL

WE CANNOT TRUST HITLER. HE
KEEPS BREAKING HIS PROMISES

GERMANY IS VERY QUICKLY
REARMING. WE NEED TO STOP
HITLER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

APPEASEMENT MAKES BRITAIN
LOOK WEAK. WE MUST STAND UP
AGAINST TYRANTS

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An illustration showing the arguments for and against the policy of Appeasement



Examiner Tips and Tricks

A Paper One exam question could ask you to explain if Chamberlain was justified in following the policy of appeasement. Use these arguments for appeasement. Discuss in your answer if Britain could stand up to Hitler. Consider the motivations for Chamberlain to follow appeasement. Explain if these reasons were bigger than the threat that Hitler posed to world peace.



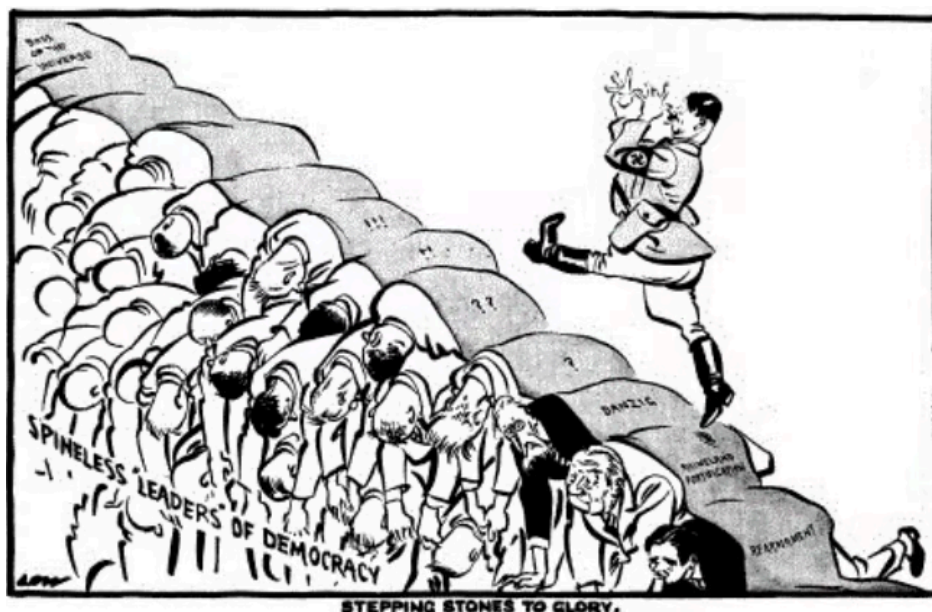
Worked Example

Study Source A.

How useful is this source to a historian studying the causes of the Second World War? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge

7 marks

Source A: A cartoon by David Low published in the *Evening Standard* on 8th July 1936 with the title "Stepping Stones to Glory". A representation of Hitler is seen stepping on multiple people's backs. The words 'Rearmament' and 'Rhineland Fortification' are displayed on the first three backs.



Partial answer:

Source A is useful for a historian because it shows the dangers of appeasement (1). The cartoon shows Hitler stepping over the backs of what Low calls "spineless leaders of democracy" (1). The cartoon was published in 1936. By this point, the League had allowed Hitler to rearm and remilitarise the Rhineland for Germany. The leaders of France and Britain were following a policy of appeasement, which gave in to Hitler's demands to avoid war (1). The cartoon shows that some people in 1936 disagreed with appeasement. Calling the leaders 'spineless' shows that Low believed that the leaders could do more to stop Hitler (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

All sources are, in some way, useful for a historian. To achieve full marks for this question, you need to comment on the nature, origin and purpose of the source

- **Nature** – The source is a cartoon produced in 1936. Cartoons are useful for understanding the zeitgeist, or the mood of the time. A limitation of cartoons as historical sources is that events are often exaggerated



Your notes

- **Origin** – David Low was born in New Zealand but worked in the UK. He created many political cartoons for *The Star* (1919 – 1927) and the *Evening Standard* (1927 – 1950)
- **Purpose** – Cartoons are often drawn to entertain or to provide an opinion. Low represents an anti-appeasement opinion in a time when a lot of British people supported the policy

This method of source analysis ensures you are using details from the source and your own knowledge in your answer.



Your notes

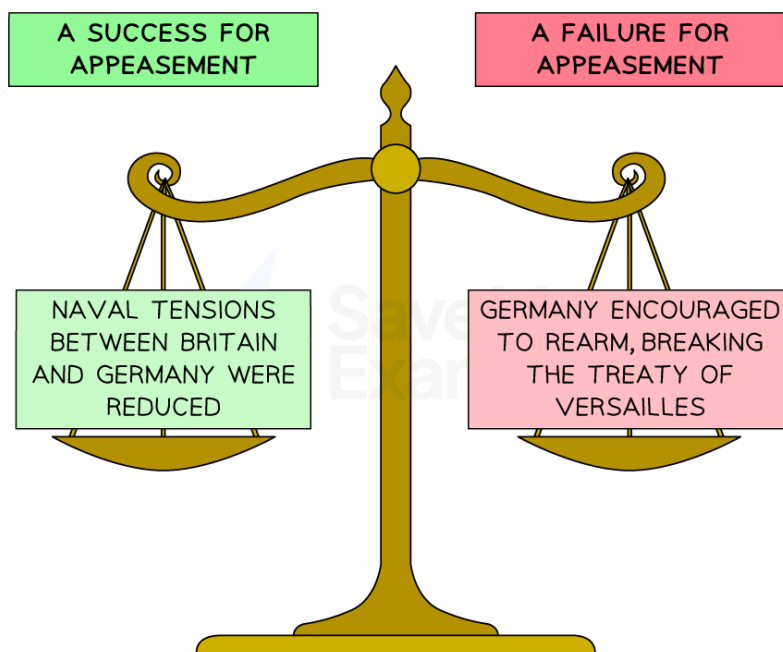


The Anglo-German Naval Agreement, 1935

- In **April 1935**, Britain, France and Italy entered into an agreement called the **Stresa Front**.
- The nations agreed to:
 - **Oppose Hitler's** foreign policy
 - Challenge Hitler if he attempted to break the Treaty of Versailles
- By June, the Stresa Front agreement had broken
 - The **Abyssinian Crisis** worsened Italy's relationship with Britain and France
 - Britain and Germany signed the **Anglo-German Naval Agreement**
 - This agreement was the first attempt at **appeasement**
 - It gave **concessions to Germany's navy** to limit Hitler's aggression

Date	Terms	Impacts
June 1935	Germany to have a navy 35% the size of the British Royal Navy Germany allowed to develop submarines . They can only have 45% of the submarines that Britain possesses A guarantee of Britain's naval supremacy	The agreement broke the Treaty of Versailles and the Stresa Front It showed that Britain wanted to protect itself rather than protect Europe from Hitler

Was the Anglo-German Naval Agreement a Success for Appeasement?



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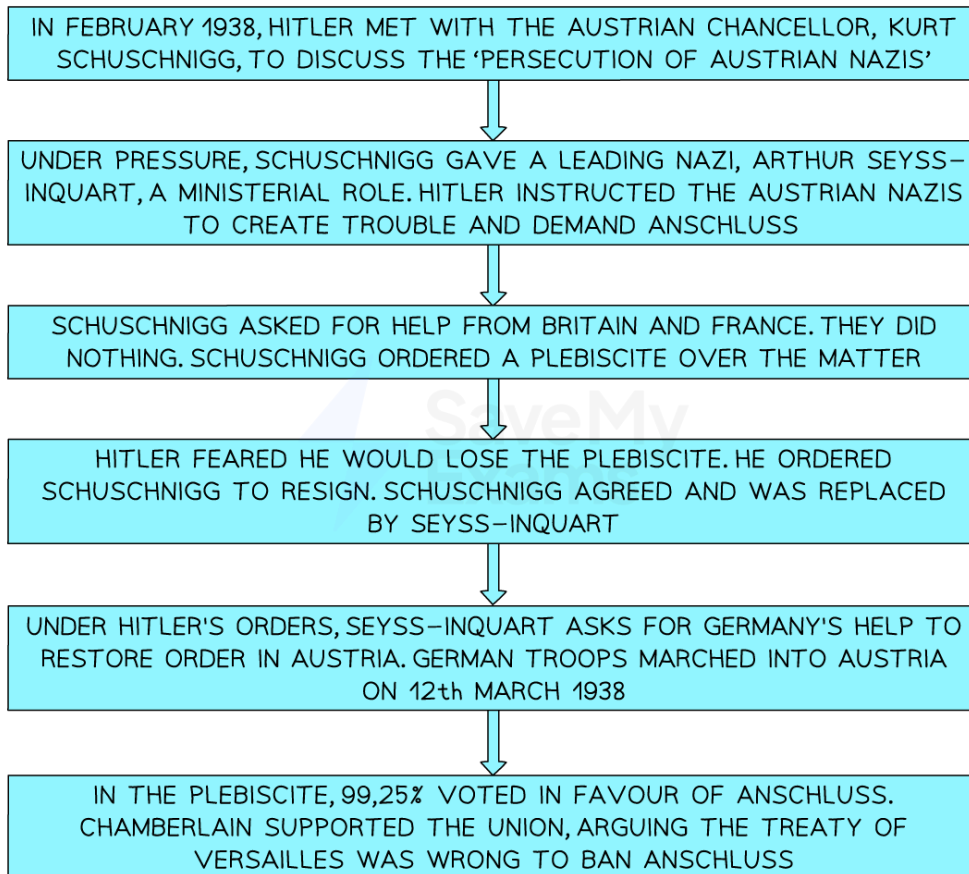
An illustration showing the positives and negatives of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement for appeasement

Anschluss, 1938

- Many Austrians supported the idea of **Anschluss** because:
 - The majority of Austrians, around 98%, spoke German
 - They felt that Austria had a **weak economy** without Germany
 - There was a **strong Nazi Party** in Austria
- By **March 1938**, Hitler had united Austria with Germany unopposed



Your notes



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A flow diagram showing how Hitler achieved Anschluss in 1938



A photograph of Hitler's arrival in Vienna in March 1938. The original caption states: "The Führer's arrival in Vienna on Monday afternoon turned out to be a triumphal entry, the likes of which no statesman has ever experienced."

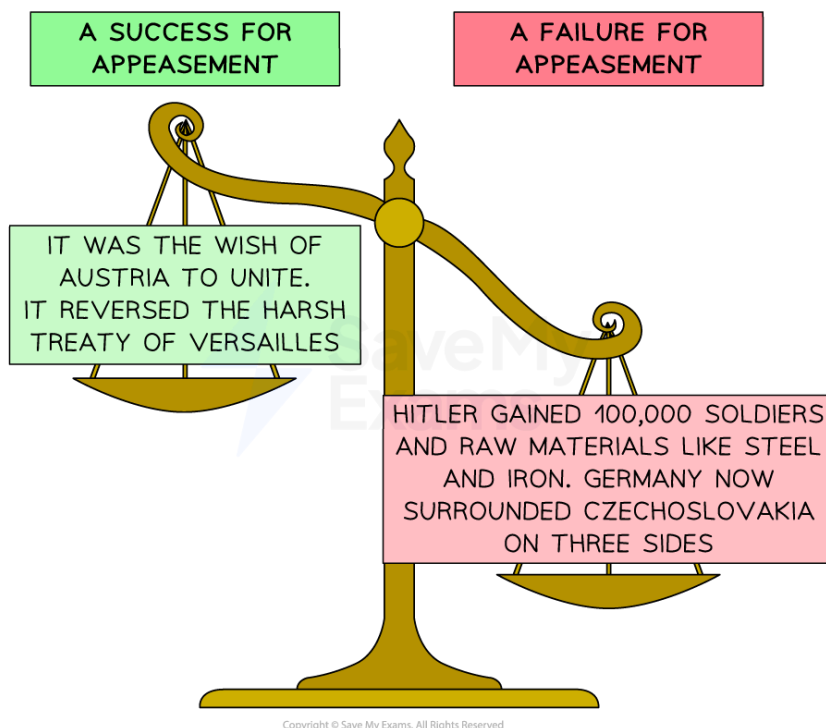


Your notes

Crowds on that March 12 included the unconvinced and the skeptical, as well as the curious. People gathered as if drawn by a magnet; but their presence did not endorse the new political environment, nor did it contradict the findings of recent government polls [that between 65 and 70% of Austrians wanted to retain independence from Germany]

An extract from *When Hitler Took Austria* (2008). The author of the book is Kurt von Schuschnigg, the son of the former Austrian Chancellor

Was Anschluss a Success for Appeasement?



An illustration showing the positives and negatives of Anschluss for appeasement



Worked Example

Study Sources F and G. After reading Source F, do you believe Hitler in Source G? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge

8 marks

Source F: From a speech by Churchill to the British Parliament, 14 March 1938

The seriousness of the event on 12 March cannot be exaggerated. Europe is confronted with a programme of aggression, unfolding stage by stage, and there is only one choice open to us and to other countries – either to submit, like Austria, or to take effective measures while time remains to ward off the danger. If we were

to delay, how much should we throw away of resources which are now available for our security and for the maintenance of peace?

We cannot leave the Austrian question where it is. We cannot accept as a final solution of the problem of Central Europe the event which occurred on 12 March. The public has been concentrated upon the moral and sentimental aspects of the Nazi conquest of Austria – a small country brutally struck down, its Government scattered to the winds, the oppression of the Nazi party doctrine imposed upon a Catholic population and upon the working classes of Austria. Nazi Germany, in its present mood, is in a position to dominate the whole of South East Europe. Over an area inhabited perhaps by 200 million people, Nazism and all that it involves is moving on to absolute control. Therefore, we await further statements from His Majesty's Government with the greatest possible interest.

Source G: From a speech by Hitler during the campaign for the German parliamentary elections, 25 March 1938

Certain foreign newspapers have said that we fell on Austria with brutal methods. I can only say that even in death they cannot stop lying. I have in the course of my political struggle won much love from my people, but when I crossed the former frontier into Austria I was met by such a stream of love as I have never before experienced. We have come not as tyrants, but as liberators: an entire people rejoiced. Here, not brutal violence, but our swastika has conquered. In truth it was the uprising of the people. Millions of our countrymen in Austria have held their banners high and have remained loyal to the Reich.

Partial answer:

After reading Source F, I do not believe Hitler in Source G (1). This is because he lies about how Anschluss with Austria occurred. In Source G, Hitler states “when I crossed the former frontier into Austria I was met by such a stream of love”. However, in Source F, Churchill argues that it was a “Nazi conquest of Austria – a small country brutally struck down” (1). It is untrue all Austrians welcomed Hitler. Hitler demanded the resignation of Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, using the threat of violence from the Austrian Nazi Party (1). As a result, Hitler is not correct when he states that “an entire people rejoiced” when the country’s leader did not agree to the policy (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

For this Paper Two question, ensure you have two paragraphs stating if you believe Hitler or Churchill’s assessment of Anschluss with Austria. Consider the purpose of each of the sources. For example, Hitler was speaking during the campaign for the German parliamentary elections, which may make his account of Anschluss **biased**. Identify where the two sources disagree and who is the most trustworthy source.



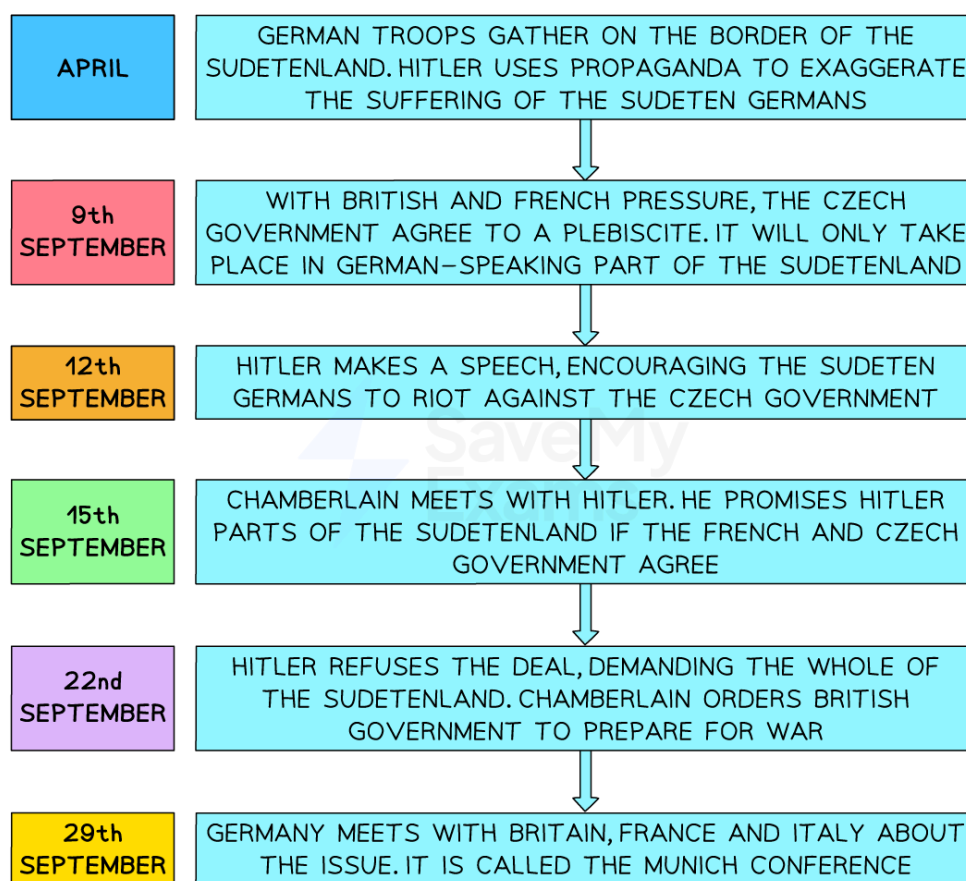
Your notes

The Sudeten Crisis and the Munich Conference, 1938



- Hitler wanted to gain the **Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia** for Germany because:
 - After Anschluss, **Germany bordered Czechoslovakia on three sides**
 - Claiming Czechoslovakia would **protect Germany** from invasion
 - The Sudetenland had **rich mineral resources** and the Skoda **armament** factory
 - This would help Germany's armament industry
 - The Sudetenland had **fortifications**
 - By claiming this area, it would make invading the whole of Czechoslovakia easier for Hitler
 - Over **3.5 million Germans** lived in the Sudetenland
 - The Sudeten Germans claimed that the Czech government mistreated them
 - Hitler would continue to achieve his foreign policy aims of **Grossdeutschland** and **Lebensraum**
- In **1938**, Hitler began his attempt to claim Czechoslovakia

What was the Sudeten Crisis?



A flow diagram showing the development of the Sudeten Crisis

The Munich Conference



Your notes

- Representatives from **Italy, Britain, France and Germany** attended the conference
 - **Czechoslovakia was not invited** to the meeting
 - This made the meeting unfair from the start
 - **The USSR were not involved** in the conference
 - This created **distrust** between the USSR and the Western powers

The Munich Agreement

- The four nations (Italy, Britain, France and Germany) developed the Munich Agreement on 30th September 1938
 - These were **terms** agreed by Hitler to **avoid war**
- The Munich Agreement stated that:
 - **Hitler would gain the Sudetenland**
 - Czechoslovakia would keep the rest of their territory
- The Munich Agreement was **controversial** because:
 - **Czechoslovakia had to accept the terms**
 - Hungary and Poland also claimed areas of Czechoslovakia
 - Poland gained Teschen in October 1938
- Hitler marched into the Sudetenland on **1st October 1938**

Was the Munich Agreement a Success for Appeasement?



A photograph taken on 30th September 1938. Chamberlain declared that the Munich Conference had guaranteed 'peace for our time' Image courtesy of the National Archive of Poland)

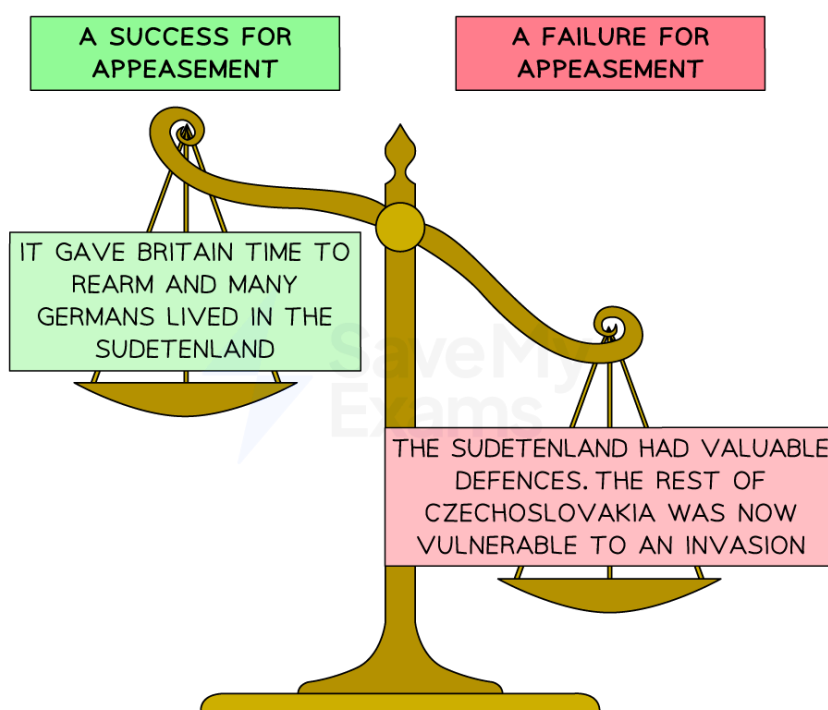


Your notes

The Munich agreement gives Hitler everything he wants (to begin with) ...

All the misery and outrage that followed the German occupation of Vienna are now certain to follow the German occupation of the Sudetenland. Prague has, even now, begun to fill with refugees – Sudeten German Socialists, Jews, not to speak of Czechs – which is natural enough, seeing that for months the German newspapers, wireless, and Hitler himself have referred to the Czechs in terms that have been one prolonged incitement to acts of violence and oppression.

An editorial in the *Manchester Guardian* on 1st October 1938. It states a negative opinion of the Munich Agreement, especially due to its impact on Czechoslovakia



An illustration showing the positives and negatives of the Munich Agreement for appeasement



Worked Example

‘Anschluss was more important than the takeover of the Sudetenland in achieving Hitler’s aims.’ How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer

10 marks

Partial answer:

The Sudetenland was important to Hitler as he wanted to unite all German-speaking people (1). In the Sudetenland, there were 3.5 million Germans living there. This land

had been given to Czechoslovakia under the Treaty of St Germain, part of the Versailles Settlement (1). This was important for Hitler's aims as it helped to achieve *Grossdeutschland* and *Lebensraum* by uniting German speakers into one Reich and increasing Germany's territory. This helped open Eastern Europe up to aggressive German expansion (1).



Your notes



Examiner Tips and Tricks

A strong response for this Paper One question needs to **examine both sides of the argument**. The next paragraph would explain how Anschluss was important to Hitler, for example achieving one of his key foreign policy aims. Continue to use a clear **PEE structure** as shown above.

You would then need to write a **conclusion explaining how far you agree** that Anschluss was more important than the Sudetenland to Hitler. Remember to use phrases like '**fully**' or '**partially**' to explain the level that you agree or disagree with the statement.

Invasion of Czechoslovakia, 1939

- By March 1939, Hitler gained the rest of Czechoslovakia
 - Hitler demanded the Czech government surrender control of Czechoslovakia
 - Failure to do this would result in the Luftwaffe **bombing Prague**
 - On 15th March, Hitler marched into Prague
 - He succeeded in encouraging **Slovakia to declare independence**
- Hitler **could not defend his actions** to claim the whole of Czechoslovakia
 - There was **no German-speaking population** in the land he claimed
 - Hitler intended to increase Germany's power
- The invasion of Czechoslovakia **ended the policy of appeasement**
 - **Chamberlain stated on 17th March that he could no longer trust Hitler**
 - Britain and France looked to protect vulnerable countries in Europe from Hitler



Your notes



KEY:	
	GERMANY, 1933
	RHINELAND REMILITARIZED, 1936
	AREAS ANNEXED, 1938
	AREAS ANNEXED, 1939
	SLOVAKIA (BECOMES GERMAN PROTECTORATE, MARCH 1939)

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A map showing how far Hitler had extended Germany's territory by March 1939



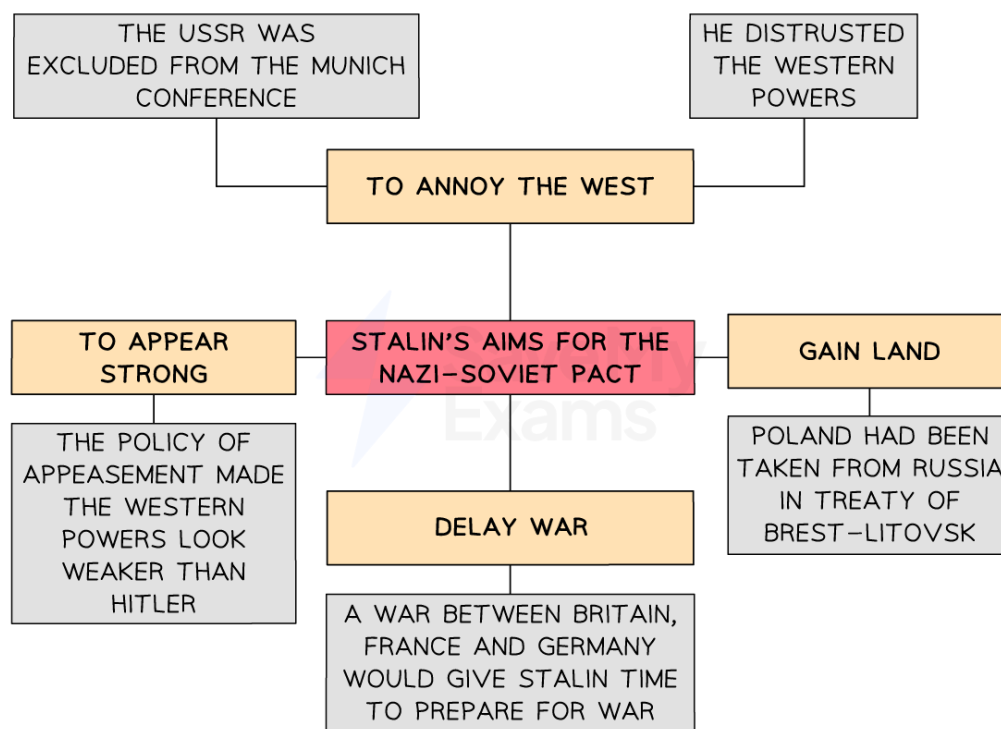
The USSR's Aims for the Nazi–Soviet Pact

- The **Versailles Settlement** created the **Polish Corridor**
 - This gave Poland access to the sea
 - It cut **Germany's territory into two** separate areas
- After Hitler invaded **Czechoslovakia in March 1939**, it was clear that Hitler would attempt to **gain the Polish Corridor for Germany**
- Hitler and Stalin (the leader of the **USSR**) were enemies because:
 - They believed in **opposite ideologies**
 - Hitler was **Fascist**. This is a far **right-wing** belief
 - Stalin was **Communist**. This is a far **left-wing** belief
 - They had **different aims for Europe**
 - Hitler wanted Germany to dominate Europe
 - Stalin wanted to gain land to implement communism
 - They had **fought on opposite sides** in the **Spanish Civil War**
 - Hitler had supported General Franco and the right-wing rebels
 - Stalin had sent equipment to the left-wing government
- On **23rd August 1939**, Germany and the USSR formed the **Nazi–Soviet Pact**
 - It is also known as the **Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact**
 - The signing of the pact **shocked the world**

Why Did Stalin Sign the Pact?



Your notes



A concept map showing what Stalin hoped to achieve from the Nazi-Soviet Pact



Worked Example

Explain why Stalin entered the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939

6 marks

Partial answer:

One reason why Stalin entered the Nazi-Soviet Pact was to give him time to rearm (1). The pact would mean Germany would focus on fighting with Britain and France rather than the USSR (1). This was a big motivation for Stalin to sign the pact. This is because he could focus Soviet industry on producing armaments. He knew that Hitler would break the pact to pursue *Lebensraum* (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

In Paper One, 'explain why' questions are worth either six or ten marks. For full marks in this question, an examiner is looking for **two fully explained reasons** as to why Stalin entered the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Use the PEE structure in your answer:

- **P** – Make a **point** about the question
- **E** – Use **evidence** that supports the point that you have made

- **E** – Explain why this evidence caused Stalin to sign the pact. Avoid repeating the point again. Explain how this factor motivated Stalin to side with Hitler rather than stand up against him.

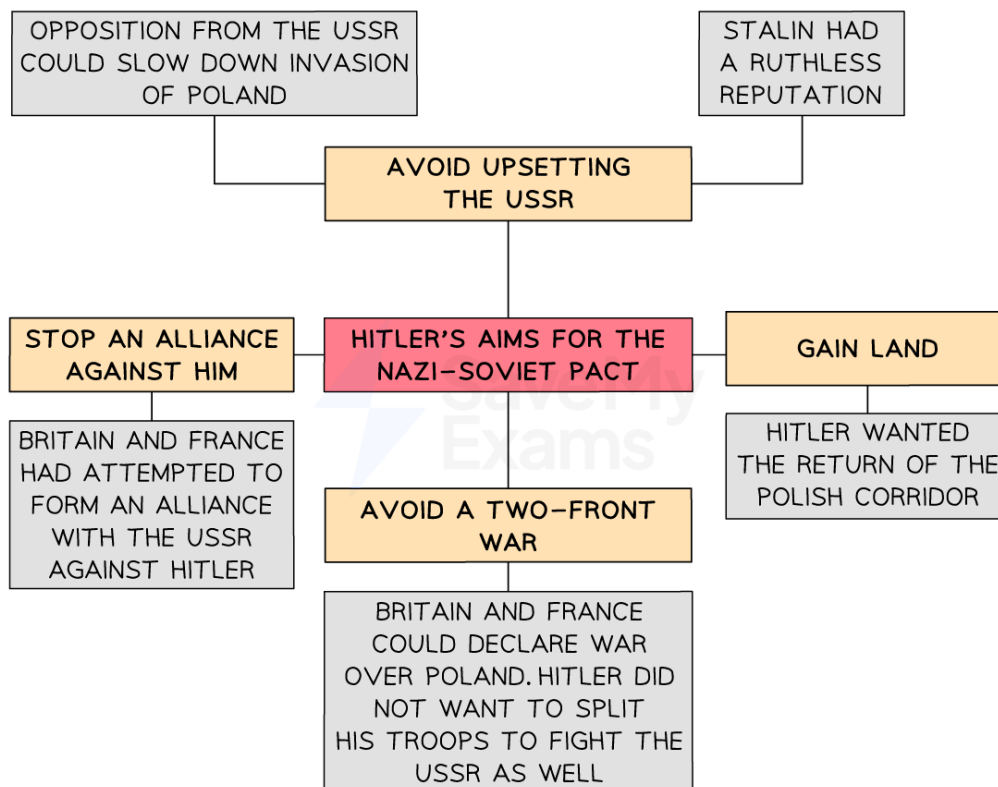


Your notes

Germany's Aims for the Nazi–Soviet Pact

- Hitler sent a **telegram to Stalin on 20th August** asking for the pact. This was surprising because:
 - The USSR had a **large Jewish population**
 - It was a common, but incorrect, belief that many Soviet communists were Jewish
 - Hitler considered the **Slavs**, people who lived in Eastern Europe, as **subhuman**
 - **Taking the USSR's territory** was necessary to fulfil Hitler's foreign policy aim of **Lebensraum**

Why Did Hitler Sign the Pact?



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A concept map showing what Hitler hoped to achieve from the Nazi–Soviet Pact

Terms of the Nazi–Soviet Pact

Date	Terms	Impacts
August 1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A non-aggression pact between Germany and the USSR for 10 years The secret partitioning of Polish territory. Stalin to gain control of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Finland. Germany to gain half of Poland and the city of Danzig 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public agreement shocked the world, especially Britain and France Germany invaded Poland nine days after the signing of the pact



Your notes



Your notes



KEY:

GERMANY

THE SOVIET UNION

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A map showing the partition of Poland and the territory gains agreed in the Nazi-Soviet Pact



Your notes



A picture of Joseph Stalin shaking hands with the German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop after signing the Nazi-Soviet Pact



A cartoon in an American newspaper the day after the Nazi-Soviet Pact. It uses the story of Little Red Riding Hood to show the danger of the Nazi-Soviet Pact to Poland

Other Alliances – Anti-Comintern Pact



Your notes

- By the time of signing the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Hitler had entered into **other alliances that strengthened his position**
 - In **1936**, Germany and Japan signed the **Anti-Comintern Pact**

Date	Terms	Impacts
November 1936	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ An agreement between Japan and Germany to help each other in the fight against communism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1937▪ Japan, with its large military, was a powerful ally to Hitler

Other Alliances – The Pact of Steel

- Germany and Italy entered into a **formal alliance** called the **Pact of Steel in 1939**
 - Its formal name is the **Pact of Friendship and Alliance**
 - The two countries had signed a friendship treaty in **1936** dubbed the **Rome-Berlin Axis**

Date	Terms	Impacts
May 1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A military alliance that promised to help each other in times of war▪ To agree peace with another country, both Germany and Italy must agree to the terms▪ To work together in war planning and armament	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Triggered the Tripartite Pact in 1940, uniting Japan, Italy and Germany▪ Made Italy a formal ally to Germany, increasing Hitler's military strength in Europe

How Did Other Alliances Influence the Nazi-Soviet Pact?

- Stalin became increasingly worried about the **power of Fascism**
 - **Japan was an old enemy of Russia**
 - Japan had beaten Russia in a war in 1904
 - Japanese-controlled Manchuria bordered the USSR
 - The Nazi-Soviet Pact would give Stalin **temporary protection** from Japan and Germany

- The pact was **doomed to fail**
 - The Anti-Comintern Pact made it clear that **Hitler did not support Communism**
 - In 1941, Hitler broke the Nazi-Soviet Pact by invading Russia in Operation Barbarossa



Your notes



Worked Example

Study Source A. What impressions does Source A give of the relationship between Hitler and Mussolini? Explain your answer using details of the source

7 marks

Source A: From a history book published in 1981

In March 1938, Hitler marched into Austria after notifying Rome only at the very last moment. Italy thus lost the immense advantage of having only a weak buffer state on her northern frontier. Having often promised that he would fight to defend Austrian independence, now in March Mussolini protested he had never said anything so foolish. Hitler had been careful not to tell Mussolini of his plans to extend Germany's living space and calculated that, as Italy had its hands full in Spain, he could meanwhile take Austria and Czechoslovakia, possibly without offering his partner anything in return. He had gradually been displacing Italy in the commerce of south-eastern Europe. Mussolini was seriously worried and occasionally he spoke of changing sides in Europe. He still hoped to ride several horses at once but such behaviour was irresponsible, unrealistic and hardly that of a potential ally.

Partial answer:

Source A suggests that Mussolini was worried about his relationship with Hitler (1). The source discusses that, when Hitler enacted Anschluss, he did not inform Mussolini until "the very last moment". Italy bordered Austria and had promised to protect Austrian independence from Hitler (1). Therefore, the source proves that Anschluss made Mussolini question their relationship with Hitler. He may have needed more reassurance from Hitler which may have motivated Mussolini to enter the Pact of Steel with Germany in 1939 (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

In this style of question in Paper Two, ensure you read the source carefully. You need to understand the source to discover what the source suggests about Hitler and Mussolini's relationship. To help you, highlight and annotate important sections of the source. You can also add key knowledge around the quote to plan how you will answer the question.



British–French Guarantee of Poland, March 1939

- After Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, Britain and France believed that **Hitler's next move was to retake Poland**
 - The **Versailles Settlement** established the Polish Corridor from German land
 - **Poland cut Germany's territory into two** separate areas
 - The free city of **Danzig** lay in Poland
 - It had been made free in the Versailles Settlement
 - It **used to be a German city** and contained many Germans
 - Hitler had already **demande**d the **return** of Danzig
 - Hitler was **expanding eastwards**
 - Czechoslovakia bordered Poland
- Britain and France **abandoned the concept of appeasement** by March 1939
 - They did not believe that Hitler would stop his aggressive foreign policy
 - Britain and France had made significant progress in **rearmament**



Your notes



KEY:	
	GERMANY, 1933
	RHINELAND REMILITARIZED, 1936
	AREAS ANNEXED, 1938
	AREAS ANNEXED, 1939
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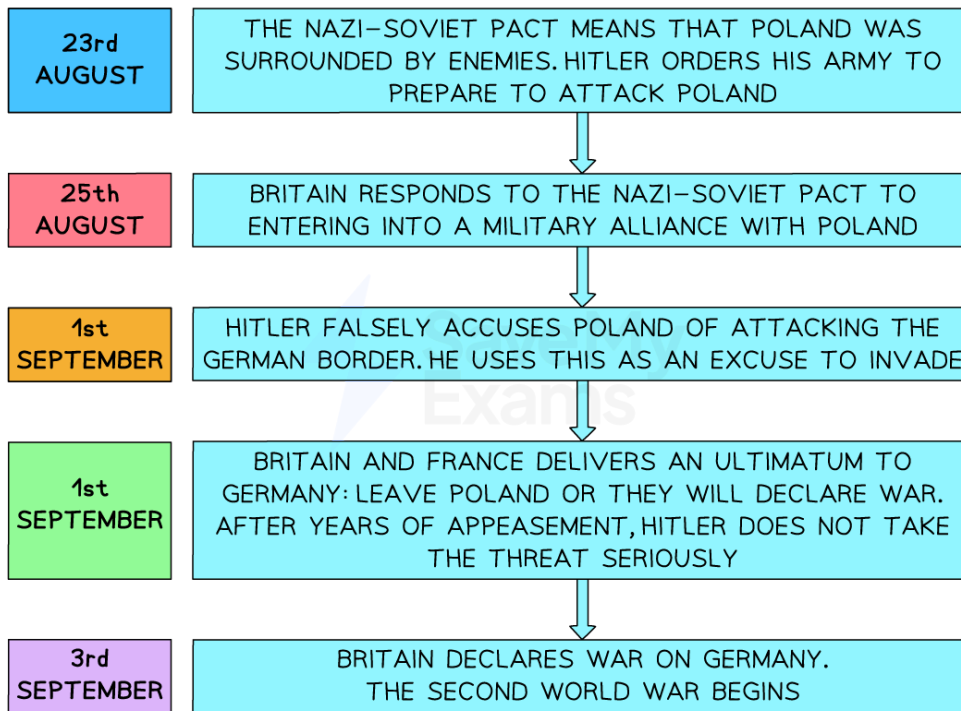
A map showing how far Hitler had extended Germany's territory by March 1939

- On 31st March 1939, Britain and France made a formal agreement with Poland
 - The two countries promised that they would protect Poland's borders

The Polish Crisis and the Outbreak of War



Your notes



A flow diagram showing how the Polish Crisis caused the outbreak of the Second World War

- Hitler was surprised that Britain declared war because:
 - Britain and France had allowed Hitler to **get away with similar invasions**
 - Hitler believed he could **negotiate with Britain**
 - Hitler thought that, if he promised not to invade Britain and its **colonies**, Britain would allow Hitler to control Europe
 - Hitler believed that he had **legitimate reasons** to invade Poland
 - Germans lived in the Polish Corridor
 - Danzig was originally a German city
 - He did not think Britain was prepared for war

This morning the British ambassador in Berlin handed the German government a final note stating that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received, and that consequently this country is at war with Germany

A section of Chamberlain's radio broadcast, declaring the outbreak of the Second World War, 3rd September 1939



Your notes



The front page of the *Boston Evening Globe* on 1st September 1939 explaining Britain and France's ultimatum to Germany. It shows the belief that Hitler's invasion of Poland would result in war



Worked Example

Are you surprised that Germany invaded Poland in September 1939? Explain your answer

10 marks

Partial answer:

On one hand, I am not surprised that Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939 (1). Germany and the USSR signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact in August. A key term in this pact was the division of Poland between the two powers (1). This meant that Hitler knew that if he invaded Poland he would not be attacked by the USSR. As a result, it should have been very clear to the world powers that Hitler intended to invade Poland quickly to expand his territory (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

A strong response for this Paper One question needs to **examine both sides of the argument**. The next paragraph would explain why it was surprising that Hitler invaded Poland. You could use the British-French guarantee to Poland. Continue to use a clear **PEE structure** as shown above.

You would then need to write a **conclusion explaining how surprised you are** that

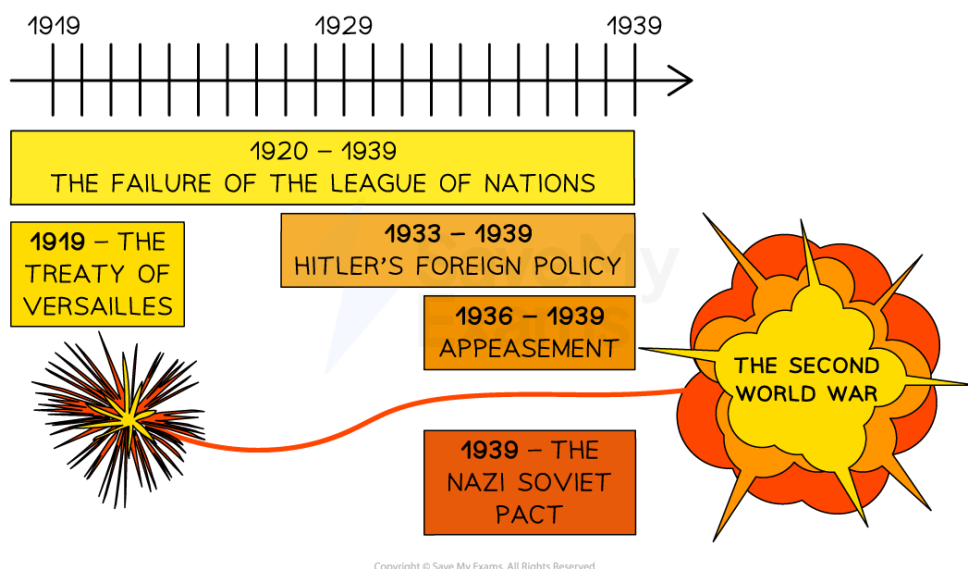
Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939. Remember to use phrases like 'fully' or 'partially' to explain how surprised you are about Hitler's actions.



Your notes

Causes of the Second World War

Cause	Why did this cause the Second World War?
The Treaty of Versailles	The harsh terms of the treaty caused significant political and economic issues in Germany . Lloyd George warned that the terms would cause a future conflict . The resentment for the treaty was one of the causes of the election of Hitler in 1933
The failure of the League of Nations	In the 1920s, the League of Nations had proven itself to be weak and ineffective . The League's lack of action against the Manchurian and the Abyssinian Crises encouraged Hitler to take risks in his foreign policy. Britain and France favoured their own interests over the League's
Hitler's foreign policy	Hitler's aims were aggressive and expansionist . Ideas about Grossdeutschland and Lebensraum meant expanding eastwards into other countries. Hitler invested heavily in rearmament and the Luftwaffe . Possessing this much military power made war more likely
Appeasement	The policy gave Hitler Austria and the Sudetenland against their governments and the Treaty of Versailles . Hitler viewed Britain and France as weak. This encouraged him to make increasingly outrageous demands that would lead to war
The Nazi-Soviet Pact	The USSR had many reasons to avoid breaking the pact. As a result, Britain and France were weaker without the USSR . The pact gave Hitler the perfect conditions to invade Poland. He knew that, if his actions triggered a war, he would only fight this with Britain and France



An illustration showing a build-up of events that caused the Second World War in 1939



Worked Example

Study Sources A and B. How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources

7 marks

Source A: From a history book published in 1992

The Czech crisis brought Europe very close to war. Hitler wrote at this time, 'It is my unalterable decision to smash Czechoslovakia by military action.' The effects of the Munich Agreement had profound implications for European diplomacy and the balance of power, since with hindsight it is clear that Hitler was now prepared to pursue a policy of war, although he wanted to fight any conflict on his terms. His ultimate objective was still the creation of Lebensraum at the expense of the USSR, but hopefully this could be achieved by Britain's appeasement policy developing into a more general acceptance of Germany's dominant position in central and eastern Europe. In March 1939 Germany had secured the self-dissolution of the Czech state. Some historians have pointed to the various military orders Hitler gave at this time for the establishment of long-range bomber squadrons and the construction of a large navy as evidence that he was willing to take on Britain. This may well have been his long-term intention, but in the short term Hitler most definitely did not want a war with Britain and France. How could he avoid such a conflict while pursuing his claims against Poland? It was the hope of neutralising Britain and France which drove Hitler into the arms of Stalin. After the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was signed, Hitler was confident that western military involvement would not follow a German invasion of Poland. But by 3 September Germany was at war with Britain and France. How did Germany find itself in this

position? The cause was Hitler's desire for continental hegemony* and Lebensraum which could only be achieved (as he well knew) by military force

*hegemony = the dominance of one group over another



Your notes

Source B: From a history book published in 1960

The main thrust of Hitler's foreign policy was eastwards. He wanted a German empire in eastern Europe but no more. He hoped to achieve this without war. Germany posed no threat to Britain. Chamberlain caused German hostility towards Britain by unnecessarily intervening in the Sudeten crisis of May and September 1938.

Hitler may have directed his generals to prepare for war but this was only to make Germany stronger, not to fight a war. Hitler believed that Germany was most likely to make gains in eastern Europe if it was strong. He also believed that Communism might break down without a war, allowing him to get what he wanted with no effort at all. However, he had no firm plans and was willing to improvise and take what was offered to him by circumstances. He wanted no more than to make Germany a great power, an aim which all countries have. Hitler's speech in August 1939 tells us the importance of the Pact with the Soviet Union, 'Now the probability is great that the West will not intervene.' His promise to Britain in August that Germany's frontier in the West was final and that he would not threaten the British Empire, shows he had no ambitions directed against Britain and France. By the end of August the breach between Poland and its allies Britain and France was widening and could soon be wide open. However, it also gave Hitler a chance and he gambled on it by ordering the attack on Poland. This decision, based as it was on Hitler supposing that Britain and France would not go to war, was a mistake, a miscalculation.

Partial answer:

Sources A and B disagree on whether Hitler was prepared for a world war (1). Source A states that Hitler planned for the possibility of war. It states that his foreign aim policies "could only be achieved (as he well knew) by military force" (1). Hitler began an aggressive and expensive rearmament programme in 1933. By 1939, there were around 1.4 million men in the German armed forces and a total cost of 26 billion marks on rearmament (1). However, Source B states that Hitler was improvising and did not have a war plan. Source B states that Hitler "hoped to achieve [a German empire] without war" and "gambled" on attacking Poland (1).



Examiner Tips and Tricks

For written sources in Paper Two, use a quote directly from the source to provide evidence. You can use square brackets [...] to replace words like 'it' with the event referred to in a previous sentence. This ensures that your quotes are short and to the point. Do not be afraid to take quotes from multiple parts of the source (as the worked example does for Source B). This helps you show the examiner that you understand the overall message of the source.