

## Grade 9

The Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre is pleased to offer a series of eight (8) units covering the following Grade 9 CAPS topic:

*Failure of the Weimar, the rise of Nazi Germany, outbreak of WW2 in Europe, the Holocaust, people's experiences and resistance*

### Unit 1

Aftermath of WW1

Failure of the Weimar

***By the end of the unit Learners should be familiar with***

1. The effects of WW1 and Treaty of Versailles on the political and economic life of Germany
2. why the Weimar Republic failed
3. The rise of power of Hitler and the Nazi Party

## **World War 1 1914-1918**

### **Treaty of Versailles**

Some of the conditions imposed on Germany

- Accept responsibility for the war
- Give up land
- Pay crippling reparations
- Reduce Army and Navy

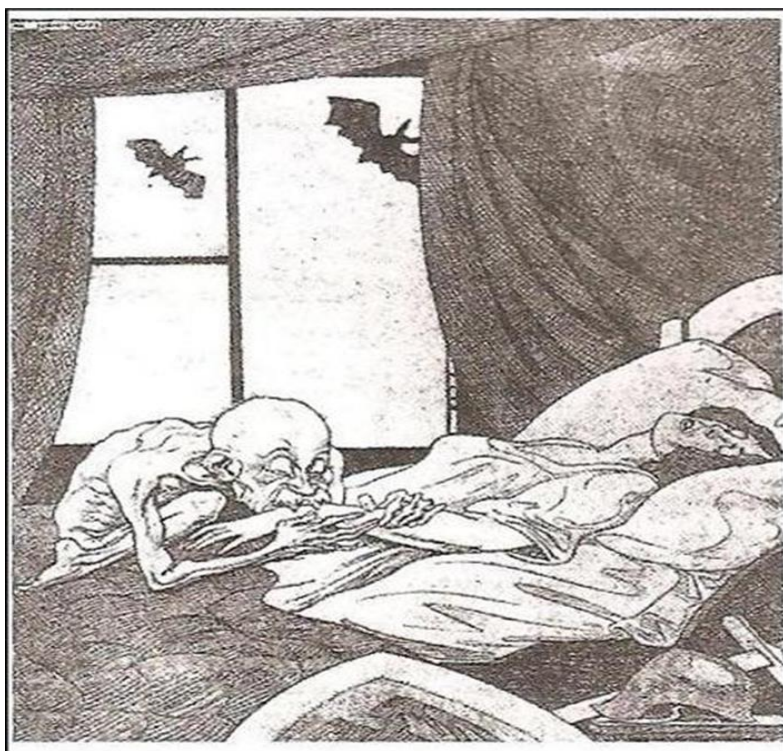
Our first unit deals with why the Weimar Republic failed as a democracy

We are going to look at the aftermath (results) of World War 1 which was covered in the Grade 8 curriculum.

Germany was forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles, which had quite onerous, (difficult) terms.

They had to accept full responsibility for the war, they had to give up land, they had to pay reparations. Paying reparations means paying back the costs of the war to other countries, and they had to substantially reduce their army and navy.

How do you think the people of Germany felt about this?



From the German Newspaper Kladderadatsch. It was printed in 1919 and entitled Clemenceau, The Vampire

(Clemenceau is pronounced Kle-men-so)

Clemenceau was the prime minister of France. Have a look at what he's doing. Think about who the woman on the bed might be. Look at how she is depicted (shown) as opposed to how Clemenceau is depicted.

Think about the old man who's sucking her blood

Think about who the bats at the window might be. What do you think they represent and what do you think they are waiting for?

You can learn a lot from cartoons. Think about what the cartoonist and the readers of this newspaper might have been thinking about the Treaty of Versailles.

The Treaty of Versailles commanded that there be political changes in Germany. Germany had been a constitutional monarchy. In other words, it was ruled by a king who was not voted into power, but came through the royal line. The king's powers were limited by a constitution.

The Treaty of Versailles said that Germany had to be a democracy. This meant that the government would be elected by the people and they would elect the president and the president would choose a chancellor (similar to a prime minister). Because this system was seen as part of the treaty, it was never popular. People didn't look at the system and considered it under its own merits. They were just angry that it was forced on them.

This democracy was known as the Weimar Republic of Germany.

### **Article 22**

**Members of parliament are elected in a general, equal, immediate and secret election.**

**Voters are men and women older than 20 years**

### **Article 109**

**All Germans are equal in front of the law.**

**In principle, men and women have the same rights and obligations.**

### **Article 114**

**The rights of the individual are inviolable**

### **Article 122**

**Youth is to be protected against exploitation as well as against moral and spiritual dissipation, bodily neglect**

### **Article 135**

**Undisturbed practice of religion is guaranteed by the constitution and is placed under the protection of the state**

It had a constitution and the Constitution had very good articles or laws. For example, members of parliament are to be elected in a general, equal, immediate and secret election.

**Think about why votes should be secret.**

Why should voters not share who they're voting for with other people? Also, that the voters are men and women older than 20 years, similar to South Africa except we vote at the age of eighteen.

What is really interesting is that women were allowed to vote and this was really unheard of a hundred and one years ago. Also, **everyone** was equal before the law. Whether you were male or female, you had the same rights, but you also had the same responsibilities and obligations to behave yourself within the law. Individuals' rights were inviolable. They could not be violated or destroyed. Youth was to be protected in all spheres of their lives, and religion could be practiced freely and under the protection of the state.

This was a really advanced constitution and a reasonable constitution, not unlike our own. If you look at some of these articles and you look at articles in our South African Constitution, they are very similar.

**Germany was in a state of political upheaval**, people couldn't come to an agreement about things. There were many parties that were for the democracy. But there were many of parties that were anti the democracy for different reasons. Some wanted a single leader, one autocratic leader (a leader who has total control) who would tell them what to do. Other anti - democracy parties wanted a communist system.

So Germany was not in a good state politically and Germany was not in a good state economically.

**Germany was in a state of economic upheaval**, Germany was suffering not only from inflation which is when your money loses its value from year to year, prices go up, the money stays the same i.e. salaries don't go up at the same rate the prices do and this is called inflation.

In Germany, there was something called hyper- inflation this meant that money lost its value to such an extent that it was used for children to play with .They played with piles of banknotes or people used it in ovens to warm their houses.

- Pro-Democracy Parties e.g. Social Democratic party, Bavarian People's Party, Centre Party....
- Anti-Democracy German Nationalist peoples party, Nazi party, German peoples party ...these parties did not want the democracy they wanted an autocratic leader – many of these people were ex-soldiers
- Anti-Democracy (very different from the anti-democracy parties listed above)The communist party... was the main left wing party and many of these members were also ex-soldiers



Children playing with money



Adults burning money for fuel to keep warm



Price of a loaf of bread in Deutsche Marks –DM (the German currency)

November 1918 1 DM  
November 1922 163 DM  
September 1923 1,500,000 DM  
November 1923 200,000,000,000 DM



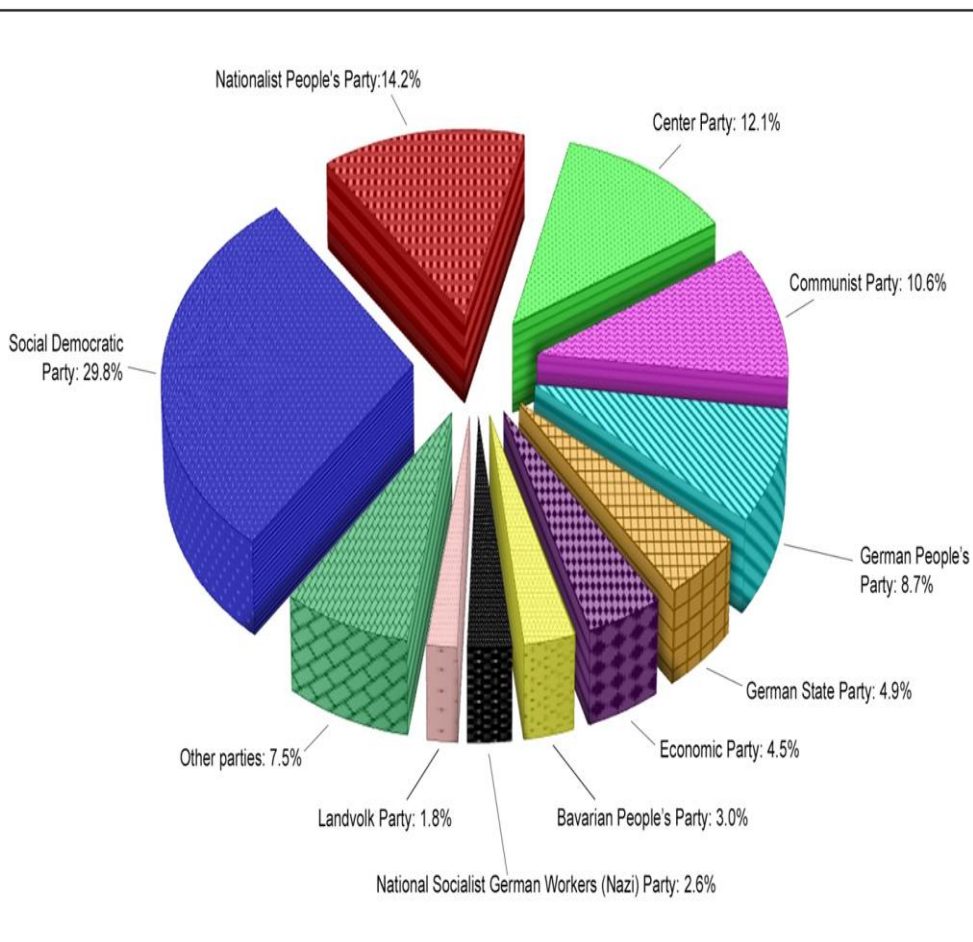
## The Dawes Plan 1924



Gustav Stresemann - German Foreign Minister and Charles Dawes the Vice President USA reach a deal whereby America lends Germany money to help repay debt and rebuild its economy. Stresemann creates a new German currency called the Rentenmark

### Economic Recovery!!

### 1928 Election



Looking at the percentage of seats in parliament in 1928, you will notice that the Social Democratic Party had the most seats and the Nazi Party, had a very small percentage of the vote because people didn't want them.

People thought their platforms, their ideologies, their worldviews were extreme.

### Source A

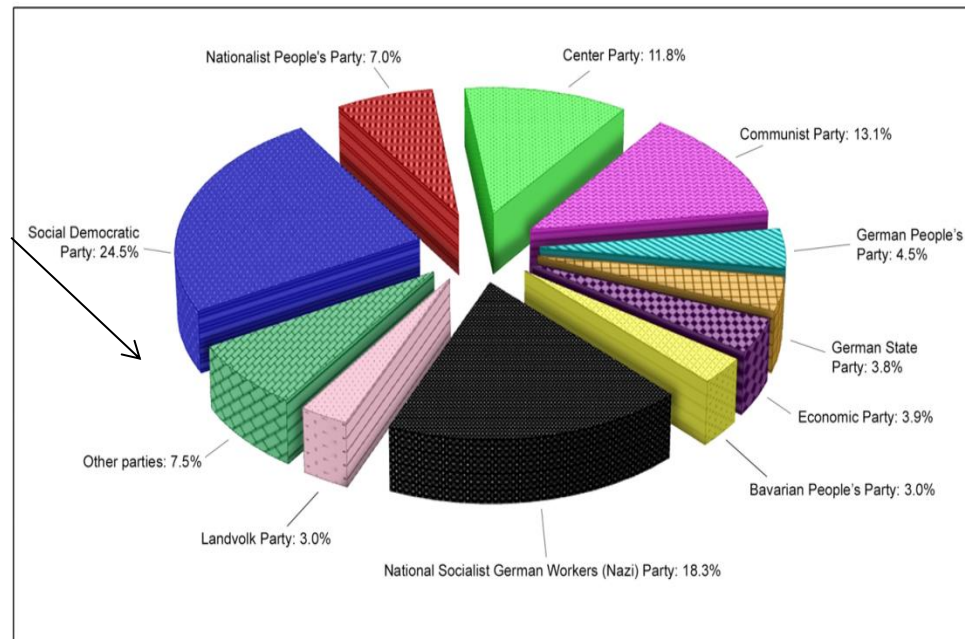
### Percentage of seats won in the Weimar German Reichstag (Parliament) - 20 May 1928 Elections

Sourced from: [www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/elect.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/elect.htm). Accessed 15 January 2014

## 1929 Stock Market Crash in America

With the crash of the stock market in America there were no more loans from America for Germany. This plunged Germany into a worse economic situation than it had been in before.

## 1930 Election



Source B

Percentage of seats won in Weimar Germany's Reichstag (Parliament) - 14 September 1930 Elections

Sourced from: [www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/elect.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/elect.htm). Accessed 15 January 2014

Looking at the second pie chart just two years after the first, the Nazi Party had 18,3% and other parties were shrinking. People started to listen to fringe parties because they made promises and people need promises when they are desperate, when they feel that things just are not getting better for them. When someone says, "I will make it better. Vote for me! You will get free housing, you will get a job, you will get free electricity, I will make sure that you get everything you need," as Hitler did, people tend to vote for the person or party who makes those promises.

## Hitler's Ascent to Power and the end of German Democracy

- July 1932 General Election: Nazi Party 37.27%
- November 1932 General Election: Nazi Party 33%
- The Nazis were not gaining a majority by Democratic means, they formed coalitions with the Conservative Parties
- January 30th 1933 Paul Von Hindenberg President of Germany appointed Hitler Chancellor of Germany
- March 23rd 1933 Law to Remedy The Distress of the People and the Reich was passed. It is known as the Enabling Act

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Looking at the cartoon on Page 2 answer the following:
  - a) Who is the woman on the bed meant to represent?
  - b) Who are the bats at the window why are they there?
  - c) Who is the old man?
  - d) What is the cartoonist's attitude towards the Treaty of Versailles?
2. Look at the articles in Germany's Weimar Constitution of 1919 and find 3 similar articles that we have today in 2021 in our South African Constitution.
3. Look at the two pie charts showing the elections of 1928 and 1930 and give a reason for the rise in popularity of the Nazi party.
4. Was Hitler voted into power with a majority? Give a reason for your answer.
5. Do you think Democracy (government by the people) should be protected? Give a reason for your answer.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre: <http://ctholocaust.co.za/>

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwVBU5VqvsumuwDdzYIAaQ>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/hitler-comes-to-power>

Facing History and Ourselves  
<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/hitlers-rise-power-1918-1933>