International Relations
[ 1918 — 1939 ]

history is amazing but really?? all dis memorising???
Great Suffering after WWI

France
• Worst fighting took place here for 4.5 years and areas larger than Wales ruined
• Good farmland destroyed by shells & farm animals killed rapidly for food
• >2 mil people had to flee homes, 3/4mil homes & 23k factories destroyed
• 5600km railway lines & 48,000km roads wrecked
• 1.4mil French soldiers killed & 2.5mil wounded

Belgium
• Great War started here when Germans swept through it for attack on France
• Most of country occupied by Germans for 4 years
• Machinery stripped from factories, crops taken & food rationed, church bells melted for armament & rebels shot
• Flanders(single unoccupied part) was ruined by fighting & city of Ypres lay in rubble
• >50k soldiers dead
Great Suffering after WWI

**Britain**

- No part of country was ever occupied by enemy
- 750k soldiers killed, 1.5mil wounded, many crippled for life
- Govt was deeply in debt: had spent £9bil on war & >1bil was borrowed from USA

**Italy**

- Joined war in 1915 because Allies promise to give them Australian land when fighting was over
- 3 years of fighting on their own soil resulted in 600k dead soldiers & north-east Italy devastated

**USA**

- Suffered the least -> didn't start fighting till late 1917
- Loss of 116k men was small compared to that of other Allies
Great Suffering after WWI

Russia

• Only Allied country to surrender due to hunger & deaths of 1.7mil soldiers in 1917

• Revolutions broke out (do u hear da people sing)

• Had to pay heavy price for surrender: The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk took away all Russia's western provinces & 1/3 of Russians found themselves under German rule

Germany

• Very little fighting took place on German soil

• Nearly 2mil soldiers were killed in war and by 1918 the country was exhausted

• Then, revolution caused chaos

• Even after fighting stopped, British navy blockaded Germany's ports to stop supplies from getting in to ensure German army couldn't renew the war

• However, ordinary civilians suffered & with food ships unable to reach their ports, millions of Germans starved.
Great Suffering after WWI

The Suffering of War

• Other central powers also suffered heavy losses:
  • Austria-Hungary lost 1.2mil men
  • Turkish Empire lost 325k men
  • Bulgaria lost just over 100k men
• Mid 1918s: tired & hungry people of Europe hit by epidemic of Spanish influenza
  • Greatest killed of war
  • >25mil people died worldwide

By end 1918, people had suffered greatly. Leaders of victorious nations were determined to prevent such war from reoccurring & must make treaties w/defeated countries to ensure lasting peace.
The Paris Peace Conference

- In Jan 1919, Allied leaders met in Paris to decide on peace terms they'd offer to the Central Powers

- Biggest peace conference in world's history: hundreds of politicians from 32 countries gathered. (Defeated powers not consulted)

- However, meetings were dominated by the 'Big Three'

- Russia wasn't present as she wasn't trusted after the Bolshevik revolution & had already made peace w/ Germany
The Big Three

- David Lloyd George (Prime Minister of Britain)
- George's Clemenceau (Prime Minister of France)
- Woodrow Wilson (President of USA)

Agreed that their task was to ensure they a terrible war never happened again.

Had very diff ideas and expectations about what needed to be done.

Major differences between these 3 & much disagreement during the 6 months of negotiations.

Peace treaties that were eventually agreed were a compromise between the diff aims of the Big 3.
Clemenceau

• Nicknamed 'Tiger'; determined that France shouldn't be defeated during the war
• Had strong backing of French people
• Wanted pace treaties to protect France in the future & compensate the French for their suffering

• Aims
  ① Have revenge on Germany for French suffering
  ② Make Germany pay for cost of damage
  ③ Ensure Germany would never be able to attack France again: take away German land; weaken her industries; reduce armed forces — cripple her
Wilson

- Greatly influenced by belief in idealism — finding perfect solutions to problems
- Aim: make future wars impossible by creating a fair peace
- In 1918 he proposed Fourteen Points as a basis for the peace talks & future peace
- The most imp of these points was self-determination — people of diff national groups to have the right to rule themselves.
- USA joined the war in late 1917 — had not suffered as much and could have a more detached view
- Disagreed w/Clemenceau that Germany should pay the cost of war damage. In his opinion, Germany wasn't the not country to blame for starting the war
Lloyd George

- Agreed w/ many of Wilson's Fourteen Points; personally could see that if the defeated nations were treated too harshly -> become angry/ resentful
- But British public wanted him to be tough w/Germany('Make Germany Pay') & he also realised he couldn't ignore public opinion
- Newspapers & ambitious politicians encouraged such anti-German feelings

Aims

① End German threat to the British navy + empire
② Make Germany a non-aggressive country w/o colonies
③ Prevent Germany from becoming so weak that a revival of European industry & trade was hindered
④ Prevent Germany from becoming so poor they turn to communism
⑤ Avoid humiliating Germans so they wouldn't want revenge
⑥ Help secure France against Germany but ensure France didn't become too

powerful
The Fourteen Points

Wilson wanted:

- to prevent Germany from getting aggressive again
- punish Germany for her aggression but avoid heavy penalty
- to base the peace treaties on the 14 points

The most important of the 14 points:

① There must not be secret agreements between countries. If countries dealt openly with each other, there would be less suspicion & misunderstanding

② Countries must reduce their armed forces & weapons

③ People living under foreign empires (eg. Czechs living in Austrian territory) must be allowed to form their own nations & choose their own governments

④ All countries should belong to a new org for keeping peace in the world.

Wilson suggested the peace treaties should create a League of Nations
Making Peace

• Woodrow quickly got his own way as he was the only one who had detailed ideas for making peace

• Politicians spent first 2 months setting up the League of Nations

• Then they turned to problem of self-determination
  
  • Italian politicians demanded that Italians under Austrian rule must be reunited with Italy
  
  • Poles living in Russian/Austrian/German territory demanded a nation of their own
  
  • Czechs & Yugoslavs wanted as much land as they could get

• The Peace Conference rapidly became a free-for-all where victors competed to carve up lands of the defeated powers

• Only countries that didn't take part were Germany, Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria & Turkey, & communist Russia
Treaty of Versailles

On 28/06 1919, the politicians left Paris and went by train to Versailles. There, in the royal palace, they signed the first if the treaties they had spent so long discussing.

• **The Treaty of Versailles** dealt with Germany.
  • >200 pages long; contained >400 separate sections/ clauses

**SUMMARY OF MAIN CLAUSES**

• A League of Nations was set up to keep international peace in the future & was responsible for ensuring the peace settlement was maintained [ the 1st 26 clauses describes how it was to work & were called the Covenant of the LON. ]
Treaty of Versailles - Germany

- Germany had to give land away to neighbouring countries
  - All Germany's colonies in Africa were given to Britain/ France/ South Africa
  - New Guinea was given to Australia, Samoa to NZ
  - Danzig, the Saar (a very wealthy coal industry town) & Memel were to be governed by the LON before the people would vote for whether they wanted to be part of Germany
  - All land which Germany had taken from Russia in 1918 was taken back (some to Russia, some to create new nations — Latvia, Poland etc.)
  - Polish corridor created: split into 2 separate territories (harder to administer)
  - >10% of land taken away from Germany: lost 7 mil economic subjects (affected economy)

Military Terms
- Germany's armed forces were reduced to a bare minimum - an army of 100k men & a navy w/ no more than 6 battleships.
  - Impact: massive unemployment & economic damage (navy)
- No tanks, submarines & Air Force were allowed
Treaty of Versailles - Germany

• Western Germany (Rhineland) was made into a demilitarised zone -> no German soldiers/ weapons allowed there. Allies were to keep an army of occupation on the West Bank for 15 years
  • Provides a buffer for France (reduce chance of success of attack on France as DMZ zone was on the border between the 2)
  • Didn't forfeit airforce because Germany was a producer of aircraft

• Germany was forbidden to unite w/ Austria to make a single German-speaking state

• War Guilt - Article 231 forced Germany to accept blame for starting WWI

Reparations
• Germany had to pay compensation for damage to Allies, mainly France. The exact amt would be decided by a special Reparations Committee.

• In late 1921 it announced the sum of £6600mil to be paid over 42 years
German Reactions

Germans had not been consulted on this and there was a horrified uproar when they were told the terms of the treaty weeks before they were due to sign it. It was far harsher than expected.

- Germans everywhere bitterly called the Treaty the 'Dikat' (dictated peace)
- The government resigned
- Captains of the German fleet which was being kept by the British in Scapa Flow sank their ship in protests
- They were upset for several reasons:
  
  Territorial losses: Germans complained that the loss of 7mil subjects & 13.5% of territory was too harsh; particularly resented loses to Poland in the east. Germany was now split in 2 by the polish corridor

  Germans claimed that Allies were trying to bankrupt Germany w/ high reparation claims
German Reactions

Terms were worked out in secret & forced upon them

All of Germany's colonies were taken away from her but the allies kept theirs

Germans hated having to accept full blame for the war

Above all, Germans hated having to disarm because this left the country defenceless against neighbouring states

However, there was nothing they could do about it as the Allies threatened to invade if they didn't sign. So when all the politicians were assembled in the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles, 2 members of a new German govt were led into the hall and told to sign their names on the treaty, followed by Allied politicians.
Was the treaty fair?

Many historians have argued that the treaty was fair on Germany:
• Did not weaken Germany as much as Germans complained. By 1925, German steel production was 2x Britain's.
• Germany had forced worse treaty of Brest-Litovsk on Russia in Mar 1918
The Other Peace Treaties

The treaty-makers had to deal not only w/ Germany but also w/ her defeated partners — the Empire of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria & the Turkish Empire.

• In the last year of the war the people of Austria-Hungary rebelled against their emperor & tried to gain independence.

• Three had already set up their own individual states & appointed their own leaders — the Czechs, Hungarians & Serbs. They were putting into practice Wilson's idea of self-determination.

AUSTRIA (Treaty if St. Germain 1919)

• Austria-Hungary was dealt with by 2 treaties signed @St. Germain & Trianon
• Recognised Hungary & Austria as separate & independent states
• Made them pay reparations & reduce armaments
• Made them give up land to their neighbours
• Forbade Anschluss, them from uniting w/ Germany
The Other Peace Treaties

BULGARIA (Treaty of Neuilly 1919)
- Gave land to neighbours (Greece & Yugoslavia)
- Pay reparations
- Reduce army to 20k

HUNGARY (Treaty of Trianon 1920)
- Pay reparations
- Limit army to 35k
- Hand over war criminals
- Give land to neighbours (Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia)

RUSSIA
- Indirectly affected by treaties
  - Treaty of Versailles gave much of German-conquered land back, but not all of it
  - Her provinces on the Baltic Sea became independent states
  - Peacemakers gave part of southern Russia to Romania & her polish provinces weren't returned

POLAND
- Gained independence by taking land from conquerers (Germany, Austria-Hungary & Russia)
- Land taken from Germany particularly important – 'Polish Corridor' gave her free access to ports on the Baltic Sea
The Other Peace Treaties

THE TURKISH EMPIRE (Treaty of Sèvres 1920)
• Extremely harsh - took away most of Turkey's land in Europe
• Put the Turkish Straits under LON's control
• Arab lands made into mandates, lands which were controlled by the French & British
• LON to make sure that France & Britain governed these mandates properly
• Ordered French, British & Italian troops to occupy Turkey itself

Changes: 1921-29
The Turks hated the treaty of Sèvres, esp the occupation by foreign troops & the amt of land they were forced to give the Greeks.

• 1921: A nationalist leader, Mustapha Kemal, overthrew the sultan & led an army that drove the Greeks out of Smyrna.
• 1922: Allies agreed to renegotiate the peace settlement, which led to 1923 Treaty of Lausanne
1923 Treaty of Lausanne

- Returned lands that Turkey had lost to Greece
- Have Turkey control of the straits again
- Ordered all foreign troops to leave.
Reparations

In 1922 Germany paid a small amount then asked for a 2 year delay before the next instalment.

- Allies refused & in 1923 the French invaded the Ruhr
- Worsened german's economic problems -> led to hyperinflation
- Eventually French & Germans agreed to the Dawe's plan & the French withdrew their troops from the Ruhr
- Dawes's plan scaled payments down to 2500mil marks/ year which was to be paid over a longer period.
- USA would provide 800mil marks in good in loans to Germany to help stabilise its economy & develop industry/ trade.

Over the next 5 yrs, 1924-29, Germany began to prosper. Resentment against the treaty died down. In 1929 the Young Plan further reduced the reparation payments to 2000mil marks a year, extending them to 1969.
Assessment of the Peace Treaties

There has been much disagreement about the effects of the PTs; some believe it led to WWII, some argue that the positive effects were greater than the weaknesses

CRITICISMS:
- The treaties failed in Central Europe because
  - they created too many new states (eg Yugoslavia) which contained unhappy minorities
  - these new countries weren't strong enough against powerful neighbours (Germany, Russia)
- Turkey was treated very unfairly in order to satisfy the aims of France, Britain & Greece
- Many terms didn't work and didn't last - Treaty of Sèvres only lasted 3 years. Reparation payments were changed on 2 occasions
- Left defeated countries v. bitter & determined to get revenge/overturn the terms of the treaties.
  - Particularly true in Germany where extremist Hitler got support because of the 'stab in the back' theory & promising to overthrow the treaty.
THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

pretty useless.
Origins/ Aims of LON

• All 5 Paris Peace Treaties began in the same way, describing a new organisation for keeping peace in the world — LON.
• Idea was mooted by Woodrow Wilson in his 14 points
• Support for such an organisation grew out of the horror and devastation of WWI
• By 1915 many people belonged to LON societies in Britain, France & USA
• 10 Jan 1920: LON came into existence

• To maintain peace through collective security
• Preserve territory against any external threat & maintain existing independence of all members
• Encourage international cooperation in trade & business & disarmament
• Promote international goodwill
Organisation of LON

**The Assembly**
Met annually & each member had 1 vote. The assembly could:
- Recommend actions to the council
- Fix the league's budget
- Elect non-permanent members to the council

**The Council**
- Consisted of 4 permanent members (Great powers: Britain, France, Italy, Japan) that each had 1 veto vote
- & non-permanent members (4-9)
- Met 5x a year to deal w/ emergencies
- An unanimous vote was needed for all decisions

**The International Court of Justice**
- Set up in 1921 @the Hague in the Netherlands
- 15 judges from 15 member states
- Settle legal disputes between countries
- But only when requested to by the countries involved
Organisation of LON

The Secretariat
• Ensured that all admin work of LON was carried our efficiently
• Consisted of secretary-general & civil servants, permanent officials paid by the LON
• Prepared reports, kept records & translated documents

Agencies & Commissions
• A wide range of agencies & commissions were formed to deal w/ a variety of problems
• Eg. International Labour Org, Health Org, the Mandates Commission & the Minorities, commissions dealing w/ women's rights, military affairs etc.
The Covenant of The League of Nations

Described how peace was to be kept. Every member promised:

• That if it quarrelled with another member, it would go to the LON & try to settle the problem instead of going to war.
  • The talks would take place in the League's Assembly in Geneva (sort of world parliament which met once a year in which each member had 1 vote

• To help any member hat was attacked in defiance of above agreement, via:
  • Condemning the aggressor (making them feel so guilty they backed down)
  • Imposing econ sanctions on the aggressor (cutting off trade)
  • If necessary, joining forces w/other members to take military action against aggressor. (collective security)
Weaknesses — Membership

The league had 42 members when it was set up & this no. increased over the years. However, certain key countries weren't included:

- Defeated countries like Austria & Germany (Germany only became a member in 1926)

- The USSR, which was still distrusted because it was ruled by a communist govt.

- USA: Woodrow confidently expected US to join but Americans hated the idea due to "isolation". Congress voted against membership, depriving the LON of the support of the most powerful nation in the world
Weaknesses — Attitudes of Main Members

Britain
• The conservative govt & military class were less enthusiastic about the LON
• Britain had a vast empire to look after and was suffering from the aftermath of WWI -> didn't have the means to settle any squabble of Europe
• Simply saw the League as a talking shop

France
• Regarded Germany as only enemy
• If the LON would protect them against Germany, they were in favour of it
• If they weren't, then they would make their own arrangements
• Wanted LON to enforce the terms of the peace treaties

Rarely worked together, esp in 1920 where they disagreed over the treatment of Germany. Britain felt Germany had been treated too harshly while France felt the Treaty of Versailles hadn't gone far enough.
Weaknesses

Security Issues
• LON was often successful in forcing smaller nations to give way but the real test came when it had to deal with aggression from bigger countries.
• The council could raise armed forces from member states but in practice countries were reluctant to do so.
• Did not have an army to back up its decisions -> did not have the force to make nations stop fighting.

Idealism
• The league was an idealistic attempt to avoid another war, and this idealism was also a weakness.
• All member states had equal voting rights & all decisions in both Assembly & Council had to be unanimous.
• Fine when members agreed w/ each other, but not when they disagreed.
Successes in 1920s

The Aaland Islands, 1920-21
- Islands belonged to Finland but claimed by Sweden.
- Most islanders wanted to be ruled by Sweden.
- Referred to LON; decided Finland should keep islands but the islanders' Swedish way of life should be protected & no weapons kept there.
- Both countries accepted the decision.

Dispute over Upper Silesia 1921
- The TOV allowed the people of Upper Silesia to vote whether they wanted to be part of Germany/ Poland.
- Mar 1921: 700k voted for Germany & 500k for Poland -> rioting & violence after this close result.
- After a 6-week inquiry, LON decided to split it into half, with Poles having most of the industry.
- Accepted by both countries though it caused some German bitterness.

Disarmament Committee
- Organised the Washington Naval Conference 1921. Naval powers agreed to reduce no. of warships.
Successes in 1920s

The Greek-Bulgarian War 1925
• Fighting broke out on the border between Greece & Bulgaria
• Greek invaded Bulgaria which appealed to the league
• Council ordered both sides to stop fighting & withdraw & threatened sanctions when Greeks appeared reluctant to obey
• LON sent experts to the area to find out who was to blame -> enquiry decided Greece was at fault and fined them £45k. Both sides accepted.

Refugee Committee
• Raised money, found transport, designed houses & provided med aid for refugees.
• From April 1920-22, it helped >450k prisoners return home
• Found home for 600k Greek refugees fleeing from turkey.

Drug Committee
• Persuaded states to tighten up customs & postal control & educate people about the dangers of drugs
• Investigated drug trade & tried to control poppy growing (main source of opium)

+ 1923 dispute over Memel
Failures in 1920s

Dispute over Vilna 1920
- Both new states of Poland & Lithuania claimed this town
- It had been capital of Lithuania but 30% of the inhabitants were Poles (compared to the 2% Lithuanian)
- In 1920 the polish army seized the town
- LON asked the Poles to withdraw to allow people of Vilna to vote on its future but they refused
- The Conference of Ambassadors awarded Vilna to the Poles -> LON had been ignored.

Dispute over Corfu 1923
- Aug 1923: 5 Italian surveyors working for LON in mapping the border between Greece & Albania were killed on the Greek side of the border
- Mussolini(new Italian dictator) demanded compensation from Greek govt, who refused
- Mussolini then bombarded & occupied Greek island of Corfu
- The Council wanted the league to condemn Italy's aggressive actions but France & Britain didn't want to upset Mussolini & disallowed it
- Instead put great pressure in the Greeks to accept his demands and only when they apologised & paid u did Mussolini retreat his forces from Corfu
- LON failed against a great power

+ dispute over Teschen 1919
Improving the Peace

Work of the League
• Membership increased from 48->54 nations from 1920-29
• In 1926 Germany was admitted to the LON

The Washington Conference 1921
• Britain agreed that other countries could develop large navies of their own, providing theirs was still largest overall.
The Locarno Treaties

In 1925, the politicians in Europe met again to look for ways of making a peace that would last.

- Met on neutral territory, lakeside town of Locarno in the mountains of Switzerland & discussions weren't dominated by Americans.
- Germany signed these treaties with Britain, France, Italy & Belgium, Poland & Czechoslovakia.
- Result was the Locarno Treaties

All agreed not to go to war over territorial disputes
- Germany was to accept the western borders given to them in 1919 & changes to the borders with Poland & Czechoslovakia would only take place via negotiation
- France, Germany & Belgium agreed to respect the borders between them.
- Italy & Britain agreed to act as International policemen to ensure promises
- France promised to protect Belgium, Poland & Czechoslovakia if Germany ever attack them
- Germany accepted that Rhineland must remain a demilitarised zone
- All 7 countries agreed they would take their disputes to LON
In 1928, 65 nations (including Germany) signed an agreement known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact promising never to go war again as a way of solving their disputes.
Collapse of International Co-operation in the 1930s

Aggression
• Leaders of Japan, Italy & Germany tried to improve conditions @home by being aggressive towards other nations.
• By taking over other lands they aimed to
  • Gain land & resources
  • Increase national pride

The Great Depression
• Collapse of the US stick market in 1929 led to:
  • Collapse of international trade
  • 25 mil people out of work worldwide
  • Closure of banks, factories & businesses
  • Economic rivalry instead if cooperation. USA and Britain raised custom duties on foreign imports
  • Mass unemployment & poverty
Collapse of International Co-operation in the 1930s

Isolation of USA
• Refused to join the LON & avoided involvement in Europe.

Failure of the LON
• The LON failed to stop aggression in Manchuria & Abyssinia
• Italy, Germany & Japan left LON in 1900s.

Rise of Dictators
• In many countries people blamed their govt for their poverty & lack of work
• Gave support to political parties offering to put thing right. (Many of these were led by dictators)
• >20 countries became dictatorships after 1929
Collapse of International Co-operation in the 1930s

Failure of Disarmament

- Disarmament conference of 1932-3 was organised by LON
- Reps from >60 countries came to discuss way in which their country might disarm & so reduce chances of war
- Unfortunately, the conference didn’t achieve anything

Germany wanted everyone to disarm to her low level
France, still fearful of Germany, refused.

Hitler withdrew from the conference & the LON & began to rearm.
The Manchurian Crisis 1931-3

First major failure of the LON in the 1930s was over the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.

Why did they invade?
- Japan had been badly hit by Depression (her industrial strength relied on exports which fell by 50% from 1929-31), hence couldn't buy imports
- Country was overcrowded
- Military leaders believed Japan must expand for more living space + raw materials.

Chose Manchuria cause:
- It belonged to China which was v weak @ this time. (split in 2 civil war between nationalists and communists)
- Japan argued that it would act as a buffer against USSR & communism
- Already had special interest in Manchuria; ran South Manchurian Railway & controlled some of the cities along its route.
The Manchurian Crisis 1931-3; Mukden Incident

18 Sept: there was an explosion on the South Manchurian Railway -> Japs claimed this was an act of sabotage by the Chinese who denied this, claiming that all their soldiers were in the barracks.

- Gave Japanese the ideal excuse to take over Manchuria
- Japanese generals acted w/o orders from govt in Tokyo
- Invasion succeeded, Manchuria renamed Manchukuo
- The last Chinese emperor (overthrown in 1911) became a japanese puppet
- China appealed to LON
What did the LON do?

- Condemned Japan's actions & ordered the withdrawal of Jap troops. Jap govt agreed but their army refused.

- Appointed the Lytton Commission to investigate the crisis - took >1 year to report, by which the invasion & occupation was complete. Commission found Japan guilty of forcibly seizing part of China's territory

- Accepted the report & instructed all of its members not to recognise Manchukuo. It invited Japan to hand Manchukuo back to china

Jap Govt kept Manchuria & left the LON in 1033. LON didn't stop Jap aggression. Japan then went in to occupy the Chinese city of Jehol.
Why did the LON fail in the Manchurian crisis?

• Members were unwilling to impose econ sanctions on Japan bc the depression had already damaged world trade

• The Great Powers were unwilling to take military action. Britain esp feared Japanese attacks on its colonies in the Far East

• The USA was the most powerful country w/ interests in the Far East. Sent a representative to join the Lytton Commission but wasn't prepared to take further action
Results of the crisis

• First major failure of the LON - showed it was weak in face of a great power

• World learnt that it paid to be aggressive, encouraging further acts of aggression

• Japan continued its aggression, took over more provinces in north Chin between 1933-36

• Japan withdrew from LON & eventually became closer to dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini; formed the Anti-Comintern Pact w/ Germany & Italy between 1936-7.
THE ABYSSINIAN CRISIS

2nd major crisis in 1930s [ LON pls ]

In 1935, Italy invaded Abyssinia. Once again, the LON failed to stop aggression.

In the 1930s, Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) was the only independent African state. Ruled by Emperor Haile Selassie.
The Abyssinian Crisis 1935-6: Why

WHY did Italy invade?

• Italy had suffered from the Great Depression & unemployment rose. Mussolini turned to foreign conquest to distract the attention of Italian people

• Italy already had an empire in north-east Africa (colonies of Eritrea & Italian Somaliland which were on the borders of Abyssinia)

• The Italians had tried to take Abyssinia in 1986 but had been defeated @the battle of Adowa. This was a chance for revenge

• Mussolini was jealous of Hitler's rearmament in Germany --> wanted to show he was still the main dictator in Europe
The Abyssinian Crisis 1935-36: The Invasion

- Dec 1934: Italian troops provoked a clash with Abyssinians at Wal Wal as an excuse for war.

- Oct 1935: Italy invaded.

- The Abyssinian forces stood little chance against the modern Italian army.

- Nevertheless, it was a huge country with poor roads & took a long time to conquer.
The Abyssinian Crisis 1935-36: What did LON do?

**Dec 1934**
- The LON offered to arbitrate* in the dispute.
- Rejected by Italy

**Oct 1935**
- Condemned the Italian invasion of Abyssinia
- Imposed econ sanctions on Italy
- BUT these didn't include oil, coal & iron
- Non LON members (US, Germany) continued to trade w/ Italy
- Mussolini later admitted that if they hadn't, the invasion would've stopped in a week

**Dec 1935**
- The Hoare-Laval Pact
- Drawn up by foreign secretaries of Britain & France, Hoare & Laval
- Large areas of Abyssinia were to be given to Mussolini in return for troop withdrawal
- Abyssinia would be reduced to half it's original size
- Almost immediately the details were leaked to the press, causing public outcry
- Plan was abandoned

**Mar 1936**
- Threatened oil embargo on Italy
- This had no impact
- The Italians conquered Abyssinia & united it w/ Eritrea & Somaliland

*act as a judge*
The Abyssinian Crisis 1935-36: What did LON do?

June 1936
- Haile Selassie addressed the Assembly calling for LON assistance against Italian aggression
- No additional LON action

July 1936
Sanctions against Italy abandoned

Why did the League fail in Abyssinia?
{ successful action against Italy was dependent on Brits & French, they were unwilling to take strong measures because: }

- Frightened that if they imposed full sanctions it'd lead to war w/ Italy. They weren't ready for war
- Wanted to keep Mussolini as an ally: didn't want to upset him as this might drive him to ally w/ Hitler & Germany
- Their attempt @compromise, the Hoare-Laval Pact, showed Mussolini how weak they were. He thus contained the invasion.
The Abyssinian Crisis 1935-36: Results

• Once again, showed the weakness of LON. Countries lost faith in the League & it's ideals

• Several countries (including Britain & France) moved away from their policy of collective security & began to rearm

• Actions of the LON & Britain & France upset Mussolini; he didn't expect them to oppose his invasion

• He moved closer to Hitler & in 1936 signed the Rome-Berlin Axis

• Once again, aggression had been shown to work. Hitler took note of this lesson

• 1937: Italy left the LON
Why did the LON fail?

- Organisation contained weakness: didn't meet frequently so there were often delays

- Important nations were absent
  - USA never joined
  - Germany didn't join till 1926 & left in 1933
  - Japan left in 1933, Italy in 1937
  - The USSR didn't join till 1934 & was expelled in 1939

- Sanctions were ineffective, esp w/o USA as a member

- The LON didn't have it's own military forces to use against an aggressor

- Countries were often reluctant to act unless their own interests were @stake & sometimes even acted against League decisions. Eg. The Hoare-Laval Pact