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STUDY GUIDE



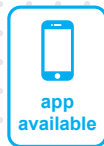
# International Relations: To What Extent Was the League of Nations a Success?

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STUDY GUIDE

**International Relations: To What Extent  
Was the League of Nations a Success?**

CIE





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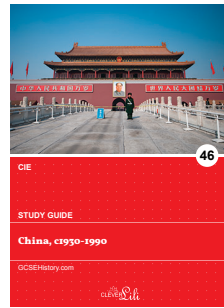
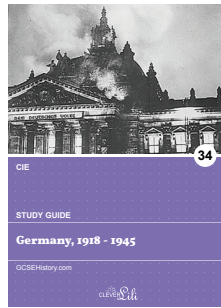
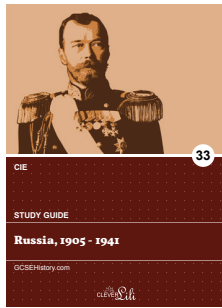
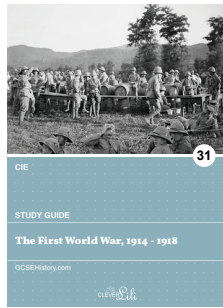
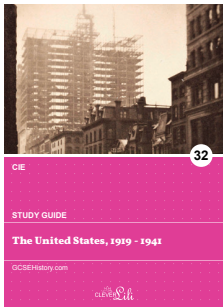
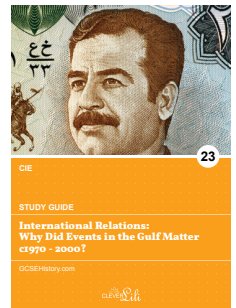
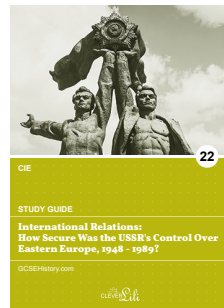
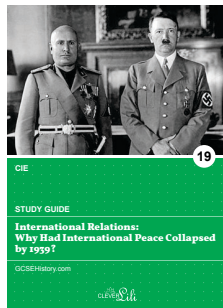
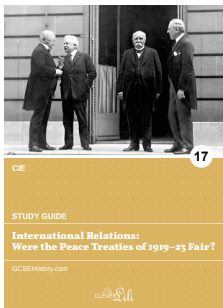
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## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

In this study guide, you will see a series of icons, highlighted words and page references. The key below will help you quickly establish what these mean and where to go for more information.

### Icons



**WHAT** questions cover the key events and themes.



**WHO** questions cover the key people involved.



**WHEN** questions cover the timings of key events.



**WHERE** questions cover the locations of key moments.



**WHY** questions cover the reasons behind key events.



**HOW** questions take a closer look at the way in which events, situations and trends occur.



**IMPORTANCE** questions take a closer look at the significance of events, situations, and recurrent trends and themes.



**DECISIONS** questions take a closer look at choices made at events and situations during this era.

### Highlighted words

**Abdicate** - occasionally, you will see certain words highlighted within an answer. This means that, if you need it, you'll find an explanation of the word or phrase in the glossary which starts on page 17.

### Page references

**Tudor** (p.7) - occasionally, a certain subject within an answer is covered in more depth on a different page. If you'd like to learn more about it, you can go directly to the page indicated.

## WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?





The title of the second unit of the Core Content Option B in the CIE History IGCSE is 'To what extent was the League of Nations a success?' This unit investigates the role, structure and success of the League of Nations in the 1920s and 1930s.

### Purpose

This unit focuses on international relations and the way in which different nation states interacted, and the change, continuity and significance of their relationships over time. You will study their priorities, agreements, disagreements and the key events that affected them.








### Enquiries

This unit gives you the information you need to understand the following:

-  The success and failures of the League in the 1920s.
-  How far weaknesses in the League's organisation made failure inevitable.
-  How far the Depression made the work of the League more difficult.
-  The success and failures of the League in the 1930s.








### Topics

Topics covered in this course include:

-  The birth of the League.
-  The structure and organisation of the League.
-  The successes and failures of the League commissions.
-  Successes and failures of the League in settling the international disputes of the 1920s.
-  The impact of the Depression on the work of the League.
-  The Treaty of St Germain with Austria.
-  The failures of the League in the 1930s, including the Manchurian Crisis, the Abyssinian Crisis and the World Disarmament Conference.




### Key Individuals

Key individuals studied in this course include:

-  Woodrow Wilson.
-  Fridtjof Nansen.
-  Ludwik Rajchman.
-  Albert Thomas.
-  Lord Lytton.
-  Benito Mussolini.
-  Haile Selassie.

### Assessment

This unit usually appears as one of four possible questions in Option B Core Content International Relations Since 1919 on the Paper 1 exam, of which you must complete two. Therefore, you will answer one question on the success of the League of Nations, if this appears as an option on your exam paper. The question is comprised of 3 sections - a, b and c. However, check with your teacher to find out whether this unit will appear on the Paper 2 source paper in your exam.

-  On the Paper 1 exam, you may choose to complete a three-part question on this topic, which will be divided into sections a, b and c.
-  Question a is worth 4 marks. This question requires you to describe key features of the time period. You will be asked to recall 2 relevant points and support them with details or provide at least four relevant points without supporting detail.
-  Question b is worth 6 marks. This question requires you to explain a key event or development. You will need to identify two reasons, support those reasons with relevant factual detail and then explain how the reasons made the event occur.

## WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

- 👤 Question c is worth 10 marks. This question requires you to construct an argument to support and challenge an interpretation stated in the question. You will need to have a minimum of three explanations in total (two on one side and one on the other), fully evaluate the argument and come to a justified conclusion. You will have the opportunity to show your ability to explain and analyse historical events using 2nd order concepts such as causation, consequence, change, continuity, similarity and difference.
- 👤 If this topic appears on Paper 2, you will answer six questions on a range of source material about this topic. Check with your teacher to find out your Paper 2 topic.

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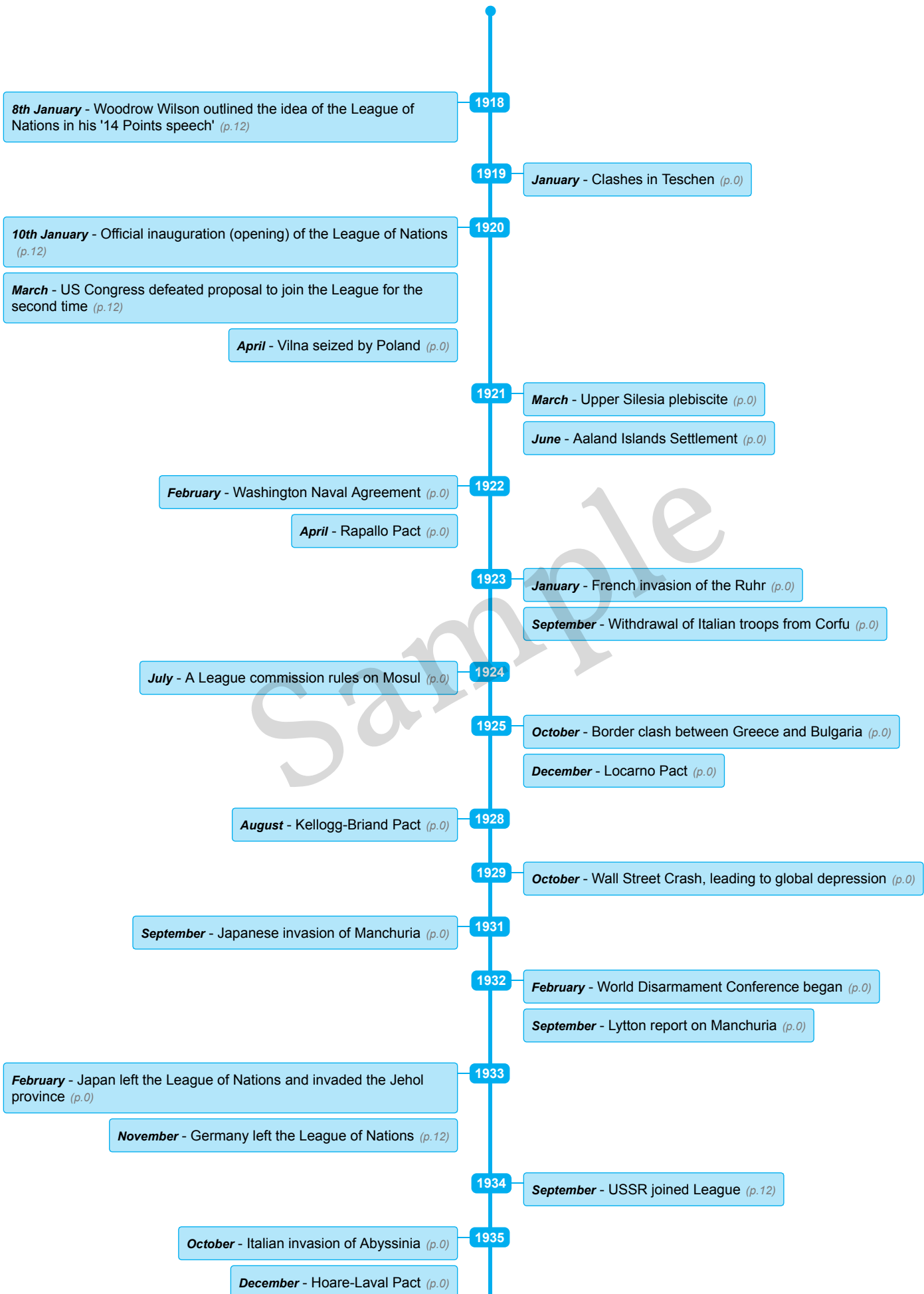


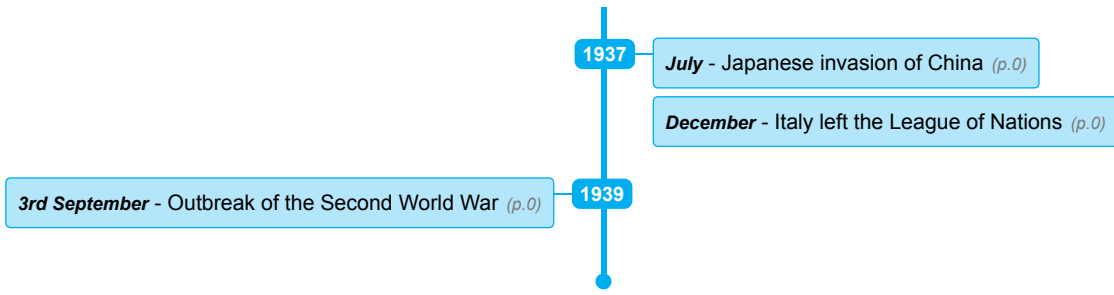
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# THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## TIMELINE





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# THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

'You will say, "Is the League an absolute guaranty against war?" No; I do not know any absolute guaranty against the errors of human judgment or the violence of human passions...' Woodrow Wilson



## What was the League of Nations?

The League of Nations was an international organisation that aimed to make the world more peaceful. It provided a platform for countries to solve the issues that might lead to war.



## Whose idea was the League of Nations?

There were 3 important individuals that put the League of Nations together.

- ✓ President Wilson originally drafted his ideas about the League of Nations in his 14 Points at the end of the First World War.
- ✓ Jan Smuts of South Africa was involved in the discussions, as was British politician Sir Robert Cecil.
- ✓ British prime **minister** David Lloyd George also contributed to the talks.



## What were the aims of the League of Nations?

The League of Nations had a number of aims.

- ✓ Its primary aim was to keep world peace, and solve **disputes** that might lead to war.
- ✓ It wanted to achieve world **disarmament**.
- ✓ It wanted to achieve global co-operation in trade.
- ✓ It aimed to improve the lives of people worldwide.



## When was the League of Nations formed?

The League of Nations came into being in January 1920.



## Where was the League of Nations based?

The League of Nations was based in Geneva, Switzerland. Switzerland was seen as a peaceful country and was also home to the headquarters of the Red Cross.



## What was the Covenant of the League of Nations?

The Covenant of the League of Nations was the name chosen by President Wilson to describe the League's **constitution**. It contained 26 articles, or laws, about how the League should be organised.



## What were the problems with setting up the League of Nations?

The politicians who were responsible for setting up the League encountered some problems.

- ✓ The plans for the League were put together in a hurry.
- ✓ Critics felt the aims of the organisation were badly-defined or too idealistic.
- ✓ Britain wanted a simpler organisation that would only meet in emergencies, similar to the existing Conference of Ambassadors which oversaw the fulfilment of the peace settlement of the First World War.
- ✓ France wanted a strong league with its own army.
- ✓ American Congress decided the USA should not join the League.
- ✓ Other countries, such as the USSR and Germany, were not invited to join.



## Why didn't the USA join the League of Nations?

There were 6 reasons the USA did not join the League of Nations.



- ✓ The idea of the League of Nations was unpopular in the USA.
- ✓ Many Americans, particularly those with German ancestry, hated the Treaty of Versailles. They did not want membership of an organisation set up to enforce it.
- ✓ After the **casualties** of the First World War, many Americans were afraid their soldiers would become involved in conflicts not directly related to America.
- ✓ The League's **sanctions** might hurt American trade.
- ✓ There were fears the League would be used to defend the British and French **empires**. Many Americans were anti-imperialist.
- ✓ Wilson was too ill to run for re-election in 1920 but the Republican candidate, Warren Harding, **campaign**ed for American **isolationism** and a return to 'normalcy'. These ideas appealed to the **electorate**, who voted him in.



### What did Britain think of the League of Nations?

David Lloyd George was critical of the League to begin with. However, in March 1919 he issued the Fontainebleau Memorandum which gave it his full support.



### What made Britain change its opinion the League of Nations?

The League was to run German **colonies** lost under the Treaty of Versailles as **mandates**. Historians have argued Britain saw this as an **empire-building** opportunity.



### What did France think of the League of Nations?

France was supportive of any measure that would protect them from another German invasion.



### How was the League of Nations organised?

The League was organised into 7 bodies that had different roles within it.

- ✓ The Secretariat.
- ✓ The Assembly (p.o) of the League.
- ✓ The Council of the League (p.o).
- ✓ The Permanent Court of International Justice.
- ✓ The International Labour Organisation (p.o).
- ✓ The **Commissions**.
- ✓ A Council of Ambassadors existed between 1920 and 1931.



### What were the weaknesses of the League of Nations?

The League had 7 weaknesses that meant it struggled to be effective.

- ✓ The USA was never a member of the League. It became isolationist after the Paris Peace Conference, meaning the League didn't have America's powerful and influential support.
- ✓ Germany wasn't allowed to join the League until 1926, which meant the organisation looked like a 'winner's club'. Germany left in 1933 after Adolf Hitler came to power.
- ✓ Soviet Russia wasn't invited to join the League until 1934, because it was **communist**.
- ✓ Along with France, Britain was one of the League's most influential and powerful members. However, it was mostly concerned with its **empire** rather than prioritising the League's principles.
- ✓ Along with Britain, France was one of the League's most influential and powerful members. However, the country was worried about maintaining its security against potential German **aggression**, rather than prioritising the League's principles.
- ✓ The League was slow to reach decisions as its Assembly (p.o) only met once a year.
- ✓ The League had to rely on members donating their armies, as it didn't have its own. This made it weak against **aggression**.



- ✓ All decisions in the League had to be **unanimous**, so each country had an equal say. This meant just one country could **veto** an action being taken.

### ★ What was collective security in the League of Nations?

**Collective security** was the principle on which the League of Nations worked. It was based on the idea that if all members worked together, they could force any aggressive country to stop threatening the peace.

### ★ What was collective security in the League of Nations also known as?

It was known as Article 10 in the Covenant of the League.

### ★ What were the powers of the League of Nations?

The League had three main powers at its disposal to keep the peace, based on the principles of **collective security**.

- ✓ **Moral** disapproval (also known as condemnation). If the Council voted to condemn the action of a country, it knew the weight of the world's opinion was on the League's side.
- ✓ **Economic sanctions**. If a country was aggressive, the Council could decide that League members would refuse to trade with it or lend it money. This is also known as being **'blacklisted'**.
- ✓ **Military sanctions**. As a last resort, the Council could decide to send in an army of soldiers from member **states**.

### ★ Who were members of the League of Nations?

The League had many countries as members, but there were also some important non-members.

- ✓ The League had 42 member countries when it was first set up, and 59 by the end of the 1930s.
- ✓ The USA was never a member of the League, even though it was US **president** Woodrow Wilson's idea.
- ✓ In the absence of the USA, Britain and France were the most dominant and influential members of the League.
- ✓ Germany was allowed to join in 1926, but left to rearm in secret shortly after Hitler was appointed **chancellor** in 1933.
- ✓ The USSR was allowed to join in 1934.
- ✓ Japan, a permanent member of the Council of the League (p.0), left in 1933 after the Manchurian Crisis (p.0).
- ✓ Italy, a permanent member of the Council of the League (p.0), left in 1937 after the Abyssinian (p.0) Crisis.

### ★ What were the League of Nations' successes in the 1920s?

During the 1920s, the League saw some significant successes.

- ✓ It successfully solved **disputes** in the Aaland Islands (p.0), Teschen (p.0), Mosul (p.0) and Bulgaria.
- ✓ The League largely changed the way countries dealt with one another, handled problems, and solved global **disputes**.
- ✓ The League gave confidence to smaller nations which could not protect themselves.
- ✓ The League was successful in rebuilding post-war Europe.
- ✓ The World Health Organisation ran many successful **campaigns** and set up research institutes.
- ✓ The Refugees' Commission successfully repatriated thousands of **prisoners of war**.
- ✓ The International Labour Organisation (p.0) began to pave the way for workers' rights, offering a minimum wage and suggested work hours.
- ✓ The Slavery Commission worked to get rid of slavery and prostitution globally.
- ✓ The Economic and Financial Committee sent experts to help countries such as Austria and Hungary, whose **economies** were nearly **bankrupt**.
- ✓ The other **commissions** worked to improve life for people across the world.

### ★ What were the League of Nations' failures in the 1920s?

The League was not completely successful in the 1920s.

- ✓ Its decisions in **disputes** over Corfu (p.0) and Vilna (p.0) were seen as unfair, as was its failure to act over the Ruhr.



- ✓ The International Labour Organisation (p.0) failed to force countries to introduce better working practices.
- ✓ The failure to **disarm** other nations was damaging to the League's reputation and caused even more resentment from Germany, which had been forced to disarm.
- ✓ The League showed itself to be biased towards larger, more powerful nations. This was clear during the Corfu (p.0) crisis.
- ✓ The League's most powerful members, Britain and France, prioritised their own needs before those of the League.
- ✓ Without an army of its own, the League showed it could only use **moral** condemnation and **sanctions** to make a country back down.
- ✓ Some world problems required agreements outside of the League. For example, the Dawes Plan (p.0) and the Locarno Pact (p.0) demonstrated the League was not fully effective at dealing with the issue of Franco-German relations.



### What were the League of Nations' successes in the 1930s?

The League had 2 important achievements in the 1930s:

- ✓ The Saar Commission successfully organised a **plebiscite**, where the **population** voted to reunite with Germany in 1935.
- ✓ The League successfully convened 26 nations to combat the dangerous selling of illegal drugs. This still functions today.



### What were the League of Nations' failures in the 1930s?

The League's failures in the 1930s far outweighed its successes.

- ✓ With the global Depression after 1929, the League faced many challenges it had not previously encountered.
- ✓ The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 showed the League was slow to act and powerless. Although the League condemned Japan's actions, it could not do anything to stop them.
- ✓ Following the invasion of Manchuria, the Japanese withdrew from the League and continued to invade other parts of China. This was a huge embarrassment to the organisation.
- ✓ At the Disarmament Conference, Germany walked out early over unfair treatment. Although it later returned, Hitler secretly began to rearm. By October, Germany again withdrew from the **conference**, and shortly after from the League itself.
- ✓ The Disarmament Conference failed for many reasons, as few members seriously considered **disarming**. It also saw Britain and France were divided on what to do with Germany.
- ✓ Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia (p.0) in 1935 was the final blow to the League of Nations. Once again it was slow to act and did little to discourage Italian **aggression**, wanting to retain an **ally** against Hitler.
- ✓ Equally damaging was the secret deal created by the British and French foreign **ministers**, Hoare and Laval. They planned to offer Mussolini two thirds of Abyssinia (p.0) in return for his withdrawal. They didn't consult the League or the Abyssinian emperor, or seek approval, first.
- ✓ As a result of the Abyssinian (p.0) Crisis, the League was viewed as insignificant in international affairs from then on.



### What were the League of Nations' overall successes?

The League had mixed success in its lifetime and did solve some **disputes** in the 1920s. Overall, the League's biggest success came from **commissions** that sought to fix global issues.



### What were the League of Nations' overall failures?

The League fell very short of Wilson's ideal. It was weakened by a lack of key members and an army of its own. This, along with the Depression and the self-interest of France and Britain, meant it was unprepared for dealing with aggressive nations in the 1930s.



### What did the different parts of the League of Nations do?

The League consisted of several bodies that each performed a different function:

- ✓ The Secretariat was the League's civil service.



- ✓ The Assembly (p.0) was a big meeting of all member countries to make important decisions about the League, and was effectively its **parliament**.
- ✓ The Council of the League (p.0) was a smaller executive body which decided how the League would react to events.
- ✓ The Permanent Court of International Justice was a mostly **independent** body that reached legal decisions when countries had **disputes**.
- ✓ The International Labour Organisation (p.0) was mostly **independent** and worked to improve working conditions in all its member countries.
- ✓ The **Commissions** were agencies set up by the League to tackle specific problems in member countries.
- ✓ The Council of Ambassadors was a group of important diplomats that had existed before the League was created. They represented the **allied** powers in issues around the peace settlements. It was **dissolved** in 1931.

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# GLOSSARY

## A

**Abolish, Abolished** - to stop something, or get rid of it.

**Abolition** - the act of abolishing something, i.e. to stop or get rid of it.

**Aggression** - angry, hostile or violent behaviour displayed without provocation.

**Agricultural** - relating to agriculture.

**Allies** - parties working together for a common objective, such as countries involved in a war. In both world wars, 'Allies' refers to those countries on the side of Great Britain.

**Annex, Annexation, Annexed** - to forcibly acquire territory and add it to a larger country.

**Assembly** - a meeting of a group of people, often as part of a country's government, to make decisions.

## B

**Bankrupt** - to be insolvent; to have run out of resources with which to pay existing debts.

**Blacklist** - the blocking of trade as a means to punish.

## C

**Campaign** - a political movement to get something changed; in military terms, it refers to a series of operations to achieve a goal.

**Casualties** - people who have been injured or killed, such as during a war, accident or catastrophe.

**Chancellor** - a senior state official who, in some countries, is the head of the government and responsible for the day-to-day running of the nation.

**Civil servant** - a person who works for the government, either at national or local level.

**Civilian** - a non-military person.

**Claim** - someone's assertion of their right to something - for example, a claim to the throne.

**Collective security** - a policy adopted by the League of Nations, with the idea members should feel safe from attack as all nations agreed to defend each other.

**Colonies, Colony** - a country or area controlled by another country and occupied by settlers.

**Commissions** - the collective term for several organisations set up by the League of Nations to solve global issues.

**Communism** - the belief, based on the ideas of Karl Marx, that all people should be equal in society without government, money or private property. Everything is owned by the people, and each person receives according to need.

**Communist** - a believer in communism.

**Conference** - a formal meeting to discuss common issues of interest or concern.

**Constitution** - rules, laws or principles that set out how a country is governed.

**Constitutional** - relating to the constitution.

**Cooperate, Cooperation** - to work together to achieve a common aim. Frequently used in relation to politics, economics or law.

**Council** - an advisory or administrative body set up to manage the affairs of a place or organisation. The Council of the League of Nations contained the organisation's most powerful members.

**Credit** - the ability to borrow money, or use goods or services, on the understanding that it will be paid for later.

**Currency** - an umbrella term for any form of legal tender, but most commonly referring to money.

## D

**Demilitarised** - to remove all military forces from an area and forbid them to be stationed there.

**Democratic** - relating to or supporting the principles of democracy.

**Disarm** - to remove any land, sea and air weaponry.

**Disarmament** - the reduction or removal of weaponry.

**Dispute** - a disagreement or argument; often used to describe conflict between different countries.

**Dissolution, Dissolve** - the formal ending of a partnership, organisation or official body.

**Dysentery** - an intestinal infection that causes diarrhoea containing blood or mucus. Other symptoms can include stomach cramps, nausea and vomiting. In some cases it can lead to death due to severe dehydration.

## E

**Economic** - relating to the economy; also used when justifying something in terms of profitability.

**Economy** - a country, state or region's position in terms of production and consumption of goods and services, and the supply of money.

**Electorate** - a group of people who are eligible to vote.

**Empire** - a group of states or countries ruled over and controlled by a single monarch.

**Epidemic** - an outbreak of disease that spreads quickly and affects many individuals at the same time.

**Eradicate, Eradication** - to destroy something and completely wipe it out.

**Export** - to transport goods for sale to another country.

**Extreme** - furthest from the centre or any given point. If someone holds extreme views, they are not moderate and are considered radical.

## F

**Fascist** - one who believes in fascism.

## H

**Hygiene, Hygienic** - a term for conditions or practices with the aim of maintaining good health and preventing disease, especially in regard to cleanliness.

**Hyperinflation** - rapid acceleration of inflation which typically sees a currency lose its value and become worthless. As a result, the price of goods skyrockets for a short period of time.

## I

**Import** - to bring goods or services into a different country to sell.

**Independence, Independent** - to be free of control, often meaning by another country, allowing the people of a nation the ability to govern themselves.

**Industrial** - related to industry, manufacturing and/or production.

**Industry** - the part of the economy concerned with turning raw materials into manufactured goods, for example making furniture from wood.

**International relations** - the relationships between different countries.

**Isolationism** - a policy adopted by the USA after the First World War which saw them withdraw from international disputes and European politics.

## L

**Left wing** - used to describe political groups or individuals with beliefs that are usually centered around socialism and the idea of reform.

**Leprosy** - a contagious and painful disease affecting the skin, mucous membranes and nerves; it can lead to permanent damage and even death.

## M

**Mandate** - authority to carry out a policy.

**Military force** - the use of armed forces.

**Mine** - an explosive device usually hidden underground or underwater.

**Minister** - a senior member of government, usually responsible for a particular area such as education or finance.

**Moderate** - someone who is not extreme.

**Morals** - a person's set of rules about what they consider right and wrong, used to guide their actions and behaviour.

## O

**Occupation** - the action, state or period when somewhere is taken over and occupied by a military force.

## P

**POW, Prisoner of war, Prisoners of war** - somebody who has been captured and taken prisoner by enemy forces.

**Parliament** - a group of politicians who make the laws of their country, usually elected by the population.

**Plebiscite** - a vote or referendum on an important matter in an area or country.

**Population** - the number of people who live in a specified place.

**Poverty** - the state of being extremely poor.

**President** - the elected head of state of a republic.

**Prevent, Preventative, Preventive** - steps taken to stop something from happening.

**Production** - a term used to describe how much of something is made, for example saying a factory has a high production rate.

**Province, Provinces** - part of an empire or a country denoting areas that have been divided for administrative purposes.

## R

**Raid** - a quick surprise attack on the enemy.

**Refugee, Refugees** - a person who has been forced to leave where they live due to war, disaster or persecution.

**Reparations** - payments made by the defeated countries in a war to the victors to help pay for the cost of and damage from the fighting.

**Right wing** - a political view with beliefs centred around nationalism and a desire for an authoritarian government opposed to communism.

## S

**Sanctions** - actions taken against states who break international laws, such as a refusal to trade with them or supply necessary commodities.

**Smallpox** - a contagious and potentially fatal disease that causes a high fever, rashes and blisters.

**Socialist** - one who believes in the principles of socialism.

**Soviet** - an elected workers' council at local, regional or national level in the former Soviet Union. It can also be a reference to the Soviet Union or the USSR.

**State, States** - an area of land or a territory ruled by one government.

## T

**Territories, Territory** - an area of land under the control of a ruler/country.

**Treaty** - a formal agreement, signed and ratified by two or more parties.

### U

**Unanimity, Unanimous** - when everyone involved is fully in agreement with each other.

### V

**Veto** - the right to reject a decision or proposal.

Sample

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