

APWH|Unit 7 “Global Conflicts from 1900 to present” Reading Questions

UNIT 7.4| Causes of World War II (Appeasement and the Causes of War)

Five Key Ideas

1. **Unresolved Issues from World War I** – The Treaty of Versailles placed harsh penalties on Germany, leading to economic collapse, resentment, and the rise of Adolf Hitler.
2. **The Rise of Fascism** – Authoritarian leaders like Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo gained power by promoting ultranationalism, militarism, and expansionism.
3. **Appeasement Failed** – Britain and France allowed Hitler to take Austria and Czechoslovakia, hoping to avoid war, but this only encouraged his aggression.
4. **Germany’s Invasion of Poland (1939) Started World War II** – The Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact gave Hitler confidence to invade Poland, forcing Britain and France to declare war.
5. **Japan’s Expansion in Asia** – Japan invaded Manchuria (1931) and China (1937), marking the start of World War II in the Pacific.

Key Concepts/Terms

- **Fascism** – A far-right, authoritarian ideology that glorifies the state, promotes militarism, and suppresses opposition.
- **Appeasement** – The policy of giving in to an aggressor’s demands to avoid conflict, used by Britain and France before World War II.
- **Lebensraum (Living Space)** – Hitler’s idea that Germany needed to expand eastward to gain territory for its people.
- **Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass, 1938)** – A violent anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany that foreshadowed the Holocaust.
- **Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact (1939)** – A secret agreement between Hitler and Stalin to divide Poland and avoid war with each other.

The Path to War - The Rise of Nazism

1. How did economic instability in Germany contribute to Hitler’s rise?
2. What role did the Treaty of Versailles play in the rise of Nazism?

Summary: After World War I, Germany suffered from economic collapse, hyperinflation, and political instability. Many Germans blamed the Weimar Republic for their struggles.

The Axis Powers - Germany, Italy, and Japan Unite

3. What was the purpose of the **Rome-Berlin Axis (1936)**?
4. Why did Japan join the Axis?

Summary: As Germany prepared for war, Hitler sought alliances with other authoritarian leaders.

- Hitler’s expansionist goal of **lebensraum (living space)** justified aggressive militarism and conquest.

Nazi Germany's Aggressive Militarism - Violating the Treaty of Versailles

5. How did Hitler defy the Treaty of Versailles?
6. Why did Britain and France follow appeasement?

Summary: Germany rebuilt its military, invaded neighboring countries, and expanded its territory.

The Anschluss (1938) and Czechoslovakia

7. What was the **Anschluss**, and why was it significant?
8. How did the **Munich Agreement (1938)** fail?

Summary: Hitler expanded German territory without facing military resistance.

The Conflict Over Poland (1939)

9. How did the **Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact** lead to war?
10. Why did Britain and France finally act?

Summary: After annexing Austria and Czechoslovakia, Hitler turned to Poland.

Japan's Expansion in Asia

11. Why did Japan invade **Manchuria (1931)**?

12. How did Japan's invasion of China lead to war?

Summary: Japan sought natural resources and expanded into China and the Pacific.