

Year 9: Spring One:

World War Two – causes and main events

History in Spring 1

What will I be studying this half term?

This half term we will focus on the causes and main events of the Second World War. We will be analysing in particular the response of European leaders to German territorial expansion under Hitler in the 1930s.

How will my learning be assessed?

Multiple Choice assessment.

“How Useful” question – use your knowledge to assess the usefulness of a source.

What are the big picture questions for this half term?

- 1.) ‘Rulers of Europe were spineless in their attempts to stop Hitler.’ How far do you agree?
- 2.) What was the key turning point in World War Two?

Key individuals

Neville Chamberlain – British PM (1937-40), believer in appeasement.

Winston Churchill – British PM (1940-45), critic of appeasement.

Adolf Hitler – Fuhrer of Nazi Germany

Joseph Stalin – Leader of Soviet Russia

Key words

Lebensraum – “living space”

Appeasement – to give somebody what they want to avoid conflict or tension.

Rearmament – Building your army back up

Anschluss – Union of Germany with Austria(1938)

Munich Conference (1938)– An agreement: Britain and France allowed Hitler the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia. In return, Hitler promised to take no more land.

Blitzkrieg – “Lightning War”

Axis Powers – inc Germany, Italy and Japan

Allied Powers – inc Britain, France, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, the Soviet Union, China and USA



Hitler and Lebensraum

Hitler wanted to make Germany bigger by taking land from other, weaker countries. He believed that true Germans were such a great and powerful race that they needed the extra living space (he called it “Lebensraum”) to reach their full potential.

The need for Lebensraum was at the heart of Germany’s policy in 1930s. Hitler was building up his army (rearmament) and taking more and more land. The question was, how would European leaders stop him?

Appeasement

Appeasement is giving somebody what they want to avoid conflict or tension. During the 1930s Britain and France used appeasement in dealing with Adolf Hitler. Hitler’s desire to make Germany a great country once again led him to break many of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles (studied in Autumn 2). This included building up his army and navy as well as uniting with Austria.

Appeasement came out of a fear of another World War. British PM Chamberlain knew that his people dreaded another war like World War One. At the time, the Munich Conference (left) was seen as a victory for appeasement. Though it did not stop Hitler taking the rest of Czechoslovakia months later.

There is debate among historians as to whether appeasement was the best way of dealing with Hitler in the 1930s. PM Winston Churchill (critic of appeasement) once said “an appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last”. What do you think?

World War Two

WW2 lasted from 1939-45 and is the largest global conflict the world has ever known. It was fought over 6 continents, and during these years more than 50 million men, women and children were killed. This was a Total War – it did not just involve soldiers, sailors and airmen – ordinary people were affected and at massive risk also.

Some key events – Dunkirk, Battle of Britain, Pearl Harbour, Battle of Stalingrad, D Day, dropping of the A Bomb, VE Day. You need to understand the importance of the above.

1938	➔	1 Sept 1939	➔	3 Sept 1939	➔	June 1941	➔	Dec 1941	➔	June 1944	➔	May 1945
German troops march into Austria.		German troops invade Poland.		Britain declares war on Germany. The start of World War 2		Hitler invades Russia		Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour brings USA into war		D Day landings		Germany surrender – end of World War 2