

## Teacher's Notes: Nazis on their Way to Power

Questions for group discussion:

1. Brainstorm what the class knows about Hitler from popular culture.
2. Why might people be attracted to a violent, exclusionary ideology?
3. What does the success of the Nazi Party suggest about German society during the 1920s?

Possible answers to source analysis questions:

### Source 1

1. What does Source 1 tell us about why people might have supported the NSDAP in the early 1920s? Explain your answer.

*The source suggests that the NSDAP was not very popular as only 100 people attended this meeting.*

2. What does Source 1 tell you about the beliefs of the NSDAP? Provide two examples.

- *Scapegoating of jews/antisemitism*
- *Hostility towards the Dawes Plan and the Treaty of Versailles*
- *That Germany lacked strong leadership*
- *German poverty*
- *Anti-Western*

3. What did the NSDAP blame Jewish people for? Why do you think people supported antisemitism?

*Blamed Jewish people for*

- *Losing Germany money*
- *Taking jobs away from ethnic Germans*
- *Losing the war*

*People might have supported antisemitism because it provided a scapegoat to rally against. People were unemployed and wanted jobs, so promising to take Jewish people out of jobs would serve them. They were also annoyed at losing territory and the war.*

### Source 2

1. What do you think were the most important values an SA member should have had?

- *Loyalty is mentioned in the first two commandments, showing its importance,.*
- *Discipline is mentioned in commandments 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.*
- *Other good answers include obedience, masculinity and comradeship.*

2. Why do you think they had to tell SA members not to do things like drinking, fighting, gossiping, taking revenge, and causing mischief?

*The behaviour described in sources 5 and 6 suggests that the commandments were given in order to stop SA members drinking, fighting, gossiping, etc.*

**Source 3**

1. Write down three things you can see in this photograph of the NSDAP.

- *Large numbers of young men*
- *Military-style uniforms*
- *Bicycles*
- *Wagon for transporting Nazi Party Members*
- *Swastika armbands*
- *Darkness, suggesting that it is evening*

2. What can you infer from the photograph about the membership and beliefs or values of the party?

- *Predominately young male membership*
- *Friendship, community and comradeship*
- *Large membership*
- *Order and military-style discipline*
- *Fitness*

3. Why do you think this photograph was taken?

- *Propaganda*
- *To increase support*
- *To show the strength of the Party*
- *To show group activities and friendship*
- *To appeal to more young men*
- *As a record of an event*

**Source 4**

1. What does this photograph tell you about members of the Nazi Party?

- *They were very young.*
- *Their military overcoats are oversized, suggesting that they are borrowed.*
- *Their helmets are make-shift and amateur.*

2. Why do you think the people in this photograph might have joined the Nazi party?

*If they were veterans, they might have believed that they could have won the war if it were not for the politicians.*

*If they were young boys who missed out on the war, they might have wanted wartime experience and looked up to veterans and their uniforms.*

**Source 5**

1. According to Source 5, are the Nazi party following the Ten Commandments of the SA?

*No, they were consuming alcohol, not respecting authority and hitting comrades.*

2. Why do you think the SA and SS clashed if they were all members of the same party?

*Possibilities include alcohol, an unclear hierarchy between the two organizations, wanting to gain power and influence in the Party, and a culture of violence.*

3. How do you think violence affected the popularity of the Nazi Party and why?

*Violence negatively affected the party by alienating potential voters and making people afraid of them.*

*Its positive impact was to get rid of political opponents, to gain them support from conservatives through eliminating communists, and to attract people who liked the opportunity to be fight.*

**Source 6**

1. What does Source 6 suggest about the popularity of the NSDAP in the early 1930s? Explain your answer.

*The source suggests that the Party was popular, as 2,000 to 2,500 people attended NSDAP events such as speeches and marches.*

2. In comparison to Source 1, how did NSDAP meetings change between 1926 and 1932?

*Only 100 people attended the 1926 meeting, but 2,000-2,500 attended the 1932 meeting. The earlier meeting also involved more discussion about ideas, while the later meeting involved violent clashes with police and the presence of Communists.*

3. What factors do you think could have influenced these changes?

*The difference between the meetings reflects the growing popularity of the Nazi Party, the increasing polarization between Nazis and Communists, and a growing culture violence within the Party.*