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# i Think: World History

## WORLD WAR II



by Kendra Corr  
and Sharon Coletti

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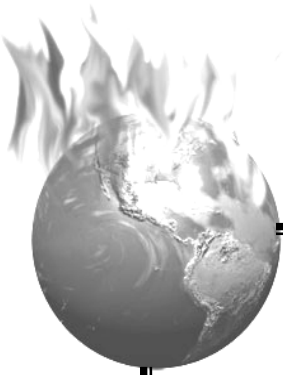
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## Not AGAIN!!

### Springboard:

Students should study the “Military Casualties” chart and generate five questions about the data.

*(Answers will vary, but some possible questions could include:*

*Why did China fight in WWII and not WWI? What happened to Austria Hungary and the Ottoman Empire? Why did France have so many fewer casualties in WWII? Why did Japan and the Soviet Union have so many more casualties in WWII? )*

**Objective:** The student will be able to explain the causes of World War II.

**Materials:** Military Casualties (Springboard handout)  
Situation Cards (handout cut into sets)

**Terms to know:** **casualty** - injured or dead soldier  
**isolationism** - policy of avoiding involvement in the affairs of other nations  
**famine** - widespread hunger

### Procedure:

- While reviewing the Springboard, explain that even after the death and destruction of The Great War, the world situation was not settled or peaceful. The many problems that the participants experienced would eventually lead to a more destructive war only 20 years later. Go on to explain that in this lesson the student(s) will examine the conditions that caused World War II.
- Distribute a set of “Situation Cards” to each student, pair, or small group. Depending on the ability level of your student(s), you can either have them group the cards and devise names for categories they sort them into, or you can provide them with a list of causes (political, economic, social, etc.) and have them decide which category each card fits.
- Have the student(s) share their arrangements and explain their reasoning. *(The way the cards are sorted is open-ended but must be explained.)* During the follow-up discussion, have the student(s) respond to the following questions:
  - ? Which cause(s) do you predict will prove to be the MOST to blame for the war? *(Answers will vary.)*
  - ? How do you think all of these causes “worked together” to create a dangerous situation that would lead to war? *(Each cause on its own is serious; but added together they created great instability in the world, heightening the possibility of war breaking out.)*
  - ? What do you think could have been done to address some of these problems before war broke out? *(Answers will vary.)*

# Military Casualties



**DIRECTIONS:** Carefully study the chart data. Then write five questions that come to mind when you compare the casualty statistics from the two world wars.

Country	Casualties in World War I	Casualties in World War II
Austria-Hungary	1,050,000	Number not available
China	Number not available	2,200,000
France	1,500,000	211,000
Germany	1,950,000	2,850,000
Great Britain	1,000,000	398,000
Italy	533,000	78,000
Japan	2,000	1,510,000
Ottoman Empire	325,000	Number not available
United States	116,000	293,000
Russia / Soviet Union	1,700,000	7,500,000

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

# Situation Cards

Japan invades Nanking China, massacring thousands.	8-10 million people are killed, exiled and imprisoned during the Purges in the Soviet Union.
Worker's strikes and protests break out all over Europe.	Italy becomes a fascist dictatorship under Benito Mussolini.
Hitler dreams of a German Empire.	Nationalistic movements break out throughout European colonies.
The Great Depression hits the United States.	Japan triples its industrial production making more steel and airplanes.
Opposition political parties are banned in Germany.	Italy is angry over the fact that they gain little land under the Versailles Treaty.
Germany forced to take sole blame for WWI under the Versailles Treaty	The United States does not join the League of Nations.
The Soviet Union becomes a Communist dictatorship under Joseph Stalin.	Japan invades Manchuria for resources.
Farms, factories, roads and bridges are destroyed during WWI.	Civil War breaks out in Spain; a fascist dictatorship emerges with Hitler's help.
The United States sets a very strict policy of isolationism.	Germany experiences hyperinflation; money is worth nothing!
Germany had to pay huge sums of money for damages during WWI.	Famine in the Soviet Union kills many in the 1920's.
Germany's democratic government is overthrown by Hitler and the Nazis.	Germany, France, Great Britain, the U.S. and other countries experience very high unemployment.
Military spending skyrockets in Germany.	France spends millions to built fortifications along the border it shares with Germany.
Under the Versailles Treaty, Germany loses its profitable colonies and access to coal mines.	Due to the Great Depression, the U.S. cannot afford to lend any money to Europe.
Millions are dead and wounded during World War I.	The League of Nations has no military at its disposal to enforce its decisions.



## The Man With the Plan

### Springboard:

The students should read “\_\_\_\_\_” and answer the questions.

**Objective:** The student will be able to explain Hitler’s plans for Germany leading up to World War II.

**Materials:** “\_\_\_\_\_” (Springboard handout)  
In His Words (handout)  
What’s the Plan? (handout)

**Terms to know:** **inflation** - rapid rise in cost of goods and services  
**empire** - country that controls itself and others  
**repeal** - to undo a law or treaty  
**expel** - to kick out; force someone to leave

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *this lesson examines the plans Adolf Hitler laid out for Germany that would cause tension and fear in Europe and eventually lead to war.*
- Distribute “In His Words” and “What’s the Plan?” The student(s) should work independently or in pairs to read the speech and complete the analysis form. (FYI: “In His Words” is a combination of an actual speech given by Hitler in 1930 and information from the Nazi party platform that was published in 1920.)
- Have them share their ideas and discuss. (Answers may vary and include: *repeal the Versailles Treaty, gain more territory for Germany, expel non-Germans, etc.*) Then lead a discussion of the following questions:
  - ? Who do you think might have responded positively to these plans? (*The German people who were suffering economically and humiliated and angry over the Versailles Treaty.*)
  - ? Why do you think these plans would cause tension and fear in Europe? (*Hitler’s words and intentions were very aggressive. He seemed to be trying to inflame the anger that was already present in Germany. Also, the people of Europe well-remembered how Germany started World War I.*)



Europe faced many problems in the years after World War I. Since the war was fought mainly on European soil, much was destroyed. After the war ended, countries immediately set about the tasks of replanting their fields and rebuilding their factories. Still, the process was long and costly.

The situation in Germany was even worse than elsewhere, since the Treaty of Versailles had stripped the country of all means of making money. Without trade, ships or mines, Germany was doomed to debt. **Inflation** in the country skyrocketed, such that the German mark was worthless! The Weimar Republic, the government the Allies had helped establish, was extremely unpopular with the German people. They blamed their new government for accepting the hated treaty and for their economic problems as well.

When the worldwide Depression began in 1929, Germany’s misery worsened. The people were desperate for help, which did come with the election of Adolf Hitler in 1933. Representing the new National Socialist Party (or Nazi Party), Hitler promised to strengthen Germany and relieve the people’s poverty. This he did by beginning a massive military build-up. The Germans once again had jobs and hope.

Next, Hitler set out to restore Germany’s wounded national pride. In 1936 he joined with Italy to form the Axis Powers and began empire building. The League of Nations, a peacekeeping organization formed after the war, tried to stop Hitler’s aggression; but without armies the League was truly powerless. Neighboring nations were once again alarmed and began their own military build-ups. Once again a rival alliance, “the Allies,” formed, and once again tensions rose.

The best title for this passage would be

- A. Treaty of Versailles
- B. Depression in Europe
- C. Years Between the Wars
- D. Adolph Hitler and the Axis

The term “**inflation**” in the second paragraph **MOST LIKELY** has to do with

- A. manufacturing.
- B. war
- C. trade.
- D. money.

Which statement best describes a **CAUSE** of the Treaty of Versailles?

- A. Germany deserved to be punished since it started the war.
- B. The Allies established the Weimar Republic in Germany.
- C. Germans blamed their government for all their problems.
- D. Adolf Hitler was elected to power in Germany in 1933.

Which statement does **NOT** explain Hitler’s rise to power in Germany?

- A. Germans had to replant farms and rebuild factories.
- B. The German people hated the Treaty of Versailles.
- C. A worldwide Depression hit Germany very hard.
- D. Hitler promised to relieve the people’s poverty.

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The best title for this passage would be

- A. Treaty of Versailles
  - B. Depression in Europe
  - C. Years Between the Wars \*
  - D. Adolph Hitler and the Axis
- (C is the most general of the four choices; the rest are details.)*

The term “inflation” in the second paragraph **MOST LIKELY** has to do with

- A. manufacturing.
  - B. war
  - C. trade.
  - D. money. \*
- (The sentence refers to the value of the German mark, Germany’s currency.)*

Which statement best describes a **CAUSE** of the Treaty of Versailles?

- A. Germany deserved to be punished since it started the war. \*
  - B. The Allies established the Weimar Republic in Germany.
  - C. Germans blamed their government for all their problems.
  - D. Adolf Hitler was elected to power in Germany in 1933.
- (Choices B, C and D are effects or part of the treaty.)*

Which statement does **NOT** explain Hitler’s rise to power in Germany?

- A. Germans had to replant farms and rebuild factories. \*
  - B. The German people hated the Treaty of Versailles.
  - C. A worldwide Depression hit Germany very hard.
  - D. Hitler made Germans feel good about themselves.
- (While it could be argued that Choice A contributed to it, all of Europe had to rebuild and didn’t fall to dictators like Hitler. The other situations all contributed to Germans’ misery and desire to regain their glory.)*

# In His Words



“My dear German people, the time has come for us to stand up and demand the respect and equality that has been denied us in the world recently. We must expect and demand that the terrible Treaty of Versailles be repealed. The terms of this vile document assume that we will take the abuse it has heaped upon us like a dying animal ...lying down. But no! Parliaments do not create the rights of people on this earth; force creates rights!

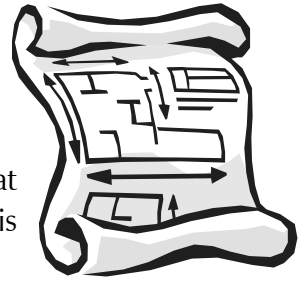
If the German people do not solve the problems this wicked treaty has wrought, and if we do not open up markets for its industry, then 2,000 years of our glorious history have been in vain, a complete waste. If this is what you my people want, than I will gladly join you in exiting the world stage, and nations with more vigor can take our place.

But, if you believe like I do that our place among world nations must be fought for and maintained. If you think, as I do, that people who are lazy have no right to the soil. If you agree that soil is for him that tills it and protects it, then you must fight with me! We have more right to our soil than all the other nations because we are so thickly populated. So you must demand what I demand! We must demand the union of all German peoples in one Great Germany. We must demand land and territory for the feeding of our people and the settlement of our surplus population! We must demand our mines and our ships, our strength!

But this is not all dear Germans. We have to protect ourselves from the enemies that live in our midst. We must insist that only members of our nation can be citizens. Only those of true German blood should be members of the great German nation. Those who are not citizens can live in Germany but only as guests living under our laws. The state will take care of its own, but only its own. Citizens will be provided with work, but if it is not possible to feed the entire population, non-citizens must be expelled to save valuable resources for the German people.

If you join me, proud people of Germany, you will see the sky is the limit for us. We will take back what has been wrongly stolen from us. We join once more with our German brothers and sisters who have been forced to live under new borders established by the despicable Versailles Treaty. We will once again work and provide for our families in the factories and mines that are rightfully ours. We will defend ourselves from our enemies. And most importantly, once and for all, we will hold our heads high as Germans – a people of a proud land!”

# WHAT'S THE PLAN?



**DIRECTIONS:** Using passages from the speech, determine what Hitler wants and is willing to do to achieve his goals. Then, decide if his actions are reasonable or not, explaining your answers.

Goals/Plans	Evidence from the speech	Reasonable?



## Be Prepared

### Springboard:

Students should complete “You Can Choose Your Friends.”  
(Answers will vary.)

**Objective:** The student will be able to describe the alliances that formed during World War II.

**Materials:** You Can Choose Your Friends (Springboard handout)  
Country Profiles (handout)  
Axis & Allies (handout)

**Terms to know:**

- alliance** - group of nations that agree to cooperate in war
- pacifist** - against war and violence
- communism** - form of rule in which all property is owned in common under strict government control
- oppression** - cruelty in the exercise of power
- fascism** - government ruled by an oppressive dictator who places the glory of the nation above all
- neutral** - not taking sides

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, review the definition of “alliance” from the “Terms to know” and have the student(s) predict which criteria from the handout they think would translate to countries picking allies. Then explain that in this lesson the student(s) will learn about some of the major players in World War II in order to predict the alliances they formed: the Allies and the Axis Powers.
- Distribute “Country Profiles” and “Axis & Allies.” Have the student(s) work individually, in pairs, or small groups to study the information and complete the analysis form.
- Have them share / compare their answers and discuss. (Answers will vary but possible answers could include:
  - ? Germany, Italy, Japan and the Soviets could be looking for other countries that might help them build their empires. Great Britain, France and the U.S. would look for allies that would help keep the peace and foster economic recovery and growth.
  - ? Answers will vary, but student(s) may not know where the Soviets belong because they were allied with France and Britain during WWI. However, Stalin signed a pact with Hitler before the invasion of Poland (which will be covered in the next lesson).
  - ? Advantages: provides security, help if attacked, economic partnerships, etc. Disadvantages: pulls countries into conflicts in which they are not directly involved in defense of allies, etc.)