Causes of World War II

8th Grade Social Studies
Causes for Concern

- Post WWI Settlement (Treaty of Versailles)
- Shifting world powers
- The Great Depression
- Rise of totalitarian dictators
1—Post WWI Settlement

- [ ] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBI6ZzaP2Uk

- Europe didn’t know how to keep the peace (League of Nations failed in USA)
  - Article 10—mandates collective security

- Germany & the War Guilt Clause
  - Had to pay $80 billion in reparations (paid in full by 2010)
  - Lost land and pride
  - Restricted military (100,000 men; no tanks, aircraft, or submarines)

- Germans bitter towards the world
Post WWI Map

Map of Europe after WWI, showing German losses
2—Shifting World Powers

- Traditional European powers suffer losses after WWI (militaristically, economically, etc…)

- New countries (U.S., Soviet Union) emerge as superpowers

- Countries like Germany, Italy, and Japan show dangerous ambition for world dominance
3—The Great Depression

- Many countries depended on U.S. for money—we aren’t lending as much
- G.D. hit U.S., Americans stopped buying products from overseas
- U.S. banks lent money to war-torn nations—banks shut down when they don’t get $$ back
- Countries take extreme measures to regain prosperity—nationalistic groups (i.e. the Nazis) are able to rise to power
Some of the worst human beings ever to rise to power came between WWI & WWII

- Adolf Hitler—Germany (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rZ4xwuAWFE)
- Joseph Stalin—Soviet Union (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_2of8pmHYU)
- Benito Mussolini—Italy (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OetedJuu4k)
- Hideki Tojo—Japan (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KPUKpPBm00)
The “Mad Little Clown”

- Hitler’s Early Life
  - Father Alois (58) & Mother Klara (28)
  - Not a good student; wanted to be an artist
  - Hitler is abused by his father; Alois dies in 1903
  - Hitler moves to Vienna (Austria) to pursue art degree in 1907; rejected after 1st application
Finally Fitting In…

- Fails physical in Vienna for Austrian army
- Volunteers for German army
  - Serves as messenger on Western Front during WWI
  - Loves military service; hates those who do not
- He finally feels accepted
- Involved in gas attack and temporarily blinded
Hitler & Foundation of Nazi Party

- Nazis form in 1919 as “German Workers Party” & Hitler gets involved
- Actively participates as a speaker & becomes recognized as the party leader
- Comes up w/ a 25 Point Program
  - Unification of Germany
  - Only German citizens; no Jews
  - Government owns corporations (socialism)
- Creates a private army (SA or Storm Troopers—Brown Shirts)
  - Fought groups who opposed Nazis
German Government Problems

- Nazis try to overthrow German government (11/8/1923)
- 2000 Nazis march through Munich; police open fire & kill 16 of them
- Hitler arrested & put on trial; gains fame from this platform
- Sentenced to 5 years in prison; only serves 6 months
The Sideshow

- Hitler’s trial was a circus
- Doesn’t deny charges
- Admitted to wanting to overthrow government
- Portrays himself as a patriot—attractive to Germans who feel betrayed
Mein Kampf

“My Struggle”

Puts forth many of his beliefs & ideas on race

Argued for more “lebensraum” for Germans
Hitler’s Germany

- Depression brings Hitler to power
- His party receives over 13 million votes in 1932 elections
- Appointed chancellor of Germany in Jan. 1933
- Makes himself dictator in 1934 after president dies
Nazi Party

- Founded in the idea of nationalism
- Blamed Jews & communists for problems Germany faced after WWI
- Vowed to get revenge for the mistreatment at Versailles
- Exerted their power through massive propaganda campaign and military might
Swastika symbol

Infamous German flag with Swastika symbol on it
Hitler’s Germany cont...

- Turns racist ideologies into living practice once he proclaims himself dictator

- Takes control of everything—schools, newspapers, radio, etc...

- Sent to concentration camps if opposed Nazi regime

- Bragged that the “Third Reich” would last for a thousand years