

The Reception of National Socialism from 1933 to the Present. Multi-perspektivische Einblicke in den Umgang mit dem Nationalsozialismus in Deutschland und dem Vereinigten Königreich erhalten (Klasse 9/10)

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Cartoon criticizing Hitler's "peace policy" in the 1930s, *The Nation*, USA (1934)

"We didn't know about it" is a common response in Germany when confronted by the terrors of Nazi rule. Although deportations, imprisonment and finally extermination of Jews, gypsies, political enemies etc. happened all over Germany, many of the older generations still claim to have seen or heard nothing. Interestingly, the same claim is also used by other nations, who deny any knowledge or responsibility before 1 September 1939. Was Hitler's agenda so shrouded in mystery? More and more we distance ourselves, born decades after WWII, so completely that no lessons need to be learned from the past? Are Adolf Hitler and the National Socialism now just an easy way to boost sales and encourage likes on YouTube?

This teaching module focuses on the events between 1933 and 1945 with an emphasis of a global responsibility for WWII and asks the question, whether we use or abuse our history.

Klassenstufe: Klasse 9/10

Dauer: 6 Unterrichtsstunden

Bereich: 20. Jahrhundert, Nationalsozialismus, 2. Weltkrieg

Kompetenzen:

- den Nationalsozialismus in den globalen Kontext einbetten
- den Umgang mit dem Nationalsozialismus zur Zeit des Dritten Reichs und in der Gegenwart reflektieren
- die Wahrnehmung Hitlers im Ausland untersuchen

Verlaufsübersicht zu den Stunden

1. Stunde: Hitler's policy up to 1939

Material	Verlauf
M 1	Impressions of the German Army / Einführung in die Außenpolitik Hitlers durch Auswertung eines Schaubildes der militärischen Aufrüstung Deutschlands
M 2	Hitler's policy from 1933 to 1939 / Verfassen von Tagebucheinträgen, um die Eckpunkte der Politik Hitlers aus unterschiedlichen internationalen Perspektiven bewerten

2. Stunde: Hitler – a threat from the start?

Material	Verlauf
M 3	Hitler's policy seen from abroad / Analysieren von Karikaturen aus dem Vereinigten Königreich und den USA in arbeitsteiliger Gruppenarbeit
M 4/M 5	Opinions on Hitler / Analyse von Zitaten zur Einschätzung Hitlers von britischer Seite aus

3. Stunde: World War II from an international perspective

Material	Verlauf
M 6/M 7	National timelines / Nachvollziehen des Kriegsverlaufs und Evaluieren der Wendepunkte in arbeitsteiliger Gruppenarbeit

4. Stunde: The end of World War II and the Potsdam Conference

Material	Verlauf
M 8–M 10	The deal of the three powers / Analysieren von Auszügen aus einem Gespräch zwischen Truman, Churchill und Stalin sowie den Potsdamer Beschlüssen in arbeitsteiliger Gruppenarbeit; Vergleich der Ergebnisse dieser Konferenz mit denen des Versailler Vertrags

5. Stunde: War stories – a basis for humour?

Material	Verlauf
M 11	From Berlin to Warsaw in one tank / Analyse und Interpretation einer Autowerbung, die Bezug auf den Zweiten Weltkrieg nimmt
M 12	Debate / Sammeln von Pro- und Kontraargumenten für eine Werbung mit historischem Bezug

6. Stunde: Cover and palliation – how to judge past opinions

Material	Verlauf
M 13	The Queen a fan of Hitler? / Analyse und Interpretation eines Fotos von 1933 und eines Zeitungsartikels von 2015

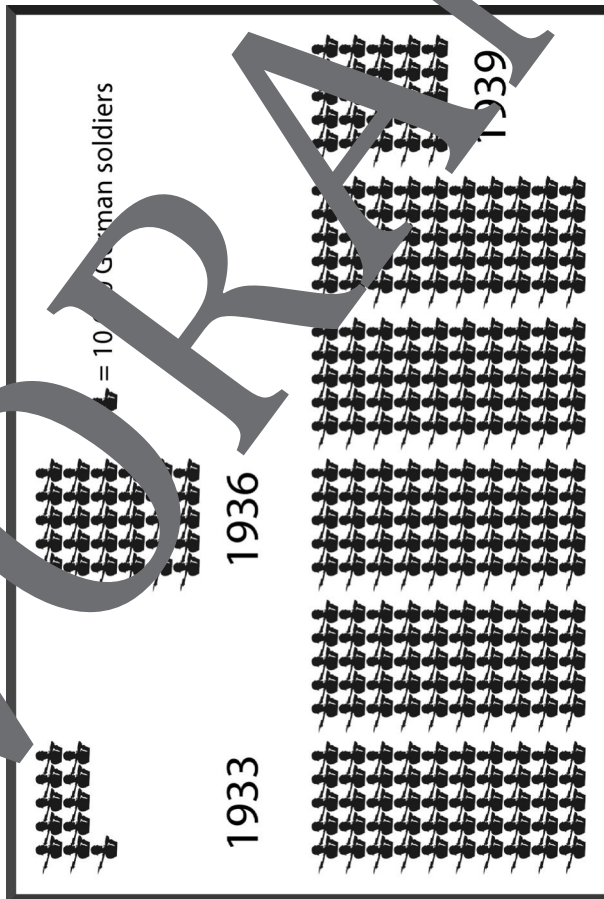
Materialübersicht

1. Stunde	Hitler's policy up to 1939
M 1 (Gd)	Impressions of the German Army – commenting on a statistic
M 2 (Tx)	Hitler's policy from 1933 to 1939 – a timeline
2. Stunde	Hitler – a threat from the start?
M 3 (Bi)	Hitler's policy seen from abroad – analysing a cartoon
M 4 (Tx)	Views of Hitler's foreign policy – an American newspaper (1933)
M 5 (Tx)	Views of Hitler's foreign policy – British Foreign Office (1935)
3. Stunde	World War II from an international perspective
M 6 (Fo/Ab)	Map of the world
4. Stunde	The end of WW II and the Potsdam Conference
M 7 (Tx)	Axis powers and Allied forces – national timelines
M 8 (Tx)	The end of WWII – the deal of the three powers
M 9 (Tx)	The end of WWII – the results of the Potsdam Conference
M 10 (Ab)	The Treaty of Versailles and the Potsdam Conference – a comparison
5. Stunde	War stories – basis for humour
M 11 (Ab/Fi)	From Berlin to Warsaw in a tank – analysing a commercial
M 12 (Ab)	A commercial relating to the war – discussing the pros and cons
6. Stunde	Cover-up and palliation – how to judge past opinions
M 13 (Tx)	The Royal Hennessies – how to judge past opinions

Ab: Arbeitsblatt **Fi:** Filmimpuls **Fr:** Frequenz **Fo:** Folie **Gd:** Grafische Darstellung **Tx:** Text

**M 1 Impressions of the German Army –
commenting on a statistics**

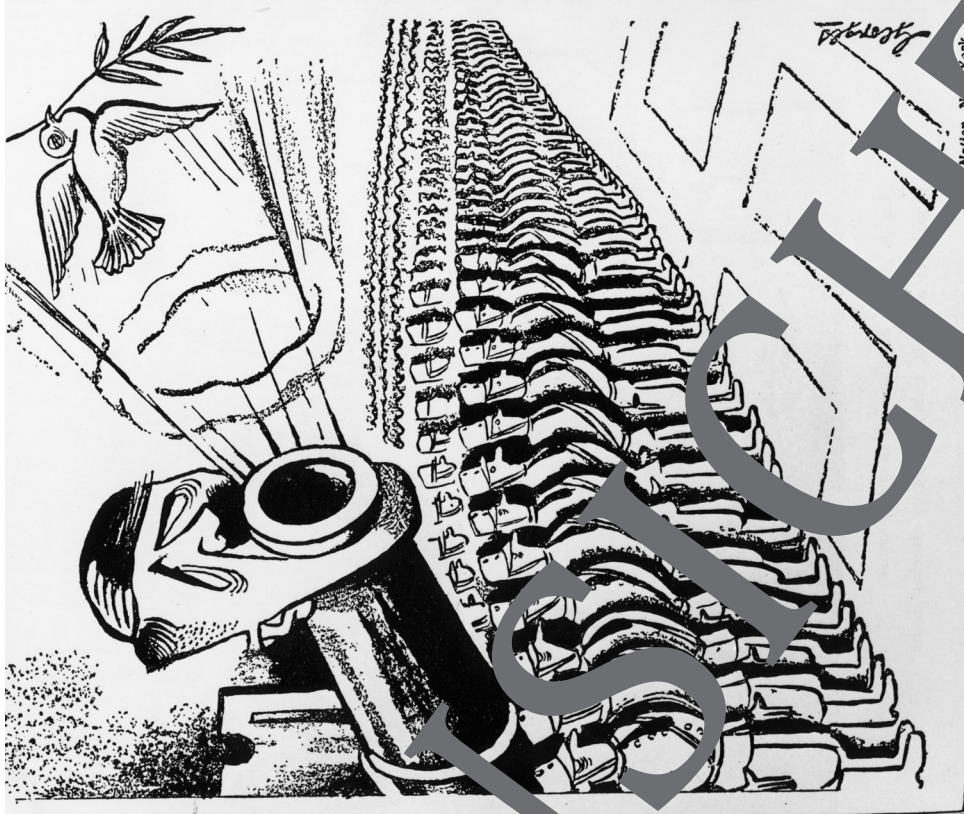
Soldiers of the Wehrmacht



Task: Take a look at the statistics and comment on its meaning.

**M 3 Hitler's policy seen from abroad –
analysing a cartoon**

Hitler's Peace Speech, USA (1933)



Cartoon published in *The Nation* (1933)

Task: Analyse the cartoon.

M 2 Hitler's policy from 1933 to 1939 – a timeline

In September 1939, Hitler commanded German troops to invade Poland. Find out about the foreign policy leading to that event.

1 February 1933:	Hitler in a radio address to the German people: "The first duty must be to ensure freedom for our people: It is our duty ¹ to ensure and stabilise peace between the countries."
3 February 1933:	Hitler tells of his plans for Germany in a speech: "[...] conquering the east to expand ² the country and 'germanise' it. For this, the rest of the world and especially the League of Nations must be deceived to guarantee success."
14 October 1933:	Hitler leaves the League of Nations. He claims that Germany will never be treated fairly and equally on the question of disarmament.
26 January 1934:	Germany and Poland sign a non-aggression pact. Hitler proves his honourable intentions by signing a pact with Poland promising to respect its borders.
16 March 1935:	Compulsory ⁵ military service is reintroduced. Starting in March, German men had to serve a time in the army, which had previously been forbidden by the military law of the Treaty of Versailles.
18 June 1935:	The Anglo-German naval agreement is signed. The United Kingdom allowed Germany to build a fleet ⁶ as long as it was smaller than the British one. Germany could have 35 ships to the UK's 100 ships.
1936:	Hitler writes in his diary: "The German population is too high. [...] the final solution lies in extending our 'Lebensraum'. In four years, our army must be ready, in four years, our economy must be ready for war."
7 March 1936:	The German army marches into the demilitarised Rhineland and claims it back for Germany.
12 March 1938:	Austria becomes part of the German Reich. Claiming to help in an inner-Austrian conflict, German troops cross the border into Austria to 'restore order'. In March, Hitler announces the union of the two countries.
15 March 1938:	Hitler marches into Czechoslovakia. Breaking his own agreement from the year before, Hitler's troops march into Czechoslovakia and occupy the country.
30 September 1938:	At the Munich Conference, part of Czechoslovakia becomes part of Germany. Hitler agrees to leave the rest of the country in peace, if the Sudetenland, where many Germans live, is allowed to be transferred to Germany.
1 September 1939:	German troops invade Poland.

Source of quotations: <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org>

Annotation

1 **duty:** Pflicht – 2 **to expand sth.:** to make sth. bigger – 3 **League of Nations:** Völkerbund – 4 **disarmament:** reduction of weapons – 5 **compulsory:** sth. you must do because of a law or a rule – 6 **fleet:** all military ships

Task: Choose one country mentioned in the timeline above. Write a diary entry from the perspective of this nation's citizens commenting on Hitler's agenda before 1 September 1939.

M 4 Views of Hitler's foreign policy – an American newspaper (1933)

A

From an article published in the *The Daily Herald*, a U.S.-American newspaper (30 January 1933)

Adolf Hitler – the Clown who wants to play statesman

Adolf Hitler, a stubby¹ little Austrian with a flabby² handshake, shifty³ brown eyes and a Charlie Chaplin moustache⁴. What sort of man is he to lead a nation? [...]

Adolf Hitler's whole career has been one surprising illusion [...] today he is in power [...] or rather in the seat of power [...] tomorrow he might not.

Annotations

1 **stubby**: small – 2 **flabby**: weak – 3 **shifty**: looking dishonest – 4 **moustache**: beard on the upper lip

Task

Analyse the writer's opinion on Hitler's foreign policy.



M 5 Views of Hitler's foreign policy – British Foreign Office (1935)

B

From the notes of Orme Sargent, at the time deputy Under-Secretary in the British Foreign Office (1935):

It is probable¹ that Germany will resort² to dictatorial methods [...]. However, this is purely an internal³ problem of the country [...].

As long as he does not bring back the Kaiser, Hitler should not be a problem [...] in the long run⁴ he will give up militarism⁵ and a policy [...].

Annotations

1 **probable**: likely to be true – 2 **to resort to sth.**: here: to use sth., to go back to sth. – 3 **internal**: here: only within/for Germany – 4 **the long run**: in the future – 5 **militarism**: belief of a government that a state should have a strong army and a lot of weapons to defend itself if necessary

Task

Analyse the writer's opinion on Hitler's foreign policy.

M 7 Axis powers and Allied forces – national timelines

Group 1: Axis powers

Germany		(Colour: red)
1 September 1939	Invasion of Poland: The country is overrun in a few weeks because the German army has fast moving tanks which are supported by bomber planes. The Polish army is defeated in a few weeks.	
April 1940	Invasion of Denmark and Norway: The German army needs coal and iron and, therefore, Hitler decides to invade the Scandinavian countries.	
June 1940	Walking through the Benelux states: The German army invades France and conquers it in a short time. The north including Paris is directly occupied; the south is then ruled by a pro-German puppet government.	
1940–1941	German air planes bomb important British cities, like London and Coventry, an important industrial town.	
April 1941	To help Italy, Hitler orders the invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece. He also sends troops to Egypt.	
22 June 1941	Three million German troops cross the border to the Soviet Union, quickly advancing to Moscow. However, the cold winter slows them down. The plan is not only to conquer the country but to completely kill the people there.	
6 December 1941	Hitler declares war on the USA.	
1942/1943	German troops are forced to retreat.	
8 May 1945	After Hitler's suicide, Germany surrenders.	

Italy		(Colour: red)
1940	Italian troops invade the Balkan region to secure the oilfields of Romania.	
1941	Italian soldiers are attacked by British troops in North Africa.	
1943	After British troops land in Sicily, Italy declares a ceasefire with the alliance.	

M 8 The end of WWII – the deal of the three powers

Here is an excerpt of the transcript of the recordings during the Potsdam Conference

The Potsdam Conference (17 July–2 August, 1945), First Sitting 17 July, 1945

Churchill: [...] I want to raise only one question. I note that the word "Germany" is being used here. What is now the meaning of "Germany"? Is it to be understood in the same sense as before the war?

Stalin: [...] Germany is what she has become after the war. There is no other Germany. That is how I understand the question.

Truman: Is it possible to speak of Germany as she had been before the war, in 1937?

Stalin: As she is in 1945.

Truman: She lost everything in 1945; actually, Germany no longer exists.

Stalin: Germany is, as we say, a geographical concept. Let us take it this way for the time being. We cannot abstract ourselves from the results of the war.

Truman: Yes, but there must be some definition of the concept of "Germany", I believe the Germany of 1886 or of 1937 is not the same thing as Germany today, in 1945.

Stalin: She has changed as a result of the war, and that is how we take her.

Truman: I quite agree with this, but some definition of the concept of "Germany" must be given. [...] Perhaps we shall speak of Germany as she had been before the war, in 1937?

Stalin: That could be taken formally, but actually not so. If a German administration should put in an appearance at Königsberg, we shall expel it, we shall most certainly expel it.

Truman: It was agreed at the Crimea Conference that territorial questions should be settled at a peace conference. How are we then to define the concept of "Germany"?

Stalin: Let us define the western border with Poland, and we shall then be clearer on the question of Germany. I find it very hard to say what Germany is just now. It is a country without a Government, without any definite borders, because the borders are not formalised by our troops. Germany has no troops, including frontier troops; she is broken up into occupation zones. Take this and define what Germany is. It is a broken country.

Truman: Perhaps we could take Germany's 1937 borders as the starting point?

Stalin: We can start anywhere. We have to start somewhere. In that context, we could take 1937, too.

Truman: That was the Germany after the Versailles Treaty.

Stalin: Yes, we could take the Germany of 1937, but only as a point of departure. It is merely a working hypothesis for the convenience of our work.

Churchill: Only a starting point. That does not mean that we shall confine ourselves to this.

Truman: We agree to take the Germany of 1937 as a starting point. [...]

Tasks

1. Read the text and take note of the most important results.
2. Present the results in your core group, then complete the worksheet (M 10) and compare them to the resolutions of the Treaty of Versailles.

M 13 Their Royal Heilnesses – how to judge past opinions

In July 2015, the British tabloid “The Sun” had a provocative title on the cover page. The topic was reported on in the German media.

“Their Royal Heilnesses: Secret 1933 film shows Edward VIII teaching this Nazi salute to the Queen.”

n-tv.de: Samstag, 18. Juli 2015

Buckingham Palace über Video empört: Siebenjährige Queen zeigt Hitlergruß

Schock oder Bagatelle? Ein Video zeigt die kleine Elizabeth, später Königin der Briten, die als Mädchen einen Hitlergruß zeigt. Für Historiker interessanter dürfte die Rolle ihres Onkels, des späteren König Edward VIII., sein. Der Palast zeigt sich verärgert. Das britische Boulevardblatt „Sun“ hat ein historisches Video veröffentlicht, in dem die Queen als Kind offenbar den Arm zum Hitlergruß hebt. Die spätere Königin Elizabeth II., heute 89, ist in dem 17 Sekunden langen Schwarz-Weiß-Film mit ihrer kleinen Schwester Margaret, ihrer Mutter und ihrem Onkel, dem späteren König Edward VIII., zu sehen. Die Erwachsenen haben ebenfalls den rechten Arm.

Der Palast reagierte umgehend: „Es ist enttäuschend, dass ein Film, der vor acht Jahrzehnten aufgenommen wurde und offensichtlich aus dem persönlichen Familienarchiv ihrer Majestät stammt, beschafft und auf diese Weise aus dem Kontext entzerrt wurde“, sagte ein Sprecher. Laut „Sun“, die das Video in der Nacht zum Samstag online stellte, soll es 1933 oder 1934 auf dem königlichen Landsitz Balmoral aufgenommen worden sein und die spätere Königin Elizabeth II. im Alter von etwa sieben Jahren zeigen. Wie die Zeitung an das Material gekommen ist, ist unklar.

„Die meisten Menschen werden diese Bilder in angemessenen Kontext und aus der Zeit heraus sehen“, zitierte die Nachrichtenagentur PA eine Palastquelle. Das ist eine Familie, die spielt und für einen Moment aus dem Kontext genommen wird, die viele in zeitgenössischen Nachrichtensendungen gesehen haben.“ Dabei habe niemand gewusst, welchen Verlauf die Geschichte nehmen werde. Die Dienste der Königin und ihrer Familie an ihrem Land während des Krieges und die 63-jährige Regierungszeit der Queen, in der sie „Brücken zwischen Nationen und Völkern“ gebaut habe, sprechen für sich selbst. [...]

Edward wurde im Januar 1926 britischer König und dankte bereits im Dezember desselben Jahres wieder ab, weil er die geschiedene Amerikanerin Wallis Simpson heiraten wollte. Zahlreiche Historiker haben ihm bereits Sympathie für die Nationalsozialisten vorgeworfen. Es gibt Fotos von 1937, die das Paar gemeinsam mit dem Diktator Adolf Hitler in München zeigen. Die „Sun“ betonte, die Veröffentlichung richte sich nicht gegen Elizabeth II., sie gäbe jedoch „faszinierende Einblicke in das Weltbild Edwards.“



Wallis Simpson and the former King Edward VIII visit Hitler in Obersalzberg (1937)

Photo: Wikipedia/BBC Historical Photo

Source: <http://www.n-tv.de/leute/Siebenjaehrige-Queen-zeigte-Hitlergruss-article15544926.html>

Task: Juxtapose “The Sun’s” and the Buckingham Palace’s positions towards the publication of the video.

- Individual work. Use the chart “Juxtapose different positions” and take notes.
- Pair work. Compare your notes with another student’s. Have you found different things, or made different interpretations?

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