



How World War Two Started in 1939

KS4 HISTORY

Ages 11-15 ⌚ 4 min read

The Seeds of War

World War Two didn't just happen by accident in **1939**. It grew from problems that started years earlier, especially after **World War One** ended in **1918**.

After **World War One**, the winning countries made **Germany** sign the **Treaty of Versailles**. This treaty was extremely harsh. **Germany** had to pay enormous amounts of money (called **reparations**) to the winners, give away lots of land, and keep its army tiny. Many **German** people felt angry and humiliated by these unfair punishments.

Think of it like being punished so severely for breaking a vase that you lose your pocket money, your bedroom, and your friends for years. You'd feel pretty angry, wouldn't you?

Economic Disaster and a Dangerous Leader

In the **1920s**, **Germany** faced terrible economic problems. Prices for everything shot up (called **hyperinflation**), and many people lost their jobs during the **Great Depression**. People were hungry, scared, and desperate for someone to fix things.

This is when **Adolf Hitler** and his **Nazi Party** rose to power. **Hitler** promised to make **Germany** strong again and get revenge on the countries that had treated them so badly. People listened because they wanted hope, even though **Hitler's** ideas were dangerous and hateful.

Hitler's Aggressive Plans

Hitler didn't just want to make **Germany** normal again—he wanted to build a huge empire. He believed **German** people were superior and deserved more land. He started breaking the rules of the **Treaty of Versailles** by secretly building weapons and an army.

In **1938**, **Hitler** took over **Austria** without permission. Then he demanded **Czechoslovakia**. Other countries worried but didn't stop him.

Why War Broke Out in 1939

On **September 1st, 1939**, **Hitler** invaded **Poland**. This was the final straw. **Britain** and **France** had promised to protect **Poland**, so they declared war on **Germany**. **World War Two** had begun.

Think of it like a schoolyard bully who keeps pushing smaller kids around. Everyone tolerates it at first, but eventually someone says, "That's enough!" and finally stands up to them.