

Years of Crisis**Section 4**

Aggressors Invade Nations

Terms and Names

appeasement Giving in to keep the peace

Axis Powers Germany, Italy, and Japan

Francisco Franco Spain's Fascist dictator

isolationism Belief that political ties with other countries should be avoided

Third Reich German empire

Munich Conference Meeting of world powers in 1938 that allowed Hitler to take part of Czechoslovakia

Before You Read

In the last section, you read about the rise of fascism.

In this section, you will learn about military actions that led to a second world war.

As You Read

Use a time line to trace the movement of Japan from democratic reform to military aggression.

JAPAN SEEKS AN EMPIRE

(Pages 481–482)

Why did Japan wish to expand?

Military leaders took control of Japan during the Great Depression. They wanted to solve the country's economic problems by foreign expansion.

In 1931, the Japanese army invaded Manchuria, a province of China. Manchuria was rich in coal and iron. These were valuable resources for the Japanese economy. Other countries spoke in protest in the League of Nations but did nothing else. Japan ignored the protests. In 1933, it pulled out of the League.

Four years later, Japan invaded China. The powerful Japanese army swept Chinese fighters aside. It killed tens of thousands of civilians and soldiers in the city of Nanjing. In spite of these losses,

Chinese forces—both the nationalists of the government and Communist rebels—continued to resist Japan.

1. What territories did Japan invade?

EUROPEAN AGGRESSORS ON THE MARCH (Pages 482–483)**What European nations were aggressors?**

Italy's Mussolini also wanted to expand. He dreamed of an Italian empire in Africa. In 1935 he ordered the invasion of Ethiopia. His troops won an easy victory. Haile Selassie, the emperor of Ethiopia, pleaded with the League of Nations to help. The League did nothing.

Section 4, *continued*

By giving in to Mussolini in Africa, Britain and France hoped to keep the peace in Europe.

Hitler made moves also. He broke the Versailles Treaty by rebuilding Germany's army. In 1936, he sent troops into an area along the Rhine River between Germany and France that the treaty had forbidden the Germans to enter. The French and British again responded with **appeasement**—giving in to keep the peace.

The German movement into the Rhineland marked a turning point in the march toward war. Also in 1936, Hitler signed an alliance with Mussolini and with Japan. These three nations came to be called the **Axis Powers**.

In 1936, civil war broke out in Spain. The army, led by General **Francisco Franco**, revolted against a government run by liberals and socialists. Hitler and Mussolini sent aid to the army, which was backed by Spanish Fascists. The Soviet Union sent aid to the government. In early 1939, the government's resistance to the army collapsed. Francisco Franco became Spain's Fascist dictator.

2. What places did Germany and Italy invade?

DEMOCRATIC NATIONS TRY TO PRESERVE PEACE (Pages 484–485)

Why did the world's democracies fail to stop the aggression?

At this time, many Americans resisted accepting the nation's new role as a world leader. They believed that the United

States should follow a policy of **isolationism**. Isolationism was the belief that political ties with other countries should be avoided. This, it was thought, would keep the country out of another foreign war.

In March 1938, Hitler moved his troops into Austria. He made it part of the **Third Reich**, or German Empire. This action broke the Versailles Treaty again. France and Britain once more did nothing.

Later that year, Hitler demanded that Czechoslovakia give up a part of its land to Germany. Czechoslovakia refused. The **Munich Conference** was held in September 1938 to solve the problem. At this meeting Germany, France, Britain, and Italy agreed to allow the Germans to take the land. In return, Hitler promised to respect the new borders of Czechoslovakia. A few months later, however, he took the entire country.

In the summer of 1939, Hitler made a similar demand of Poland. That nation also refused to give up land. Britain and France now said that they would protect Poland. But Hitler believed that they would not risk going to war. At the same time, he signed an agreement with Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin. The two countries promised never to attack one another.

The Axis Powers were moving unchecked at the end of the decade. The whole world was waiting to see what would happen next. It seemed that war would break out.

3. What happened at the Munich Conference?

Section 4, *continued*

As you read this section, take notes to answer the questions based on the time line.

1931	Japan invades Manchuria.	→	1. Why did the Japanese invade Manchuria?
			2. Why did Britain and France take no action against Italian aggression?
1935	Mussolini invades Ethiopia. U.S. Congress passes first of three Neutrality Acts.	→	3. Why did isolationists want these laws passed?
			4. What were some effects of appeasing Hitler after his invasion of the Rhineland?
1936	German troops move into the Rhineland.	→	5. What were the immediate results of this invasion?
			6. Why was the Munich Conference unsuccessful?
1937	Japan invades China. Hitler plans to absorb Austria and Czechoslovakia into the Third Reich.	→	7. How did other countries help Franco's Nationalist forces bring about the collapse of Republican resistance?
			8. Why did Stalin sign an agreement with Fascist Germany, once a bitter enemy?
1938	Munich Conference is held.	→	
1939	Franco becomes Spanish dictator. Germany and Russia sign a nonaggression pact.	→	