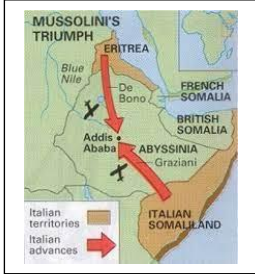
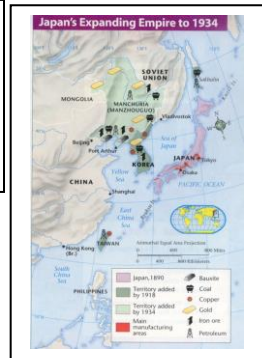


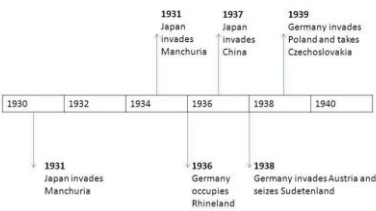
Aim #6: How & Why Does World War II Begin?

Mini Lecture

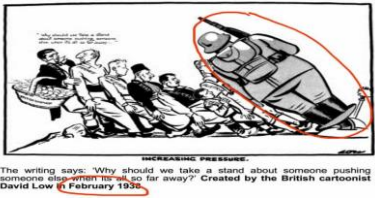
- A big cause of WWII was unfinished business at the end of WWI. The Treaty of Versailles ended the war but poisonously embittered those on the losing side, especially Germany- felt embarrassed by the harsh terms & punishments.
- Italy and Japan, though on the victorious side, felt mistreated by their allies (Britain & France). They each wanted more territory as a reward for their participation in WWI.
- First Italy (under Mussolini 1922) and then Germany (under Hitler in 1934) fell under authoritarian fascist governments. Both skillfully used propaganda to portray themselves as strong leaders who were the only ones capable of returning their nations to their past glories & stand up to communism.
- Throughout the 1930s, dictators took aggressive action. Yet, they met only verbal protests and pleas for peace from Western powers. For example, when the League of Nations condemned Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, Japan simply withdrew from the League. A few years later, Japanese armies invaded China, starting the second Sino-Japanese War.
- After its military & commercial success in the early 1900s, Japan became a dominant power in Asia. Japan became very **militaristic**, as well as nationalistic. Japanese nationalists wanted to increase the nation's power & influence, but Japan lacked natural resources. They aimed to obtain resources through expansion & conquest, especially controlling China.
- Japan first conquered Manchuria and then began a full-scale invasion of China in 1937. They quickly overran much of Northern China and captured the capital-Nanking- committing horrible atrocities on its citizens, known today as the **Rape of Nanking**.
- Meanwhile, Mussolini invaded Ethiopia in 1935. The League of Nations voted **sanctions** against Italy, but the League had no power to enforce its punishment.
- Hitler, too, defied the Western democracies by building up the German military and sending troops into the "**demilitarized**" Rhineland, which was against the Treaty of Versailles. The Western democracies denounced Hitler but adopted a policy of **appeasement**.
- Appeasement developed for a number of reasons, including widespread **pacifism**. Also, some Western leaders accepted Hitler as a strong leader who would prevent the spread of a bigger evil, Communism. Others recalled the terrible bloodshed of WWI and were determined not to risk another war, at all costs. While the Western democracies sought to avoid war, Germany, Italy, and Japan formed an alliance- the **Axis powers**.
- Hitler wanted Germany to expand to become a larger, more powerful country- arguing that Germans were biologically superior and needed more "living space".
- German aggression continued. In 1938, Hitler forced the **Anschluss**, union with Austria. Next, Hitler set his sights on the **Sudetenland**- part of Czechoslovakia where 3 million Germans lived. He vowed to invade the country if the Czechs did not give up the region peacefully.
- At the **Munich Conference**, which was held to discuss the situation, British & French leaders chose appeasement and allowed Hitler to **annex** the territory. In March 1939, Hitler took over the rest of Czechoslovakia.
- In August 1939, Hitler and Stalin signed the **Nazi-Soviet Pact (Nonaggression Pact)**, agreeing not to attack each other. This Pact shocked the world as the two dictators were ideological foes. Hitler signed because he aimed to avoid a 2-front war.
- The Pact paved the way for Germany's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, which set off WWII. Britain had signed a mutual assistance treaty with Poland and on September 3rd, Britain & France declared war on Germany.



Military Aggression Leading to World War II



What is the message of this cartoon? (6pts)



Road to WWII



Review Questions:

1. Was WWII avoidable?
2. Explain how Japan, Italy, and Germany were aggressive.
3. How did Western democracies react to those aggressors? Why did they react in that way?

Enduring Issue: Conflict

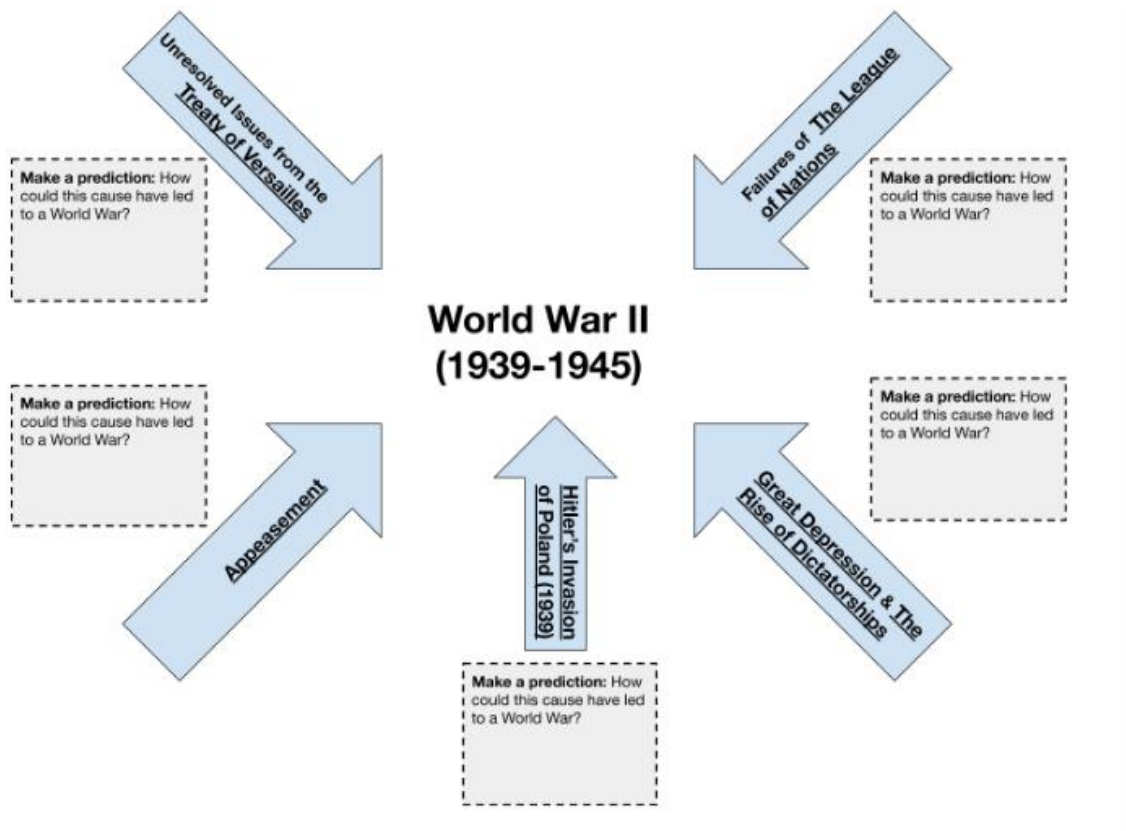
What were the causes of World War II?

What was WWII?

World War II was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945 involving over 30 countries. During the war, two opposing military alliances formed: the Allies and the Axis. World War II launched countries into a state of total war, and it became the deadliest conflict in human history with the loss of an estimated 50 to 85 million lives. Mass death was caused by the Holocaust and the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Watch this [History Channel Video on WWII](#) - Even though World War II began 21 years after the end of World War I, some historians believe that the two wars were part of one vast global conflict. Why do the historians in this clip argue that the wars were connected?

Causes of World War II



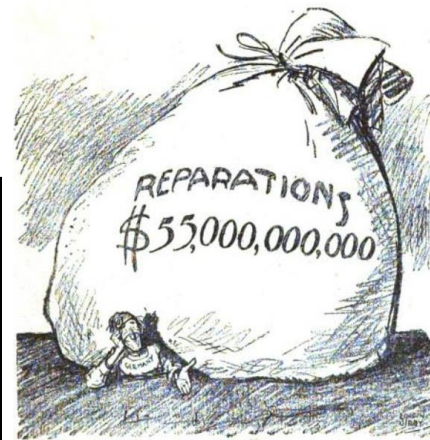
World War II Reference Timeline

Directions: Examine the timeline below. Respond to the questions.

1939	World War II Starts In Europe: Hitler invades Poland on 1 September. Britain and France declare war on Germany.
1940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> German 'Blitzkrieg' overwhelms Belgium, Holland, and France. British victory in Battle of Britain forces Hitler to postpone invasion plans.
1941	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hitler breaks the Nazi-Soviet Pact and invades the USSR. He wants the country's raw materials and the end of Communism in Europe. USSR joins the Allies. Hitler's blitz continues against Britain's major cities. Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, and the US enters the war.
1942	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany suffers setbacks at Stalingrad due to harsh Soviet climate. Mass murder of Jewish people at Auschwitz begins.
1943	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surrender at Stalingrad marks Germany's first major defeat. Italy surrenders, but Germany takes over the battle.
1944	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soviet offensive gains momentum in Eastern Europe. D-Day: The Allied invasion of France. Paris is liberated from German control in August.
1945	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auschwitz liberated by Soviet troops. Russians reach Berlin: Hitler commits suicide and Germany surrenders on 7 May. After atomic bombs are dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders on 14 August.
1945	World War II Ends: On 15 August 1945, Japan surrenders and on 2 September 1945, the war ended.

1919-1939: Unresolved Issues of the Treaty of Versailles

The **Treaty of Versailles** was one of the peace treaties at the end of World War I and it officially ended the war between Germany and the Allied Powers. The terms of the Treaty of Versailles were announced in June 1919. Even though German politicians were not consulted about the terms of the Treaty, they had very little choice but to sign it. This resulted in many unresolved issues. Germany and its allies were the losers in World War I and as such were held responsible for all of the destruction and costs. In the Treaty of Versailles, Germany lost territory, was forced to pay huge reparations (payments by a defeated country for the destruction it caused in a war), was forced to take responsibility for the war through the War Guilt clause, and forced to demilitarize or greatly reduce their military. After World War I, Germany suffered from economic problems like inflation and unemployment and Germany was often unable to meet reparation payments. These problems left many Germans angry at the Treaty of Versailles which they saw as unfair. Germans were bitter and wanted their overseas and European territories back, as well as freedom to operate as they wish.



American contemporary view of German World War I reparations. Political cartoon 1921

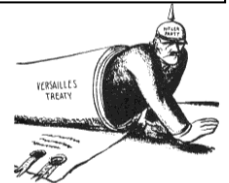
1. What were the unresolved issues of the Treaty of Versailles?
2. How could the unresolved issues of the Treaty of Versailles have led to the beginning of World War II in 1939?

1920s: Great Depression and the Rise of Dictatorships

One major cause of the global Great Depression was the American Wall Street Crash of October 1929. America had given the Weimar Republic huge loans in 1924 to help with reparation payments. However, after the Wall Street crash, America needed these loans repaid to assist its troubled economy. Because Germany lost its loans from America, it was unable to make reparation payments. Germany's failure to make reparation payments meant that France and Britain were unable to make their loan payments. Throughout the world, trade began to slow down and production decreased. The Wall Street Crash had a ripple effect throughout the world that resulted in high unemployment throughout Europe. Unemployment forced many Europeans, especially in Germany, to rely on soup kitchens and other government support.

European governments seemed unable to handle the crisis. The traditional approaches to handling economic crises seemed to only cause more problems. With the current governments unable to ease the pain and suffering of unemployment and inflation, Europeans were drawn to **totalitarian** leaders who promised economic recovery. **Totalitarianism** is a system of government in which one party tries to rule with complete control over every aspect of the lives of its citizen. There have been a number of **totalitarian** rulers in history. While they all try to run their **totalitarian states** with complete control over the people that live in them, they often have different **ideologies** [beliefs] that guide their decisions. For example, the first totalitarian ruler you learned about, **Joseph Stalin**, was a **Communist**. He used totalitarianism to make Russia into the first state inspired by Karl Marx's ideas. **Adolf Hitler** and **Benito Mussolini** were other totalitarian rulers influenced by an ideology called **fascism**. Fascists also wanted complete control over their countries. While these totalitarian leaders in Europe were motivated by different ideologies, they were all deeply **nationalist** and **militaristic**, believing that they needed to fight for the survival and superiority of their nations while building up a strong military that could defeat other nations that may have attempted to take away their power. In Japan, **Emperor Hirohito** emerged as a nationalist and militaristic leader fixated on overseas expansion.

1. What caused the rise of dictators during the interwar period? What was the main focus of these dictators?
2. How could these dictators have caused the beginning of World War II in 1939?



1931-1939: Aggression & Failures of the League of Nations

The Treaty of Versailles included the planned formation of the League of Nations, an international forum and an international collective security arrangement. The nations that joined the League of Nations agreed to settle disputes rather than go to war. The **League of Nations** was set up after World War I to keep the peace, however, the U.S. did not join and other nations were too concerned with their own problems to take on global peace. When an issue of global peace did arise, the League of Nations did not have the power to do anything about it.

In the early 1930s, the invasion of Manchuria and Abyssinia (current-day Ethiopia) destroyed people's belief in the ability of the League to stop wars or keep any kind of peace. In both situations, the League acted slowly and made poor decisions about how to suppress aggressive nations. In 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria, a Northeastern region of China. The Chinese called on the League of Nations to condemn the act and stop the Japanese, but the League did not act and the Japanese left the League of Nations. In 1935, Italy, under the leadership of fascist leader Benito Mussolini, invaded Abyssinia (current-day Ethiopia) using poison gas. The Ethiopians called on the League of Nations to condemn the invasion. Instead, Britain and France signed a secret pact to give Abyssinia to Italy. By 1936, Italy had conquered Abyssinia and in 1937, Italy left the League.

While Manchuria and Abyssinia were being invaded, Hitler announced that Germany was leaving the League and in 1935, Hitler broke the Treaty of Versailles and started rearming Germany. The League calls a Disarmament Conference but it failed and Germany continued to arm. In 1936, in defiance of the League of Nations, Germany began to recapture territories lost under the Treaty of Versailles including the Rhineland. In 1938, Germany informed the League that in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany and Austria were uniting.

There were many effects of the League of Nations failures. First, small nations soon learned that they could not expect protection from the League of Nations and that aggressive totalitarian states could act without consequence. Second, the League of Nations inability to act and their slowness made the League appear incompetent, scared and ineffective. Third, by the 1930s, the four major powers - Japan, Italy, Britain and France - all betrayed the League's goals. Fourth, because Britain and France knew the League could not stop aggressive nations, they instead followed the policy of **appeasement** or giving Hitler what he wanted to stop Germany from going to war. This policy allowed Hitler to quickly advance with his plans.

1. How did the League of Nations respond to the crisis in Manchuria (1931) and Abyssinia (1935)?
2. How did the League of Nations respond to Hitler's violation of the Treaty of Versailles?
3. What was the purpose of the League of Nations after World War I?
4. Did the League of Nations meet its goals? Explain.
5. How could the failures of the League of Nations have led to the beginning of World War II in 1939?

1935-1939: Appeasement

What is appeasement? Why did leaders take this route?

In the 1930s, when Britain and France knew the League could not stop aggressive nations, they instead followed the policy of **appeasement** or the policy of giving aggressive or enemy nations what they want in order to avoid conflict. The term is most often applied to the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's actions towards Nazi Germany between 1935 and 1939. There are several reasons why several Western democracies like Britain and France appeased Hitler. First, the British were not prepared to go to war and wanted to avoid war at all costs. Additionally, having remembered the slaughter of World War I, many leaders thought another world war would destroy civilization. Finally, some thought that Hitler's complaints and ideas were reasonable. From 1935 until 1938, Britain and France gave Hitler what he wanted such as land, control over nations, and the freedom to remilitarize because they assumed that if they gave Hitler what he wanted, he'd eventually stop and war could be avoided. Instead, this policy of **appeasement** empowered Hitler to want more and take more. The greatest example of this appeasement policy is the **Munich Agreement**.

1. What is appeasement? Why did these nations appease Hitler and Nazi Germany?
2. What do you predict are the dangers of appeasement? What are the possible benefits?

The Road to WWII

Hitler wanted to unite all German-speaking people into the Third Reich [Nazi Germany] and he began on the road to create a "living space" for German in Eastern Europe. To create the "living space" for Germany, Hitler believed that he should do whatever was necessary. One of his first steps in creating this "living space" was the **Anschluss** or union between Austria and Germany in 1938. Even though the Anschluss violated the Treaty of Versailles, Western democracies did nothing to stop Hitler.

Having built confidence that he could not be stopped, Hitler turned to Czechoslovakia. In western Czechoslovakia, there was a region called **Sudetenland** where there were German-speaking people he believed needed to be reunited with their German homeland. Britain and France were not willing to go to war so a deal was reached on September 30 between Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain (Britain), Benito Mussolini (Italy), and Édouard Daladier (France) called the **Munich Agreement**. The Munich Agreement permitted German annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland. Czechoslovakia was informed by Britain and France that they could either fight Germany alone or surrender to Germany. The Czechoslovakian government agreed to abide by the agreement because they knew they could not fight Hitler alone since Britain and France were unwilling to help them fight. The settlement gave Germany the Sudetenland and control over the rest of Czechoslovakia as long as Hitler promised to go no further.

3. What did Hitler want? How did he go about getting it?
4. What did Western democracies do in response to the Anschluss of Austria? What message might this send to Hitler? How is this an example of appeasement?
5. What did Western democracies do in response to the Anschluss [annexation of Czechoslovakia]? What message might this send to Hitler?



6. Based on the information provided by this map, how did adopting the policy of appeasement at the Munich Conference in September 1938 change Europe?



After the signing of Munich Agreement, Chamberlain returned to Britain and announced, "My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honor. I believe it is peace for our time."

However Winston Churchill, a British statesmen and staunch opponent of Chamberlain's appeasement of Adolf Hitler, delivered a speech to the House of Commons in October 1938 where he stated,

I will, therefore, begin by saying the most unpopular and most unwelcome thing. I will begin by saying what everybody would like to ignore or forget but which must nevertheless be stated, namely, that we have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat, and that France has suffered even more than we have. [...] I venture to think that in the future the Czechoslovak State cannot be maintained as an independent entity. You will find that in a period of time which may be measured by years, but may be measured only by months, Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime. [...] we are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude which has befallen Great Britain and France. Do not let us blind ourselves to that. It must now be accepted that all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will make the best terms they can with the triumphant Nazi Power. The system of alliances in Central Europe upon which France has relied for her safety has been swept away, and I can see no means by which it can be reconstituted. [...] This is only the beginning of the reckoning. This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be proffered to us year by year unless by a supreme recovery of moral health and martial vigour, we arise again and take our stand for freedom as in the olden time.

7. Why do you think Chamberlain was so excited after the Munich Agreement? How might other nations have felt about the Munich Agreement? Why?
8. If you were Chamberlain, would you have signed the Munich Agreement? Explain.
9. What did Winston Churchill fear the impact of the Munich Agreement would be?
10. How could appeasement have led to beginning of World War II in 1939?

Sept. 1, 1939: Hitler invades Poland and World War II Begins

Alliances Form

Many nations realized that after the annexation of Sudetenland, Poland would be Hitler's next target. In April 1939, Russia, Britain and France met to form an alliance to defend Poland. The Allies thought that Hitler would not invade Poland if it instigated a war with Russia. By August 1939, Russia changed its mind and left the alliance with France and Britain. In August 1939, Hitler and his enemy, Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Russian dictator, signed the **Nazi-Soviet Pact**, a nonaggression pact that publicly stated that the rival nations would maintain peaceful relations. This pact was surprising to the world because Hitler and Stalin had dramatically different ideologies. Even though these dictators did not like one another, they used each other for political ends. Secretly, this pact also said that they would invade Poland and split it between them.

1. After Sudetenland, what was Hitler's next target? How did Russia, Britain, and France respond?
2. What was the Nazi-Soviet Pact? Why was the Nazi-Soviet Pact surprising?
3. What was the secret agreement in the Nazi-Soviet pact?
4. What does this secret agreement reveal about appeasement and Chamberlain's argument that the Munich Agreement would bring "peace for our time"?



World War II Begins

On September 1, 1939, German forces invaded Poland. Only two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany and World War II officially began. Nazis stormed Poland with the power of **blitzkrieg**, or lightning war. The theory of the blitzkrieg was to defeat opponents using a series of short military campaigns. These military campaigns made use of tanks, planes and artillery to quickly attack opponents. These quick attacks would disorganize and shock opponents, making them more vulnerable. While Germany attacked Poland from the west, Stalin and the Soviet Union attacked from the east, annexing land promised under the secret parts of the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Within a month, Poland no longer existed as an independent country, and instead became absorbed under Hitler and Stalin's dictatorships.



German troops parade through Warsaw after the invasion of Poland. Warsaw, Poland, September 28-30, 1939

Watch this [Discovery Channel Video on WWII \(0:00-09:00\)](#) then answer the questions below about WWII.

5. How did Hitler justify his attack of Poland?
6. Why did Britain and France declare war on Hitler after the invasion of Poland?
7. What advantages did the German military have?
8. What was Poland's military like?
9. Which other country invaded Poland? Why?
10. After Poland surrendered, what did Germans begin to do to Jewish people?

The Nanking Massacre (The Rape of Nanking)

Directions: Watch this [news report from CCTV on the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 and the Massacre of Nanking](#), read text below, & answer questions.

In 1937, the Japanese invaded China, starting the Second Sino-Japanese War. They were successful in taking over most of the eastern coast of China and its major ports.

After invading and securing the capital, Nanking [also written Nanjing], an event known as the **Nanking Massacre**, also called **Rape of Nanking**, (December 1937–January 1938) took place. It was a period of mass killing and ravaging of Chinese citizens and surrendered soldiers by soldiers of the Japanese Imperial Army. The number of Chinese killed in the massacre has been subject to much debate, with most estimates ranging from 100,000 to more than 300,000.

The destruction of Nanking—which had been the capital of the **Nationalist** Chinese from 1928 to 1937—was ordered by Matsui Iwane, commanding general of the Central China Front Army that captured the city. Over the next several weeks, Japanese soldiers carried out Matsui's orders, perpetrating numerous mass executions and tens of thousands of rapes. The army looted and burned the surrounding towns and the city, destroying more than a third of its buildings. In 1940, the Japanese made Nanking the capital of their Chinese puppet government headed by **Wang Ching-wei** (Wang Jingwei). Shortly after the end of World War II, Matsui and Tani Hisao, a lieutenant general who had personally participated in acts of murder and rape, were found guilty of war crimes by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East and were executed.



Source: Peter Stearns et al., *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*, Pearson Longman (adapted)

1. When & where did it take place? Who was involved? What occurred?
2. China was a member of the League of Nations in 1937 and an important trade partner with the United States, Great Britain, and other European countries. How might Japan's invasion of China and the Nanking Massacre have affected relations between Japan and Western powers?
3. How do you think the Nanking Massacre will affect Japanese and Chinese relations later in history?

Causes of World War II

- German reparations
- Redrawn boundaries
- Creation of weak nations

World War I Peace Treaty

Economic and Political Factors

- Economic depression
- Hitler seen as defense against communism
- Desire among some nations for peace at any cost

•Alliances formed:

The Axis	The Allies
Germany	United States
Italy	Great Britain
Japan	France
(Others)	Russia
	China
	(45 Others)

WORLD WAR II

- Policy of appeasement
- American Neutrality Acts; desire to stay out of a European conflict

Diplomatic Factors

Hitler's Leadership

- Challenged Versailles Treaty
- Rebuilt German military
- Practiced territorial aggression
- Promoted extreme nationalism
- Encouraged anti-Semitic scapegoating