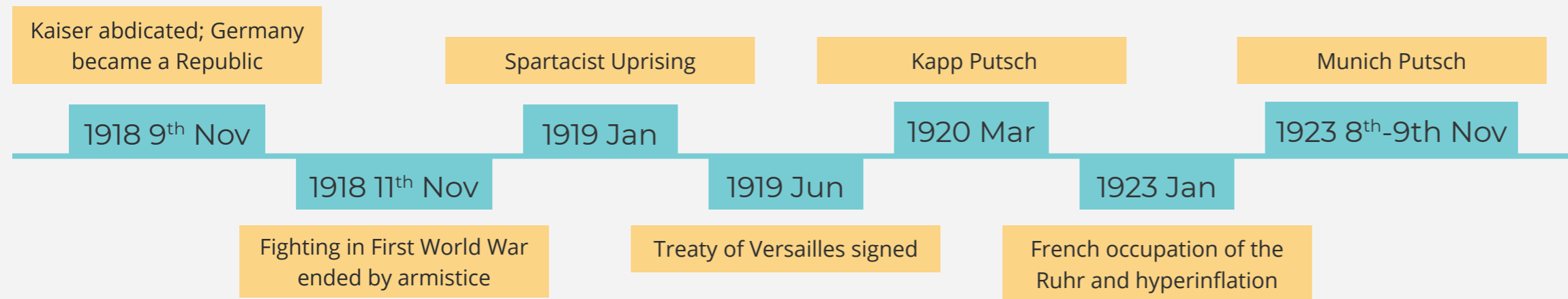


Key Question 1: What challenges were faced by the Weimar Republic from 1919 to 1923?

Timeline of events



FACT : In 1919 £1 was worth 35 German marks; by November 1923 it was worth 1,680,000,000,000 German marks!

Important concept

The **Weimar Republic** was the German government after the Kaiser had abdicated in November 1918 -

- It was democratically elected by a system of proportional representation (e.g. 10% of the vote = 10% of the seats).
- The President was elected for 7 years and selected a Chancellor to form the government.
- The Chancellor was the political leader most likely to get laws passed by the Reichstag.
- The Reichstag was made up of regularly elected representatives.
- Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution gave the President the power to make laws without consulting the Reichstag in an emergency.

IMPORTANT EVENTS : 1919-1920

1. Spartacists 1919:
 - led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg
 - aimed to make Germany a communist country like Russia
 - formed the German Communist Party (KPD).
 - called a general strike and took control of important buildings in Berlin
 - the Reichswehr (Army) and Freikorps (demobilised soldiers) ended the rebellion
 - Spartacist leaders were captured and executed
 - 3,000 people died in the uprising.
2. Kapp Putsch 1920:
 - the Berlin Freikorps refused to be disbanded after the Spartacist uprising
 - aimed to create right-wing government with Wolfgang Kapp as Chancellor
 - the Reichswehr (Army) in Berlin supported Kapp
 - the Weimar government moved out of Berlin
 - President Ebert called on workers to go on strike so the Putsch collapsed.

IMPORTANT EVENT : The Treaty of Versailles

- LAND:** Germany lost
- 13 per cent of its land
 - 6 million citizens
 - Alsace-Lorraine to France
 - Polish Corridor to Poland
 - Saarland to League of Nations control.
- MILITARY :** limited to
- 100,000 soldiers
 - no tanks, heavy guns, aircraft or submarines
 - ships of less than 10,000 tons
 - no troops in the Rhineland.
- FINANCE:** agreed to pay money as reparations of £6600 million
- FORBIDDEN:**
- uniting with Austria
 - joining the League of Nations.
- BLAME :** Article 231 (of 440)

Key words

Kaiser	emperor
Abdication	when a monarch leaves the throne
Republic	a country without a King or a Queen
Armistice	an agreement to end war
President	runs the country
Chancellor	in charge of the government
Reichstag	German parliament, makes laws
Article 48	president can ignore the Reichstag in an emergency
Constitution	rules about how a country is governed
Coalition	political parties working together in a government

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IMPORTANT EVENTS : 1919-1920

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IMPORTANT EVENTS : 1923

1. Hyperinflation
 - By 1923 German currency was worthless.
 - Food prices rose which was good for farmers but people had to barter or poach for food.
 - Savers and pensioners lost all their money.
 - Businesses could not afford to pay their workers.
 - Extreme political groups like the Nazis blamed the government.
2. Munich Putsch 1923
 - Hitler and 600 Nazis forced Von Kahr (Bavarian chief minister) to support their takeover of the government in Berlin.
 - Von Kahr told the police who attacked and arrested the Nazis
 - 16 Nazis and 4 policemen were killed.
 - Hitler was put on trial and the Nazi Party was banned.

Reasons for important events

1. Why people opposed the Weimar Republic:
 - left wing opponents wanted Germany to become Communist
 - right wing opponents wanted a strong leader (fuhrer)
 - proportional representation meant Germany had coalition governments which some people thought were too weak.
2. Why people hated the Treaty of Versailles
Some believed that:
 - Germany was not the only country to blame for the war
 - Germany had not lost the war and the leaders of the Republic had betrayed Germany ("the stab in the back")
 - Germany was being forced to pay more than it could afford
 - The Allies wanted to humiliate Germany.
3. Why hyperinflation happened
 - The German government had to print more money to make reparation payments to France, Belgium and the UK.
 - The French needed the money to pay their American debts.
 - The French invaded the Ruhr in 1923 to take their payments directly from German factories and mines.
 - German workers refused to work.