

Year 9 HT 3 – Interwar Europe

The interwar period in Europe refers to the time period between the end of World War I in 1918 and the beginning of World War II in 1939. During this time, significant historical events occurred in the UK and around the world. Interwar Europe refers to the period between the end of World War I in 1918 and the beginning of World War II in 1939. It was a time of great change and uncertainty for the countries involved. After the devastation of World War I, many countries were left with economic hardships and political instability. The Treaty of Versailles, which ended World War I, placed blame and heavy reparations on Germany, leading to resentment and economic struggles. Across Europe, there were efforts to rebuild and recover from the war's aftermath. However, economic depression and high unemployment affected many nations, leading to social and political unrest. New ideologies, such as fascism and communism, gained popularity in some countries. The rise of dictators like Adolf Hitler in Germany and Benito Mussolini in Italy increased tensions. Countries were also grappling with the challenges of preserving peace and avoiding another war. Despite efforts, unresolved conflicts and growing nationalism ultimately set the stage for the outbreak of World War II. The interwar period serves as a reminder of the importance of addressing underlying issues and promoting peace and cooperation among nations.

In the UK, key events during this time period include:

- The 1924 general election, which saw the first ever Labour government in the UK
- The General Strike of 1926, which was the largest industrial dispute in British history
- The Wall Street Crash of 1929, which led to a worldwide economic downturn and the Great Depression

In addition to these events in the UK, important historical events that were happening around the world during the interwar period include:

- The Russian Revolution of 1917, which led to the establishment of the Soviet Union and significant political and social changes in Europe
- The Treaty of Versailles in 1919, which formally ended World War I but also imposed harsh penalties on Germany, contributing to the rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany in the 1930s
- The Spanish Civil War between 1936 and 1939, which saw the rise of General Franco and the establishment of a fascist government in Spain
- The Japanese invasion of China in 1937, which marked the beginning of World War II in Asia
- The Munich Agreement of 1938, in which European leaders attempted to appease Hitler and avert war, but ultimately failed

Further reading:

Fiction:

"The One That Got Away" by Jan Mark - This book tells the story of a young girl who discovers family secrets during a school project on World War I. It offers insights into the interwar period, including the impacts of war on families and everyday life.

Non fiction:

The Treaty of Versailles: A Captivating Guide to the Peace Treaty that Ended World War I and Its Impact on Germany and the Rise of Adolf Hitler" by Captivating History - This book offers an insight into the interwar years in Europe and its repercussions. It describes in detail the causes of World War I, the peace treaty, and its impact on Germany, providing an understanding of how its conditions set the stage for the rise of Hitler and the start of World War II.