The Rise of Dictators and WWII

Steps to War
The Rise of Dictators

- Dictators (absolute rulers) seized power in Italy, Germany, Japan, Soviet Union after World War I
- Germany was treated severely after WWI (stripped of territory, forced to disarm, pay reparations)
- Worldwide Depression also hit – many people looked to new leaders to solve problems
- The MAJOR Dictators: Benito Mussolini in Italy; Adolf Hitler in Germany; Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union
Benito Mussolini (Italy)

- Preached a government called Fascism – includes intense patriotism & nationalism
- Very much linked to racism and cultural superiority
Adolf Hitler (Germany)

- Leader of the Nazi Party
- Spoke about Germany racial superiority
- Wanted revenge for Germany’s loss in World War I
Hitler Speech

- http://youtu.be/5tGKfIJwrh4
Joseph Stalin (Soviet Union)

- Communist leader (Russia went Communist after WWI)
- Controlled every aspect of people’s lives
- Eliminated all competition to him in order to stay in power
Dictators Expand Territory

- 1931 – Japan attacks Manchuria in northern China
- Japan wanted more natural resources for its growing population (Manchuria is rich in natural resources)
Italy invades Ethiopia

- 1935 – Italy invaded Ethiopia in Africa
- Mussolini wanted new areas to expand his empire in Africa
Germany Begins Conquests

- 1936 – Hitler moves troops into the Rhineland (German region near the French border)
- WWI treaty said no German troops here
- French Gov’t and League of Nations – TAKE NO ACTION
German-Italian Alliance

- Germany and Italy formed the **Axis Powers**
- Now – two dictators with stated goals of expansion are good friends
- Axis Powers help Spain’s Fascist military overthrow its elected government (Spanish Civil War)
Hitler begins his own Conquests

- 1938 – Hitler and the Germans invade Austria (most Austrians spoke German and welcomed becoming a part of Germany)
- But...Hitler and the Germans were expanding – and the WWI treaty told them not to...
The Sudetenland

- After taking Austria – Hitler wanted more
- His next desire is the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia
- The Czechs didn’t want to give this area to Germany – nor did France and Russia
Germany’s Expansion
“Appeasement” at Munich

- The British step in to offer a peace and avoid war
- British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain meets with Hitler in Munich, Germany
  - They agree to give Hitler the Sudetenland
  - Hitler has to promise he is done seeking territory

http://youtu.be/SetNFqcayeA
Reactions to Munich

- **Neville Chamberlain**, the British Prime Minister who came up with the agreement, said that he had achieved “peace in our time”.

- **Winston Churchill**, the future Prime Minister, said: “Britain and France had to choose between war and shame. They chose shame. They will get war, too.”
Hitler breaks his promise: Germany Starts the War

- After being given Sudetenland – Hitler takes the rest of Czechoslovakia
- Hitler signed a Non-Aggression Pact with Stalin and the Soviet Union (they agree to not make war on each other) – now France and Britain have lost an ally in Stalin
- Immediately after – Germany invaded Poland (France & Britain declare war on Germany) WWII officially begins