

Lesson Plan

The Rise of the Nazis

Book: *Causes of World War II*

Series: World War II

Level: Voyager

Objective

To help students explore the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party in Germany, identifying both the Nazis' goals and the messaging they used to gain power.

Supplies

- *Causes of World War II* book
- Access to the “Aftermath of World War I and the Rise of Nazism, 1918–1933” page on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum’s website:
<https://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust/path-to-nazi-genocide/chapter-1/aftermath-of-world-war-i-and-the-rise-of-nazism-1918-1933>

Before the Activity

Read *Causes of World War II* as a class, or assign it to students to read on their own. Pull up the US Holocaust Memorial Museum web page and prepare to play the video for students.

Activity

Play the video for the class, starting at 06:42, where the narrator begins describing Hitler’s rise to power, and pausing at 12:11, where the credits start. Then have students answer the following questions:

- According to this video, what were some of Hitler’s political goals? (Answers: territorial expansion, a racially pure state, and the elimination of European Jews and other perceived enemies of Germany)
- The Nazi Party used newspapers to spread its messages. What were some tactics these newspapers used? (Answers: They downplayed the Nazis’ more extreme goals and offered simple solutions to problems.)
- How did Hitler and the Nazis respond when a fire burned the German parliament? (Answers: They blamed Communists, fanned people’s fears of Communism, and declared emergency rule which ended many rights and protections. For example, the rule gave police the power to arrest or attack people.)
- Who were the Nazis’ first targets, and what happened to them? (Answer: The Nazis targeted their political opponents, having them attacked or sent to concentration camps.)

- Many German citizens supported these extreme measures. According to the video, why was that? (Answers: The Nazis gave people a sense of hope and security, and people liked the idea of a charismatic leader who would bring power to Germany.)
- Why do you think promises of safety and power tend to be so appealing to people? (Answers will vary.)

Evaluation

Could students answer the questions about the video? Could they describe how and why safety and power might appeal to people?

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' speaking and listening standards, grade 8 (SL 8.1, 8.2), and the National Council for the Social Studies standard 6.