

# EXPLAINING APPEASEMENT

**This revision activity works best if you do it with a friend, and talk about it as you do it.**

The popular view of ‘appeasement’ is that it was ‘giving in’ to Hitler – ‘turning a blind eye’ – ‘being frightened of’ Hitler. There *were* examples of this in the 1930s, but that was not ‘appeasement’.

‘Appeasement’ proper was a conscious policy of the British and French governments in the 1930s, which arose as an alternative to the League’s ‘collective security’ idea for keeping the peace. The idea of ‘collective security’ was that aggressive nations like Hitler’s Germany would be kept in line by the huge ‘moral persuasion’ of all the nations of the world, meeting in the League’s Assembly. As early as 1925, Britain and France had decided that it would never work. So, instead, they began *direct negotiations with Germany*, arguing each issue on a case-by-case basis; they called this policy ‘Appeasement’.

**If we define ‘appeasement’ as a policy of direct negotiation with Hitler, which of the following list of events would you select as examples of ‘appeasement’? Discuss and explain your decisions.**

		✓/✗
<b>1934</b>	Ten-year Non-aggression Pact between Poland and Germany	
<b>Jan 1935</b>	The Saar plebiscite: the Saarlanders vote to become part of Nazi Germany.	
<b>June 1935</b>	Anglo-German Naval Agreement (18 June): Britain agrees to let Germany have navy one-third the size of Britain’s.	
<b>1936</b>	Remilitarisation of the Rhineland. Britain and France do nothing.	
<b>1937</b>	British foreign secretary Lord Halifax goes to Germany to meet with Hitler.	
<b>Mar 1938</b>	Anschluss with Austria. Chamberlain does not like it, but argues that Austria is too far away to do anything.	
<b>15 Sept 1938</b>	Hitler demands the Sudetenland. Chamberlain meets him face-to-face at Berchtesgaden and agrees to give him the Sudetenland.	
<b>22 Sept 1938</b>	Chamberlain meets Hitler face-to-face again at Godesberg. Hitler has more demands; Chamberlain refuses and returns home. Both countries prepare for war.	
<b>30 Sept 1938</b>	Mussolini organises a four-power conference at Munich. Chamberlain, Daladier and Mussolini give way to all Hitler’s demands.	
<b>Mar 1939</b>	Hitler occupies Czechoslovakia at the invitation of the fascist Czech President Hácha. Chamberlain declares it ‘a blow to confidence’; in April 1939, Britain promises to defend Poland if Poland is attacked.	
<b>Aug 1939</b>	Danzig crisis; Hitler demands Danzig and the Polish Corridor. Britain begins negotiations for an alliance with Russia.	
<b>1 Sept 1939</b>	Hitler invades Poland; Britain declares war on Germany.	