

TALKING POINT

Which of the statements in question 1 of the Activity are facts and which opinions? Is what constitutes a fact sometimes a matter of opinion?

ACTIVITY

- 1 Take each of the following statements and explain why you agree or disagree with it.
 - a) After 1930 all Chancellors realised parliamentary government was not working and were looking for a more authoritarian solution.
 - b) By 1932 Hindenburg, Papen, Schleicher and probably even Brüning all shared the same broad aims, but disagreed on the best way to achieve them.
 - c) Once the Nazis became the largest party Hitler had to be appointed Chancellor.
 - d) Schleicher and Papen each thought he could use the Nazis for his own purposes.
 - e) Members of the elite preferred to change the political system by gaining support in the Reichstag or through using Article 48, as they were afraid of civil war if they just tore up the constitution.
 - f) After 1930, and even more by 1932, the composition of the Reichstag made reliance on Article 48 virtually inevitable.
 - g) Weimar democracy was safe in the hands of German voters; it was the elite who killed it.
 - h) Communism posed no real threat in 1932 and so is unimportant in explaining events.
 - i) By late 1932, tensions within the Nazi Party were in danger of causing a decline as rapid as its rise had been; it was saved by Hitler's appointment.
 - j) The decline in support for the Nazis in November 1932 actually helped Hitler's appointment as Chancellor.
 - k) Hitler's insistence on only joining a government as leader was a risky strategy that eventually paid off.
 - l) Hindenburg can be held primarily responsible for giving Hitler power, since in 1933 he still had a wide range of options.
 - m) The elites had good grounds for considering they could control Hitler as Chancellor.
 - n) Hitler benefited from the collapse of parliamentary government rather than being the cause of it.
- 2 There is a popular radio programme called *Just a Minute* where contestants have to talk for 60 seconds on any topic, without deviation, hesitation or repetition. This is surprisingly difficult. So we have been kind and you can talk for just 30 seconds on one of the following issues:
 - a) The impact of the Depression
 - b) The reasons why the Nazis became the largest party
 - c) The nature of German governments, 1930-2
 - d) The attitude of many of the elite to the Weimar Republic—and to the Nazis
 - e) The reasons why Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor.
- 3 Essay: 'Why did Hindenburg appoint Hitler as Chancellor in 1933?' Include:
 - how Hitler became undisputed leader of the Nazi Party
 - the effects of the Great Depression on Germany after 1929
 - why the Nazis became the largest parliamentary party in 1932
 - the failure of Weimar governments 1929-32
 - why the elite looked for a more authoritarian alternative to parliamentary democracy
 - Hindenburg's reluctant appointment of Hitler.
 Chart 8G will help you.
- 4 Imagine it is January 1933. Hold a debate in front of a key adviser to President Hindenburg over whether he should appoint Hitler as Chancellor or not. Select four to five people for each side of the debate. Possible characters could be:
 - general
 - industrialist
 - professor
 - major landowner
 - small farmer
 - worker
 - ex-soldier
 - diplomat
 - economist.