

**The Road to WWII**

- I. WWI Recap
  - a. Who? Central (Germany, Austria-Hungary) vs. Allied Powers (U.S., England, France, Russia, Italy)
  - b. Why fighting? Underlying problems over who controlled African colonies, nationalism, a complicated alliance system, and large militaries.
  - c. Outcome? Allies won, Germans forced to accept war guilt (responsibility for the war) and were told to pay reparations totaling \$30 billion to the Allies. German military was also stripped down to bare bones. A-H was divided into a number of new nations. League of Nations was created to ensure peace and security for all member nations.
  - d. How did the Treaty of Versailles set the world up for WWII?
  
- II. The Rise of Fascism and Nazism
  - a. Nations weakened after WWI turned to the idea of **fascism** (DEFINE)
  
  
  - b. Hoped that fascism would help the country rebuild their strength and spirit.
  
- III. Benito Mussolini and Italy
  - a. **Mussolini** felt Italy had been shortchanged by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. He declared himself dictator in 1925, suspended elections, put all business under govt. control, and started \_\_\_\_\_.
  - c. Wanting to create a modern-day Roman Empire, he aggressively invaded and took over Ethiopia.
  
- IV. **Adolf Hitler** and Germany.
  - a. In the years after WWI, Germany suffered from high unemployment and inflation.
  - b. Once Hitler was named leader of the Nazi Party, he got rid of his opponents, and took away Germans' civil liberties (no free speech, etc..)
  - c. The Nazis promised to do what?
  
- V. Determined to return the German Empire to its former glory, Hitler pursued an aggressive foreign policy. (MEANING? Hitler quickly tried to do what?  
\_\_\_\_\_.)
  - a. German aggression began with their seizure of the \_\_\_\_\_ in 1936.
  - b. Germany and Italy formed an alliance in 1936 as well.

- c. In 1938, Hitler annexed \_\_\_\_\_ and later that year, he demanded possession of the Sudetenland (a region in \_\_\_\_\_, which he eventually conquered in full in March 1939.)
- d. In 1939, the Germans and Russians signed the \_\_\_\_\_.  
How did this agreement differ from an alliance? EXPLAIN.

- i. NOTE: The German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact fell apart in June 1941, when Nazi forces invaded the Soviet Union.

- e. England and France, reluctant to get involved in another big conflict, adopted a policy of \_\_\_\_\_. MEANING?

- i. Additionally, to block Hitler's advances, France and Britain pledged in March 1939, they would come to the defense of Poland should its security and independence be threatened. They declared war in Sept. 1939 after Germany invaded Poland.

VI. Meanwhile, back in America....

- a. The U.S., for its part, was its business across the pond. American isolationism stemmed from economic, military, and political concerns.
- b. The U.S. was busy minding its own business (pursuing a policy of isolationism. (DEFINE)



- i. WHY? In the 1930s, the U.S. turned inward and focused on rebuilding the American economy during the Depression.
  - ii. Other fears - can we win?
    - 1. In the words of Charles Lindbergh (a vocal supporter of isolationism) "we should not enter a war unless we have a reasonable chance of winning.... And I know that the United States is not prepared to wage war in Europe successfully at this time."

c. American "Neutrality" (DEFINE)

i. Congress passed several neutrality acts in the 1930s, which were known as the \_\_\_\_\_, which stated:

1. The U.S. would withhold weapons and loans from all nations at war and would sell other goods to warring powers only if they \_\_\_\_\_.

ii. In August 1939, Einstein warned FDR that German researchers were working on an atomic bomb. In response, FDR authorized a top-secret American bomb project.

d. Once France fell to the Nazis, Roosevelt moved to help \_\_\_\_\_.

- i. FDR repealed the arms embargo section of Neutrality Act and got approval to sell arms on a cash and carry basis to Britain and France (wanted to support them vs. Hitler but also ensure that the U.S. stayed out of the war and that the economy was not disrupted)
- ii. In March 1941, FDR further amended our neutrality policy and instituted the **Lend-Lease Act**, whereby the U.S. provided \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Roosevelt said it was like "lending a garden hose to a neighbor whose house is burning down." (MEANING WHAT? Explain.)

e. How "neutral" is America during the early years of WWII?

VII. Even though \_\_\_\_\_% of the American people opposed getting involved in the war in 1941, things were pretty bleak on the European front.

- a. Between September 1939 and June 1940, the Axis Powers defeated Norway, Poland, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. In Asia, Japan was swallowing up French and Dutch colonies.
- b. England was all alone to defend herself and the rest of Europe.

VIII. While all of this was going on in Europe, in Japan...

- a. Japanese leaders, also trying to make Japan into a world power, were busy attempting to take over \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Japan formed an alliance with Germany and Italy, known as the **Tripartite Pact**. They were known as the **Axis Powers**.
- c. Then they promptly invaded Indochina, which was ruled by \_\_\_\_\_.

- d. Tension between the U.S. and Japan increased. They were mad at the U.S. because:
  - i. They could no longer make money off of exports to the U.S. because of high tariffs (remember the Hawley-Smoot tariff?)
  - ii. By 1940, the U.S. had stopped selling planes to Japan, ending a long-standing trade agreement.
  - iii. By mid-1940, the U.S. had ceased selling other crucial items (i.e. scrap metal and oil) to Japan.
  - iv. After Japan's attack on Indochina, the U.S. froze \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
  
- IX. Only the U.S. naval fleet based in Hawaii stood between Japan and total domination of eastern Asia and the Pacific.
  
- X. So, on December 7th, 1941...
  - a. Japan launched a surprise attack on the American naval base at \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Nearly 2,400 people died, and the attack destroyed five battleships and three cruisers.
  
- XI. Soon after, Roosevelt called on Congress to declare war on Japan.
  - a. Congress quickly agreed.
  - b. Three days later, Japan's allies, Germany and Italy, declared war on the U.S., thus involving the U.S. in one of the most destructive wars to have ever been waged.