

Questio: _____

FASCISM IN ITALY

Directions: Examine the documents below or from the textbook and answer the questions that follow.

> Analyzing Key Concepts

Fascism
Fascism is a political movement that promotes an extreme form of nationalism and militarism. It also includes a denial of individual rights and dictatorial one-party rule. Nazism was the Fascist movement that developed in Germany in the 1920s and the 1930s; it included a belief in the racial superiority of the German people. The Fascists in Italy were led by Benito Mussolini, shown in the chart at right.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FASCISM

- Cultural**
 - censorship
 - indoctrination
 - secret police
- Social**
 - supported by middle class, industrialists, and military
- Chief Examples**
 - Italy
 - Spain
 - Germany
- Basic Principles**
 - authoritarianism
 - state more important than the individual
 - charismatic leader
 - action oriented
- Political**
 - nationalist
 - racist (Nazism)
 - one-party rule
 - supreme leader
- Economic**
 - economic functions controlled by state corporations or state

SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts

- Synthesizing** Which political, cultural, and economic characteristics helped make fascism an authoritarian system?
- Making Inferences** What characteristics of fascism might make it attractive to people during times of crisis such as the Great Depression?

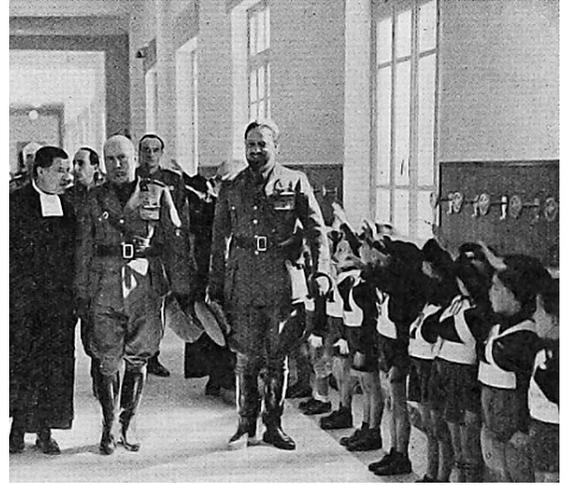
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DRILLING FASCISM The following is a primary source passage. In the 1930s, Italian writer Arturo Vivante (born in 1923) encountered fascism during his school days. In this excerpt, Vivante shows how fascism affected every aspect of life in Italy under Mussolini’s rule. *Annotate as you read, identifying key points of how fascism influenced school life for the young writer. Then, answer the questions.*

“The government was trying to turn Italians into warlike people, and soon military training was added to our education, already burdened by two periods of gymnastics. As though this weren’t enough, the authorities tried to ingratiate themselves and at the same time indoctrinate us by getting us out of classes right in the middle of a lesson. We might be translating a passage of Italian into Latin when suddenly the bell would ring, the class would be dismissed, and we would hurriedly assemble in the halls. There the head boys would arrange us in threes and march us out of the school, with the professor of gymnastics, who by now had become very important, in the lead... We never know where we would be led. If we were lucky, we would just march down the main street, march back, and be disbanded. More often, though, there was some surprise—like a speech broadcast from Rome. Then, in a square in which not just our school but all the schools

of Siena has assembled, after a long wait, we would have to listen to a mixture of voice and static carried at an incredible volume over the loudspeakers. Packed so tight we weren't able to sit, we would wait the end with aching feet...

At the beginning of my third year at the school, the professor of gymnastics, holding a large scroll under his arm, lined us up and told us there was something new in the program—calisthenics. He unrolled the scroll, stretched it out and showed it to us. From where we were, we saw a series of little stick figures. "An exercise in sixty movements," he said rather nervously. "You have the whole year to learn it. In June there'll be a big rally and I want you to know it perfectly by then..." As the drill continued into May, my mistakes became less and less frequent. I wasn't proud of this. Sometimes I would see myself, one of a crowd, performing like the rest, indistinguishable from them, and be disgusted.



... I hated gymnastics also because they spelled Fascism and the Fascists to me. How could I have let them get such a hold on me that they could twist my body this way and that according to their schemes—that the movements of my feet and knees and hands, backward or forward, up or down, should be dictated by them, for the benefit of a Fascist mayor and a noisy official come from Rome?"

Questions:

3. Why did students undergo military training?

4. How did political teachings interrupt the school day? Why might dictatorial governments want to control schools?

5. How does the author show that losing one's identity is one of the dangers of fascism?

6. Why did fascist governments aim to control every part of the daily life of a citizen? What benefit did it offer them?

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

7. What conditions in Italy made it possible for Fascism to take control?

8. Do you think Fascism could ever take hold in the United States? Why or why not? What conditions would have to be present for that to happen?