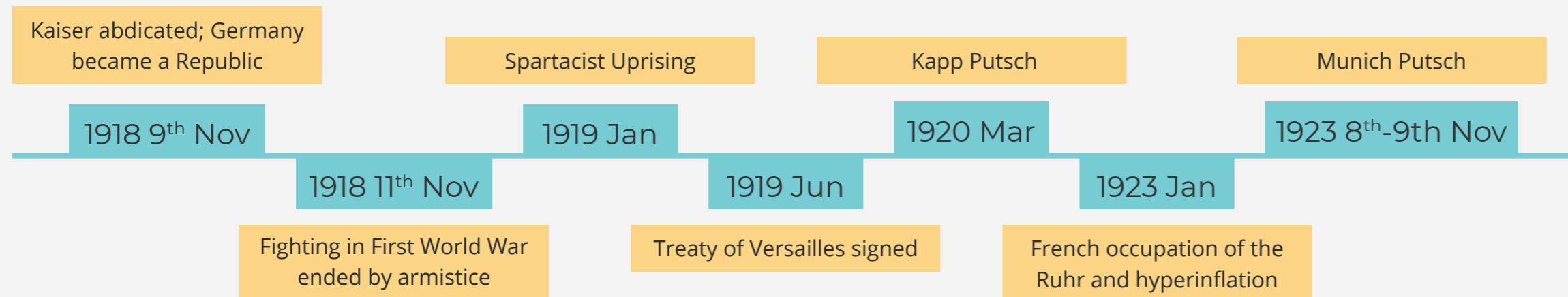


## Key Question 1: What challenges were faced by the Weimar Republic from 1919 to 1923?

### Timeline of events



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

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

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

### 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.