Bell Ringer: The Munich Agreement

Instructions: Examine the political cartoon. Read the background information. Answer the questions.

Background: When Hitler became the dictator of Germany, he began to take over various places in Europe. He took over Austria and then took the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. The Nazi's claimed Germans were being mistreated in this area and took the western boundary of Czechoslovakia. Yet, these claims were just lies and propaganda to give the Germans an excuse to invade the area. European nations were becoming anxious and wanted to reach an agreement for Hitler to stop invading other areas. On 9/30/1938, the Munich Agreement was achieved. Edouard Daladier, Premier of France, and Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, met with the Nazi regime to discuss a settlement on the issue. The leaders of France and Britain felt that, if Hitler was allowed to keep the Sudetenland, he will would stop invading other areas, so they agreed Germany could keep the area of the Sudetenland. This tactic is called “appeasement,” when you let a nation get away with an unjust action, if they pledge not to do it again in the future. Many asserted that appeasement would NOT work because it would just embolden Hitler to pursue the same actions in the future. This picture depicts Hitler as a monster that would not stop taking land in Europe, despite the Munich Agreement.

1. What is appeasement?
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2. What was the Munich Agreement?
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3. In speaking of the Munich Agreement, a British politician named Winston Churchill said these words, “Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonor. They chose dishonor. They will have war.” What do you think Churchill meant by these words?
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Answers:

1. What is appeasement?
   Appeasement is when you let a nation get away with an unjust action, if they pledge not to do it again in the future.

2. What was the Munich Agreement?
   In this agreement, Edouard Daladier, Premier of France, and Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, met with the Nazi regime to discuss a settlement on the issue. The leaders of France and Britain felt that, if Hitler was allowed to keep the Sudetenland, he will would stop invading other areas, so they agreed Germany could keep the area of the Sudetenland.

3. In speaking of the Munich Agreement, a British politician named Winston Churchill said these words, “Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonor. They chose dishonor. They will have war.” What do you think Churchill meant by these words?
   Winston Churchill was saying, in an ironic way, that the only real choice Britain and France had was to go to war with Germany. Once Germany started taking land, they were not going to stop. Appeasement would fail and, eventually, Britain and France would have to go to war anyway. So, Britain and France were not avoiding conflict with Germany, they were simply delaying the inevitable result that they were going to have to fight Hitler to stop his invasions in Europe.