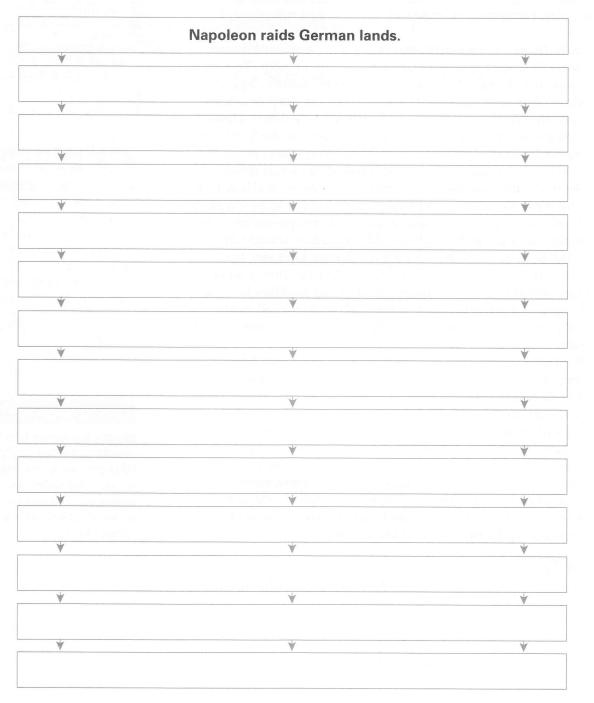# Note Taking Study Guide
BUILDING A GERMAN NATION

Focus Question: How did Otto von Bismarck, the chancellor of Prussia, lead the drive for German unity?

As you read this section in your textbook, complete the following chart to record the sequence of events that led to German unification.

Napoleon raids German lands.

CHAPTER 22 SECTION 1

Section Summary
BUILDING A GERMAN NATION

In the early 1800s, German-speaking people lived in a number of German states. Many also lived in Prussia and the Austrian empire. There was no unified German nation. However, events unfolded in the mid-nineteenth century that eventually led to the formation of one Germany. Between 1806 and 1812, Napoleon invaded these lands. He organized a number of German states into the Rhine Confederation. After Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna created the German Confederation. This was a weak alliance of German states headed by Austria. In the 1830s, Prussia created an economic union called the *Zollverein*. This union removed tariff barriers between many German states, yet they remained politically fragmented.

Otto von Bismarck, the **chancellor** of Prussia, led the drive to unite the German states—but under Prussian rule. Bismarck was a master of **Realpolitik,** or realistic politics based on the needs of the state. After creating a powerful military, he was ready to pursue an aggressive foreign policy. Over the next decade, Bismarck led Prussia into three wars. Each war increased Prussian power and paved the way for German unity.

In 1866, Bismarck created an excuse to attack Austria. The Austro-Prussian War lasted only seven weeks. Afterwards, Prussia **annexed** several north German states. In France, the Prussian victory angered Napoleon III. A growing rivalry between the two nations led to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Bismarck worsened the crisis by rewriting and releasing to the press a telegram that reported on a meeting between William I of Prussia and the French ambassador. Bismarck's editing of the telegram made it seem that William I had insulted the Frenchman. Furious, Napoleon III declared war on Prussia, as Bismarck had hoped. The Prussian army quickly defeated the French.

Delighted by the victory, German princes persuaded William I to take the title **kaiser** of Germany. In January 1871, German nationalists celebrated the birth of the Second **Reich.** Bismarck drafted a constitution that created a two-house legislature. Even so, the real power was in the hands of the kaiser and Bismarck.

Review Questions

1. What events occurred in the early 1800s that helped promote German unity?

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2. How did Bismarck use war to create a united Germany under Prussian rule?

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READING CHECK

What was Realpolitik?

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VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *editing* mean in the underlined sentence? Circle the context clues in the paragraph that could help you figure out what *editing* means.

READING SKILL

Recognize Sequence What events led Napoleon III to declare war on Prussia?

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