

## Evidence sheet

### Document A

I am not a follower of every new group that comes along. I joined the NSDAP because it is run by men who, above all, know what they want. Our educated classes are not good at organisation even though their theories may be well meant. Hitler and Drexler are men of action, although they have not been to university.

Gustav Seifert, Letter (6 January 1922)

### Document B

For five years I remained unemployed and I was broken in body and spirit and I learned how stupid were all my dreams in those hard days at university. I was not wanted by Germany ... then I was introduced to Hitler. You won't understand and I cannot explain either, because I don't know what happened, but life took on a tremendous new significance ... I have since committed myself, body, soul and spirit, to this movement ... I can only tell you that I cannot go back. I cannot question, I am pledged.

Interview with an un-named member of the Nazi party (1936)

### Document C

Here it seemed to me was hope. Here were new ideals, a new understanding, new tasks. The perils of Communism could be checked, Hitler persuaded us, and instead of hopeless unemployment, Germany could move towards economic recovery. It must have been during these months that my mother saw a Storm Trooper parade in the streets of Heidelberg. The sight of discipline in a time of chaos, the impression of energy in an atmosphere of universal hopelessness, seems to have won her over also.

Albert Speer (1931)



### Document D

What does our Chancellor Hitler want? He wants to lock up the Godless Communists. He wants to drive out the Jews. He wants proper government. He wants to give every German work. He wants an army again. He wants to make the German people powerful again.

Extract from a German history textbook (1934)

### Document E

We need some national pride again. But who can the nation be proud of these days? Of Ebert? Of the government? We need a national will just as much. We must not always say: 'We can't do that'. We must be able to do it. In order to smash this disgraceful peace treaty, we must regard every means as justified. First there must be a national mood and then will come the economic prosperity of the nation. We must have blind faith in our future ... We are not a class party, but the party of honest workers.

Extract from a speech by Hitler (October 1920)

### Document F

At one of the early congresses I was sitting surrounded by thousands of S.A. men and as Hitler spoke I was most interested at the shouts and more often the muttered exclamations of the men around me, who were mainly workmen or lower middle class types. "He speaks for me, he speaks for me", "He knows how I feel". Many of them seemed lost to the world around them and were probably unsure of what they were saying. One man in particular struck me as he leant forwards with his head in his hands, and said: "Gott sei Dank, he understands."

Amy Buller, *Darkness over Germany* (1943)



## Activity sheet

### Task 1: understanding the text

Read through the six documents carefully. Highlight any words or phrases which you don't know the meaning of. Discuss them with your neighbour, use a dictionary or ask your teacher to find out what they mean and record this on your copy.

### Task 2: identifying reasons for Nazi support

Pick out phrases from the documents which tell you about the reasons people had for liking Hitler and the Nazi party. Record them as a list.

e.g.

- "I joined the NSDAP because it is run by men who, above all, know what they want"
- "I was not wanted by Germany ..."

### Task 3: bringing order to the reasons

Look carefully at the selections on your list. Do they fit into any categories? For example, several might be about hatred of communism or the appeal of Hitler as an individual.

Highlight reasons which you think can be grouped together in the same colour and label the categories.

### Task 4: writing the answer

You are now ready to answer the question:

*Why did so many people in Germany support the Nazi party?*

Use each colour category as the theme for a short paragraph. Try to use quotations from the documents to back up your points as evidence. Don't forget you also need a brief introduction and conclusion to pull together your ideas.