

A-LEVEL HISTORY

AT NEWCASTLE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



NAME: _____

TEACHER: _____



UNIT 1: BRITAIN 1930-1997

COURSE GUIDE AND WORKBOOK

Topic	Pages	Lesson Complete	Catch-Up Complete	Revision Complete
Churchill in the 1920a				
Britain in the 1930s				
Indian Independence				
Abdication				
Appeasement				
Churchill as PM				
War in 1940				
Mediterranean Strategy				
Relations with Generals				
Bombings of Germany				
Post-War Social Reform				
1945 Election				
Attlee's Government				
1951 Election				
Conservative Leadership				
Socio-Economic Developments				
Labour Weaknesses				
1964 Election				
Wilson's Reforms				
Wilson's Economic Policy				
Wilson's Industrial Relations				
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Wilson and Callaghan				
Thatcher's Economy				
Thatcher's Industrial Relations				
Thatcher's Social Policy				
Election Victories				
Thatcher's Decline				
Problems faced by Major				
1997 Election				

BRITAIN IN THE 1920S: CHURCHILL

Consider the source below. What can you learn about attitudes towards Churchill in the period?

Clement Attlee in the House of Lords on 25th January 1965.
This occurred the day after the passing of Winston Churchill.

In 1924 he started again another career, and then, after some years, it seemed again that he had faded. He became a lone wolf, outside any party. It seems as if everything led up to that time in 1940, when he became prime minister of this country at the time of its greatest peril. Throughout all that period he might make opponents, he might make friends; but no one could ever disregard.

STRETCH: How do we analyse a source? What are the key parts of the source that we should look at?



Political wilderness – A period in the 1930s where Churchill was isolated from government and had limited influence/authority.

Given everything we have discussed, what kind of reputation do you think Churchill might have had by 1929? Stretch: Consider different groups e.g. across classes/parties/army etc.

BRITAIN IN THE 1920S: CHURCHILL

Chancellor Churchill (1924-29) and his impact on the economy

Churchill was out of politics in the turbulent period between the end of the Lloyd George coalition in October 1922, until the Conservative victory in September 1924. New Conservative Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, made Churchill Chancellor of the Exchequer. This appeared a strange decision, as Churchill had no economic knowledge or financial experience – his own finances were usually chaotic. However, against all odds Churchill found himself Chancellor during one of the most difficult periods in British economic development. There seemed to his contemporaries, and to subsequent writers, not

one but two Churchills. One was the ideologically-driven extremist, the other was the humorous, wise negotiator and parliamentarian, mindful of political necessity and doing his job as minister in line with government policy. Churchill's work as Chancellor largely followed the second path. His reaction to the General Strike may well have followed the first, but there is some debate over this.

**Churchill and the return to Gold**

One economic decision which Chancellor Churchill is best known for is Britain's return to the Gold Standard. The Gold Standard had been a pre-war symbol of economic stability, backing a currency in a fixed value of gold. Due to the economic disruption of the war, Britain had been forced to come "off gold". However, in 1925 Chancellor Churchill was encouraged by leading economists at the Bank of England, to put Britain back on the Gold Standard.

However, Britain's most famous economist of the post-war era John Maynard Keynes, was critical of this decision. He pointed out, correctly, that putting Britain back on the Gold Standard at pre-war levels would make British exports considerably dearer and as a result would lead to a decline in foreign countries buying British goods. This would particularly hit the coal industry hard, as they were already facing increased competition from Germany and Poland.

Keynes' warning about the return to Gold proved correct, especially for the coal industry. The decline in the trade of coal led to an attempt by employers to increase the working day of the miners, for less pay. This helped to create the circumstances needed for mass industrial unrest. A General Strike broke out in 1926 during which Churchill's anti-trade unionism was once again highlighted.

Churchill: Irish independence and Empire

Churchill was an enthusiastic supporter of the British Empire and held a traditional view about the role of Britain in the nations under British control. His early military career had taken him to many differing parts of the Empire such as India in 1896, Sudan in 1898 and more famously as a war correspondent during the Boer War of 1899-1902. These experiences had led him to believe firmly in the continuation of the British Empire. As Colonial Minister during the post-WW1 Lloyd George coalition government, Churchill continued to focus on questions related to Empire. A growing problem facing the British government post-war was an intensification of Irish nationalist groups campaign for independence from British rule – a campaign that was growing increasingly violent. Churchill encouraged the use of British forces in Ireland known as the "blacks and tans" to control the nationalist forces. He

KEY QUESTIONS

What was Churchill's role in British politics in the 1920s?

What were the strengths and weaknesses of Britain the 1920s?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Lloyd George

Baldwin

KEY DEFINITIONS

Gold Standard

Chancellor of the Exchequer

Wall Street Crash

Empire

BRITAIN IN THE 1920S

remained opposed to the moves by the Lloyd George government to end the dispute by giving Ireland greater powers and the subsequent formal partition of Ireland into North and South. He feared that these concessions to Ireland would only encourage other parts of the Empire to push for their own independence and would lead to the break-up of the British Empire.

Britain in the 1920s

THE ECONOMY: Britain had been a great industrial power in the nineteenth century with textiles, iron and steel, engineering, coal and chemical industries leading the world. However, by 1929 its older industries were in decline. There was much less demand for its heavy industry products. Unemployment had not fallen below a million in the 1920s and trade had been hindered by the high price of the pound after the return to the GOLD STANDARD. In October 1929 the collapse of the US stock market saw the beginning of the WALL STREET CRASH and a long period of world economic depression which lasted into the 1930s.

THE WALL STREET CRASH: A number of financial experts warned that the American economy was slowing down and in September 1929 some investors started selling shares in large numbers. Many people started feeling nervous and investors went into panic and rushed to sell their shares. On 24 October, now referred to as Black Thursday, 12.8 million shares were sold. Thousands of people saw their fortune, or any money they had in the bank, disappear.

SOCIETY: Britain had been deeply affected by the loss of over 750,000 men in the First World War. There was a loss of faith in old values of patriotism and deep reluctance to go to war again. There was a rise in the relative wealth and influence of the middle classes as the suburbs grew and the importance of banking and financial services to the economy began to outstrip that of industry. The war had confirmed social change with regard to the role of women who had the vote on equal terms with men after 1928 and had much more freedom of movement, dress and way of life than had been true in the previous century. The rise of radio, cinema, the popular press, the telephone and the use of motor transport increased awareness of the wider world and improved communications.

POLITICAL LIFE: The two main parties of Britain were Conservative and Labour. The Liberals, who had been the major party of change before 1914, had declined to the third party. Labour was a relatively new party, representing working people, and had increased its support during and after the First World War to become a national party. It did not form a government until 1924, which lasted under a year, but it did win the election of 1929. The Conservatives had lost the 1906 election badly and were out of power until they joined a wartime coalition with Labour and the Liberals in 1915. They were the major party in the continuing coalition from 1916 to 1922 under the Liberal, Lloyd George, but ended the coalition agreement in 1922. They were in power 1922-1923 and 1924-1929. The Liberals had been the great party of reform since 1859 and introduced many important changes, including the beginnings of the modern welfare state. However, the party split during the First World War and were overtaken by Labour. They did not hold office in their own right after 1915.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE: Britain was the head of an empire of 240 million people. The Empire was very important and many British people lived and worked in it either in administration, education or in farming, business or church activities. Some areas were self-governing such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa. India

EXAM QUESTIONS

STRETCH

To what extent was Churchill isolated in the 1920s?

What were the key problems faced by British government in the 1920s?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

BRITAIN IN THE 1920S

however had limited self-government only which proved to be an issue for Britain during the 1930's. Britain's African possessions and its other colonies in Asia were ruled directly. Britain also controlled the Suez Canal, which also became a problem during the 1950's, as well as being highly dominant in Egypt. The Empire helps Britain to win the First World War, but was very costly and difficult to defend.



Britain in the 1930s

The Labour government elected in 1929 very quickly became blighted by the world economic crisis which had been caused by the Wall Street Crash of October 1929. Division within the Labour Party about what was the best way to deal with the Great Depression led to the collapse of the government in 1931. From 1931 until 1940, Britain was governed by a "national government" – a coalition government of all parties, formed on the request of the King. However, although the ex-Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, was the Prime Minister, the National Government was not a true coalition of all the parties. The bulk of the Labour Party was bitterly opposed to MacDonald joining the national government. The Liberal Party made a small contribution. The power base of the national government was the massive majority that the Conservatives held in parliament. When MacDonald resigned in 1935, Conservative leader Stanley Baldwin became Prime Minister and Conservative dominance became even more obvious.

The economic impact of the Wall Street Crash and Depression intensified a range of existing economic problems, especially the decline of the staple industries. From 1930, world trade shrank and with it the demand from British exports which hit British manufacturing hard. As a result, unemployment in the staple industries rose to frightening levels. By 1932 unemployment reached 2.5 million. This meant that 47% of steel workers were unemployed and 60% of shipbuilders were without work. Certain areas of the country were completely dependent on these industries and as a result many towns experienced particularly acute unemployment. For example, Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales had 62% male unemployment and Jarrow in the north-east had 70% male unemployment.

Jarrow became a town that came to symbolise the problems of industrial decline and the plight of the unemployed because of the Jarrow March of 1936, when 200 unemployed men from the South Tyneside shipbuilding town marched the 300 miles to London to deliver a petition to parliament calling for government intervention to

SUMMARISE

ECONOMY:

EMPIRE:

SOCIETY

POLITICS:

CHURCHILL:

BRITAIN IN THE 1930S

help save the town. The Jarrow March was one of many so-called “hunger marches” that occurred during the 1930s to draw attention to the poor living conditions and desperate poverty many were facing.

As well as facing the responsibility of guiding Britain through the world Depression, the national government also faced the pressure of a growing political extremism which had swept across Europe (both from the communist left and the fascist right) and appeared to becoming more popular at home in Britain too. Following the economic crash of 1929, it gave weight to the argument that capitalism was on the verge of collapse and the early 1930s saw the membership of the Communist Party of Great Britain rise. The party newspaper had a daily circulation of 80,000 copies and the party even were successful in getting some MPs elected. In 1932, following a visit to Mussolini’s fascist Italy, former Labour MP Oswald Mosely formed the British Union of Fascists. The BUF gained support for the owner of the Daily Mail, which printed many pro-BUF articles and helped swell their membership to 50,000. However, overall both groups had limited success in fully gaining traction into the British political system. The BUF became associated with anti-Semitism and violent incidents such as the Battle of Cable Street which lost them the support of many. The CPGB were largely restricted by the fact that the moderate leadership of the Labour Party refused to work with the Communists and blocked its efforts to infiltrate the trade union movement.

Prices fell faster than wages, particularly food prices. Cost of living fell by more than a third between 1920 and 1938. This led to historian A.J.P Taylor’s claim that “increased consumption by individuals pulled Britain out of the Depression”.	There was a decline in the average family size in inter-war Britain. A woman who married in the 1880s was likely to have over 4 children, whereas by the 1920s the figure was on average 2 children.
Financial security of the salaried middle-classes stimulated a suburban house building boom in the 1930s.	A 1944 study found that 85% of all long-term unemployment in inter-war period was found in North-England, Scotland and Wales.
Many of newer industries of the 1920s did experience unemployment during the slump but managed to recover from it easier than the old staples. E.g. insured unemployment in motor car industry ran at 20% in 1932 but fell to 4.8% by 1937. In shipbuilding, the corresponding figures were 62.2% and 23.8%.	As well as regional differences in economic circumstances, there were also differences between towns within the same region. For example, Jarrow experienced around 80% male unemployment in 1935, but just down the road in Hebburn – there was a housing boom.
Improvements in housing and sanitation helped to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases such as typhoid. A higher proportion of army volunteers were judged fit to fight in 1939 than in 1914.	New industries such as motor vehicles, chemicals and aircraft enjoyed particular growth. Output of motor cars doubled between 1929 and 1939, making Britain the second largest car maker in the world. However many of these growing newer industries were based in particular parts of the country such as the south and Midlands.
A new steelworks opened in Jarrow in 1938 which led to increased employment in the town. This development largely arose as a result of increased rearmament in 1938-39.	In an attempt to control unemployment benefits the government introduced the “means test”. This was an invasive financial assessment that families went through before the level of their benefit was decided.

KEY QUESTIONS

What were the main problems faced by British government in the 1930s?

How did the Great Depression impact Britain?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Baldwin

Oswald Mosely

Ramsay MacDonald

KEY DEFINITIONS

Great Depression

National Government

CPGB

BUF

Communism

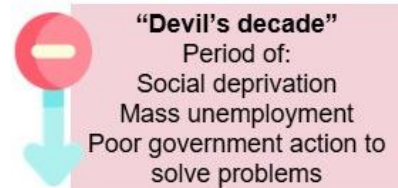
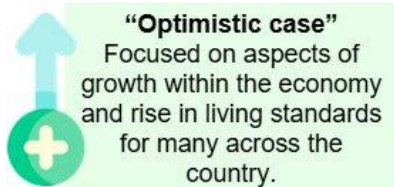
BRITAIN IN THE 1930S: CHURCHILL

Consider the provenance of the sources below. Why are they significant for us as historians?

Source A: An official report or memorandum created by the government outlining the numbers of British civilians killed during the Blitz. This memorandum was created to inform Prime Minister Churchill.

Source B: A letter between the king and his wife outlining his thoughts on the government.

STRETCH: Which is most significant if we are exploring Churchill in the 1930s and 1940s?



INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

British rule in India was coming under increasing pressure in the late 1920s and 30s from an Indian population who wanted self-governance and representation. The pressure came from both the educated elite and the mass population led by Gandhi. Dressing like a poor peasant, he developed a campaign in the pursuit of freedom by non-violent protest. Britain responded with a mix of repression and reform. In April 1919, Gandhi led a mass campaign against the extension of police powers and troops fired on a protesting crowd at Amritsar, killing 400 and wounding 1200. This brutality gave Indian nationalism huge numbers of new supporters.

There followed a mass civil disobedience campaign, and in 1930 Gandhi led a mass march to the sea to protest about the salt tax by gathering natural sea salt. Numerous arrests followed, including Gandhi, who was released from jail to attend conferences in London in 1930 and 1931 to get agreement on ending the conflict. He was arrested in his return to India. In 1933, Britain announced its intentions of allowing India greater self-government. This paved the way for the Government of India Act of 1935, which took effect in 1937.

TIMELINE: INDIAN INDEPENDENCE



Despite having influence since 1700s, the British 'Raj' officially began in 1858

1876 Queen Victoria was declared Empress of India

1885 Indian National Congress formed to campaign for greater Indian participation in government

1919 Amritsar Massacre: British kill 379 Indians, led to the expansion of the INC

1920s: INC leader Gandhi carried out civil disobedience campaign against British. Arrested many times

1930-1931: Series of Conferences held in London discussing extending further powers to India, Gandhi released from prison to attend

1935: Government of India Act

How did Churchill's views on India clash with those of his own party and the government?

Churchill had served in India as a young officer. He took the late-Victorian view that India was "the jewel in the crown" of the whole British Empire and that it had to be protected, no matter what, in order to maintain the empire. He took it for granted that Britain's greatness was bound up with its imperial status. He also took the view, common among those who had served and worked in India, that British rule alone prevented the domination of the Hindu elites over the large numbers of Indian Muslims. British rule had ensured the end of what he saw as barbaric practices and meant economic and social progress. He thought that it had ensured good government, prevented endemic corruption and protected the weak. He also had a strong belief in the racial superiority of the Anglo-Saxons and in their destiny to rule over and develop "lesser" peoples.

Churchill's attitude to proposals to introduce reforms into India led to a serious rift with Baldwin and the Conservative leadership. Churchill disliked a proposal from the Viceroy Lord Irwin (later Lord Halifax), suggesting that there should be a Round Table Conference to discuss giving India the status of a Dominion within the Empire, allowing it to govern itself along the lines of the self-governing "white" Dominions of Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand. This suggestion came in the aftermath of reforms in 1909 and 1919, which had already introduced a measure of self-government in India.

KEY QUESTIONS

What was the significance of India within the British Empire?

What were Churchill's views regarding Indian Independence?

Why was British government divided regarding independence?

What was the significance of Gandhi's actions during the 1920s/30s?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Queen Victoria

Churchill

Baldwin

Gandhi

Lord Irwin

Samuel Hoare

KEY DEFINITIONS

Independence

Amritsar

Round Table Conference

Jewel in the crown

Government of India Act

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

From September 1930 Churchill became the figurehead of a very determined opposition to change in India. In December 1930 Churchill spoke at a meeting of The Indian Empire Society, a reactionary imperialist organisation set up to oppose reform.



GANDHI PICTURED
DURING A VISIT TO
BRITAIN IN 1931

India – consensus politics

Some issues in British politics did not and do not become matters of party debate but political parties try to work together to get the best policy. India was one of these issues and Churchill, by not accepting this middle ground, made himself look out of touch with mainstream politics.

Baldwin, as Conservative leader, the Liberals and Labour members of the National Government had taken a joint stand in supporting discussions, so Churchill was taking on the entire British political establishment. Churchill was horrified by the release of Gandhi from prison to attend the London conferences in 1930 and 1931. Churchill refused to meet Gandhi and described him as “this malignant and subversive fanatic”. However, little progress was made at the meetings. While in the country Gandhi also met with the King at Buckingham Palace. When asked by a reporter if he thought wearing his traditional loin-cloth style dress was suitable attire to meet the King, Gandhi replied, “The King was wearing enough for both of us”. However, Churchill’s increasingly extreme public statements and his support of eccentric and racist organisations that were opposed to negotiations and change isolated him from the more moderate Conservatives. Stanley Baldwin undermined Churchill’s position through calm and moderate speeches and by mocking references to Churchill’s views.

In 1934 Churchill was bitter in his attacks on government ministers over India reform proposals. Even his former supporter Leo Amery MP said that it was Churchill’s “unique achievement to stir up a hornets nest where there were no hornets”. In aiming to make Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary for India, resign he threatened to shatter the Conservative Party. This won him only ridicule from Conservative MPs and the deep distrust of the Conservative leadership. Yet when the Government of India Act was finally passed, Churchill stopped agitating, and even invited a close friend and political supporter of Gandhi to lunch, saying he wished India well.

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they support the idea that Churchill was isolated due to the issue of Indian Independence? [30 marks]

STRETCH

To what extent was Indian Independence the main reason for Churchill’s isolation in the 1930s?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

ABDICATION CRISIS

Despite the crises that Britain had faced since 1910 both at home and abroad the monarchy had been a stable element in British life. George V, who reigned from 1910 to 1936, was in many ways the first of the modern monarchs. His respectable lifestyle, in contrast to the mistresses and visits to Parisian houses of ill-repute of his father, was in accord with the desire for respectability of middle-class Britain. George V had been a solid supporter of the war effort. His bearing was dignified and suitably naval. He broadcast directly to the nation, but both he and Queen Mary kept an appropriate degree of reserve and aloofness. In many ways, he was a perfect constitutional monarch. David, his eldest son had been seen as neurotic and unstable. He had a reputation as a playboy and, despite doing his duty by serving in the armed forces during the First World War and by carrying out imperial tours and official openings, his private life was less respectable. He had a predilection for older women, regardless of whether they were already married, and for parties more typical of the “roaring twenties” than the more staid formal gatherings of his parents. He also had a tendency to make off-the-cuff remarks which could be seen as political interference. Some believed he was an admirer of Nazi Germany.



However, there had been erratic heirs in the past who had knuckled down to do their royal duties. The main problem was his attachment to Wallis Simpson, an American woman who had previously been divorced before marrying Mr Simpson. Following a second divorce from Mr Simpson in 1936, David, now King Edward VIII, was determined to marry her. This raised a considerable constitutional issue. The King was officially the head of the Church of England and was as such committed to defending its values, which included opposition to divorce. In November 1936, Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin told the King that public opinion would not accept Wallis Simpson as Queen.

Edward proposed a morganatic marriage instead. However, this would have required parliament's approval both in Britain and in the self-governing dominions. The cabinet did not give its approval. If the King married Wallis, then it would have meant the resignation of the government. Thus there were very serious constitutional issues at stake at a time of dangers abroad and continuing economic difficulties. In December 1936, Edward broadcast his speech of abdication.

Churchill and the abdication

Churchill took up a minority position. He was a member of a limited and informal group called “The King's Friends” who undertook to support the monarch for reasons of personal loyalty and chivalry. He was one of the biggest supporters of the idea of a potential morganatic marriage. However, the bulk of parliament, despite any personal sympathy, did not take that view. Churchill's views brought him once again into direct conflict with leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin. Baldwin was furious with Churchill's ongoing meddling and support for the King. In early December Churchill experienced one of the worst days of his career as he misjudged the mood in the House of Commons and made a speech in favour of the King that was shouted down. Baldwin had “whipped” Conservative MPs into backing his moves to force the King to abdicate and Churchill was left humiliated. This marked the beginning of the end for the King, who came to realise that there was no parliamentary support for him continuing as King.

KEY QUESTIONS

What were the views of the British establishment towards Edward VIII?

What is the significance of the abdication crisis?

What were Churchill's views regarding the abdication crisis?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Edward VIII

Baldwin

Churchill

Wallis Simpson

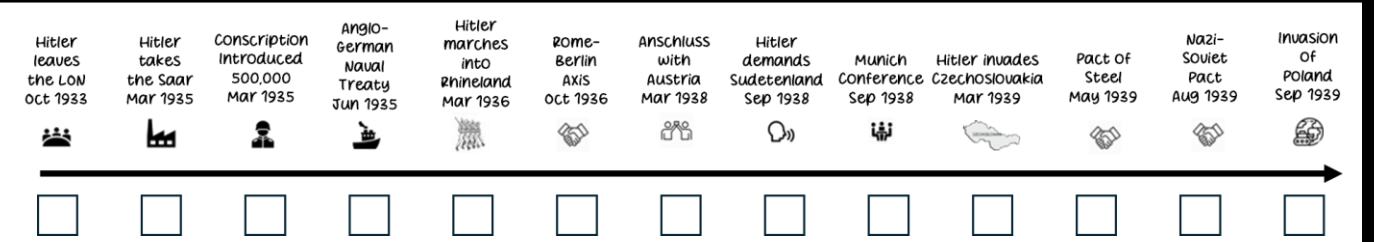
KEY DEFINITIONS

Abdication

Morganatic Marriage

King's Friends

APPEASEMENT

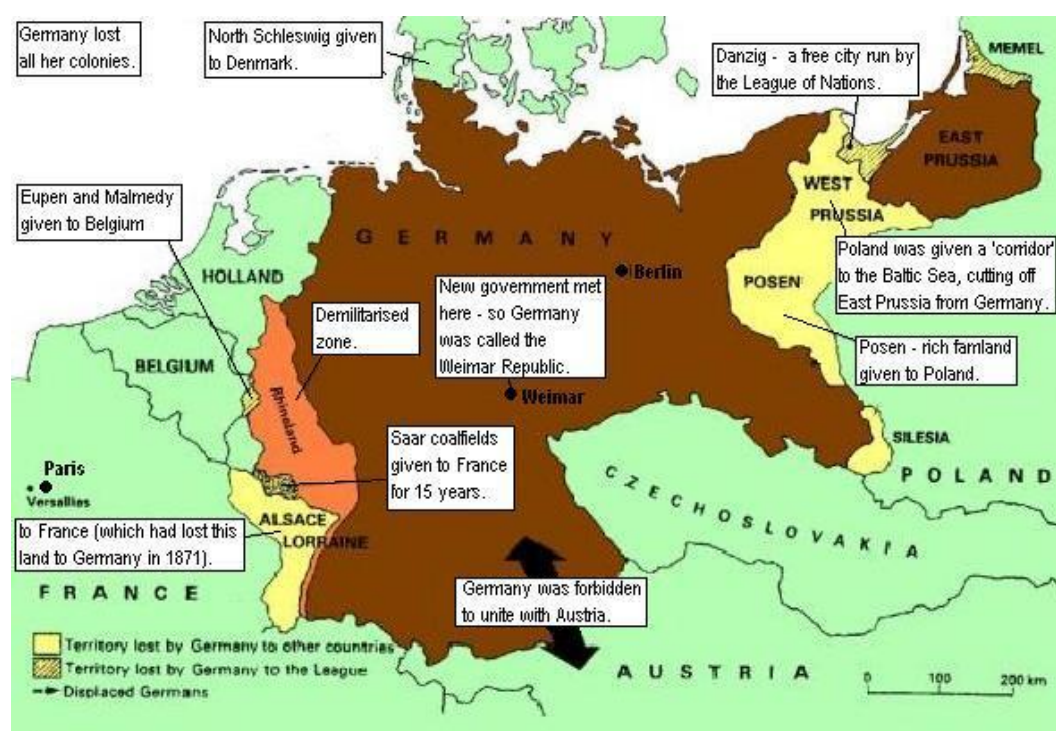


How might Hitler's actions create international tension?

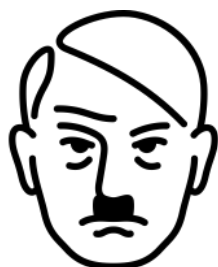
To what extent was the policy of appeasement effective?

	Churchill's views?	How can we support Churchill's viewpoint?	Why might Churchill's viewpoint be described as unrealistic?
1	Britain should rearm and build its air force		
2	Britain should be establishing a 'Grand Alliance' that would stand up to Hitler		
3	Britain should go to war in 1938 in support of Czechoslovakia		

APPEASEMENT



MAP OUTLINING THE KEY TERMS OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES, 1919



In January 1933, Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. By the summer of 1934 he had consolidated his power and became dictator of the newly labelled Third Reich.

Hitler managed to achieve a mass popular support in Germany through arguing for a programme of economic measures to ease unemployment, and vigorously arguing for the reversal of the despised 'diktat' the Treaty of Versailles

Hitler's Key foreign policy aims:

- Uniting German speaking peoples
- Recovery of lost territories
- Rearmament
- Lebensraum (expansion into the East)
- Union with Austria

Hitler's earliest foreign policy actions:

- Withdrew the League of Nations in 1933
- Announces that Germany had reintroduced conscription and began rearmament in 1935

Rearmament in Britain

The debt that Britain had generated during the First World War meant that difficult decisions had to be made regarding cuts to government spending in the 1920s. The British adopted a belief in the "Ten-Year Rule" – which suggested that there would be no prospect of war for the next ten years, and therefore the government could

KEY QUESTIONS

What was the policy of appeasement?

How did Hitler's foreign policy increase international tension in the 1930s?

What were the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and how might this lead to tension?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Hitler

Baldwin

Chamberlain

KEY DEFINITIONS

League of Nations

Treaty of Versailles

Ten Year Rule

Foreign Policy

Great Depression

APPEASEMENT

make cuts to military spending without risking British interests. By 1920 the British armed forces had been reduced to 370,000 men. At the same time the German army had been reduced to 100,000 by the Treaty of Versailles. Churchill had been supportive of these cuts during the 1920s.

Was Churchill right to be concerned about the strength of the British armed forces in the 1930s?

- The impact of the Great Depression in Britain from 1929, also did not encourage British politicians to prioritise military spending. By 1930 defence spending was below the amount spent in 1910.
- During the 1920s Britain put its faith in international organisations and agreements such as the League of Nations and the Locarno Pact.
- There appears to be a slight shift in policy in 1932 in the aftermath of the Manchurian crisis, with the British abandoning the “Ten-Year Rule”, however there was still no large scale move to re-arm with only £100 million spent on defence in 1933.
- British defence spending had grown to £700 million but still lagged behind the spending of the Germans.
- British politicians remain reluctant to make a public commitment to re-armament due to the anti-war feeling among the British public. Stanley Baldwin stated that announcing a programme of re-armament would have lost him the 1935 election.
- In 1935 the British agree to the Anglo-German Naval Treaty which allowed the growth of the German navy to 35% the size of the British navy. Churchill was horrified.
- Between 1932 and 1936 the number of German soldiers from 100,000 to 1 million. The British armed forces on the outbreak of war in 1939 only numbered 897,000 men.

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they support the idea that Churchill was unrealistic in his views regarding foreign policy in the 1930s. [30 marks]

STRETCH

To what extent were Churchill's views on rearmament unrealistic?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

APPEASEMENT: THE KEY EVENTS

Remilitarisation of the Rhineland

In March 1936, the Germans remilitarised the Rhineland; an area between themselves and France that was according to the Versailles treaty, to remain demilitarised and act as a buffer zone between the two former warring nations. Since this was another breach of Versailles, Hitler gave his troops orders to withdraw at the first sign of French opposition. No resistance was offered beyond the usual protests. Hitler, well aware of the mood of pacifism among his opponents, soothed them by offering a peace treaty for 25 years. Baldwin and Eden (the new Foreign Secretary) judged that British public opinion would not have supported military action, since the Rhineland was part of Germany. Indeed, Lord Londonderry (a Conservative who was Secretary of Air from 1931 to 1935) was reported to have sent Hitler a telegram congratulating him on his success, while Lord Lothian remarked that the German troops had merely entered their own “back garden”. The Olympic Games held in Berlin in 1936 after the remilitarisation of the Rhineland, was a sign that German was still regarded as a “normal” European country.

**Anschluss with Austria**

The abdication crisis also proved a distraction in 1936, and it was not until March 1938 when Neville Chamberlain was prime minister that the next European crisis – the annexation by Germany of Austria took place. This was Hitler’s greatest success to date. Having first reached an understanding with Mussolini (the Rome-Berlin Axis of 1936) and signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan,

Hitler carried out the Anschluss with Austria, a further breach of Versailles. It was a triumph for Germany: it revealed the weaknesses of Britain and France who again did no more than protest; it demonstrated a new understanding with Italy, and it dealt a severe strategic blow at Czechoslovakia which could now be attacked from the south as well as the west and north.

After the movement of German troops into Austria Churchill made a very dramatic speech in the Commons in which he called for a Grand Alliance and increased military commitment to France. However, at no point did Churchill suggest military action to reverse the seizure. The Grand Alliance was only a means to deter future aggression. Churchill’s response to Chamberlain’s rejection of this idea was muted. Instead he welcomed an increase in rearmament and did not resign from the Conservative Party over the issue or attempt to establish a strong opposition group to Chamberlain within the government

KEY QUESTIONS

What was the policy of appeasement?

How did Hitler’s foreign policy in the 1930s increase international tension?

What were Churchill’s views regarding the policy of appeasement?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Baldwin

Eden

Hitler

Chamberlain

KEY DEFINITIONS

Remilitarisation

Anschluss

Rome Berlin Axis

Anti-Comintern Pact

Grand Alliance

Munich Conference

APPEASEMENT: THE KEY EVENTS

Sudetenland and the Munich Conference

All was ready for the beginning of Hitler's campaign to acquire the German speaking Sudetenland, a campaign which ended in further triumph at the Munich conference in September 1938. His excuse for the opening propaganda campaign was that the 3.6 million Germans were being discriminated against by the Czech government. The Nazis organised huge protest demonstrations in the Sudetenland and clashes occurred between Czechs and Germans. The Czech president, Benes, feared that Hitler was deliberately stirring up trouble so that German troops could march in "to restore order". Chamberlain and Daladier, the French Prime Minister, both feared that war between Germany and Czechoslovakia was imminent. Chamberlain's government put pressure on the Czechs to make concessions and, as agitation grew among the German speakers in Czechoslovakia, and Hitler's speeches became more war-like, Chamberlain took a bold decision in flying to see Hitler to negotiate an agreement.

There was much relief when Mussolini offered mediation and a four-power conference met at Munich in September 1938. There was little attempt to resist Hitler's demands. Chamberlain pursued personal diplomacy and, without consultation, asked Hitler to sign a pact guaranteeing future consultation. He regarded this as somehow a diplomatic triumph. He waved it to cheering crowds on his return and claimed that he had gained "peace for our time". There was tremendous admiration for Chamberlain's efforts to keep peace, and leading military figures were relieved. However, when the immediate relief had subsided there was growing concern. Churchill memorably expressed it when he said in a debate on Munich that Britain had suffered a defeat.

Annexation of Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia was crippled by the loss of 70% of her heavy industry and almost all her fortifications to when it looked as though the country was about to fall apart, Hitler pressurised President Hacha into requesting German help "to restore order". Consequently, in March 1939 German troops occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. Britain and France protested but took no action: according to Chamberlain, the guarantee of Czech frontiers did not apply because technically Czechoslovakia had not been invaded: German troops had entered by invitation. However, the German action caused a great outburst of criticism: for the first time the appeasers were unable to justify what Hitler had done.

Invasion of Poland

Hitler soon turned his attention to Poland. The Germans resented the loss of Danzig and the Polish Corridor at Versailles. At the end of March 1939, Chamberlain still outraged at the German occupation of Prague, wrote to the Polish government promising them that if their independence was threatened, Britain and France "would at once lend them all the support in their power". Meanwhile there was pressure from certain quarters in Britain for some sort of alliance with the USSR. However, both Chamberlain and Halifax detested Communism and were sceptical of Russia's military strength. The USSR grew tired of British stalling and signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler in August. Hitler was now convinced that with Russia neutral, Britain and France would not risk intervention; when the British ratified their guarantee to Poland, Hitler took it as a bluff. A full-scale German invasion began early on 1st September 1939. Only when pressure mounted in parliament and in the country did Chamberlain send an ultimatum to Germany. When this expired at 11 am on 3rd September, Britain was at war with Germany. Soon afterwards France also declared war.

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they support the idea that Churchill was isolated due to differing views on the policy of appeasement. [30 marks]

STRETCH

To what extent were Churchill's views regarding rearmament and war in 1938 unrealistic?

To what extent was the policy of appeasement successful?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

WHY DID CHURCHILL BECOME PM IN 1940?

Wartime politics – the fall of Neville Chamberlain and the rise of Winston Churchill

The outbreak of war had little effect on the political situation in Great Britain. A political truce was immediately agreed upon by the three major political parties. The composition of the Chamberlain government changed little. The Prime Minister was prepared to make some gestures towards his political opponents to encourage national unity. However, the Labour Party, owing to its personal hatred of Chamberlain – “he always treated us like dirt”, said Attlee, years later - refused to serve, a decision which was not unwelcome to the Prime Minister. Chamberlain was therefore forced to strengthen his team by the inclusion of leading Tory dissidents like Winston Churchill who was assigned to the Admiralty and also became a member of the new War Cabinet, and Anthony Eden. The appointment of Churchill was particularly significant. Although an ardent anti-appeaser, he remained loyal to the Prime Minister to the end, but his energy, confidence and growing popularity meant that he was, in effect, an alternative Prime Minister.



Neville Chamberlain was not cut out to be an effective war leader. An outstanding administrator and party manager in peacetime, and a lucid but uninspiring speaker, he lacked the energy, vision and popular appeal that would enable him to offer the leadership and inspiration that the nation now needed. Chamberlain seemed to recognise this himself, writing to his sister, “How I loathe this war. I was never meant to be a War Minister”.

When the scale of the military crisis became clear in April 1940, Neville Chamberlain began to face increasing criticism from groups within his own party, from most of the Labour Party, and from the press. There were various reasons for this. His policy of appeasement had been popular at first but public opinion began to turn against it after Hitler annexed Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and even more so when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939. Chamberlain was also criticised for failing to procure an alliance with Soviet Russia to deter Hitler; and for underestimating Hitler’s aggressive intentions. In April 1940, Chamberlain boasted that “Hitler had missed the bus” – a few days later the Germans invaded Denmark and Norway. This undermined faith in his leadership.

Chamberlain was also heavily criticised for not organising the economy for war with

KEY QUESTIONS

Why did Chamberlain resign?

How can we characterise Britain’s first year at war?

Who were the two candidates for the role of PM?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Chamberlain

Attlee

Churchill

Lord Halifax

Anthony Eden

Leo Amery

KEY DEFINITIONS

Admiralty

Appeasement

Annexation

Norway Campaign

WHY DID CHURCHILL BECOME PM IN 1940?

enough urgency. Some important and indispensable measures were carried out by the government in the early months to place the country on a war footing. Over 1 million children were evacuated from the great cities to the countryside after the 1st September; gas masks had been distributed and a black-out was imposed; new ministries were created; the call-up of young men into the armed forces was begun; food subsidies and rent controls were introduced and food rationing was begun in January 1940. Even so, the transition from a peacetime to wartime economy was slow and unco-ordinated and often accompanied by muddle and confusion. As late as the spring of 1940 there were still more than a million unemployed. As historian, A.J.P Taylor has commented, "the government were still moving into the war backwards with their eyes tightly closed". Moreover, as far as the wider purpose of the war was concerned, namely, to attack and defeat Germany, the attitude of the Allied governments was cautious and defensive. In the period of the "Phoney war", no military activity took place in western Europe. Instead the RAF dropped propaganda leaflets over Germany and the British navy performed its traditional functions of patrol and blockade. Indeed, Neville Chamberlain and other ministers had virtually convinced themselves that naval blockade alone could win the war by depriving Germany of essential raw materials and foodstuffs.

There was growing unease and bewilderment among the public at the military stalemate. In parliament members of all parties were increasingly critical of the government's record. Their fears were soon justified. Early in April 1940 German troops invaded and occupied Denmark and then moved against Norway. The British government responded to the Norwegian appeals for help. However, due to poor planning, lack of co-ordination between navy and army, and no real air cover, British troops were forced to withdraw. It was this debacle which brought to a head the mounting criticism of Neville Chamberlain's leadership. It led directly to a two-day debate in the House of Commons on 7-8 May, instigated by the Labour Party. It was one of the most enthralling and momentous occasions in British parliamentary history. Though there was a half-hearted defence of the government's recent record by the Prime Minister and a more vigorous one from Churchill, the tone of the debate was set by the speech of the Tory anti-appeaser, Leo Amery, who attacked Chamberlain personally and called for him to stand down as Prime Minister. When the Prime Minister appealed for support from his friends in the House, Lloyd George replied, "there is nothing that can contribute more to victory in this war than that he should sacrifice the seals of office". Conservative backbenchers refused to support Chamberlain and it was clear he had lost the support of a large section of his party. On the following day, 9th May, the Prime Minister reluctantly accepted that a coalition government was inevitable. However, it was also made clear that the parties would not accept Chamberlain as leader of the coalition – a new Prime Minister was needed.

At eleven o'clock I was again summoned to Downing Street by Mr Chamberlain, the Prime Minister. Mr Chamberlain had received a reply from the Labour leaders that they would not serve under him. The question, therefore, was whom he should advise the king to send for after his own resignation had been accepted He looked at us both across the table. I have had many important interviews in my public life, and this was certainly the most important. Usually I talk a great deal, but on this occasion I was silent. As I remained silent a very long pause ensued ... Then at length Halifax spoke. He said he felt that his position as a Peer, in the Lords and not in the House of Commons, would make it very difficult for him to discharge the duties of a prime minister and especially in wartime. He spoke for some minutes in this sense, and by the time he had finished it was clear that the duty would fall upon me – had in fact fallen upon me.

From Churchill's, "The Gathering Storm", 1948

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they support the idea that Churchill was the 'best man for the job' following Chamberlain's resignation in 1940. [30 marks]

STRETCH

What were the strengths and weaknesses of both Churchill and Halifax when considering their role for Prime Minister?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

CHURCHILL BECOMES PRIME MINISTER

Interpretation		Summarise the interpretation
In May 1940, after the disastrous Norwegian campaign, Chamberlain resigned and Churchill became prime minister. He died a few weeks after he left office, on 9 November 1940.		
He practiced a policy of appeasement toward Germany but Chamberlain eventually realized that his policy was a failure. Due primarily to the debacles of the first months of the war, he was forced to resign as in May of 1940.		
Individual	How did this individual contribute to Churchill's appointment as PM?	
Lord Halifax		
Chamberlain		
Attlee		
Lord Amery		
Churchill		
Factor	Was Churchill the best man for the job?	
Churchill's attitude towards appeasement		
The ongoing phoney war and Churchill's strategy		
The failure of the Norway campaign April 1940		
Labour party support for Churchill as leader		
Churchill's character and former experience		
Lord Haliux as an alternative candidate		

BRITAIN'S MANAGEMENT OF WAR IN 1940

What was Churchill's stance towards the war in 1940?

Churchill felt that he was destined to lead Britain; he had first-hand experience of war and confidence in the ability of Britain and its considerable empire to wage war successfully.

As I went to bed at about 3 am I was conscious of a profound sense of relief. At last I had the ability to give directions over the whole scene. I felt as if I were walking with destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial.

Churchill recalling his feelings on the night of his appointment as Prime Minister in his book "The Gathering Storm", 1946

By the 13th May, the situation was dangerous but the British army was intact; the French had large forces; Italy had not joined Germany; the British were fighting on only one front and Churchill had put together a Cabinet with some of his own supporters. He was highly determined to wage war energetically, but his past record was not especially encouraging. The Norway campaign had not been a success; he did not have a good record in the First World War; there was little enthusiasm from US President Roosevelt for his appointment; and both the House of Commons and the government contained many who liked and admired Chamberlain.

The war moved quickly and on 14th May the Germans broke the French defences. The prospect of a rapid defeat of France was suddenly a reality. By 28th May 1940 Churchill was facing profound challenge:

Germany had bombed Poland and the Low Countries. There was considerable fear of large scale bombing of Britain and very heavy casualties were expected.

The British army had been cut off from the French forces and had fallen back on Dunkirk, hoping to be evacuated. The chances of rescuing 300,000 troops seemed low given German air superiority.

There was danger of Italian entry into the war, which would threaten Egypt and the Suez Canal. This would cut off Britain's quickest sea route to India, and its colonies in the Far East and make them more difficult to defend against Japan.

Gold reserves were running out and it was not clear whether Britain could afford to go on fighting.

**Britain's options:**

Lord Halifax, appointed Foreign Secretary in Churchill's first war cabinet, had been a major supporter of appeasement and had begun making discreet approaches to discover what the Germans would require from Britain to enter into peace talks. On 28th May the Cabinet discussed a French proposal to approach Mussolini to find out what peace terms Hitler might accept. As foreign secretary, Halifax needed to know what Britain's options were, but it would have been dangerous to suggest by approaching Italy that Britain was considering a negotiated peace, as this would have shown Hitler that Britain was weakening her resolve to carry on in the war.

KEY QUESTIONS

How successfully did Britain manage war in 1940?

How did Churchill perform as Prime Minister in 1940?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Halifax

Mussolini

Hitler

Dowding

Goering

KEY DEFINITIONS

Dunkirk

Foreign Secretary

Cabinet

Blitz

Luftwaffe

RAF

BRITAIN'S MANAGEMENT OF WAR IN 1940

Halifax had argued that it might be better to consider terms with the Germans before France was defeated and before German bombing destroyed Britain's aircraft factories. The Australian High Commissioner pleaded for an appeal to Roosevelt for a peace conference but his memorandum was firmly rejected by Churchill with the word "rot".

The situation had improved by 4th June with the evacuation of 224,318 British troops and 111,172 of their allies from Dunkirk. The cabinet had resisted French demands for more aircraft and an air defence of Britain was possible. Belgium had surrendered and relations with France were very poor. The cabinet members who favoured any negotiation had been silenced and Churchill made his most famous speech to the Commons.

"We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the endWe shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

He made a direct appeal to the USA when, after saying the Empire would continue the fight if Britain was invaded, he went on to say until "the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old". This speech was broadcast on the radio, but with actor Norman Shelley impersonating Churchill, who was too busy to speak on the radio himself. Churchill later re-recorded the speech in his own voice. Events continued to move quickly and next came the French surrender. Once again, there was talk of attempting peace talks with the Germans, but by now these were not considered a serious possibility. The remarkable achievement of Churchill was to maintain a war with no allies against what was perceived to be one of the greatest military powers the world had ever seen. On 3rd July 1940, a massive gesture of defiance was made by the attack on the French fleet to prevent it falling into German hands. The RAF had been bombing Germany since its invasion of the Low Countries and continued to do so, despite inevitable German reprisals. A very bold decision was taken to send British armoured forces to Egypt even when there was a real threat of German invasion of Britain. This decision paid off as Britain achieved rapid victories against Italy, Hitler's ally, which had colonies in North Africa adjacent to Egypt.

The Battle of Britain

The brunt of the war fell on Britain with the German decision to launch an air offensive in August 1940, which had the aim of destroying the RAF. Churchill spoke on 20th August.

"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few. All hearts go out to the fighter pilots, whose brilliant actions we see with our own eyes day after day; but we must never forget that all the time, night after night, month after month, our bomber squadrons travel far into Germany".

Hitler and Goering, the head of the German air force, thought that bombing British cities was more important than destroying the RAF. They believed that civilian populations would not withstand the bombing, that morale would crack and that this would make a continuation of the British war effort impossible. In September the Germans diverted their attention from the RAF airfields to the bombing of British cities, which had the unintended effect of enabling the RAF to recover. Sir Hugh Dowding, the head of RAF Fighter Command must take much of the credit for victory

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they suggest Churchill demonstrated effective management of war in 1940. [30 marks]

STRETCH

Explain the significance of Churchill's speeches in their contributions to Britain's management of war in 1940.

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

BRITAIN'S MANAGEMENT OF WAR IN 1940

in the Battle of Britain. Not only was the organisation of the RAF defences his responsibility, but he had opposed Churchill in two crucial decisions.

1. He urged Churchill to not send promised squadrons of fighters to aid the French army – these aircraft could be used for home defence instead.
2. He resisted Churchill's suggestion that an all-out attack should be launched on the German airforce following the first day of the Battle of Britain. Dowding knew it was vital he kept his forces intact in order to defeat the Germans and could not risk so many fighters in the early stages of the battle.

The very effective British aircraft, the Hurricanes and Spitfires, had been developed under Churchill's much-criticised predecessors, MacDonald and Baldwin. Churchill had played little part in this or in the growth of radar. His operational advice was often unsound and he failed to prevent Dowding falling victim to rivalries with the top RAF command and being virtually sacked after the battle. The Labour leader, Attlee, was asked what Churchill's contribution to the battle was and he replied, "just words". However, Churchill's memorable and splendid oratory was indeed inspirational and gave the RAF pilots their place in history.

By the end of 1940 Britain had enjoyed some victories in North Africa and had defeated the German air offensive. Churchill had established his position over his rivals and his oratory had become a weapon of war. His determination had prevented any negotiations with Germany and the nation had steeled itself for a long struggle. Given the situation – with no commitment to help from the USA and with a population who had suffered the terrible losses of the First World War – this was a remarkable achievement.



Your Ten Questions:

1. How many were evacuated from Dunkirk?
2. Who was foreign secretary under Churchill?
3. When was the Battle of Britain?
4. Who were the few?
5. What was the name of the German air force?
6. Which general defied orders during the Battle of Britain?
7. When did the Blitz begin?
8. How many were evacuated as a result of the Blitz?
9. How many become homeless as a result of the Blitz?
10. Where did Britain experience victories by the end of 1940?

SUMMARISE

Norway Campaign:

Dunkirk Evacuation:

Battle of Britain:

Blitz:

CHURCHILL'S MANAGEMENT OF WAR IN 1940

Extract from a long statement made by Churchill in the House of Commons, 4th June 1940

I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our Island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of **tyranny**. The British Empire and the French Republic, linked together in their cause and in their need, will defend to the death their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength. Even though large **tracts** of Europe and many old and famous states have fall or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the **odious apparatus** of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender.

Extracts from a long statement made by Churchill in the House of Commons, 20th August 1940.

Rather more than a quarter of a year has passed since the new Government came into power in this country. What a **cataract** of disaster has poured out upon on us since then.... The British nation and British Empire, finding themselves alone, stood undismayed against disaster. No one flinched or wavered, nay, some who formerly thought of peace, no think only of war. We cannot tell what lies ahead. It may be that even greater ordeals lie before us. We shall face whatever is coming to us. We are sure of ourselves and of our cause and that is the supreme fact that has emerged in these months of trial.

The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, except in the **abodes** of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the world war by their **prowess** and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.

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MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

Churchill's military decisions: The importance of North Africa



Britain had a long history of concern with the Mediterranean as a vital trade route. This had increased with the building of the Suez Canal. Opened in 1869 the Suez Canal created waterway from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. From 1876, the British had used the canal and developed a key role in its running and a dominance in Egypt. The canal became a vital trade route for the British Empire.

Before 1939 British military leaders were intensely concerned about the Mediterranean and the danger that Italy might pose if it allied with Germany against Britain in a war. Italy joined the war in 1940 and invaded southern France. A major concern to Britain was the presence of Italian troops in her North African colonies (modern-day Libya) which bordered on Egypt. Britain controlled the entrance to the Mediterranean at Gibraltar, but there was a danger that Franco, the Spanish dictator, might threaten that control by joining the war on Hitler's side. This could weaken Britain control in its Mediterranean territories, and in particular threaten its control of the Suez Canal which was a major link to Britain's Asian colonies, especially India. The Mediterranean was also the key to the defence of oil supplies from the Middle East.

From 1942 another problem emerged. Germany had gone to war with Russia in 1941 and by 1942 had driven the Russian forces back considerably in the south. Britain were worried that if Germany broke through into Egypt, then German forces might link up with forces in Russia and secure the vital oil fields of southern Russia and the Middle East. The outcome of the entire war was thus at stake in the war in the Mediterranean. Churchill hoped for a Balkan front consisting of Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey and to achieve that sent forces into Greece when Italy invaded in 1940. A front in Greece would draw German resources and open up the prospect of increased British influence in south-east Europe. Churchill during the First World War had talked of this area of south-eastern Europe as "the soft underbelly of Europe". However, in 1940-41, as in 1915, the Balkans proved to be not such a soft underbelly as British forces were defeated in Greece and forced out.

British forces were highly successful against the Italians in North Africa but faced a more serious enemy in the form of the German Afrika Korps and its commander,

KEY QUESTIONS

What were the reasons behind the development of the Mediterranean Strategy?

Why might the Mediterranean Strategy create tension between Churchill and other wartime leaders?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Stalin

Roosevelt

Mussolini

Hitler

Rommel

KEY DEFINITIONS

Suez Canal

Mediterranean Strategy

Balkans

German Afrika Korps

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

General Erwin Rommel. Under Rommel's command North Africa turned into a difficult battleground where British troops faced a well-equipped German force. By 1941 Egypt was under threat. However, Rommel was too short of men and supplies to take Egypt and was forced back after the Battle of El Alamein in 1942. The US joining the war in December 1941, put pressure on Churchill to move his focus away from the Mediterranean strategy. The American general, George Marshall, saw little point in wasting resources in the Mediterranean and argued for taking the pressure off Russia and establishing a western front. The Americans believed that the success of the war depended on the survival of Russia and engaging with and defeating the main German forces. From their perspective, the Mediterranean was a distraction and of limited strategic importance. They held long-time suspicions that for Churchill, the Mediterranean Strategy was more about the protection and preservation of the British Empire than the defeat of Nazi Germany.

Churchill's military decisions: War in Italy

In 1943 considerable resources were devoted to an invasion of Sicily by British and US forces. This decision to commit troops to Italy in 1943 remains one of the most puzzling decisions of the war. For example, many argue that with North Africa, Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus and Sicily in Allied hands, the Mediterranean was secure. By 1943, also, Italy had been weakened by defeats and was no longer a serious threat. The Germans were established in Italy and many were unconvinced about an extended campaign to take Italy. However, sixteen Allied divisions were occupied in heavy fighting in Italy. As the Germans had roughly the same number of forces, there was no question of a smaller Allied force being able to effectively fight and hold back German troops who could have been used against Russia or to counter the Allied invasion of France. It was rather the Allies who were tied down. Finally, if Italy had fallen, it is difficult to see how this would have led to the defeat of Germany. This required a decisive defeat of the German forces in France, rather than in Italy, and an invasion of Germany itself.

The Russians found Churchill's insistence on the invasion of mainland Italy particularly frustrating. Facing the bulk of fighting against German forces in the east, Stalin believed that Churchill was using the campaign in Italy as an excuse to delay opening the Second Front (allied invasion of Western Europe). He saw this delay as a sign of disrespect and evidence that Britain was happy for Soviet forces to continue to bear the brunt of high casualties. It was not entirely unreasonable of Stalin to hold this view. It was not until June 1944 that Britain and the US launched the long-awaited D-Day invasion of occupied France. Thus the bulk of the war in Europe had been centred on the Mediterranean. Why was there such a delay? High casualties were expected to come with the invasion of France, and therefore Churchill was keen to put it off for as long as possible. Many wanted to wait for Germany to be weakened further by their battles against Russia and the Allied bombing of German cities. However, such a long struggle in Italy was not expected. The allies encountered a range of failures such as the landing at Anzio, south of Rome, in 1944.

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they support the idea that Churchill's Mediterranean Strategy was flawed? [30 marks]

STRETCH

To what extent was the Mediterranean Strategy flawed?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

CHURCHILL AND HIS GENERALS

Churchill not only became Prime Minister in 1940, but also Minister of Defence. Unlike previous civilian war leaders, he was directly involved by his membership of the two leading committees which ran military affairs: the Defence Committee of the Cabinet and the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

He was very concerned not to repeat the situation in the First World War in which responsibility for the war was handed over to military experts such as Field Marshall Sir Douglas Haig. He was one of the few prime ministers to have direct military experience – even if this was limited to junior command in colonial wars and a brief period as a lieutenant-colonel on the Western Front in 1916. His writings had led him to a study of military history and he had great confidence in himself as a strategist. Like Hitler, however, he was an amateur working alongside highly-trained professional soldiers. The results were not always harmonious. Churchill believed in direct supervision and detailed questioning of his military leaders. This could either be seen as an essential function of leadership – to be a critic and ensure that military leaders were up to scratch; or it could be sign of irritating micro-management and undermining of professional soldiers.

Churchill and his Generals in North Africa

NORTH AFRICA CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Prioritised by Churchill in 1940 as German and Italian presence in North Africa – especially Egypt could threaten sea routes (SUEZ CANAL) to the Empire.

Formed part of Churchill's "MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY".

US troops joined in support of British action in 1942 in what was known as OPERATION TORCH.

Most famous victory – BATTLE OF EL ALAMEIN against German troops led by GENERAL ROMMEL.

Relations with Sir Archibald Wavell

The rapid British advance in North Africa in 1940 justified the decision to concentrate on fighting in North Africa, but Churchill gave little credit to the commander, Sir Archibald Wavell, whom he personally disliked. Churchill took forces away from him when Italy invaded Greece in 1940 and the cabinet made a decision to send troops to defend it and establish a new Balkan front. Wavell was not given any time to prepare properly. His troops were taken off to a deeply flawed campaign. Without proper planning and resources, this was another expedition that failed when German troops invaded. The British had to be evacuated to Crete and then were defeated there by a German attack and forced out again. The early successes in North Africa were thrown away, and Wavell did not have the resources to meet German forces under Rommel who were sent to Africa. He took the blame and was demoted.



Relations with Auchinleck and Montgomery

Wavell's successor, Sir Claude Auchinleck, was not prepared for a premature attack on the Germans and, to Churchill's annoyance, he insisted on delaying until he was well prepared. "The Auk" was a thoughtful leader, who realised the importance of

KEY QUESTIONS

To what extent did Churchill maintain effective relationships with his Generals during World War Two?

How did the Mediterranean Strategy impact Churchill's relationships with his Generals?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Wavell

Auchinleck

Montgomery

Brooke

Dowding

KEY DEFINITIONS

Mediterranean Strategy

Battle of El Alamein

CHURCHILL AND HIS GENERALS

taking advantage of German concentration of invading Russia to give Britain time to build up its resources in Egypt before attacking. Despite an effective defence against German attacks and making thorough preparations for a counter attack, he too was sacked for his delays and not being sufficiently daring and aggressive.

His replacement, Bernard Montgomery, won over Churchill by his selfconfidence but insisted on very thorough preparations involving accumulating more than twice the men that Rommel had before attacking at El Alamein in October 1942. Much of the credit for the first major British victory in the war should have gone to Auchinleck because of the efficient preparations he had made, even though



he did not actually lead the attack. However, Churchill disliked him and favoured “Monty”. Montgomery was very slow in following up his victory after El Alamein, which allowed the Germans to retreat to Tunisia. But Churchill continued to favour him.

Relations with Sir Alan Brooke

Throughout the war Churchill constantly interfered with operational matters, sacked able and thoughtful commanders and preferred military leaders with often doubtful abilities but with the “right attitude”. The main burden of Churchill’s interference fell on the head of the army, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke. Brooke was a highly competent organiser and thorough professional. However, in temperament he was very different from Churchill, yet the working relationship of the two opposite personalities was one of the greatest wartime partnerships. He was conscious of the need to deploy British forces carefully and avoid heavy casualties. He was often annoyed by Churchill “thinking aloud” and coming up with all sorts of different military ideas. His wartime diaries, often written up after long and exhausting meetings, give a sense of frustration with political interference. They are supported by many other recollections by senior officers. Personal dealings with Churchill, a highly opinionated and charismatic leader, tended to be tricky but when it came to major decisions there were fewer disagreements between Brooke and Churchill.

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they suggest that Churchill developed positive relationships with his Generals, [30 marks]

STRETCH

Rank the relationships that Churchill maintained with Generals from strongest to weakest and justify your reasoning.

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

CHURCHILL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS GENERALS

General	Details of Relations	Judgement
Hugh Dowding		
Archibald Wavell		
Claude Auchinleck		
Bernard Montgomery		
Alan Brooke		

BOMBING OF GERMANY

If waging war against Germany in North Africa had been an alternative to invading France, then another was to destroy German morale and its capacity to provide for its extensive armed forces by relentless bombing. Germany had used civilian bombing to create terror in Poland in 1939 and in the Low Countries, Belgium and France in 1940. British cities had been the subject of a "blitz" after the focus of the Battle of Britain had switched from attacking the RAF to other major cities. There was considerable public pressure to take the war to Germany in the same way. The RAF Bomber Command had been created with a bomber offensive in mind and was eager to show that it could hasten the end of the war by destroying both morale and war capacity. There were some problems, however:

→ A specialist report in 1942 had indicated that bombing was not effective or precise enough to substantially damage German industrial production.

→ The Blitz had not destroyed civilian morale in Britain. There was little chance that it would destroy German morale either, as so many had supported the Fuhrer before 1939. This did not weaken, as from 1943, many Germans saw Hitler's supposed genius as the only way to stop Russia invading and taking terrible revenge once it was clear that Germany could not defeat the USSR.

→ There were also ethical objections to killing large numbers of civilians, including women and children. These were voiced by brave objectors such as Bishop Bell of Chichester when heavy bombing raids initiated by Sir Arthur Harris began in 1942 and continued throughout the war with the enthusiastic support of the USA.

Harris deliberately aimed at as much destruction of German cities as possible by assembling large forces of bombers with incendiary bombs to deliberately create fire storms. There was considerable loss of life in major cities like Hamburg, the industrial cities of the Ruhr, Berlin and in February 1945, Dresden. The death toll for this raid on one of Germany's most famous and historic cities was probably 40,000. Total casualties for the bombing of Britain from 1939 to 1945 were 60,595. In all, between 400,000 and 600,000 Germans died in bombing raids. Dresden was not an obvious military target. Bombing a city which was sheltering thousands of refugees led to criticisms at the time. It remains one of the most controversial acts of the war. Despite the heroism of the bomber crews and the heavy losses they endured, the effectiveness and morality of their work have both been questioned. Churchill himself had doubts about a policy he had enthusiastically supported



KEY QUESTIONS

What was the impact of the Bombing of Germany?

What were Churchill's justifications for bombing Germany?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Hitler

Stalin

KEY DEFINITIONS

Dresden

RAF

Blitz



BOMBINGS OF GERMANY

**Churchill's Ambivalence Over the Bomber Offensive**

By NICK BOSANQUET & ANDREW HALDENBY | June 14, 2024

The worst of charges have been levelled at Winston Churchill over the Second World War bomber campaign. The subject needs more light and understanding, since the bomber offensive shortened the Second World War by at least a year. Until 1942, Churchill was a brake on the idea that strategic bombing could win the Second World War. To gauge its effectiveness, he commissioned two



reports. The first, in August 1941, concluded that only one bomber in three would get within five miles of its target. This paralleled Churchill's view during the previous war: "It is not reasonable to speak of an air offensive as if it were going to finish the war by itself," he wrote in 1917. "It is improbable that any terrorization of the civil population which could be achieved by air attack would compel the Government of a great nation to surrender."

Professor Frederick Lindemann and others kept the bomber argument alive, arguing that at least, raids would "de-house" German workers. After Russia was attacked in June 1941, bombing began to seem more attractive—particularly since it was for many months the only way to satisfy Stalin's demand that Britain face the enemy. To Stalin in August 1942, Churchill spoke of destroying German morale, shattering German cities. This "had a very stimulating effect" on Stalin, and "the atmosphere became progressively more cordial."

The bomber offensive was the subject which drew the most Parliamentary and public debate. Churchill was committed to it from 1942, but to avoid controversy it was given little publicity. Apart from a visit to a Yorkshire base with Australian External Affairs Minister Herbert Evatt, Churchill rarely visited the installations. Nevertheless, the east of England, from the Thames to the Tees, soon bristled with air bases. Stalin and Roosevelt consistently supported the bomber offensive. Churchill remained in lingering doubt. His concern over civilian casualties surfaced again over French losses (which remained low) in the run-up to D-Day. Yet earlier, the bomber offensive was the best he could offer his Russian ally. Stalin in 1943 welcomed his messages about the tonnage dropped on German cities.¹⁰ The bombing campaign was a reality which reduced Stalin's continued pressure for a second front.

Meanwhile, the effect on the German war effort was profound. Hitler was shaken by the 1943 Dam busters raid and the Hamburg firestorm. German industries hitherto devoted to offense turned to anti-aircraft guns and night fighters. The bombing wore the Germans down. In May 1943 there were 636 Luftwaffe fighters on the Eastern Front. A year later there were only 505. In the same period, German aircraft devoted to defence rose from 930 to 1690.¹¹ A thousand more fighters and medium bombers on the Eastern Front with replacements would have caused at least half a million more casualties. Had there been no bomber offensive, Germany would have been free to develop its war industries including jet fighters, advanced artillery and possibly short-range rockets. It would have had the time and space to train new forces to use these weapons, instead of relying on troops from occupied territories. Shortening the war by six months saved at least half a million casualties, a million counting those on the Eastern Front. Without a bombing offensive the war would have dragged on for a least a year with more casualties and fresh tolls from famine and disease among displaced populations.

BOMBINGS OF GERMANY

BBC NEWS

**Churchill in 'war crimes' row, Wednesday, 20 November 2002**

British bombing raids killed a thousand German civilians a day when World War II was already won, says the historian sparking debate on whether Churchill was a war criminal. German historian Jorg Friedrich argues the UK killed more than 635,000 civilians, including 75,000 children, during "indiscriminate" raids over five years. Mr Friedrich says he has never accused Churchill of being a "war criminal" - that is just the way British newspapers have interpreted his claims. The grandson of the wartime prime minister Sir Winston Churchill, former MP Winston Churchill has countered the claims, saying the bombing raids were successful in disrupting German arms manufacture.

The historian told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "It made no military sense - the peak of the bombing campaign was between January 1945 and April 1945 when the war was effectively won," said Mr Friedrich. The daily death toll of 1,023 was twice as many each day as were killed in the German bombing of Coventry, he said.

The Bombings of Germany - Context

If waging war against Germany in North Africa had been an alternative to invading France, then another was to destroy German morale and its capacity to provide for its extensive armed forces by relentless bombing. Germany had used civilian bombing to create terror in Poland in 1939 and in the Low Countries, Belgium and France in 1940. British cities had been the subject of a "blitz" after the focus of the Battle of Britain had switched from attacking the RAF to other major cities. There was considerable public pressure to take the war to Germany in the same way. The RAF Bomber Command had been created with a bomber offensive in mind and was eager to show that it could hasten the end of the war by destroying both morale and war capacity.

Harris deliberately aimed at as much destruction of German cities as possible by assembling large forces of bombers with incendiary bombs to deliberately create fire storms. There was considerable loss of life in major cities like Hamburg, the industrial cities of the Ruhr, Berlin and in February 1945, Dresden. The death toll for this raid on one of Germany's most famous and historic cities was probably 40,000. Total casualties for the bombing of Britain from 1939 to 1945 were 60,595. In all, between 400,000 and 600,000 Germans died in bombing raids. Dresden was not an obvious military target. Bombing a city which was sheltering thousands of refugees led to criticisms at the time. It remains one of the most controversial acts of the war. Despite the heroism of the bomber crews and the heavy losses they endured, the effectiveness and morality of their work have both been questioned. Churchill himself had doubts about a policy he had enthusiastically supported.

The Bombing of Hamburg, codename Operation Gomorrah began on 24th July 1943 and lasted for 8 days and 7 nights leaving 37,000 wounded. As a result of the bombings, 42,600 lost their lives and one million Germans fled the city. The bombing of Dresden began on the 13th July and lasted two days using 3,300 tons of bombs. Temperatures peaked at 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit leaving road surfaces melted. After the raid had finished, SS guards brought in from a nearby camp, burnt the bodies in the city's Old Square (the Altmarkt). There were so many bodies that this took two weeks to complete.

RELATIONS WITH WARTIME LEADERS



Ho Hum! No chance of contagion.

By Dr. Seuss



The affectionate way in which most Britons regarded the new Prime Minister. The slogan "Go to it—and keep at it" was displayed on many Ministry of Information posters.



**SOMEONE IS TAKING SOMEONE FOR
A WALK**

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1939-1941

Who were the leaders of nations?

**Franklin D. Roosevelt**

- Leader of the USA since 1932 during the Depression
- Popular and energetic leader
- Despite not joining war until 1941 – did support Britain via Lend Lease scheme
- Died in 1945 before the end of the war

**Josef Stalin**

- Leader of the USSR since 1928
- Played a role in the communist revolution of 1917
- Reputation for ruthlessness
- Established the greatest police state of its time
- Signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939
- Surprised by German invasion of June 1941

**Charles de Gaulle**

- Totally devoted to France and the continuation of the war effort in France
- Led the free French movement
- Became president of the French Committee of National Liberation in 1943
- On December 21, 1958, de Gaulle was elected president of the republic.

It seemed as if Churchill might be a more natural ally of Roosevelt than of Stalin; both headed English-speaking democracies. However, the US leader was a difficult person to know. On the surface he could be charming and seemed to be sympathetic; but he had a reputation for not committing himself, despite giving his listeners the impression he had. As his biographer Conrad Black wrote about a meeting between the two in Canada in August 1941, “Churchill would not have noticed the conditions and qualifications and nuances with which Roosevelt clouded almost everything he said”. Their correspondence reveals far more affection from Churchill than from Roosevelt and Roosevelt’s deliberate snubbing of Churchill at the Tehran Conference of 1943 was more characteristic of the US leader than of the more open Churchill.

On 12th September 1942 Churchill send Roosevelt this message.

You know how I treasure the friendship with which you have honoured me and how profoundly I feel we might together do something really fine and lasting for our two countries.

Their personal relationship had been seen as “the partnership that saved the West” and Churchill worked hard to maintain it.

However, the relationship had started badly. Roosevelt had first met Churchill in 1918 and took a dislike to him. He thought him “a stinker” and that he had “lorded it” over him. Churchill had made unfavourable remarks about Roosevelt in 1937 which were quoted by Roosevelt’s opponent, Wendell Willkie, during the US election campaign of 1940.

US support but non-intervention

Churchill had hoped for US intervention in the war, but Roosevelt had to be careful, as there was a danger of war with Japan and US public opinion was generally against a war in Europe. Nevertheless, the USA did offer some support:

- In November 1939 the USA repealed the Neutrality Act which allowed Britain to purchase American arms.
- In October the USA declared a neutral zone along the entire coast of the USA and

KEY QUESTIONS

How were relations between Churchill and wartime leaders affected by the Mediterranean Strategy?

How significant was Churchill’s attendance at conferences?

What was the impact of Britain’s imperialism on relations between Churchill and wartime leaders?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Hitler

Roosevelt

Eisenhower

De Gaulle

Stalin

KEY DEFINITIONS

Atlantic Charter

Imperialism

Neutrality Act

Lend Lease

Diplomacy

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1939-1941

South America and the US navy patrolled this to prevent the sinking of merchant shipping by the Germans. This involved Anglo-American naval co-operation.

- In September 1940, 50 old US destroyers were exchanged with Britain for leases to 8 British naval bases from Newfoundland to British Guiana.
- In December, Roosevelt used the phrase “arsenal of democracy” to defend sales of arms to Britain.
- In March 1941, the Lend-Lease Act was passed permitting the President “to sell, transfer title to, exchange, lease, lend or otherwise dispose of” defence articles “to any country whose defence the President deems vital to the defence of the USA”. It led to \$31.6 billion of assistance going to Britain by 1945.
- In April US troops occupied Greenland and, on 1 July 1941, Iceland, in order to stop Germany using either as a military base.

However, despite this support, Churchill disliked the way that Roosevelt failed to fully commit and continued to stress US isolationism. Churchill believed that Roosevelt was putting domestic political reasons (i.e. re-election in the 1940 election) over what he believed was the potential destruction of Western Democracies. Their first meeting as national leaders took place in Placentia Bay in Canada in August 1941. Churchill was keen to make a good impression and obtained a joint declaration of “certain common principles”, known as the Atlantic Charter. This was remarkable as the USA had not declared war, yet the document referred to plans “after the destruction of the Nazi tyranny”.

The Atlantic Charter

This document confirmed that neither the US nor Britain wanted territorial gains out of the war. It stated that “they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live” and that all states should have “access on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world”. A further point committed both nations to work for “improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security”. There was also a commitment to peace and disarmament. Churchill never accepted that it applied to Britain’s Empire and accepted it only as a sign that the USA had entered into a “tacit alliance” with Britain.

However, Churchill was well aware that the problem was, though Roosevelt could offer support for Britain, a declaration of war lay in the hands of the US Congress (equivalent of the British parliament; they had to approve any act of war declared by the President). Further pressure from Churchill at this point, may not have succeeded, as Americans were concerned about a number of issues.

Many argued that the very existence of the British Empire stood in the way of world free trade, which was likely to become a US war aim.

There were suspicions that Britain would want to gain territories to add to the Empire..



American Concerns in 1941

Roosevelt thought it was morally wrong for Britain to still rule over an Empire and wanted self-determination for the peoples of the Empire.

Military chiefs were concerned that Britain had too many troops based in North Africa instead of getting ready to fight back in France.

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they suggest Churchill was able to maintain positive relations with other wartime leaders during WWII?
[30 marks]

STRETCH

To what extent was Churchill able to maintain positive relations with other wartime leaders?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1939-1941

Why did the Americans enter the war?

By December 1941 it seemed increasingly likely that Japan's war in China would lead to conflict with the USA, as America had imposed embargos on oil and metal ore supplies to Japan. When Japan attacked the US Pacific fleet in Pearl Harbour, Hitler made possibly his greatest mistake of the war and declared war on the USA. Churchill had been proved right that "the tide is turning our way" and had helped to prepare the ground by his meetings; but he could not really have foreseen Hitler's decision and his strategy was based on hope.

What followed was a remarkable turn of events. Though Roosevelt wanted to wait before meeting Churchill, the Prime Minister went to Washington as soon as possible, where he made a very positive impression. America was now more inclined to see Churchill as a heroic figure in a very emotional time rather than an old-fashioned imperialist warmonger and Churchill's oratory and confidence now were major elements. British policy prevailed. The US General Marshall did not get his way and there was no invasion of northern France immediately. The USA supported Churchill's strategy of fighting mainly in the Mediterranean. From being alone, Britain was now a member of a Grand Alliance of 26 nations.

International Diplomacy, 1939-1941: Churchill and Stalin

Churchill had held a hostile view of communism since the Russian Revolution of 1917, and it support of his view point, it did indeed, as he had warned, lead to the creation of a bloodthirsty dictatorship under Josef Stalin. However, when a greater threat arose from Hitler after 1933, Churchill proposed the formation of a Grand Alliance, which would have included Russia on purely practical grounds. He did not, however, alter his view that communism was an evil. In fact, many of early activities of the Russians in the war appeared to prove this.

USSR at War: 1939-1941

- August 1939 Stalin agreed to a non-aggression pact with Hitler
- Working with the Germans the USSR occupied Eastern Poland in September 1939. This was accompanied with violent repression which mirrored many of the atrocities carried out by the Germans.
- In 1940 the Soviet forces carried out a massacre of Polish prisoners in Katyn forest, just outside of Smolensk. It is estimated that 4,253 people were executed, mostly with their hands tied behind them in a cod-blooded manner similar both to earlier Soviet internal purges and to Nazi ethnic killings. Stalin gave personal orders for this.

Operation Barbarossa, June 1941

When Hitler's armies invaded Russia in June 1941, Churchill was quick to offer support to the USSR. There was little expectation that Hitler would lose. Russia had not performed well militarily in the war against Finland in the winter of 1939-40, and following the rapid early German victories in Russia, it seemed certain there would be a Russian defeat. However, Churchill made he view towards the Russians clear in one of his most famous comments: **'If Hitler invaded hell, I would make at least a favourable reference to the devil in the House of Commons.'**

This made it clear that Churchill was aware that the Soviet regime to which Britain was allying itself was maintained by brutal repression, but that the threat from Germany in 1941 was great enough to warrant such an alliance.

RANKING

USA

_____/10

USSR

_____/10

FRANCE

_____/10

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1939-1941

In the event, despite massive Soviet losses of men and equipment, the German advance was halted before Moscow and Leningrad. The prospect of a long and gruelling struggle in Russia emerged and was followed by the US entry into the war. Churchill now had his Grand Alliance, even if it did mean dealing with “the Devil”. When the British ambassador to the exiled Polish government produced a report making it clear that evidence pointed towards Soviet responsibility for Katyn, this was not made publicly available and remained top secret. Roosevelt was sent a copy but suppressed it and refused to entertain any opinion that Russian behaviour was so brutal. Perhaps it was simple necessity – to defeat the Germans. Both the USA and Britain had to maintain a favourable image in their countries of “Uncle Joe” Stalin and the heroic Russian people.

First discussions between Britain and the USSR, 1941

After 1941, Churchill had clear aims:

1. Russia must stay in the war in order to weaken Germany.
2. Russian demands that a second front should be opened in France should not be met for as long as possible.

Stalin had clear aims too, which involved a restoration of its 1941 frontier, including the gains it had made in 1939-40. As this was a war being fought for freedom and whose idealistic aims had been set out in the Atlantic Charter, this presented moral problems for Churchill. Stalin’s aims were in direct contradiction to the wishes of the countries of Eastern Europe who had no desire to have a brutal dictatorship forced on them by the USSR. In the first meeting with the British, attended by British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in December 1941, Stalin made these claims clear and demanded a second front by the invasion of northern France to take some pressure off the Soviet army.

At this stage, Roosevelt was completely against any promise of territorial gain. When Eden suggested negotiating possible USSR post-war frontiers, Churchill issued a considerable rebuke. All territorial decisions should wait until the war had been won. Appeasing the USA was more important than appeasing Stalin. However, if Russia did not co-operate, then difficulties might arise. There was no certainty that Stalin would not negotiate with Hitler, as he had done in 1939 or simply fight his own war. Convoys were sent to Northern Russia carrying supplies, with considerable loss of life among British seamen, to assure Stalin of Britain’s goodwill. And Churchill decided to see Stalin personally.

Your Ten Questions:

1. When was the Lend Lease Act introduced?
2. How much was given in aid as a result of Lend Lease?
3. Why did the USA join the war?
4. What was the Atlantic Charter?
5. Why was Roosevelt concerned regarding relations with Britain in 1941?
6. Which country did the USSR sign a non-aggression pact with in 1939?
7. When was the Katyn massacre?
8. How many were killed during the Katyn Massacre?
9. What was Operation Barbarossa?
10. When was Operation Barbarossa?

SOURCE ANALYSIS

Roosevelt’s message to Congress August 1941

The Congress and the President having heretofore determined through the Lend Lease Act on the national policy of American aid to the democracies which East and West are waging war against dictatorships, the military and naval conversations at these meetings made clear gains in furthering the effectiveness of this aid. Furthermore, the Prime Minister and I are arranging for conferences with the Soviet Union to aid it in its defense against the attack made by the principal aggressor of the modern world-- Germany. It is perhaps unnecessary for me to call attention once more to the utter lack of validity of the spoken or written word of the Nazi government. No society of the world organized under the announced principles could survive without these freedoms which are a part of the whole freedom for which we strive.

How far does the source suggest Churchill maintained positive relations with the USA?

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1941-1945

Once Britain was joined in the war by first the USSR and then the USA international conferences became a significant part of the working relationships between the “big three”. It was at these conferences that key decisions were made about the conduct of the war and the shape of the post-war world. In total Churchill attended sixteen of these conferences, Roosevelt twelve and Stalin seven.

Significant Wartime Conferences

June 1942: Washington Conference – Churchill and Roosevelt

August 1942: Moscow Conference – Churchill and Stalin

Jan 1943: Casablanca Conference – Churchill and Roosevelt

August 1943: Quebec Conference – Churchill and Roosevelt

November 1943: Tehran Conference – Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin

October 1944: Moscow Conference – Churchill and Roosevelt

February 1945: Yalta Conference – Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin

July 1945: Potsdam Conference – Churchill Truman and Stalin

**CHURCHILL AND ROOSEVELT**

In meetings throughout June 1942 in the US, Churchill persuaded Roosevelt against what had become known as “Operation Sledgehammer”, the opening up of a second European front via the invasion of France to help ease the pressure on the Russians. Instead Churchill promoted the idea of a joint campaign in North Africa. Roosevelt during these early meetings agreed to the movement of over 1 million US troops to Britain; from which they were either shipped to North Africa and Italy, or preparing for the invasion of France.

Despite reluctant American support for Churchill’s Mediterranean Strategy, there were bumps in the relationship during this period. Roosevelt disliked Britain’s backing on de Gaulle as the representative of the French. The Americans preferred to work with the French General Giraud, a higher ranking officer. Tensions over this issue were evident at the Casablanca conference at which both de Gaulle and Giraud were present.

In meetings throughout the summer of 1943, US pressure forced a planned date for the invasion of France to be agreed upon – May 1944. Roosevelt was also moving to the logical position that, given Russia’s immense war effort – the USSR was for example bearing the brunt of military casualties: an estimated 8-10 million compared with 380,000 British and 416,000 American during the entire war – the key element in US diplomacy should be to negotiate with Stalin and to sideline Churchill, whose forces were not contributing to the war on the scale of the US and USSR. By the time of a meeting at Quebec in August 1943, splits were apparent. The USA favoured an attack on southern France, which Churchill did not. Churchill favoured attacks in the Balkans which the USA did not.

The meeting at Tehran was the first conference that all three leaders attended, but it

KEY QUESTIONS

How were relations between Churchill and wartime leaders affected by the Mediterranean Strategy?

How significant was Churchill’s attendance at conferences?

What was the impact of Britain’s imperialism on relations between Churchill and wartime leaders?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Hitler

Roosevelt

Eisenhower

De Gaulle

Stalin

KEY DEFINITIONS

Diplomacy

Tehran

Mediterranean Strategy

D-Day

Second Front

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1941-1945

is perhaps more significant as it highlighted how poor relations between Churchill and Roosevelt had become

→ Roosevelt refused to meet privately with Churchill - but he did meet with Stalin. He discussed plans for post-war Germany with the Soviet leader.

→ He met with the Chinese without Churchill's knowledge.

→ He made it clear that the USA was switching more of its attention to the defeat of Japan – abandoning the common “Europe First” strategy that had been deployed until then.

→ Following bitter discussions a planned date for the invasion of northern France was agreed. Churchill reluctantly agreed that the operation (Operation Overlord) would be led by the Americans.

At a meeting with Roosevelt in Quebec in September 1944 Churchill had to implore Roosevelt to extend Lend Lease credit after the war to Britain. At one point he exclaimed “What do you want me to do? Get up on my hind legs and beg for you, like Fala?”, (Fala was Roosevelt's dog). Similarly when he raised the issue of the need to push on to reach Berlin before the Russians, the Americans were not convinced. It was becoming increasingly clear that the Americans were not as concerned as the British were at the prospect of post-war Soviet expansion.

The Yalta Conference of February 1945 was the last between Churchill and Roosevelt. There was little to be done except to accept Stalin's control of Eastern Europe and Roosevelt made it clear that US military forces would only be deployed for a further two years at the most. However, both Roosevelt and Churchill did agree that there should be free elections and democracy in post-war Europe; and to let the individual countries to decide their own fate. Roosevelt, however, was concerned that the same principles would not be applied to the British Empire.

Roosevelt's death in April 1945 produced a heartfelt reaction from Churchill, but the hopes for a post-war world based on a special relationship were not really founded on reality.

CHURCHILL AND STALIN

Churchill's first meeting with Stalin in Moscow in August 1942 did not go well at first. Stalin bluntly demanded a second front to ease the pressure on his forces in the east. Churchill's explanation of the “soft underbelly” strategy, which included drawing a crocodile to represent Germany and Italy to show why a Mediterranean strategy was vital, was met with Russian scepticism. Churchill felt as though he was not being treat as the hero of 1940 but as some sort of cowardly weakling. Tempers were frayed. Eventually, and with a large consumption of alcohol, Stalin and Churchill became more friendly and Churchill seemed to warm to him. However, there was little actually settled. Stalin did not get a second front, only promises of one, and there was still the unresolved issue of the post-war territory.

Churchill met with Stalin again in Moscow in October 1944. By now his own reservations about discussing post-war settlement had gone; and there was less need to worry about offending the USA. The invasion of France had been successful – but Churchill could not really set the 156,000 troops who went into action on the 6th June 1944 (D-Day) against the 2 million Russian troops who were fighting the Nazis in the simultaneous battle of Kharkov and pretend that the war was being fought equally by Russia and the West. Here was the essence of the problem for Churchill. For Britain, D-Day was and remains a monumental and heroic event. For the USSR, it

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they suggest Churchill was able to maintain positive relations with other wartime leaders during WWII?
[30 marks]

STRETCH

To what extent was Churchill able to maintain positive relations with other wartime leaders?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

RELATIONS WITH OTHER WARTIME LEADERS 1941-1945

was a long-delayed and relatively under-resourced diversion. The fact is that Stalin did not particularly need Churchill. In any negotiation, Churchill did not have a strong hand. Indeed, it could be said he really had no hand at all as it is probable that the USSR could have defeated Germany without the second front. However, at least the second front was established, which generated more good will, and some negotiation could take place before Russian troops broke through into Europe. Given the relatively weak hand that Churchill had in 1944, he did well to maintain the relationship with the USSR, keeping the door open for future negotiations with Stalin.

The “Percentages Agreement”

In Churchill’s memoirs on the 1944 Moscow Conference, he discusses a piece of paper which he describes as “naughty”. This paper proposed dividing Eastern European countries into “spheres of influence” – meaning that regions or countries could be dominated by a greater power who would not necessarily rule the areas directly. The infamous “percentages agreement” challenged the idealistic vision of Britain as a fighter for freedom and was more typical of cynical power politics. There was no question of consulting the people of the countries that were to be dominated by the USSR and the West. It was the sort of deal that Stalin understood and oddly he respected it. In the aftermath of the agreement, Stalin showed his allegiance to Churchill by not offering help to the Greek communists in a civil war in which Britain supported the royalist side.

CHURCHILL AND DE GAULLE

Churchill loved France and spoke fluent is heavily accented French. He had been in close contact with the French as soon as he took power and was devastated by the French surrender, being willing to send further forces even after Dunkirk and to commit air resources to France against the advice of the RAF commanders. He even offered a union between Britain and France as a desperate attempt to keep France in the war. Hitler occupied northern France, but allowed a reduced, pro-Nazi French state considerable independence after the peace treaty in 1940.

This pro-Nazi state was known as Vichy France as its capital was the southern town of Vichy. Churchill was shocked at the French surrender and concerned about the French fleet falling into German hands. The actions taken against the French navy by Britain were brutal and, some thought, unnecessary: 1297 French servicemen were skilled when five ships were sunk by Britain. These actions ensured that future relations with Vichy France were impossible.

The French saw the British retreat as a betrayal. The symbol of continuing French resistance came to be as the tall, proud Colonel Charles de Gaulle who saw himself as the spirit of a free France and led the forces known as the Free French (exiles from occupied France who were based in Britain). Churchill admired de Gaulle but found him difficult to work with. De Gaulle was uncompromising and often unco-operative and was also disliked by the Americans. De Gaulle was not a political leader or a high-ranking officer; as well as being the self-proclaimed champion of France, he also saw himself as the natural leader of post-war France – something that Churchill and Roosevelt did not accept. De Gaulle would not work closely with former Vichy leaders in North Africa which annoyed Roosevelt and embarrassed Churchill. Churchill had to work hard to restrain his temper and impatience. De Gaulle, despite being totally dependent on British goodwill, felt no obligation and relations between himself and Churchill were stormy throughout the war.

RANKING

USA

/10

USSR

/10

FRANCE

/10

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Churchill during his years as a Liberal MP had been a well-known supporter of social reform. However, during the Second World War he saw discussion of what might happen after victory as a distraction to achieving that victory. Nevertheless, the wartime coalition which Churchill headed had made substantial progress in planning the post-war period and paved the way for important reforms after 1945. These changes during the war largely came as a result of the work of the Labour members of the war cabinet – Clement Attlee and Arthur Greenwood.

Some of the social changes made during the Second World War

Rest centres and meal service centre	To help those who had suffered in air raids
Committees for the homeless	A million homes were made habitable. Prefabricated homes were created to meet the housing shortages.
National Assistance	The old “means test” was abolished in 1941 and help was given to the needy.
Emergency Hospital Service	By 1941 8 out of 10 hospitals were brought under a national scheme for the first time
National Fire Service	Over 1500 different fire services were brought together
Mothers and children	Diphtheria immunisation; free milk to school children; extension of free school meals; orange juice and cod-liver oil provided. Led to reductions in infant mortality.
Railways	In 1942 British railways united and nationalised the rail network
Factory Acts	Improved welfare for 6 million workers; Catering Wages Act and Wages Council Act led to improved wages for the low-paid.
Education Act	The school leaving age was to be raised to 15. Education to be divided into primary (5-11) and secondary (11-16) and tertiary (16+). School fees in state schools ended and milk and meals provided. 11+ exams introduced to decide on future education path

Despite the evident examples of social progress made during the war as outlined above, the key turning point in the war which pushed demand for whole-scale social reform came in 1942 with the publishing of the Beveridge Report.

**The Beveridge Report, 1942**

Sir William Beveridge produced a report on 1st December 1942. He argued that poverty could be abolished if there were an extended social insurance scheme in which everyone of working age would be expected to pay a weekly National Insurance contribution. He identified the five causes of poverty – which he labelled “the five giants” – want, disease, squalor, ignorance and idleness. In order to tackle these he recommended child allowances and foresaw a national health service and an end to mass unemployment. His report sold over 600,000 copies and became symbol of a desire for greater social welfare.

KEY QUESTIONS

What is the significance of social change during the second world war?

How did Churchill's role as PM during WWII contribute to the outcome of the 1945 election?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Clement Attlee

Arthur Greenwood

William Beveridge

KEY DEFINITIONS

Welfare

Post-war consensus

Beveridge Report

National Health Service

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Thus the war had forced the state to extend medical services, care for the poor and homeless, plan for future extension of the welfare state, make provision for more town and country planning and reform education. There was a determination not to return to the disappointment which followed the First World War and the poverty and unemployment in many areas in the 1930s.

Although the Conservatives as a whole supported the Beveridge Report, many – including Churchill – feared the growth of the state. These concerns were borne out of political thinking. Churchill believed that an expansion of the government in the role of British citizen's lives would lead to greater support for more left-wing and socialist policies and would naturally lead to a growth in support of the Labour Party. The report was debated in February 1943 and aroused passionate arguments from all sides of the House of Commons. Churchill expressed concerns at the costs but the Conservatives and Liberals accepted the principles of what Beveridge called “a social service state”, with citizens paying contributions for health and welfare benefits, and Labour thought it did not go far enough.

The 1945 Election

- The general election took place on 5 July 1945 but results were not available until 26 July because time was needed to collect and count votes from overseas servicemen.
- Labour was consistently in the lead from 1943 in by-elections, and opinion polls were suggesting that they had a substantial lead over the Conservatives.
- On 26 July the results showed that Labour had won 393 seats, a gain of 227. The Conservatives had lost 185 seats to Labour.

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE
Were the election results really that big of a surprise? → The electoral fortunes of the Labour Party had also been improving before the war. Opinion polls by 1941 showed increasingly popular support for Labour and from 1943 onwards the polls consistently showed a 10-20% Labour lead over the Tories. → Evidence suggests there was a steady leftward trend amongst the electorate during the early 1940s. This trend was helped by the expansion of the trade union movement during the war. The war also made people aware of the enormous contribution made by Soviet Russia towards the defeat of Hitler, putting socialism in a good light. → Another influence on the public mood was exerted by memories of the 1930s. Ironically, the Conservatives in 1945 paid the price for their sweeping electoral success in 1931 and 1935. In 1945, many voters blamed the Conservatives for the failings of the 1930s: not only unemployment and social	Problems of policymaking were fundamental to the Conservatives' defeat. → There was a lack of official policy-making on home affairs – the Conservatives focused on “let's win the war first”. The Conservatives became preoccupied with Churchill's vision of internationalism and concern over the Soviet Union, at the expense of welfare reform and reconstruction. → Churchill himself had no message on domestic policy, apart from warnings about increased involvement of the government in social and economic affairs. → Generally the Conservative Party was not associated with welfare reform and a split developed within the party between those who were pro-reform and those who were

EXAM QUESTIONS

Using these four sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess how far they explain the reasons for the outcome of the 1945 election.
[30 marks]

STRETCH

What was the significance of the Beveridge Report?

To what extent did the people of Britain want greater social change in 1945?

SUMMARY NOTES

Notes Due:

Notes Completed:

1945 ELECTION

LABOUR

deprivation, but the failure of appeasement to prevent another war and the inadequacies in Britain's defences which were revealed when the war began.

Labour's electoral propaganda played on these bad memories and the need to ensure that they never occurred again. Harold Macmillan, a Conservative who lost his seat in 1945, wrote later that: "It was not Churchill who lost the 1945 election; it was the ghost of Neville Chamberlain".

How important was the war in Labour's fortunes?

→ The massive extension of state control, regulation and planning seemed to have led to full employment and a sense of working together for a common goal. Voters felt that if these methods produced these results in wartime, then they should be applied in peacetime. As a result, Labour's plans for the nationalisation of key industries no longer seemed wild or dangerous.

→ Although the war did not in reality create as strong a communal spirit as the propaganda image might suggest, it did forge a greater sense of national unity. The social mobility caused by the war meant that some of those for whom the 1930s had been a period of affluence were brought into contact with those for whom the 1930s had been a decade of poverty and despair. Such experiences led to the feeling amongst many middle-class voters too that things had to be different after the war.

→ Labour politicians had played a key role in the war coalition. The work of Attlee, as deputy prime minister, Ernest Bevin as the Minister of Labour, Herbert Morrison as Home Secretary kept Labour's leaders in the forefront of voters' minds throughout the war.

→ The tendency of those who served in the armed forces was to be pro-Labour. In 1945, Churchill remarked to his RAF Chief that he hoped servicemen would vote for him in the forthcoming election. He replied, "80% of them will vote Labour". Churchill said furiously that he was grateful to learn that 20% would vote for him. He replied "The other 20% will not vote at all".

CONSERVATIVE

anti-reform.

→ This split can be seen via the party's response to the Beveridge Report. It was embraced enthusiastically by the Tory Reform Group, who were also in favour of more government intervention, but it was treated with suspicion by others, such as Churchill, who feared the extension of state intervention and higher taxation.

→ Too little was spent on publicity, only £3,000. This was less than one-tenth of the £30,000 spent in 1935.

→ Local Conservative Party activism was virtually non-existent up to a few months before the 1945 general election.

Was there a failure of leadership from Churchill?

→ Churchill was not a good party man. He had been in the political "wilderness" until the war. → At the time, he was identified as a war leader. This was fine for war but not for peace. He was totally involved with strategy and wartime diplomacy.

→ He did not have close relations with the party organisation hierarchy and tended to listen more to his cronies, Beaverbrook and Bracken.

→ During the election campaign Churchill in what has become known as his famous "Gestapo" speech, suggested that a Labour government would need some form of secret, political police force to ensure its control of the economy and society. It probably cost the Conservatives votes. Attlee's calm and measured response only deepened public sympathy for Labour.

→ Churchill's age was also an issue – 70 in 1945

KEY QUESTIONS

What were the strengths of the Labour party in the lead up to the 1945 election?

What were the weaknesses of the Conservative party in the lead up to the 1945 election?

What were the main reasons for the outcome of the 1945 election?

KEY INDIVIDUALS

Churchill

Attlee

Morrison

Bevin

Beaverbrook

Macmillan

KEY DEFINITIONS

Propaganda

Welfare

Beveridge Report