# Campaign to Dictatorship

Trace how elections, propaganda, and political decisions advanced Nazi goals.

**SS24.WH.9b** "Trace Adolf Hitler's rise to power, describing Nazi ideology and the use of propaganda to advance his political and racial goals."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Circle three steps in Hitler's rise to power, underline one Nazi racial claim, and number two propaganda methods to trace how power and ideas spread.

### How Hitler Gained Power

1. In 1923, Adolf Hitler led a failed attempt to seize power in Munich. After a short prison term, he changed tactics: the Nazi Party would compete in elections while working to destroy democracy. In *Mein Kampf*, written during his imprisonment, he argued that Germans belonged to a supposedly superior "Aryan" race and blamed Jews for Germany's problems. These racist claims were false. When the Great Depression brought mass unemployment after 1929, Nazi speakers promised jobs and national strength. Their promises appealed to some voters who had lost faith in Germany's elected government.

2. Nazi propaganda turned political messages into repeated sights and sounds. Posters pictured Hitler as a decisive leader; radio broadcasts carried speeches; huge rallies showed orderly crowds under Nazi banners. These displays made the party seem united and powerful, even though many Germans rejected it. Posters and broadcasts also spread antisemitic lies, presenting Jews as enemies rather than neighbors and citizens. By July 1932, the Nazis had won more seats than any other party in parliament, but they did not hold a majority. Election success gave Hitler leverage, not the legal power to rule alone.

3. On January 30, 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler chancellor, expecting conservative allies to control him. After a fire damaged the Reichstag in February, the government used an emergency decree to restrict civil liberties and arrest opponents. In March, lawmakers passed the Enabling Act under intimidation, allowing Hitler's cabinet to make laws without parliament. The Nazi government then banned rival parties. Propaganda now served a dictatorship: it praised Hitler and promoted exclusion of Jews. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws stripped German Jews of citizenship and banned marriages between Jews and people classified as having "German blood."

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did conditions after 1929 help the Nazis gain votes by 1932?

2. Why did the July 1932 election result not make Hitler Germany's ruler, and what happened next?

3. How did the government's actions after the Reichstag fire help Hitler turn the chancellorship into a dictatorship?

4. How did propaganda support the Nazi goal of excluding Jews, and what later law advanced that goal?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A museum plans a display called "From Campaign to Dictatorship." Write a 70 to 90 word exhibit label that connects at least two turning points in Hitler's rise, explains how propaganda supported a Nazi racial goal, and makes clear that Nazi racial claims were false.

ANSWER KEY

# Campaign to Dictatorship

GRADE 9 · SS24.WH.9b

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle three steps in Hitler's rise to power, underline one Nazi racial claim, and number two propaganda methods to trace how power and ideas spread. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How did conditions after 1929 help the Nazis gain votes by 1932? | **Mass unemployment and lost faith in the elected government made Nazi promises of jobs and national strength appealing to some voters. By July 1932, the Nazis held more seats than any other party.** |
| 2 | Why did the July 1932 election result not make Hitler Germany's ruler, and what happened next? | **The Nazis held the most seats but lacked a majority. President Hindenburg appointed Hitler chancellor in January 1933.** |
| 3 | How did the government's actions after the Reichstag fire help Hitler turn the chancellorship into a dictatorship? | **An emergency decree restricted civil liberties and enabled arrests of opponents. The Enabling Act let Hitler's cabinet make laws without parliament, and the Nazi government banned rival parties.** |
| 4 | How did propaganda support the Nazi goal of excluding Jews, and what later law advanced that goal? | **Posters and broadcasts spread the false claim that Jews were enemies. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws stripped German Jews of citizenship and banned specified marriages.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

This display traces how Hitler turned an election campaign into a dictatorship. As unemployment rose after 1929, Nazi promises drew some voters, and by 1932 the party held the most seats in parliament, though not a majority. Hindenburg appointed Hitler chancellor in 1933. Nazi rallies presented him as powerful and united with the crowd, while propaganda spread the false claim that Jews were Germany's enemies. After the government suppressed opposition, the 1935 Nuremberg Laws made the Nazis' goal of excluding Jews part of German law.

Accept other accurate sequences of turning points and propaganda methods from the passage. Responses should identify antisemitic claims as false, not repeat them as fact.