

Treaty of Versailles →

- Treaty that ended WWI
- Germany was blamed for the war, had to pay reparations to the Allied Powers, could not rebuild its military, and lost territory.
- Germany could not afford to repay the reparations after the Stock Market Crash in 1929.
- This led to the collapse Weimar Republic and the rise of Nazism.

Rise of Nazism →

- Adolf Hitler was elected in 1933 and almost immediately began rebuilding Germany's military.
- Great Britain and France thought Germany would prevent the spread of Communism to the West.
- Hitler made an alliance with Italy in 1936 and Japan in 1938.
- Germany invaded Austria and 6 months later took over Czechoslovakia.
- Neville Chamberlain met with Hitler to try to reach and appeasement.

Causes of World War II

Failure of Appeasement →

- Appeasement is the idea that if you meet another government's demands, you can avoid war.
- During the 1930s, Hitler's invasion of Austria and Czechoslovakia and the rebuilding of its military seemed understandable due to the harsh repercussions of the Treaty of Versailles.
- Neville Chamberlain believed the treaty was too harsh on Germany so he and his government adopted the Policy of Appeasement.
 - o The Sudetenland was returned to Germany if no further territorial claims would be made by Germany.
 - o This agreement was seen as an excellent example of securing peace through negotiation rather than war.
- Chamberlain promised if Poland were invaded by Germany, he would help Poland – unlike Czechoslovakia.

Failure of the League of Nations →

- League of Nations was an international organization set up in 1919 to keep world peace through negotiation rather than by force.
- Reasons for failure →
- Not all countries joined - USA refused, Germany was not allowed to join, and Russia was excluded because of the fear of communism.
 - The League had no power – main weapon was refusal to trade with that country
 - The League had no army
 - Unable to act quickly – met only 4 times a year and decisions had to be agreed on by all nations. This prolonged the process if there were acts of aggression.

Initial Cause →

Germany invaded Poland in September of 1939.