

Key Dates: 1889– Hitler was born in Braunau-am-Inn Austria.

1903– Hitler’s abusive father dies suddenly.

1907– Hitler’s mum Klara dies & Hitler moves to Vienna.

1913– Hitler gains his inheritance & moves to Munich.

1914– Start of WW1. Hitler joins the German army.

1918– End of WW1. Hitler returns to Munich with the aim of becoming a politician.

1923– Munich Beer Hall Putsch

1924– Hitler sentenced to 5 years in prison. He writes Mein Kampf.

1929– Wall Street Crash.

1933– Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.

1935– Nuremberg Laws passed.

1938– Kristallnacht ‘Night of Broken Glass’.

1939– Start of WW2.



By the end of this Half Term I should know:

How Hitler’s personality was influenced by his upbringing

How he struggled at school and failed to get into Vienna Art School became homeless and anti-semitic

How Hitler found a sense of belonging after joining the German army and fighting in WW1

How he felt betrayed by the Weimar Republic and the Treaty of Versailles believing Germany had been stabbed in the back

How he recognised that to get into power in Germany he could not rely on force but needed the vote

Key Terms

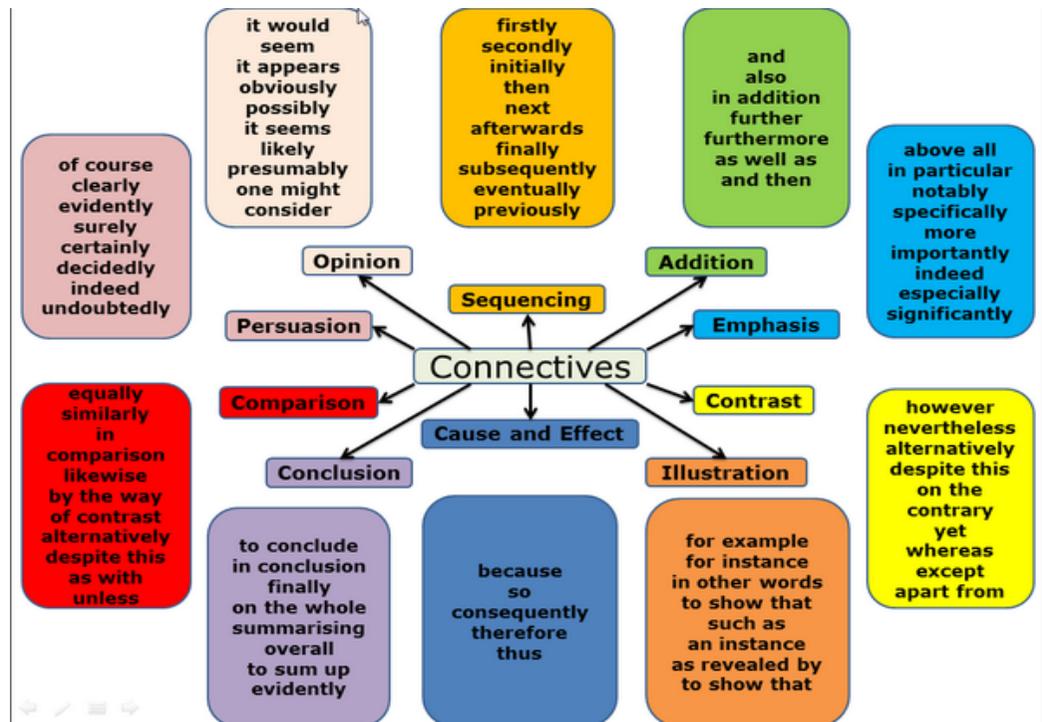
Nazi party: the beliefs and policies of the National Socialist (German Workers’) Party, led by Adolf Hitler, which controlled Germany from 1933 to 1945:

Fascism: A right-wing form of government in which most of the country’s power is held by one ruler.

Fuhrer: Also spelled **Fuehrer**, German **Führer**, (“Leader”), **title** used by Adolf Hitler to define his role of absolute authority in Germany’s Third Reich (1933–45).

Third Reich: The **Third Reich**, meaning “**Third Realm**” or “**Third Empire**”, alluded to the **Nazis’** conceit that Nazi Germany was the successor to the earlier Holy Roman Empire (800–1806) and German Empire (1871–1918).

Anti-Semitism: *Anti-Semitism* is hostile behavior toward Jews just because they are Jewish, including stereotyped views and teachings proclaiming the inferiority of Jews.





KHS—History Knowledge Organiser—Half Term 3 - Rise of Evil



Hitler's early life

Adolf Hitler was born on 20 April 1889 in [Braunau am Inn](#), a town in [Austria-Hungary](#) (in present-day Austria), close to the border with the [German Empire](#).¹ He was the fourth of six children born to Alois Hitler and his third wife, [Klara Pölzl](#). His father beat him, although his mother tried to protect him. Alois Hitler's farming efforts at Hafeld ended in failure, and in 1897 the family moved to Lambach. The eight-year-old Hitler took singing lessons, sang in the church choir, and even considered becoming a priest.¹

Like many Austrian Germans, Hitler began to develop [German nationalist](#) ideas from a young age.¹ He expressed loyalty only to Germany, despising the declining [Habsburg Monarchy](#) and its rule over an ethnically variegated empire. Hitler and his friends used the greeting "Heil", and sang the "[Deutschlandlied](#)" instead of the [Austrian Imperial anthem](#).

After Alois's sudden death on 3 January 1903, Hitler's performance at school deteriorated and his mother allowed him to leave.¹ He enrolled at the *Realschule* in [Steyr](#) in September 1904, where his behaviour and performance improved.¹ In 1905, after passing a repeat of the final exam, Hitler left the school without any ambitions for further education or clear plans for a career.¹

Vienna and Munich

In 1907, Hitler left Linz to live and study fine art in [Vienna](#), financed by orphan's benefits and support from his mother. He applied for admission to the [Academy of Fine Arts Vienna](#) but was rejected twice. The [director](#) suggested Hitler should apply to the School of Architecture, but he lacked the necessary academic credentials because he had not finished secondary school.

The origin and development of Hitler's anti-Semitism remains a matter of debate.¹ His friend, [August Kubizek](#), claimed that Hitler was a "confirmed anti-Semite" before he left Linz.¹ However, historian Brigitte Hamann describes Kubizek's claim as "problematical". Hitler received the final part of his father's estate in May 1913 and moved to [Munich](#), Germany. When he was conscripted into the [Austro-Hungarian Army](#),¹ he journeyed to [Salzburg](#) on 5 February 1914 for medical assessment. After he was deemed unfit for service, he returned to Munich.¹ Hitler later claimed that he did not wish to serve the [Habsburg Empire](#) because of the mixture of races in its army and his belief that the collapse of Austria-Hungary was imminent.

World War I and the German surrender

In August 1914, at the outbreak of [World War I](#), Hitler was living in Munich and voluntarily enlisted in the [Bavarian Army](#).¹ Posted to the [Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 16](#) (1st Company of the List Regiment),¹ he served as a dispatch [runner](#) on the [Western Front](#) in France and Belgium,¹ spending nearly half his time at the regimental headquarters in [Fournes-en-Weppes](#), well behind the front lines.

On a recommendation by Lieutenant [Hugo Gutmann](#), Hitler's Jewish superior, he received the Iron Cross, First Class on 4 August 1918, a decoration rarely awarded to one of Hitler's [Gefreiter](#) rank.¹ He received the [Black Wound Badge](#) on 18 May 1918. Hitler described the war as "the greatest of all experiences", and was praised by his commanding officers for his bravery.

Like other German nationalists, he believed the [Dolchstoßlegende](#) (stab-in-the-back myth), which claimed that the German army, "undefeated in the field", had been "stabbed in the back" on the [home front](#) by civilian leaders, Jews, [Marxists](#), and those who signed the [armistice](#) that ended the fighting—later dubbed the "November criminals".

Politics and power

After the end of WW1 Hitler returned to Munich with the aim of entering politics. In 1923, Hitler enlisted the help of World War I General [Erich Ludendorff](#) for an attempted coup known as the "[Beer Hall Putsch](#)". This attempt ended in failure and Hitler was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment at Landsberg Prison. He was treated as a celebrity here and only served a year, taking the opportunity to write his book 'Mein Kampf' (My Struggle).

In 1929 the Wall Street Crash sent the world into an economic depression. Hitler's Nazi party started to become more popular with the German voters. In 1933, Hitler was elected as Chancellor of Germany in a coalition government. However, he had no intention of sharing power with anyone.

After a suspicious fire burned down the Reichstag Building in 1934 Hitler took the opportunity to pass the Enabling Act which granted him total power. The following year (1935) the Nuremberg Laws were passed and the persecution of the Jews started. WW2 would only be four years away (1939-45)