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| **Aim:** | **Date:** |
| **Key Words:**  **1.**  **2.** |  |

**Fascist Italy**

**A. Post World War I Italy**

Dear Cousin Alfonso,

You can’t imagine the problems that we face since the Great War ended. Conditions here are even worse than before you left for America.

My comrades and I fought for four long years. For what? At Versailles, the Allies treated Italy like dirt! We were promised territories which were rightfully ours and we got next to nothing! So what did we win? Why did we fight? I came home from the war and find that I cannot get a job, prices are sky high, and the government doesn’t do anything about it. Yet we pay heavy taxes to pay the costs of the “Great War.” Each day I read in the papers how the members of the Parliamentdebate the days away while millions of us starve. Meanwhile, workers are taking action. Workers are seizing factories, and there is talk of imitating the new communist government in Russia! If that happens, our family’s little property will be lost! Then what would we live on?

Last night, I went to a rally sponsored by the new Fascist Party. It was something to see, with military music, flags and banners everywhere! Their leader, Benito Mussolini, spoke. He is the only one who gives us hope. He told that we are the descendants of the Romans who once ruled the world. He said the Italian people will rise again and create a new Roman Empire! He told us that our problems are extreme and that only extreme actions will solve them and make us great again!

Your devoted cousin,

Fabio

*Describe three problems in Italy after World War I.*

*Explain the extent to which this quote is a reliable source on life in Italy after WWI. (Reliable, somewhat reliable, or unreliable)*

**B. Fascism and Mussolini**

The poverty and hopelessness caused by WWI and the Great Depression caused many countries to look for change. The people were ready to turn to strong leaders who promised a better future. A man named Benito Mussolini became the leader of Italy in 1922. He and his followers were called fascists**.** Fascism is a government led by a dictator having complete power, not allowing criticism, controlling all industry, and supporting extreme nationalism and often racism. He improved his country’s economy and industry, but he demanded total control of the country. In a fascist society, the country is considered more important than the individual.

*What is the main goal of Fascism and Mussolini?*

*Why do you think the people of Italy turned to a fascist government?*

**C. Mussolini’s Italy**

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| *Mussolini’s Italy* | *1.What caused this plan?*  *2. What is the effect of this plan?* |
| Mussolini's Ideas on War  “War alone brings up to their highest tension all human energies and imposes the stamp of self-respect upon the peoples who have the courage to make it. “Words are beautiful things, hut rifles, guns, ships, and airplanes are still more beautiful. The 20th century will be remembered as the century of Italian power and glory." |  |
| Mussolini's Battle for Births  “The fate of nations is intimately bound up with their powers of reproduction.” Mussolini wanted to increase the number of Italians from 40 to 60 million by 1950. More people meant more soldiers. Mothers were therefore given generous maternity benefits. Couples with six or more children did not have to pay taxes while unmarried men had to pay additional taxes. Newly married couples were given cheap train tickets so that they could go on their honeymoon. |  |
| Government Services and Agencies  Dopolavoro- Arranged sporting activities and provided workers with cheap holiday packages.  Minculpop (Ministrv of Popular Culture)- Made sure that film, plays, radio programs and books glorified Mussolini and Fascism. The Party tried to control sport, because victory in international matches would show the strength of Fascism. Tennis players had to play in black shirts and give the Fascist salute at the end of matches. |  |
| Mussolini's Economic Policies  "State intervention in economic production arises only when private initiative is insufficient This intervention may take the form of control, assistance or direct management."  Mussolini liked to tackle economic policies by declaring war on them. He launched the Battle Over the Southern Problem in 1924, laying the foundation for a new village called Mussolinia. It was to be the first of thousands of new villages that would change life for the poor. He also declared the Battle for Wheat in 1925 to convince farmers to grow more wheat so that Italy would not have to import it. The farmers who grew the most wheat were awarded with gold, silver, and bronze medals. What production doubled by 1939. Lastly, Mussolini initiated the Battle for Land in 1926, intending to drain marshes and swamps and clear woodlands to create more land for farms. |  |
| Rome Berlin Axis (1936)  Germany and Italy agree to work together for the future. Mussolini later joined the Anti-Communism Pact with Germany and Japan as an anti-communist alliance. Under the Charter of Race Jews were persecuted in Italy after 1938. Italy also entered the Pact of Steel, a military alliance with Germany. |  |