

Name _____

Date _____

Adolf Hitler: A Closer Look

Read the following selections carefully. Be prepared to answer questions about the material.

Part A

Some facts about Hitler:

1. He was born in 1889 in Austria. He had an older half-brother, a half-sister, and a younger sister. He later adopted Germany as his country. He had a chronic fear that there was Jewish blood in his own family.
2. When Hitler was eighteen, he spent months caring for his mother, who was dying of cancer. Before her death, Klara Hitler begged her son's friend, August Kubizek, to help her otherwise friendless son. Later, Frau Hitler's doctor attested that Hitler was overcome with grief at his mother's death.
3. Adolf Hitler's first goal was to become an artist, but he was rejected by the art academy in Vienna. He then decided to become an architect. He wrote poems and prose, played the piano, and loved the opera.
4. As a soldier in World War I, he received the Iron Cross, 1st Class, "for personal bravery and general merit." He was wounded in the leg. He was also attacked with deadly mustard gas, which resulted in temporary blindness.
5. Hitler felt that Germany's surrender in 1918 was premature and shameful. Like almost all Germans, he deplored the Versailles Treaty.
6. Hitler loved animals, especially dogs. As a young man, out of sympathy and for his own amusement, he sometimes fed the mice in his room! Under his dictatorship, animal experimentation was limited by laws against vivisection.
7. Although he was determined never to marry and have a family, Hitler showed a love for children. Children of some of his associates affectionately called him "Uncle." He would not tolerate sexual abuse of children by his staff.
8. Hitler had a deeply ingrained hatred and fear of Jews. He also subscribed to the ideal of crafting a perfect German "master race."
9. He was a charismatic speaker who had an almost hypnotic effect on German audiences. He was also a brilliant propagandist who appealed to the masses through parades, posters, and extensive press campaigns.
10. Hitler was a disciplined person who never smoked and seldom drank alcoholic beverages. He was also a vegetarian.
11. He was an effective organizer, personally responsible for transforming the Nazi Party from a small fringe group into a powerful national force. Later, his leadership made Germany the most powerful nation in Europe.
12. Hitler married his mistress, Eva Braun, in 1945, shortly before their deaths in a suicide pact.¹