

Congratulations

on making the decision to study

History at A-Level

Apart from history being an extremely enjoyable subject which enables you to learn about the past and come to a better understanding of the present, a History qualification provides you with **important skills** that are **valued by good universities and employers**.



You will be **learning to analyse and assess** a wide variety of information,  consider different viewpoints, express your arguments in oral and written form, and be learning how to think and work both independently and in co-operation with others.

This is why 'The Russell Group', made up of the 20 largest research based universities in the country, have **consistently placed the study of A level History high on their list of preferred subjects** in an attempt to aid student A level choice. Dr. Wendy Piatt said: *"It is really important that students do not disadvantage themselves by choosing a combination of subjects at A-level which will not equip them with the appropriate skills and knowledge for their university course or which may not demonstrate effectively their aptitude for a particular subject"*.



History will support your future whichever path you choose to take.



Welcome to A Level History

Mr Calder Mrs Morris

Miss Gray Miss Keane

Democracy and Nazism: Germany, 1918–1945

You will be studying German History before and during the Nazi period and so having an overview of any German history before you start your studies will be useful.

If you would like to do some extra reading here is a short reading list:

- R Whitfield, *Democracy and Nazism: Germany 1918-1945*, Oxford University Press, 2015
- G Layton, *Access to History: From Kaiser to Fuhrer: Germany 1900-1945*, Hodder Education, 2009
- F McDonough, *Hitler and Nazi Germany (Cambridge Perspectives in History)*, Cambridge University Press, 1999

Reading fiction will also help you understand the period:

Goodbye to Berlin by Christopher Isherwood

The Reader by Bernhard Schlink

Maus by Art Spiegelman

Night by Elie Weisel

For the German side of the course, you will be expected to have for the first lesson:

- **An A4 lever arch file**
- **A pack of 10 dividers**
- **Writing paper**
- **The course textbook: Oxford AQA History Democracy and Nazism 1918-1945'**

TASKS

1. List the grievances or issues that the German citizens in the biographies below highlight?
2. Sort the list into the following categories:
 - a. economic issue; b. political issue; c. social issue; d. racial/religious issues.
3. Make a decision which issue appears to be the most important to the people and Explain why you think this may be (200 words)

Please bring the finished work to your first History lesson.

Good Luck and we will see you in September 😊

Weimar Republic biographies

Hermann Struts

Hermann Struts, a lieutenant in the German army, fought bravely during the war. He comes from a long line of army officers and is himself a graduate of the German military academy. Struts has always taken pride in the army's able defence of the nation and its strong leadership. Yet Struts is bitter about the fact that he has not had a promotion in over ten years. Few soldiers have, mainly because the Treaty of Versailles limited the size of the German army. In the old army, Struts would have been at least a captain by now and possibly a major. The treaty, he argues, has harmed not only Germany's honour but also his own honour as a soldier. He feels that if the government had refused to sign the treaty and allowed the army to fight, both he and Germany would be better off.

Otto Hauptmann

Otto Hauptmann works in a factory in Berlin. Although his trade union has actively worked for better conditions and higher wages, it has not made many gains. Hauptmann blames their lack of

success on the 1923 inflation and the current depression. He believes that the union would be more successful if the economy were more stable. Still, it is the union that has kept him employed. At a time when many of his friends have been laid off, his union persuaded the owners of his factory to keep men with seniority.

Karl Schmidt

Karl Schmidt is an employed worker who lives in the rich steel-producing Ruhr Valley. Like so many men in the Ruhr, he lost his job because of the depression. Yet Schmidt notes that the owners of the steel mills still live in big houses and drive expensive cars. Why are they protected from the depression while their former employees suffer? Although the government does provide unemployment compensation, the money is barely enough to support Schmidt, his wife, and their two children. Yet the government claims that it cannot afford to continue even these payments much longer. Schmidt feels that the government would be in a stronger position to help people if it cut off all reparations.

Elisabeth von Kohler

Elisabeth von Kohler, a prominent attorney who attended the University of Bonn, has a strong sense of German tradition. She believes that her people's contributions to Western civilization have been ignored. Kohler would like to see the republic lead a democratic Europe. She disapproves of the methods the Weimar Republic often uses to silence and repress different points of view. Her sense of justice is even more outraged by the way the victors of World War I, particularly France, view Germany. She would like to prove to the world that the Germans are indeed a great race. She is proud to be an attorney and a German woman in the Weimar Republic.

Gerda Munchen

Gerda Munchen is the owner of a small Munich grocery store started by her parents. For years,

her parents saved to send her to the university. But Munchen chose not to go and the money stayed in the bank. In 1923, she had planned to use the money to pay for her children's education. But that year inflation hit Germany. Just before her older daughter was to leave for the university, the bank informed the family that its savings were worthless. This was a blow to Munchen, but even more of a blow to her daughter, whose future hung in the balance. Munchen does not think she will ever regain her savings. With so many people out of work, sales are down sharply. And Munchen's small grocery is having a tough time competing with the large chain stores. They can offer far lower prices. She and her children question a system that has made life so difficult for hardworking people.

Albert Benjamin

Albert Benjamin is a professor of mathematics at the University of Berlin. While his grandparents were religious Jews, Benjamin is not religious. Benjamin's three brothers, however, are religious Jews. He is very proud of his German heritage, and even volunteered to serve in the German Army during World War I. After the war, Benjamin married Eva Steiner. Eva is Protestant and they are raising their three children as Christians. Benjamin is concerned because prices have gone up while his salary as a professor has not. His family can no longer afford vacations and special presents for the children. His wife worries that if the economic problems continue, the family might have to cut back on spending for food.

Eric von Ronheim

Eric von Ronheim, the head of a Frankfurt textile (fabric) factory, is very concerned about the depression. Sales are down and so are profits. If only Germany had not been treated so ruthlessly at Versailles, he argues, the nation would be far better off. Instead the government has had to

impose heavy taxes to pay reparations to its former enemies. As a result, Germans are overtaxed with little money to spend on textiles and other consumer goods. The worldwide depression has made matters worse by making it difficult to sell German products to other countries. Even if the depression were over, Ronheim does not think taxes would come down because of reparation payments.