The Early Unpopularity & Challenges to the Weimar Republic

The main reasons for the Republic’s early unpopularity were the 'stab in the back' theory (Dolchstoss Theory) and the Treaty of Versailles.

- **Stab in the back theory**—many Germans thought the German army had been stabbed in the back by the politicians (November Criminals) who signed the armistice in November 1918.
- **Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles** (seen as the war guilt clause) stated that Germany had caused the war, they had to accept the war guilt and had to pay reparations—compensation—to the victorious nations. Germans viewed the Treaty as a 'diktat' (dictated and imposed on them).

The Terms of the Treaty of Versailles 1919

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territorial (Land) Terms</th>
<th>Military Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All colonies to be given to the Allied Powers.</td>
<td>The army was not to exceed 100,000 men, to be used only within Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsace-Lorraine returned to France</td>
<td>No tanks, armoured cars or heavy artillery permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eupen and Malmedy given to Belgium</td>
<td>No military aircraft permitted. The existing air force was destroyed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The loss of Posen and West Prussia to Poland—this put a million Germans under Polish rule.</td>
<td>No naval vessel to be greater than 10,000 tons. Navy limited to 6 battleships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It also divided Germany into two, cutting off East Prussia from the rest of Germany.</td>
<td>No submarines permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plebeiscites (public votes) had to take place in either areas to decide whether they should leave Germany.</td>
<td>The Rhineland—German land which bordered France—was demilitarised, which meant that the German army was not allowed to move through those areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Silesia voted to become part of Poland.</td>
<td>The part of the rich Saar coalfields was also to go to France for 15 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Schleswig decided to become a part of Denmark.</td>
<td>The army of the Reichswehr were stationed there until 1930.</td>
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**The Setting up of the New Constitution**

In January 1919, a new democratic constitution for Germany was drawn up in the town of Weimar. It was finalised in August 1919 and had both strengths and weaknesses.

**Strengths:**
- It established the most advanced democracy in Europe, allowing men and women to have the vote at the age of 20 at a time when in Britain the age was 21 for men and 30 for women.
- The President was elected every 7 years and had the power to appoint to the government.
- The Reichstag (parliament) had the power to pass or reject changes in the law. Members of the Reichstag were elected by proportional representation every 4 years.
- It established the right of free speech and freedom of religious belief.

**Weaknesses:**
- Article 48 said that in an emergency the President could make laws without going to the Reichstag. This gave the President too much power.
- Proportional representation often led to many small parties gaining seats, including extremist groups such as the Nazis. No one party was large enough to secure a majority.
- Coalition governments were often weak and short lived.
- The army generals and judges were the same men who had served the Kaiser. Many of them opposed the Weimar Republic.

The Weimar Constitution

- President—head of state (the Weimar Republic is a parliamentary democracy, the president is a ceremonial figure who appoints the Chancellor, who becomes head of government when no single political party get a majority of the seats in the Reichstag—
- Chancellor—head of government (the Chancellor of the Reich) is the German Prime Minister and is elected by the members of the Reichstag; the President can remove a Chancellor for political reasons; the Chancellor must consult the President before the constitutional chapter of law making could be started.
- Cabinet—made up of the members of the Reichstag who are of the same political party as the Chancellor. The Cabinet decides policy, whereas the Chancellor is responsible for day to day running of the government.
- Reichstag—elected by proportional representation every 4 years, with 832 members (25 seats were additional and not linked to a particular party). The Reichstag is the only law making body of the German government. It has the power to make laws, and it also has the power to remove the Chancellor if it disagrees with what the Chancellor is doing.
- The President—head of state (the Weimar Republic is a parliamentary democracy, the President appoints the Chancellor who becomes head of government when no single political party get a majority of the seats in the Reichstag—
- Head of state: Friedrich Ebert (1918-1925)
- Chancellor: Kurt von Schwerin (1918-1920), Hermann Dietrich (1920-1922), Johannes Bell (1922-1923), Franz von Papen (1923-1930)
- The Head of state had very limited powers but they could be strengthened under a National Emergency. A National Emergency meant that the President could declare a state of emergency and appoint a Reichspraesident to run the government. This allowed the President to make temporary laws and limit the powers of the Reichstag. For example, President Ebert used the National Emergency powers to make laws to ensure that the November Criminals did not escape trial. On 11 November 1918, he had Matthias Erzberger, the head of the Social Democratic party and one of the men who had negotiated the armistice, assassinated.
- Head of government: Karl Liebknecht (1918-1919), Wilhelm Metal (1919-1920), Matthias Erzberger (1920-1921), Friedrich Ebert (1921-1925)
- The head of government had the power to negotiate the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and to make peace with the Allies. The Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28 June 1919 by Matthias Erzberger, the leader of the SPD in the Reichstag. The Treaty of Versailles was a disaster for Germany. The terms included:

**The Weimar Republic 1918-1933**

- Political challenges to the Weimar Republic continued from the left and right wings.
- The Left Wing (Communist Party, KPD) had also begun forming and began to challenge the government from the left. The KPD (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands) was formed in 1920 and the Communist Party in Germany was the largest political party in the Weimar Republic. The KPD was a political party that believed in communism and opposed the capitalistic system. The KPD believed in the overthrow of the government and the introduction of a socialist society.
- The Right Wing (Nationalists, Nazis) were also a challenge to the Weimar Republic. The Nationalists (SPD) were led by Gustav Stresemann and they believed in a liberal democracy and the stabilisation of Germany. The Nazis, led by Adolf Hitler, believed in a national socialist system and the overthrow of the government. The Nazis were a political party that believed in the introduction of a national socialist system and the overthrow of the government. The Nazis were a political party that believed in the introduction of a national socialist system and the overthrow of the government. The Nazis were a political party that believed in the introduction of a national socialist system and the overthrow of the government.

**The Weimar Republic Faced Several Threats, Revolts and Putches**

**Opposition from the Left—The Spartacist Revolt**

- The Spartacists, led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, demonstrated against the government in December 1918. 16 people died in clashes with the police.
- They formed the German Communist Party and on 5 January 1919 staged an uprising in Berlin to overthrow the government and create a Communist state in Germany. They were inspired by Bolshevism in Russia. With the help of the Freikorps the uprising was crushed and Rosa and Karl were arrested and killed.

**Opposition from the Right—The Kapp Putsch**

- The Freikorps were furious at the Treaty of Versailles. March 1920, they attempted to take power in Berlin, through a putch led by Dr Wolfgang Kapp.
- Kapp set up a new right-wing government in Berlin. The army would not put the putch down, showing lack of support for the Weimar Republic.
- Berlin workers supported Weimar and went on strike; the putch collapsed.

**Challenges to the Republic from the Left and Right**

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**Key Terms**

- Abduction: A leader, like a king, queen or giving up their throne or position.
- Aristocracy: A formal agreement between countries or groups at war to stop fighting for a particular time, especially to talk about possible peace.
- Constitution: The rules which set out how a country is run.
- Republic: A country without a king or queen.
- Weimar Republic: the republic that existed in Germany 1919-1933. Coalition Government: two or more political parties joining to form a government so no single political party get a majority of the seats in the legislature to pass laws.
- Democracy: The belief in freedom and equality between people.
- SPD: Social Democratic Party, the biggest party in the German parliament in 1918.
- Reichstag: German Parliament
- Chancellor: Equivalent to a prime minister.
- Nationalism: state/government centered.
- Trade unions: Groups of workers formed to protect the rights and interests of workers in various occupations (jobs).
- Communist: An extreme form of government, in which representatives of the workers set up a government and take over ownership of all land, property and resources in a country. It was associated with Germany's enemy.
- Freikorps: Unemployed ex soldiers.
- KPD: German Communist Party
- Reichwehr: The regular German army
- Putch: A violent attempt to overthrow a government.
- Diktat: A treaty which is imposed and not agreed by both parties. (Dictated)
The Challenge of 1923: French Occupation of the Ruhr

- Germany's biggest problem was that its government was bankrupt because Germany's gold reserves had all been spent in the war. The Treaty of Versailles deprived Germany of wealth earning areas such as the coal fields in Silesia, as well as paying 6.6 billion in reparations.
- In January 1923, the French marched into the Ruhr industrial area, determined to get payment in kind by taking goods.
- The German workers chose passive resistance to the occupation and went on strike.
- This meant that fewer goods were being produced. The German government in response printed more money to pay the strikers which, alongside fewer goods, turned inflation into hyperinflation.
- By November 1923, the German mark was worthless: $1 was worth 4,200,000,000 marks. A loaf of bread cost 201 billion marks.

The Effects of Hyperinflation on Different People

**Losers**
- People who were in debt or borrowed money found it easy to pay off their debts now that money was practically worthless.
- Some rich businessmen borrowed money and profited because the value of their debts went down so they were able to pay back loans for nothing or even take over smaller middle-class businesses.
- Elderly people who lived on pensions found their savings were wiped out and they couldn't buy food or heat their homes.
- Small businesses collapsed or were taken over by rich people. Normal trade became impossible due to daily price changes and an increase in bartering. Some shops refused to accept money and asked for payment in swapping goods (bartering) instead.

**Winners**
- Farmers benefited from food prices increasing. They were also in a good position to barter as they had access to food and goods that were in short supply (bread, butter, etc.).
- Some rich people had their money in land, houses, and gold. They were protected against hyperinflation.
- As German marks became worthless, foreign suppliers refused to accept German marks for goods, so imports dried up and shortages of food and other goods got worse for everyone.

The Golden Age? Changes in Society 1924-1929

- Many Germans saw improvement in their standard of living.
- Wages - The real value of wages increased each year after 1924.
- Inflation - Extreme inflation. Hyperinflation brought in Rentenmark. This meant that fewer goods were being produced. The German government in response printed more money to pay the strikers which, alongside fewer goods, turned inflation into hyperinflation.
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Changes in the Position of Women

1. Politics - 1919, women over 20 given right to vote.
2. The League of Nations 1926 - At the end of WW1, the Allies had founded the League of Nations. This was a new international body on which powerful countries discussed ways of solving the world's problems without resorting to war. Initially, Germany was excluded but in September 1926, Stresemann persuaded the other great powers to accept Germany as a member of the League of Nations.
3. The Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928 - Germany signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact along with 64 other nations. It was agreed that they would keep their armies for self-defence and solve all international disputes by peaceful means. It was the work of two French and US foreign ministers and was named after them. The USA was not in the League of Nations and saw this as a way to assert peace.

Changes in Standard of Living

- Politics - 1919, women over 20 given right to vote.
- Weimar constitution introduced equality in opportunity, pay and education.
- By 1926, 60% of women had entered the labour market.
- Architecture - a new group of architects and designers emerged called Bauhaus, who used bold designs and unusual materials and basic shapes and colours.
- Unemployment Insurance - this law in 1927 required workers and employers to make contributions to a national scheme for unemployment welfare.
- The Dawes Plan 1924 - reorganised Germany's reparation payments into 30 payments, with the first being 1 billion marks for the first year.
- The Rentenmark - November 1923, Stresemann introduced the Rentenmark to replace the German mark. This was a temporary measure in order to stabilise the currency and restore confidence.

Cultural Changes

- Art - Neue Sachlichkeit (new objectivity) was a new style of art which portrayed society in an objective way. It was associated with painters such as George Grosz and Otto Dix.
- Cinema - a golden age for cinema. German actress Marlene Dietrich became a popular film star and did the film 'Metropolis' in 1927. The film was directed by Fritz Lang, who went on to direct 'M' and 'Metropolis'.
- Literature - This period encouraged literature from the right and left in politics. Eric Remarque wrote a moving anti-war novel called 'All Quiet on the Western Front' describing the horrors of WW1.
- Naval Treaty 1926 - The other main powers agreed that they would keep their armies for self-defence and solve all international disputes by peaceful means. It was the work of two French and US foreign ministers and was named after them. The USA was not in the League of Nations and saw this as a way to assert peace.

Weimar & Nazi Germany 1918 - 1939

- The German economy recovered from the disasters of 1923 while relations with other countries, especially Britain and France, improved.
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- Germany was restricted to a small number of tanks. It was converted into the Rentenmark.
- The Young Plan 1929 - Germany negotiated a further change to reparations. A timescale for payment was set, with Germany making payments until 1988. The reparation figure was reduced from 6.6 billion to 1.85 billion. Hitler described this as passing the 'penalty to the unborn.'

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Early development of the Nazi Party

### Hitler's early career in politics (DAP)
- Hitler is asked to keep an eye on local political activists in the Munich area and begins to attend the meetings of the German Workers' Party (DAP).
- The DAP had been founded in Munich in February 1919, by Anton Drexler, a railway mechanic.
- 12 September 1919 - Hitler's first meeting. Only 23 present with party funds of 7 marks & 50 pfennigs.
- 1 September 1919 - Hitler joined the DAP.

### Setting up the Nazi Party (NSDAP)

**Party policy**
- **January 1920** - Hitler became head of party propaganda.
- **February 1920** - Hitler and Drexler wrote the Twenty-Five Point Programme.
  - The party was strongly opposed to Weimar politicians, democracy and the Jews.

**Hitler's personal appeal**
- Hitler was a very skilled orator (public speaker).
- His speeches were rehearsed, frantic rage. They were very persuasive.
- Hitler persuaded with his hands to draw the crowd.
- Hitler had publicity photos and paintings produced showing him as an orator.
- November 1919 - November 1920, Hitler appeared at 46 party gatherings as the star speaker.
- June 1920 - membership of the DAP grew to 1,000.
- December 1920 - membership of the party grew to 3,000.

**Party organisation - Hitler introduces changes to the DAP**
- **January 1920** - the DAP set up a permanent office in Munich.
  - Hitler chose Rudolf Schuster, a friend from the army, as the party's first full-time administrator.
  - The party's meetings became more organised, better advertised. Party membership and funds began to increase.
- Hitler suggested that the party be called the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP - or Nazi Party for short).
- The Nazi Party adopted its characteristic logo, the swastika.
- December 1920 - due to an increase in party funds a newspaper is bought - the People's Observer.
  - The paper cost 180,000 marks. Its initial circulation was 11,000 copies. Within a year it reached 17,000 copies. The NSDAP could now send its message to Munich, Bavaria and other parts of Germany.

### Party leadership
- **July 1921** - Hitler forces a leadership contest and defeated Drexler to become the leader of the NSDAP.
- Hitler surrounded himself with supporters such as:
  - Rudolf Hess - a wealthy academic, who became Hitler's deputy.
  - Hermann Göring - a young and wealthy First World War fighter pilot.
  - Julius Streicher - a publisher who founded another Nazi newspaper (The Stormer).
- Ernst Röhm - an arab faced, buck neon-ex-army officer who was popular amongst soldiers.
- General Ludendorff - became a friend of Hitler and was leader of the German Army during WW1.
- January 1922 - Hitler persuaded the members to give up their right to elect their leader. The NSDAP became his party.

### The Munich Putsch, 1923 (Beer Hall Putsch)
- 8 November 1923 - Three leading Bavarian government officials met in a beer hall.
  - Gustav von Kahr - Leader of the state government of Bavaria, von Seisser - head of the police, von Lossow - head of the German army of Bavaria.
- Hitler burst in with 600 men and announced that he was taking over Bavaria.
- Rohm and the SA took over the local police and army headquarters. However the main army barracks remained in the hands of those loyal to the government.
- 9 November - Ludendorff released Kahr, Seisser and Lossow which was a huge mistake.
- 9 November - at midnight Hitler, 1,000 SA and 2,000 volunteer supporters marched to Munich.
- Hitler did not have the support of the local people or the main army headquarters.
- Fighting started between the two sides, Hitler was left with a dislocated arm, Goring was shot, fourteen Nazis and 4 policeman were shot dead. Hitler faked the scene.
- 11 November - Hitler was found and arrested.
- At the trial, Ludendorff was found not guilty. Hitler and three others were found guilty of treason and sentenced to five years in Landsberg Prison. The NSDAP was banned.

### Nazi Party Reorganisation, 1924-28

Hitler was soon able to resume his political career and take the views written in Mein Kampf to the German electorate.
- The ban on the NSDAP was lifted on 16 February 1925.
- The SA was reformed as a smaller group with specially selected members he could trust to act as his bodyguard.
- The party headquarters was in Munich.
- Philipp Bouhler was appointed party secretary and Franz Schwarzh was appointed party treasurer.

The party had:
- Its paramilitary arm, the SA.
- A women's section called The German Women's Order.
- For younger people, a National Socialist German Students' League was created.
- The Hitler Youth for 14 - 18 year olds alongside a School pupils' League.

** Longer-term causes **
- 'stab in the back' theory
- The loss of Germany's colonies
- The disarmament of the Weimar Republic
- From 1919 to 1923, the NSDAP had been growing in the Munich base in Bavaria, south Germany.
- Bavarian state leaders shored some of the NSDAP views and turned a blind eye to the violence of the SA

**Medium-term causes**
- Hitler & NSDAP were heavily influenced by a right-wing party in Italy, called the Fascists, led by Mussolini.
- They modelled their salute and use of flags on the Fascists.
- In 1922, Mussolini led his forces in a 'march on Rome' and took control of the democratic government of Italy.

**Short-term causes**
- During 1923, hyperinflation in Germany reached its peak.
- In 1923, French troops entered the German industrial region of the Ruhr and took over German businesses there.
- German workers resisted, they were arrested, imprisoned, and even deported.
- The German people were bitterly aggrieved by these events.
- The Weimar Republic seemed weak and unable to solve people's problems. The time was ripe to exploit those grievances. In November 1923, Hitler made a bid for power.

**The SA and the SS (Schutzstaffel)**
- 1930 - Hitler had expanded the SA to 400,000, but did not fully trust their loyalty.
- Whilst in prison, the SA had become loyal to Ernst Röhm, its commander.
- The storm troopers were violent thugs and difficult to control.
- 1925, Hitler took two steps to tighten his control of his paramilitary forces.
  1. Hitler replaced Röhm as leader by forcing him to find work abroad until he returned to the Nazi Party in 1930.
  2. He then set up a new group called the Schutzstaffel or SS (Protection Squad). This was a smaller group with specially selected members he could trust to act as his bodyguard.
- The SS was run by Hitler's personal chauffeur and bodyguard, Julius Schreck.
- Soon after, Hitler replaced Schreck with Heinrich Himmler, from a non-Communist member of the Nazi party.
- Himmler expanded the SS to 3,000 members by 1930. They were formidable - and feared - for their menacing black uniforms, which were introduced in 1932.

### The Creation of a National Nazi Party

It was decided to create party branches, called Gaue, each led by a Gauleiter. There were 35 regions (Gaue). Each region had a district leader (Gauleiter). Gregor Strasser, Gauleiter in the north of Germany.

Joseph Goebbels - Gauleiter in the Rhineland.

Hitler raised money for the party by taking control of party finances, taking donations from wealthy industrialists and later received loans from big businesses like Thyssen, Knapp and Bosch.

### Nazi Party Reorganisation 1924-28

#### Party reorganisation 1924-28

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#### The role of the SA
- August 1921 - The SA were formed.
- Many of the SA were recruited from the unemployed and were often ex-soldiers.
- They dressed in brown uniforms and were known as the 'Brownshirts.'
- August 1922 - numbered 800.
- Used to control crowds and disrupt opposition meetings.
- Hitler selected a few SA to be his bodyguard.

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#### Key Points

**Propaganda** - A way of controlling public attitudes.
- Propaganda uses things like newspapers, posters, radio and film, to put ideas into people's minds and therefore shape attitudes.

**Twenty-Five Point Programme** - A document explaining the policies of the DAP.
- Policies - A course or principle of action adopted or supported by an individual or organization.

**Nationalism** - A political outlook in which all policies are organised to make the nation stronger and more independent.
- Socialism - A political outlook which stresses that a country's land, industry and wealth should all belong to the workers of the country.
By early 1926, it was clear that the local leaders
However, other party leaders, such as Hitler himself,
within a week, investors had lost $4,000 million.
German banks were major investors in shares on the US stock exchange and suffered huge losses.
Germany and American banks demanded the return of money they had lent to business in industry and agriculture. The German economy collapsed.

The Great Depression
October 1929 – Wall St Crash – Failing shares meant that people’s investment fell in value.
People rushed to sell their shares.
24 October 1929 – Black Thursday – 13 million shares were sold. Prices even lower. Shares worth $20,000 in the morning were worth $1,000 by the end of the day.
Within a week, investors had lost $4,000 million.
German banks were major investors in shares on the US stock exchange and suffered huge losses.
German banks rushed to take their money out of banks causing them to run out of money.
German and American banks demanded the return of money they had lent to business in industry and agriculture. The German economy collapsed.

The Bamberg Conference of 1926
By early 1926, it was clear that the local leaders (Gauleiters) in each of the 35 regions in Germany were not united. Each had to look after their own constituency.
Strasser and Goebbels who were based in the industrial and urban area of northern Germany emphasised the socialist part of National Socialism. They wanted more benefits for the workers and less for the German Army, he was a war hero. This increased support for the WPO.

Impact of the Bamberg Conference of 1926
The Bamberg Conference had a big impact on the Nazi Party.
Hitler’s control of the party was now clear and Goebbels was promoted to Gauleiter of Berlin as a reward for his loyalty.
Strasser pleaded for harmony with Hitler, but Hitler never really trusted him. Strasser was murdered in 1934 during a clear out of Nazi leaders.
The socialist principles of the Nazi party were weakened. This gave Hitler more freedom to adopt any policies he liked.

Rise in support for the Communist Party (KPD) and NSDAP General elections, 1928 – 32: seats in the Reichstag

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>KPD</th>
<th>NSDAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hitler’s limited powers as Chancellor of Germany
The Weimar constitution controlled what the Chancellor could do.
Hindenburg repudiated all the powers of the President.
Hitler’s cabinet had 12 members – but only two were NSDAP members (Wilhelm Frick and Hermann Goering).
NSDAP members numbered only one-third of the Reichstag.

How Hitler became Chancellor
1932 – Weimar Republic was crippled by economic problems. Chancellor Bruning relied on presidential decrees (Article 48) to pass laws.
April 1932 – Bruning banned the SA and SS because of unrest on the streets. All parties feared the same treatment. Then he planned to buy up land from landowners to house the unemployed. Landowners were furious. Hindenburg was a landowner. National Principles.

Van Schleicher organised a coalition of right-wing landowners, industrialists and army officers and chose a wealthy politician, von Papen to lead the coalition. Hitler agreed to support the coalition.
30 May 1932 – Bruning resigns and von Papen becomes Chancellor.
July 1932 – Reichstag elections. Mass fighting occurred on the streets from the Nazis and KPD and made the government look out of control. The Nazis won a huge 230 seats and became the largest party in the Reichstag.
Hindenburg called for another Reichstag election. Hitler spoke for 5 hours and made it seem like the day was exciting and Hitler attracted many young people.
Young people – The Nazis were seen as exciting and Hitler attracted many young members.
Woman – Hitler claimed that voting Nazi was for the benefit of families.

March 1932, Presidential Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Hindenburg</th>
<th>Leader of NSDAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KPD</td>
<td>5 million</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSDAP</td>
<td>18 million</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23 million</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

April 1932, Presidential Elections (no candidate achieved 50% of the vote)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Hindenburg</th>
<th>Leader of NSDAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KPD</td>
<td>4 million</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSDAP</td>
<td>19 million</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23 million</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hitler becomes Chancellor
30 January 1933 – Hitler becomes Chancellor.

The Lean Years, 1923-29
By 1929, The Nazi Party was well organised. It had 100,000 members and Hitler had tightened his personal control over the party. However, in some ways, these were lean years. There were several reasons for this.
The Reichstag Fire

- 27 February 1933 - The Reichstag building was destroyed by a massive fire.
- A young Dutchman, a communist supporter named Marinus van der Lubbe, was caught on site with matches and lighters.
- Van der Lubbe confessed, was put on trial and executed.

Hitler uses the fire to his advantage

- Hitler and Hermann Göring, the new chief of police, claimed that van der Lubbe was part of a communist conspiracy against the government.
- Four thousand communists were arrested on the night of the Reichstag Fire.
- Hitler pressured President Hindenburg into declaring a state of emergency.
- With Hindenburg’s support, Hitler could now decrees to govern without the Reichstag.
- Next, Hitler persuaded Hindenburg to call an election for 5 March 1933. Hitler hoped to gain more seats in the Reichstag.
- Hitler issued the Decree for the Protection of the People and the State. This gave him powers to imprison political opponents and ban communist newspapers.
- Since Hitler controlled Germany’s police force, he ensured that they ignored violent activities of the SA.
- Hitler persuaded Gustav Krupp and other industrialists to bankroll the Nazi campaign. Three million marks were donated in just one evening.
- 5 March 1933 - Nazis increase their Reichstag members to 288. Violent clashes led to 70 deaths.

The Enabling Act

- March 1933 - Hitler proposed the Enabling Act to the Reichstag. Hitler expected opposition because the Act was designed to destroy the power of the Reichstag.
- Hitler used Nazi Party stormtroopers (SA) to intimidate his opponents.
- von Papen originally thought that he could control Hitler's control.
- The act was renewed again in 1937. The SS were posted inside to intimidate members of other parties. The SA were mainly on informants. Feared by the general public.
- The Enabling Act was the Law for the Removal of the Distress of the People and Reich. It said that:
  - the Reich cabinet could pass new laws
  - these laws could override the constitution of the Weimar Republic
  - the laws would be proposed by the Chancellor - Hitler.
- The Enabling Act would give Hitler the right to make laws for the next four years without the consent of the Reichstag.
- A secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful.
- 24 March 1933 - with the support of the other nationalistic parties, Hitler achieved a two-thirds majority in the Reichstag.
- Hitler had now enough votes to change the constitution of the Republic.

Nazis increase their Reichstag members to 288. Violent clashes led to 70 deaths.

- The Night of the Long Knives (removing opposition within the NSDAP)

By the start of 1934, Hitler had made Germany a one-party state - the Nazi Party. He now made sure that he was the unchallenged leader of the party.

- Ernst Rohm, leader of the SA. Rohm had formed a manly group, the Stahlhelm, with the SA. This brought SA numbers to 3 million.
- Stormtroopers complained that, although risking death for Hitler, he undervalued their contribution to the nation’s dictatorship powers.
- 60% of the SA were permanently unemployed.
- SA members were loyal to Rohm.
- Rohm criticized Hitler’s links with rich industrialists and army generals.
- Rohm wanted more socialist policies, to tax the rich and help the working class.
- German army officers worried that Rohm wanted to replace the German army with the SA.
- Leaders of the SS, such as Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich wanted to reduce the power of the SA and increase the power of the SS.

Hitler was aware that many working people would not volunteer for the SA.

- 30 June 1934 - Hitler organised a meeting with Rohm and 100 other SA leaders at a hotel in the Bavarian town of Bad Wiessee.
- When they arrived, Rohm and the other senior officers of the SA were arrested, imprisoned and shot.
- Von Papen - Vice Chancellor von Papen originally thought that he could control Hitler. Hitler had advised him to make Hitler Chancellor.
- SS squads entered von Papen’s office, shot his press secretary and arrested his staff.
- Von Papen’s home was surrounded and his telephone cut off.
- Von Papen did not have ‘Hitler in his pocket’ like he assured Hindenburg that he had. The inmates of the concentration camps were:
  - Starved to death.
  - Worked to death.
  - Tortured to death.
  - Shot.
  - Poisoned.

The Death of Hindenburg

- 2 August 1934 - President Hindenburg died, aged 87. Hitler took over supreme power.
- Hitler knew that he could not control all 18 Länder (regional) parliaments.
- He issued a decree to make all political parties in Germany illegal, except for the NSDAP.
- Hitler used his powers to ban trade unions and made strikes illegal.
- POLITICAL PARTIES - Hitler removed all political opposition.
- May 1933 - Nazis broke into trade union offices all over Germany and arrested union trade union officials.
- Hitler used his powers to ban trade unions and make strikes illegal.
- TRADE UNIONS - Hitler was aware that many working-class Germans supported the communists. He was worried that workers might go on strike to undermine the government.
- May 1933 - Nazis broke into trade union offices all over Germany and arrested union trade union officials.
- Hitler used his powers to ban trade unions and make trades illegal.
- MAY 1933 - Nazis attacked their two main political rivals. Nazi stormtroopers entered the offices of the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party, destroyed newspaper offices and confiscated all their funds.
- July 1933 - Hitler issued a decree to make all political parties in Germany illegal, except for the NSDAP.
- LOCAL GOVERNMENTS - Hitler’s next step was to strengthen the central government in Berlin - which he controlled - to weaken local government in Germany.
- Under the Weimar constitution, each region of Germany had its own parliament, which ran the local government in the area.
- By 1934, Hitler had control of the Reichstag - but he could not control the 18 Länder (regional) parliaments.
- January 1934 - Hitler abolished the lander parliaments and declared instead that governors appointed by him, would run every region of Germany.

Controlling the legal system

- Hitler realised that those sent to court stood no chance against him if they were biased in favour of the Nazis.
- The Judges - Hitler set up the Nationalist Socialist League for the Maintenance of the Law. All judges had to be members. If any judges displeased the Nazis, they were denied membership.
- The court laws - Hitler abolished trial by jury. Judges decided innocence, guilt and punishments.
- Hitler and the SS were given near all cases of treason offences against the state. Judges were hand-picked and trials were held in secret. You could not appeal against the decision of the People’s Court.
- 1934 - 1939, 534 people were sentenced to death for political offences. 1930-1934, only eight people had been sentenced to death.

The Police State (SS, SD and the Gestapo)

The Nazis used the police to control what people did and what they said. Those who spoke against the Nazis were arrested.

- SS - (protection squad who wore black uniforms) led by Heinrich Himmler. By 1936 the SS controlled all Germany’s police and security forces.
- SD - Security department (secret police) led by Reinhard Heydrich. The SD spied on all known opponents and critics of the Nazi Party and the German government.
- Gestapo - (Secret State Police, no uniform) led by Reinhard Heydrich. Prosecuted anyone who said anything critical of the Nazis or the German government. Ruled mainly on informations. Feared by the general public.
The Christian religion was another aspect of German society which Hitler's Nazi police state set out to control.

The Catholic Church

- One-third of Germany's Christians were Catholic.
- Catholics also had their own schools, which taught values different from Nazi state schools.

The KPD continued to fight for the establishment of a new society. Joseph Goebbels was the key person in the Nazi efforts to control and influence attitudes. He was appointed Minister of People's Enlightenment and Propaganda in 1933.

- Goebbels co-ordinated Nazi policy towards the media, sport, culture, and the Arts. Attitudes which the Nazis opposed were censored.

Nazi control of the media

The Nazi Press decreed that newspapers had to promote the Nazis. Any newspaper which opposed the Nazis was closed down. 1,600 Catholic newspapers were closed down in 1936 alone. Radio - All radio stations were put under Nazi control and frequent broadcasts were made by the Nazis. Nazi ideas were spread through the radio. Mass-produced radios were sold to the public and speakers were even placed in the street. 70% of German homes had a radio and none could pick up foreign stations.

Catholic youth activities, such as the Catholic Youth League, were banned. In 1937 - Pope Pius XI realised the agreement made between Hitler and the Catholic Church was worthless. He issued a strong statement against the Nazi regime, stating it was 'With burning anxiety'.

The Protestant Church

- At first some protestants were grateful that Hitler had dealt with the anti-Christian communists that they worked with. The Reich Church, 1936 - The Protestant Churches which favoured working with the Nazis combined in 1936 to form a single Protestant church. Ludwig Muller - Leader of the Reich Church. Some churches displayed swastikas, which Hitler had forbidden. Jews were not allowed to be baptised into the Reich Church. Jewish teaching of the Old Testament were excluded. Resistance - Pastor Martin Niemoller. 1933 - he was one of the Protestant pastors to set up the Pastors' Emergency League (PEL) to campaign against Nazi actions.
- Niemoller was sent to a concentration camp and the PEL was banned.

Hitler tried first to work with the churches, but Nazi ideology of racial superiority, strength and violence clashed with the churches values of peace and respect. As a result Hitler removed religious opposition and Germany was becoming a totalitarian state.

Goebbels and Propaganda

Nazi control of music

Jazz music was banned because it was seen as the work of black people and therefore inferior. Richard Wagner was favoured because he put music to the legends of heroic and powerful Germans from the past.

Nazi control of literature

No new books could be published without approval from the Chamber of Culture. Existing books which went against Nazi views were censored and 2,500 writers were officially banned. Millions of books were destroyed by the Nazis. In May 1933 students in Berlin burned 20,000 books written by Jews, communists, and anti-Nazi authors. Books by Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein were burned.

Nazi control of architecture

Futuristic and modernistic architecture was disliked by the Nazis. Albert Speer became a favourite architect of the Nazis. Speer built huge buildings, so that size gave the impression of power and permanence.

Nazi control of film

Films had to support Nazi ideas. Films shown in cinemas were preceded by a 45 minute newsreel showing German achievement. All films had to be approved by Goebbels. The Nazi Party even made their own films. Nazi films had underlying political messages, such as Hitlerjunge Quex (1933), in which a young member of the Nazi Party is killed by communists.

Nazi control of culture and the Arts

September 1933. Reich Chamber of Culture - Overseen by Goebbels and the Ministry of propaganda. Art, architecture, literature, music, theatre and film were all consistent with Nazi ideals. Anything opposed to the Nazis was banned. Reich Chamber of Visual Arts - all painters and sculptors were required to be members. Any artist who refused membership was forbidden to teach, produce or sell art.

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**Knowledge Organiser: Key Topic Four**

**Weimar & Nazi Germany 1918 - 1939**

**Nazi policies towards women**

- The Nazis had a traditional view of the role of women. Their policies reflected this.
- Nazi views on women and the family
  - Their slogan Kinder, Kirche, Küche summed up their view, as they thought women should be homemakers and child bearers, and not go out to work.
  - They wanted to increase the birth rate and strengthen the Third Reich.
  - Women had a central role in producing the genetically pure Aryan race, ensuring the future of a strong state.
- Nazi policies towards women
  - Nazi policies brought about changes in women's employment, domestic roles and appearance.
- Employment: women were encouraged to give up their jobs, get married and have large families. Women doctors, civil servants and teachers were forced to leave their professions. Girls were discouraged from higher education and gaining the qualifications needed for professional careers.
- Marriage and family: in 1933, the Law for the Encouragement of Marriage provided loans to help young couples marry, as long as the wife left her job. Couples kept 1/3 of the loan for each child born, up to four children. Maternity benefits were also increased. On Hitler's mother's birthday (12th August), medals were awarded to women with large families.
- Appearance: the ideal Nazi woman was blonde, blue-eyed and stoutly built with broad hips for childbearing. She wore traditional clothes and did not smoke or drink. Women were discouraged from wearing trousers, high heels and makeup. Dyeing or styling hair was frowned on, as it was seen as bad for childbearing.

**Successes & failures of Nazi policies towards women**

**Successes**

- In the first few years the number of married women in employment fell.
- The number of marriages and the birth rate increased.
- The German Women's Enterprise organized Mothers' Schools to train women in household skills, as well as courses, lectures and radio programmes on household topics. It had 6 million members.

**Failures**

- The number of women in employment increased from 4.85 million in 1933 to 7.14 million in 1939. From 1936 the Jewish labour shortage and more workers were needed in heavy industry due to rearmament.
- Many employers preferred women workers because they were cheaper. Women's wages remained only two thirds of men's.
- Some women resented the loss of more professional jobs such as doctors, lawyers and schoolteachers.

**Nazi control of the people**

- Teachers had to accept and put across Nazi ideals or be sacked. Nearly all joined the Nazi Teachers' Association.
- The curriculum changed to put across key Nazi ideals and prepare students for their future roles. Textbooks were rewritten to fit the Nazi view of history and racial purity, and had to be approved by the Ministry of Education. Mein Kampf (t. My Struggle) became a standard text.
- With boys, the emphasis was on preparation for the military. Girls learned needlework and cookery to become good homemakers and mothers.
- History: this was rewritten to glorify Germany's past and the Nazi Party.
- Physical Education: took 15% of curriculum time to ensure that girls were fit to be mothers and boys were prepared for military service.
- Eugenics: a new subject about selective breeding, more especially the creation of a master race. Children were taught that they should not marry so-called inferior races, such as Jews.
- Race Studies: a new subject in 1935 to put forward Nazi ideas on race, in particular the superiority of the Aryan race.
- Geography: pupils were taught about lands which were once part of the German Reich.

**Hitler Youth and the League of German Maidens**

The Nazis wanted to control the leisure time of the young. They closed down all youth movements belonging to other political parties and the Churches. There were four separate youth organisations for 10-18 year-olds, under the control of Baldur von Schirach, Youth Leader of the Reich.

- German Young People - for boys aged 10-13.
- Young Girls - for girls aged 10-14.
- Hitler Youth - for boys aged 14-18.
- League of German Maidens - for girls aged 14-18.

From 1936 membership was compulsory, although many did not join. For the boys, the focus was on military training, sport, hiking and camping. The girls were taught to separate youth organisations for 10-18-year-olds, under the control of Baldur von Schirach, Youth Leader of the Reich:

- German Young People - for boys aged 10-13.
- Young Girls - for girls aged 10-14.
- Hitler Youth - for boys aged 14-18.
- League of German Maidens - for girls aged 14-18.

**Successes & failures of Nazi policies towards the young**

**Successes**

- Membership of the Hitler Youth expanded from 5.4 million in 1936 to 7.14 million in 1939.
- Many young people enjoyed the exciting and interesting activities such as camping.
- Others enjoyed the great sense of comradeship and belonging to something that seemed powerful.

**Failures**

- Membership of the Hitler Youth expanded from 5.4 million in 1936 to 7.14 million in 1939.
- Many young people enjoyed the exciting and interesting activities such as camping.
- Others enjoyed the great sense of comradeship and belonging to something that seemed powerful.

**Key Terms**

- Kinder, Kirche, Küche - Nazi slogan meaning Children, Church and Cooking.
- Hitler Youth - Organisation set up for boys in Germany to convert them to Nazi ideals.
- League of German Maidens - Youth organisation for girls aged between 14 and 18 to prepare them for motherhood.
- Autohahns - German motorways.
- Beauty of Labour - A department of the Kraft durch Freude (KdF) that tried to improve working conditions.
- German Labour Front - An organisation of employers and workers which replaced trade unions.
- Reich Labour Service - A scheme to provide young men with manual labour jobs.
- Strength through Joy (KdF) - An organisation set up by the German Labour Front to try to improve the leisure time of German workers.
- Ghetto - Densely populated areas of a city inhabited by a particular ethnic group, such as Jews.
- Kristallnacht - The 'Night of the Broken Glass.' The name given to a night of violence against Jews due to the amount of shattered glass which littered the streets.
- Nuremberg Laws - Laws passed in 1935 which denied German citizenship to Jewish people.
- Selective Breeding - Nazi policy designed to create a master race.
**Employment and living standards**

Nazi policies reduced unemployment; however, there is debate about the standard of living during this period.

**Nazi policies to reduce unemployment**

Hitler was determined to reduce unemployment. This stood at 6 million in 1932 and had more or less been removed by 1938.

**Job-creation schemes**

In 1933, 18.4 billion RM (Reichsmark) were spent on job-creation schemes, rising to 37.1 billion by 1938. One scheme was a massive road-building programme to create autobahns. This improved the efficiency of German industry by allowing goods to cross the country more quickly and enabled the swift transportation of German troops.

**The Reich Labour Service (RAD)**

The Reich Labour Service provided young men with manual labour jobs. From 1935, it was compulsory for men aged 18-25 to serve six months. Workers lived in camps, wore uniforms, received very low pay and carried out military drill as well as work.

**Invisible unemployment**

Some unemployed people were 'invisible' and not counted in official unemployment figures:

- Jews dismissed from their jobs. From 1933, many Jews were forced out of their jobs, especially in professions such as lawyers and doctors.
- Women doctors, civil servants and teachers dismissed from their jobs.
- Women who had given up work to get married.
- Unmarried men under 25 who were pushed into RAD schemes.
- Opponents of the regime held in concentration camps.

**Rearmament**

Rearmament, especially after 1936, created more jobs:

- More money was spent on manufacturing weapons, and other heavy industry grew, such as the iron industry. By 1939, 26 billion RM were spent on rearmament.
- From 1935, all men aged 18-35 had to do two years' military service. The army expanded from 100,000 in 1933 to 1,400,000 in 1939.

**Changes in the standard of living**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Better off</th>
<th>Worse off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There was more or less full employment.</td>
<td>Lack of freedom. German workers lost their rights under the Nazis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'Strength Through Joy' (KdF) tried to improve the leisure time of German workers through leisure and cultural trips. These included concerts, theatre visits, sporting events, weekend trips, holidays and cruises.</td>
<td>In 1933, trade unions were banned (replaced by the Nazi-backed German Labour Front). The Labour Front did not permit workers to negotiate for better pay or reduced hours of work. Strikes were banned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty of Labour tried to improve working conditions. It organised the building of canteens, swimming pools and sports facilities. It installed better workplace lighting and improved noise levels.</td>
<td>Volkswagen swindle. The idea to encourage people to put aside money every week to buy a Volkswagen was a con trick. By 1939, not a single customer had taken delivery of a car. None of the money was refunded.</td>
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<td>Volkswagen swindle. The idea to encourage people to put aside money every week to buy a Volkswagen was a con trick. By 1939, not a single customer had taken delivery of a car. None of the money was refunded.</td>
<td>Invisible unemployment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The persecution of minorities**

Hitler used the Jews as scapegoats for many of Germany's problems. The Nazis also persecuted Slavs (Eastern Europeans including Poles and Russians), Gypsies (a race of people who travel across the continent rather than living in one place), homosexuals and those with disabilities.

**Nazi racial belief and policies**

Central to the Nazis' policy was the aim to create a pure Aryan racial state. They thought this could be achieved by selective breeding and destroying the Jews. Jews and Slavs were seen as inferior Untermenschen or subhumans.

**The treatment of minorities**

Germans with disabilities were seen as a 'burden on the community.' There were also socially undesirable groups such as homosexuals and gypsies.

- People with disabilities. The 1933 Sterilisation Law allowed the sterilisation of those suffering from physical deformity, mental illness, epilepsy, learning disabilities, blindness and deafness.
- Homosexuals. Homosexuality remained illegal. Nazi views about the importance of family life meant that same-sex relationships could not be tolerated. Gay men were arrested and sent to concentration camps.
- Gypsies. The Nazis wanted to remove Germany's 30,000 Gypsies because they were non-Aryan and threatened racial purity. In 1935, the Nazis banned all marriages between Gypsies and Germans.

**The persecution of the Jews**

The persecution of the Jews gradually increased in the years 1933 - 1939.

**Early policies, 1933-34**

- In 1933, the SA (Sturmabteilung) organised a boycott of Jewish shops and businesses.
- Jews were excluded from government jobs.
- In 1934, local councils banned Jews from public spaces such as parks.

**The Nuremberg Laws, 1935**

The Nuremberg Laws were a series of measures aimed against the Jews, including:

- The Reich Citizenship Law stated that only those of German blood could be German citizens. Jews lost their citizenship, and the right to vote and hold government office.
- The Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour forbade marriage or sexual relations between Jews and German citizens.

**Kristallnacht and after**

On 8 November 1938, Goebbels organised anti-Jewish demonstrations which involved attacks on Jewish property, shops, homes and synagogues. So many windows were smashed that the events of 9 November 1938 became known as the 'Night of the Broken Glass' or Kristallnacht. Worse persecution of the Jews followed.

In January 1939, the SS was given the responsibility for eliminating Jews from Germany. This would be achieved by forced emigration (the act of leaving one's country to settle in another):

- On 30 April, Jews were forced into ghettos.
- By the summer of 1939, about 250,000 Jews had left Germany.
Question 1: Inference

Below is an example of an exam-style inference question which is worth 4 marks. Give two things you can infer from Source A about Hitler's meetings.

SOURCE A
Adapted from the diary of Luise Solmitz, 23 March 1932. Solmitz was a schoolteacher writing about attending a meeting in Hamburg at which Hitler spoke.

There stood Hitler in a simple black coat, looking over the crowd of 120,000 people of all classes and ages… a forest of swastikas unfurled, the joy of this moment show itself in a roaring salute… The crowd looked up to Hitler with touching faith, as their helper, their saviour, their deliverer from unbearable distress. He is the rescuer of the scholar, the farmer, the worker and the unemployed.

How to answer
You have to make two inferences and support each with details from the source. For each of the two inferences you are given the prompts ‘What I can infer’ and ‘Details in the source that tells me this.’

- ‘What I can infer?’ Begin your answer with ‘This source suggests.’ This should help you to get the message from the source.
- ‘Details in the source that tell me this.’ Then quote the detail from the source which supports this message. Begin part of the answer with ‘I know this because the source says/shows…’

Below is a sample answer to this inference question with comments around it.

What I can infer:

The source suggests that Hitler appealed to many different sections in German society.

Details in the source that tell me this:

I know this because the source says ‘He is the rescuer of the scholar, the farmer, the worker and the unemployed.’

What I can infer:

The source also suggests the crowd were very enthusiastic about Hitler.

Details in the source that tell me this:

I know this because the source says ‘the joy of this moment showed itself in a roaring salute… The crowd looked up to Hitler with roaring faith.’

Visual sources
You could also be asked to make inferences from a visual source. You should still follow the same format as above, but make sure to describe a specific detail from the source image provided.
Below is an example of an exam-style causation question which is worth 12 marks.

Explain why the Weimar Republic experienced a period of recovery, 1923-29.

You may use the following in your answer:

• The Dawes Plan
• The Locarno Pact
• You must use information of your own.

How to answer

• You need to explain at least three causes. This could be the two mentioned in the question and one of your own. You don't have to use the points given in the question, you could decide to make more points of your own instead.
• You need to fully explain each cause and support your explanation with precise knowledge, ensuring that each cause is fully focused on the question.

Below is a sample answer to this question with comments around it. How would you improve it?

The Dawes Plan was negotiated with the USA and was introduced in 1924. It changed Germany's reparation payments. Germany could now afford to pay reparations. The Americans also gave loans which sales left Germany dependent on the USA. This was disastrous when the Wall Street Crash happened in 1929.

The Locarno Pact was signed by Germany and other countries, including France which agreed Germany's borders with other states. It improved relations with other countries. Many Germans were still furious because the Treaty of Versailles and the fact that they could not join the League of Nations.

A third cause is not explained.

Exhibit 2: Causation

Below is part of an answer given to this question in which the student agrees with Interpretation 2 about the achievements of Nazi policies towards women in Germany in the years 1933-39.

INTERPRETATION 2
From Weimar and Nazi Germany by E. Willmot, published in 1993.

In 1933 there were 4.85 million women in paid employment. This increased to 7.14 million in 1939. Economic reality forced Nazi ideology to do a U-turn. A labour shortage began to develop from 1936 and the government looked to women to plug the gap. In 1937, the Nazis overturned a clause in the marriage loans scheme to permit married women who had a loan to take up employment.

How to answer

You need to identify the main view that each interpretation has about the Nazi policies towards women in the years 1933-39 and give a final judgement on the relative value of each source. For example, one source might provide one view of an event, the other source a different view.