

WW2 HISTORY.COM

Why did the Nazis decide to invade the Soviet Union and what was the nature of this war?

Activity One:

Make a list of all the reasons why one country may want to go to war against another.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Activity Two:

Watch the film clip 'Why did the Nazis invade the Soviet Union?'

Which of the below were reasons, according to the film clip, for Hitler invading Russia?

With Russia defeated Britain would have to give up	The main reason for the invasion was that the USSR had a lot of oil that Hitler needed	Hitler hated Bolshevism (Communism)
The German invasion of the USSR was a mistake – Hitler never wanted to attack the Soviet Union	Hitler thought that he would change history by defeating the USSR	Hitler wanted to defeat the USSR because then he would have the biggest empire in the world
Hitler thought that the people who lived in the USSR were subhuman	Germany needed space in the east for its growing population – Lebensraum	Hitler hated the Jews

Which of the reasons above were not in your list?

Activity Three:

Although all wars are dreadful, barbaric events there are rules that state how each side should behave. Most armies and leaders in modern history have, largely, stuck to these rules. Was Hitler's war in the east the same as wars of the past? Watch the film clip 'Why was the war against the Soviets a 'different kind of war?' and fill in the table below to work out how and why Hitler's war against the Soviets was different.

Hitler's War in the East	Same / different to wars through the ages?	Why / Why not?
Himmler said that his Generals would have to depopulate areas by up to forty million people		
From the first day of the invasion Nazi killing squads were ordered to shoot all male Jews.		
Russian prisoners of war They were beings of a higher race and we were their subjects, slaves or underlings. We weren't people.		
This will be what he called a war of annihilation.		
They are going to make history in an exhilarating way that has no precedent. And that is kind of a high.		

