Aim: To understand the unpopularity of the new Weimar Government and the impact of the Treaty of Versailles
Unpopularity of the Republic:

11th November 1918, 2 days after the Kaiser ABDICATED, the politicians signed the ARMISTICE – an agreement to stop fighting.

Recap: Why was this inevitable?

“We were winning World War I, why did you agree to the ARMISTICE? You politicians have no idea what you’ve done, it’s all your fault!

You should be remembered for what you are, November Criminals”
“Assistance to France in the event of unprovoked aggression by Germany.”

June 28th 1919.

Treaty of Versailles
David Lloyd George: Prime Minister, had to appear to want Germany punished to the British people – “Squeeze them till the pips squeak” – But also wanted to trade

Georges Clemenceau: Wanted to destroy Germany, was angry at the damage to Germany. Wanted Germany to never be able to start a war again

Woodrow Wilson: Offered Ebert the chance to remove Kaiser and end the war for negotiated peace. Idealist who came up with League of Nations
Blame:

War Guilt Clause 231:

This clause said that Germany had caused WWI. Germany didn’t agree but had to accept this leading to anger of the German people and leaders.

Reparations:

Germany had to pay £6.6 Billion to the allies (Britain & France)

They were already in debt from WWI and had their own destruction to deal with, this made Germans even angrier.

Terms of the Treaty of Versailles
28th June 1919:

Army (Military):

- Army reduced to 100,000 men, limited to use in Germany, 0 tanks
- 6 Battleships, 6 Cruisers, 12 destroyers and 12 torpedo boats
- 0 submarines
- 0 Airforce
- Rhineland demilitarised, French troops placed in Rhineland until 1930

Territory: Lost 10% population, 13% of European territory, 50% of iron, 15% of coal reserves

- Germany lost all 11 colonies in Africa, they were given to the allies
- Alsace Lorraine given to France
- Posen & West Prussia given to Poland
- German port of Danzig separated from Germany
- Riches from the Saar coalfields given to France for 15 years

BRAT: Blame, Reparations, Army, Territory
1. Germany had to admit full responsibility for starting the war. "War Guilt Clause 231".

2. Germany, as she was responsible for starting the war as stated in clause 231, was, therefore responsible for all the war damage caused by the First World War. Therefore, she had to pay reparations, £6.6 Billion - a huge sum of money well beyond Germany’s ability to pay.

3. A League of Nations was set up to keep world peace.

4. Germany’s army was reduced to 100,000 men; the army was not allowed tanks.
   No air force.
   6 Battleships (No Submarines), 6 cruisers, 12 destroyers, 12 torpedo boats
   Rhineland was demilitarised – France felt anxious that an attack was imminent.

5. Alsace Lorraine was given back to France – This was a particular point of anger for the French.
   Germany’s 11 African Colonies were also taken away or made independent.

6. Germany could not form Anschluss (union) with Austria.

DIKTAT ALERT
• Posen and West Prussia were lost to Poland leading to 1 million Germans under Polish rule
• it also cut Germany into 2
• Upper Silesia to become part of Poland
• Danzig was made a free city
• Output of the rich Saar coalfields to go to France for 15 years

In total, Germany lost 10% of its population, 13% of its European territory, all overseas property, 50% of its iron & 15% of its coal
“Are you kidding me?? They are most severe and harsh terms ever!! Why have you agreed to them?

Ebert, you will regret agreeing to these terms!”

“Erm, that is not quite the case!!!! The terms were dictated to us, we had no say! They wouldn’t let us negotiate! It was a DIKTAT!

We asked for concessions but they have refused!”
**Interpretation 1**


No one was prepared for the peace terms... All of this was greeted with incredulous horror by the majority of Germans. The sense of outrage and disbelief... was almost universal. Germany's international strength and prestige had been on an upward course since unification in 1871... now, suddenly, Germany had been brutally expelled from the ranks of the Great Powers and covered in what they considered to be undeserved shame. Versailles was condemned as a dictated peace, unilaterally imposed without the possibility of negotiation.

**Source C**

From an article in *Deutsche Zeitung*, a German newspaper, 28 June 1919.

Vengeance, German nation! Today, in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, a disgraceful treaty is being signed. Never forget it! On that spot... German honour is being dragged to its grave. There will be revenge for the shame of 1919.

What can you infer from this source about Germany’s reaction to Versailles?

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What is the message of this source?

Advertising a Nazi rally, 12 years later

Nazi symbol

Flames

Sad, despairing look

Shackled (handcuffed) by the Treaty of Versailles

The Nazis are having a rally and the focus of it is to blame the Treaty of Versailles for the damage it is doing to Germany in 1931, unemployment is high, as is anger!
Dolchstoss: Stabbed in the back myth

Another reason why the Treaty of Versailles was so unpopular was because the Germans didn’t believe they had been defeated in the war. Many Germans said they had been betrayed by the politicians, they were ‘stabbed in the back.'
This relates to the signing of the Armistice (11.11.1918). Many people in Germany believe that they had been Stabbed in the back by the new Government because they felt that the German army could still have won. They returned home with their weapons and fully equipped so the people didn’t understand why they had lost / surrendered.

Message is the Jews were responsible for the stabbing in the back and loss of the war.
The peacemakers had a huge responsibility and the cartoon below is rare because it gives some indication of what might happen in the future in the opinion of the cartoonist. It is a predictive cartoon rather than a cartoon about the past.

The source contains the Big 3. The weeping child is Germany. Germany is cowering in the corner like a naughty child and has now suffered a loss (TofV). Child has been stripped of clothes and possessions, like Germany had been stripped. “The class of 1940” shows when the child is old enough to fight he will want revenge. Also, he has thrown the Treaty on the floor because he knows he is the cannon fodder for another war in 20 years as a result of it.

Made in 1920 by an Australian
This relates to the Treaty of Versailles. The French wanted a treaty that would cripple Germany. Here (France) are sucking the life out of Germany as a Vampire. To the Germans, they fact they had signed the Treaty showed they were weak (or at least the Weimar Republic were).

Who made each source do you think? And why?
The Treaty of Versailles

This treaty laid out the terms of Germany’s surrender in 1919. It was made by the governments of Britain, France and the USA.

It was very harsh on Germany and extremely unpopular.

It became known in Germany as a “Diktat”.

A cartoon that appeared in a British newspaper in 1919
A cartoon from a British newspaper, 1921. Aristide Briand of France and David Lloyd George of Britain are looking at the effects of reparation payments on Germany.
Create your own source showing the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

Make sure it has a message hidden in because we’re going to swap afterwards & see if anyone can work out your “message”
Impact of the Treaty on Weimar

The treaty was so severe that it damaged Germany’s economy, especially imposing the £6.6B reparations which meant Germany would be unable to start another war.

The economy was weak for the new government from the start, and they were also politically weak because of the backlash from the German people over dolchstoss and the November Criminals.

The creation of the Weimar Republic was linked to defeat, humiliation and weakness!

Will the new Weimar Republic survive this awful start...