

America and World War II

Lesson 1 War Clouds Gather

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why does conflict develop?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *What events led to the rise of dictators in Europe?*
2. *Why did other nations allow Germany to expand its territory?*

Terms to Know

dictator leader who controls by force

anti-Semitism dislike of or discrimination against Jews

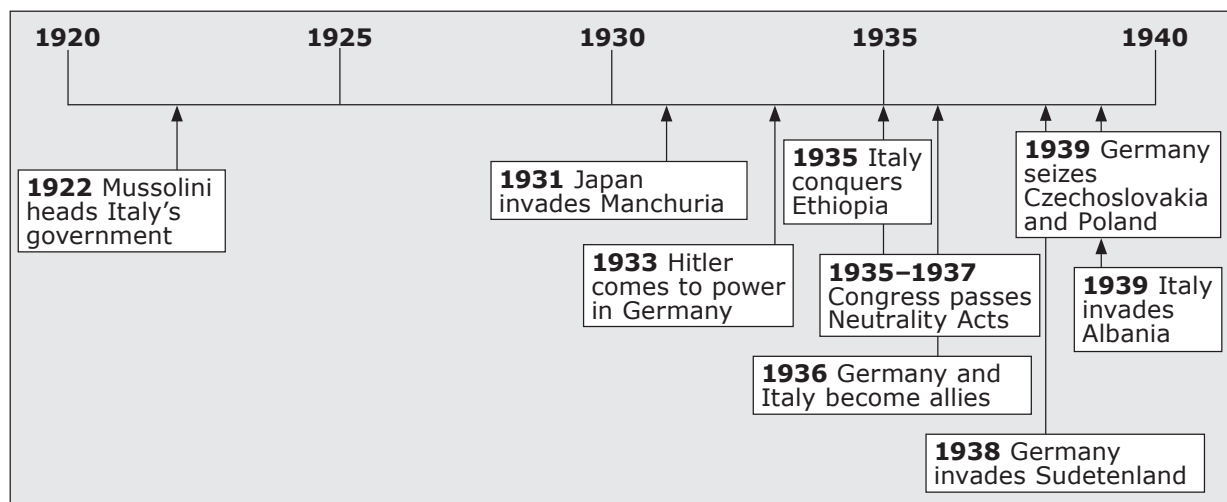
totalitarian seeking to control all aspects of life through dictatorship

appeasement giving in to demands of others in order to keep peace

Where in the world?



When did it happen?



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Lesson 1 War Clouds Gather, *Continued*

The Rise of Dictators

Several **dictators** came to power in the 1920s and 1930s. A dictator is someone who rules by force. The dictators came to power at a time when people were angry and worried.

The Treaty of Versailles ended World War I. Many Europeans did not like what the Treaty of Versailles had done. Then, in the 1930s there was an economic depression. Because of the depression, many people did not have jobs. They did not know when they were going to get jobs, either.

Leaders like Adolf Hitler made promises to the people. They promised the people that they would have enough money again. They promised that their nations would be great again. Leaders made promises so people would want them to be in power. After they were in power, the leaders became dictators. They ruled by force.

Benito Mussolini came to power in Italy. He was the first dictator in Europe after World War I. Italians were upset that Italy did not get much from the Versailles Treaty. They wanted order in their lives because things in Europe were unsettled.

Mussolini was a fascist (FASH-ist). Fascism is a non-democratic form of government that stresses the greatness of a race or nation. By 1922, the Fascist Party forced Italy's king to say Mussolini was the head of the government.

Mussolini was called *Il Duce* (DOO-chay). *Il Duce* means "the leader." Mussolini outlawed all other political parties. He took away people's rights. He stopped newspapers from reporting any news he did not like. He built up the military and attacked other countries. In 1935, Mussolini's army took over Ethiopia. The League of Nations protested weakly. Italy quit the League of Nations. In 1939, Mussolini's army invaded Albania. Albania is Italy's neighbor.

Adolf Hitler took advantage of people's feelings. Germany had suffered much in the Great Depression. Businesses had closed. People had lost their jobs.

Hitler knew that Germans were afraid. They were also angry about the terms of the Versailles Treaty. They did not like the fact that the treaty gave all the blame for World War I to Germany. Germany also had to give up some land after World War I. Germans did not like the fact that land had been taken from Germany.



Reading Check

1. What plans did Mussolini and Hitler share?



Mark the Text

2. Underline the names of the dictators of Italy, Germany, and the Soviet Union.



Explaining

3. How did the Treaty of Versailles hurt Germany?

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Paraphrasing

4. What reason did Hitler give for invading Austria?



Critical Thinking

5. Why did Japan invade Manchuria?

Hitler was the head of the Nazi (NAH-tzee) Party (the National Socialist Party). The Nazis believed that Germans were better than other people. Hitler blamed the Jews for Germany's problems. Hitler's **anti-Semitism**, or hatred of Jews, had many terrible results.

Hitler came to power in 1933. He ended democracy in Germany. He set up a **totalitarian** government. A totalitarian leader gets rid of anyone who opposes him. A totalitarian government controls every part of life.

Hitler thought Germany had a right to take more territory. The Versailles treaty said Germany could not rebuild its army, but Hitler did it anyway. He formed a partnership with Italy in 1936.

The Soviet Union was a dictatorship too. In the 1920s, Joseph Stalin became the leader of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. He killed his enemies and sent "disloyal" people to labor camps.

In Japan, people suffered during the Great Depression. Not enough people had jobs. There was not enough food. Military leaders like Hideki Tojo wanted more land and more resources. In 1931 Japan invaded northeastern China. This region is called Manchuria. There are many minerals in Manchuria.

The League of Nations criticized Japan for invading China, but they did nothing else.

In 1937 Japanese soldiers invaded China. Japan joined Italy and Germany in 1940 to form a group known as "the Axis."

Dictators rose to power, but the United States did not take sides. Congress passed Neutrality Acts. These laws said the United States could not lend money or sell weapons to nations that were at war.

Germany Pushes the Limits

In March 1936, Hitler ordered his soldiers into an area of Germany called the Rhineland. The Treaty of Versailles said that Germany could not have soldiers there, but Hitler sent them anyway.

Two years later, Hitler invaded Austria. He insisted that Austria should be part of Germany.

Next, Hitler focused on the Sudetenland (soo-DAY-tuhn-land). This was a part of Czechoslovakia (CHECK-oh-slo-VAH-kee-uh). Many people there spoke German. Hitler

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claimed they were being mistreated. He used this excuse to claim the land for Germany.

Czechoslovakia was ready to fight to keep its land. Britain and France did not want to go to war to help Czechoslovakia. In September 1938, European leaders met in Munich, Germany. They told Czechoslovakia to give Germany the land or to fight Germany alone. They were using a policy called **appeasement** (uh-PEEZ-mihnt). Hitler promised not to expand German territory any more.

Hitler did not keep his promise for very long. In 1939, his army took the rest of Czechoslovakia. Next, he wanted to invade Poland. Poland was on the border of the Soviet Union, so he worried about what Stalin would do. In August 1939, Hitler and Stalin signed a treaty. It said that they would not fight each other. With this treaty, Hitler was able to attack Poland without worrying that the Soviets would attack Germany.

//////////Glue Foldable here//////////

Check for Understanding

What conditions led to the rise of dictators?

What message did the Neutrality Act send to dictators in Europe and Asia?

**Reading Check**

6. Why was Germany able to invade Poland?



7. Use a two-tab Foldable and place it along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Write *1930s* on the anchor tab. Label the first tab *Rise of Dictators* and the second tab *Rise of Hitler and Germany*. On the front and back of the tabs, list what you remember about each. Use your Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.