

Edexcel GCSE History (1-9) Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1919-39

Key Topic 1: The Weimar Republic 1918-29

1. Legacy of the First World War

- Lack of food
- Kaiser ran away (abdicated)
- Unrest on the streets (soldiers coming back from war with weapons)

2. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution?

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Proportional Representation made sure small parties had a fair share of seats.</p> <p>No one group could have too much power</p> <p>Women were able to vote as well as men.</p>	<p>The government had to be formed in Weimar and not the capital Berlin</p> <p>There was a rise of extremist groups e.g. Communists</p> <p>The Treaty of Versailles - Germany had to accept it</p> <p>Unemployment - Thousands of men returned from the war and were without jobs.</p>

3. Why was the Weimar government unpopular?

- Treaty of Versailles
- The '**stab in the back**' theory Some German people believed that Germany had not lost the war but it was the Jews fault
- The army blamed the government for losing the war as they thought they were winning

4. What was the impact of the Treaty Of Versailles - L.A.M.B.

Land - All colonies to be given to the Britain and France. Alsace-Lorraine returned to France. No union with Austria.

Army - Army not to exceed 100,000. No military aircraft.

Money - reparations fixed at £6600 million.

Blame - Article 231 the war guilt clause -Germany had to accept blame for starting the war.

5. Who were the political extremists? Spartacists, Freikorps and Kapp Putsch

The Spartacists

Left-wing (Communists)
Led by Rosa Luxemburg and
Karl Liebknecht
Based in Berlin

The Freikorps

Right-wing
Made up of ex-soldiers who
had kept their weapons
Had 250,000 men in March
1919

Spartacist Revolt

In January 1919, the Spartacists took control over the government's newspaper and telegraph bureau, and tried to organise a general strike in Berlin. The Weimar Government sent Freikorps units to put down the revolt.

Kapp Putsch

In March 1920, Freikorps troops, fearing unemployment, decided to march on Berlin. The army refused to stop them. Dr Wolfgang Kapp, was put in charge by the rebels and the Weimar government fled Berlin seeking safety. The Kapp Putsch came to an end as there was a national strike which caused such chaos Kapp could not rule Germany

6. The Challenges of 1923: hyperinflation and the Invasion of the Ruhr

The French invasion of the Ruhr

The French invade because the Germans stopped paying reparations

French troops invade the Ruhr (industrial area in Germany) to take industrial goods

Consequences

Less goods were available

The Weimar Government instructed the Ruhr workers to go on strike, instead of helping the French (the French arrested them and brought in own workers)

Hyperinflation: When prices for goods increase it is called inflation; when they increase very quickly it is called hyperinflation.

The effects of hyperinflation

Winners

People in debt
Land owners (land still had value)
Wages rose but not as quickly as bread

Losers

People with savings (middle classes)
Old people (pensions)
Businesses went bankrupt
Some people could not afford

People blamed the Weimar government which made it even more unpopular

7. Reasons for economic recovery

Rentenmark

In November 1923, Stresemann set up the Rentenbank and issued the new currency called the Rentenmark.

Supply of these notes was tightly controlled. Their value was linked to the price of gold so it had real value. It encouraged public confidence.

Hyperinflation was over.

The Dawes Plan, 1924

In 1924, Charles Dawes, an American banker, designed a plan so Germany could pay its reparations

Installments reduced to £50 million a year.

US banks made loans to German industry. The Allies felt more confident they would get their reparations payments

Young Plan

In August 1929, a committee, set up by the Allies and led by American banker Owen Young, produced a plan.

Reduced reparations debt from £6.6 billion to £2 billion.
The payments could be made over a longer time, up until 1988
Lower reparations meant lower taxes for German people.

Improvements in the economy

Industrial output doubled
by 1928 and finally passed
pre-First World War levels
Employment and trade
increased

Continued problems

Extreme parties such as
the Nazis were against paying
reparations at all.

The economic recovery
depended on American loans.

If they were recalled Germany

8. Stresemann's success at home and abroad

Stresemann's Successes

Confidence of the German
people and Weimar
government.

Reduced support for
extremist parties

Continued problems

The hated ToV was still in
place.

Extremist parties were still
around

Lacarno Pact 1925

An agreement between Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Belgium.

Germany agreed to its new border with France improving relations with
the French.

The Rhineland was to be permanently demilitarised.

It helped Germany become a member of the League of Nations

League of Nations

A international body that hoped to discuss world problems in order to avoid another war

It showed that Germany's view counted.

It boosted the confidence of the German people in the Weimar government.

Kellogg-Briand Pact

An agreement between 62 nations. It committed countries to avoiding war

It showed that Germany was once again a major power.

It increased confidence in how Germany was being led.

9. Changes in the position of women, politics and leisure Cultural changes: architecture, art and the cinema

Women

Work: There was an increase in part-time work. There were greater opportunities in professions like teaching and medicine.

Leisure: Women had more independence and would go out to have a good time.

Cultural Changes - 1924-1929

Art: Weimar artists painted everyday life. Artists like Otto Dix would show the dark side of everyday life.

Cinema: Films became very popular.

Architecture: New designers and architects

The Nazis did not like these changes. They believed in a traditional way of life.

10. Standard of Living

Positive	Negative
Working hours reduced	Hyperinflation made employment insecure
Wages rose	Well off Germans resented seeing workers benefitting
Working conditions improved	There was still a housing shortage
Unemployment insurance was introduced	
More homes were built	