Rise of Dictators
Imagine you were a German citizen living during the rise of Adolf Hitler. You are a former worker who is recently unemployed due to the Great Depression. The current government (Weimer Republic) seems to not be making any progress whatsoever. What is your reaction to Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party? Why do you feel this way?

Imagine you were of the Jewish faith. Hitler has just been named the leader of all of Germany. He is giving speeches that blame the Jewish people for World War 1. There is anger in his tone as he speaks about the Jewish people and his constant hopes for creating a supreme Aryan race are spoken with such desire. Furthermore, the appeal to his rhetoric is continually growing more enthusiastic. How do you feel about the new leader of your country? What would you do?
“All great movements are popular movements. They are volcanic eruptions of human passions and emotions, stirred into activity by the ruthless Goddess of Distress or by the torch of the spoken word cast into the midst of the people” – Adolf Hitler
After WWI

- European countries struggling politically and economically
- Fear of communist revolution in Russia spreading to Western Europe
- Leads to search for powerful leaders
Germany after WWI

- Devastated!
- Runaway inflation and high reparation payments weakened the economy and government.
- 1930’s Germany hard hit by the Great Depression – unemployed and desperate!
Weimar Republic

- Put in place following WWI
- Parliamentary Democracy
- Never really had a chance:
  - People blamed Weimar Republic for the bad conditions of the Treaty of Versailles – war reparations
  - Great Depression
National Socialist Party

- Becomes known as the Nazi Party
- Nationalism, anti-communism, anti-semitism
- Early 1920’s Adolf Hitler gains control of party by:
  - Attacking the Treaty of Versailles
  - Blaming the Jewish people for defeat in WWI
  - Promoting German “Aryan” race
Germans Rally Behind Hitler

- Desperate, afraid, unemployed
- Hitler is promising national greatness
  - Very influential
- 1933 Hitler becomes the chancellor of Germany
- Hitler becomes *Fuhrer* or Leader
- Nazi Party takes over every aspect of German life.
  - Press, schools, churches to spread message
  - Secret police to arrest any enemies
Nazi Aggression

- 1936 sent troops into Rhineland
  - Violates treaty of Versailles
- Annexed Austria
- Appeasement – by Britain and France to preserve peace.
- 1938 Hitler threatens to invade Czechoslovakia.
  - France and Britain give Hitler part
  - Doesn’t satisfy and Hitler takes all of Czech
Rise of Fascist Italy

- After WWI, plagued by economic and political problems
- Workers going on strike, peasants trying to seize land
- Angry from Paris treaty ending WWI
Mussolini Takes Advantage

- **Founded Fascist Party**
  - Glorified the state
  - Nationalist expansion
  - Defended private property
  - Despised communism and democracy

- **Mussolini became dictator**
  - Promised great expansion (i.e. recreate Roman empire)
  - Controlled army, secret police, schools
Causes of WWII

1) Treaty of Versailles: After the first war, Germany expected a treaty based on Wilson's 14 points; instead they got hammered by reparations, disarmed, lost territory, and blamed.

2) Hitler's Actions: Hitler's rise was a result of the harsh treatment Germany suffered; the French and British were more concerned about the rise of Communism and thought a stronger Germany might prevent the spread of Communism to the West.

3) Failure of Appeasement: Politicians in Britain and France recognized that Germany had a right to rearm (in violation of the T of V).

4) Failure of the League of Nations: It had no army, no real power, couldn't act quickly and not all countries belonged to it.