**Chapter 24, Section 2: World War II Begins**

**I. “Peace in Our Time”** *(pages 713–715)*

**A.** In February 1938, Adolf Hitler threatened to invade Austria unless Austrian Nazis were given important government posts. In March 1938, Hitler announced the ***Anschluss,*** or unification, of Austria and Germany.

**B.** Hitler claimed the Sudetenland, an area of Czechoslovakia with a large German-speaking population. Czechs strongly resisted Germany’s demand for the Sudetenland.

**C.** France, the Soviet Union, and Britain threatened to fight Germany if it attacked Czechoslovakia. At the Munich Conference on September 29, 1938, Britain and France, hoping to prevent another war, agreed to Hitler’s demands in a policy known as **appeasement.**

**D.** In March 1939, Germany sent troops into Czechoslovakia, bringing the Czech lands under German control.

**E.** Hitler demanded the return of Danzig—Poland’s Baltic Sea port. He also wanted a highway and railroad across the Polish Corridor. These demands convinced the British and French that appeasement had failed.

**F.** In May 1939, Hitler ordered the invasion of Poland by the German army.

**G.** On August 23, 1939, Germany and the USSR signed a nonaggression treaty, with a secret agreement to divide Poland.

**Discussion Question**

Why did Britain and France agree to Hitler’s demands for the Sudetenland? *(They hoped that they could give Hitler the Sudetenland in exchange for peace. Also, this bought Britain time to get ready for war. Some thought Hitler’s demand that all German-speaking regions of Europe be united with Germany was reasonable.)*

**II. The War Begins** *(pages 715–717)*

**A.** On September 1, 1939, Germany and the USSR invaded Poland. On September 3, Britain and France declared war on Germany—starting World War II.

**B.** The Germans used a **blitzkrieg,** or lightening war, to attack Poland. The Polish army was defeated by October 5.

**C.** On April 9, 1940, the German army attacked Norway and Denmark. Within a month, Germany overtook both countries.

**D.** After World War I, the French built a line of concrete bunkers and fortifications called the **Maginot Line** along the German border. When Hitler decided to attack France, he went around the Maginot Line by invading the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. The French and British forces quickly went into Belgium, becoming trapped there by German forces.

**E.** By June 4, about 338,000 British and French troops had evacuated Belgium through the French port of **Dunkirk** and across the English Channel, using ships of all sizes.

**F.** On June 22, 1940, France surrendered to the Germans. Germany installed a puppet government in France.

**Discussion Question**

Why did France fall to the Germans? *(When Hitler decided to attack France, he went around the Maginot Line by invading the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. The French and British forces quickly went into Belgium, becoming trapped there by German forces. These forces escaped to Britain through the French port of Dunkirk and across the English Channel.)*

**III. Britain Remains Defiant** *(pages 717–718)*

**A.** Hitler thought that Britain would negotiate peace after France surrendered. He did not anticipate the bravery of the British people and their prime minister, **Winston** **Churchill.** On June 4, 1940, Churchill delivered a defiant speech that rallied the British people and alerted the United States to Britain’s plight.

**B.** To invade Britain, Germany had to defeat the British air force. In the **Battle of Britain,** the German air force, the *Luftwaffe*, launched an all-out air battle to destroy the BritishRoyal Air Force. After German bombers bombed London, the British responded bybombing Berlin, Germany.

**C.** The Royal Air Force was greatly outnumbered by the *Luftwaffe,* but the British had radar stations and were able to detect incoming German aircraft and direct British fighters to intercept them.

**Discussion Question**

How did the British stop the German forces from invading Britain? *(Winston Churchill delivered a defiant speech, which rallied the British people. The British air force bombed Berlin, Germany, after the Germans bombed London. The British hid in subway tunnels when the German’s bombed London. Although the Royal Air Force was greatly outnumbered by the* Luftwaffe, *the British had radar stations that were able to detect incoming German aircraft and direct British fighters to intercept them.)*