8

STUDY GUIDE

Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905–24

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Contents

How to use this book ........................................................................................................... 7
What is this book about? ...................................................................................................... 8
Revision suggestions ........................................................................................................... 10

Timelines
Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24 ............................................................................. 11

Background to Russia
Introduction to Russia in the Early 1900s ....................................................................... 14
The Russian Calendar ......................................................................................................... 0

How did the Tsars Rule Russia?
Tsarist Rule ...................................................................................................................... 0
Tsar Nicholas II .................................................................................................................. 0
Tsarist Police State ........................................................................................................... 0

Discontent
Discontent .......................................................................................................................... 0
Political Opposition to the Tsar ........................................................................................ 0

Causes and Events of 1905 Revolution
The Russo-Japanese War, 1904-05 .................................................................................. 0
Bloody Sunday, 1905 ........................................................................................................ 0
The 1905 Revolution .......................................................................................................... 0

Political Parties
The Octobrist Party ........................................................................................................... 0
The Socialist Revolutionary Party ....................................................................................... 0
The Trudovik Party ............................................................................................................ 0
The Kadets .......................................................................................................................... 0
The Social Democratic Party .............................................................................................. 0
The Bolshevik Party .......................................................................................................... 0
The Mensheviks .................................................................................................................. 0

Tsar Nicholas II Response
The October Manifesto, 1905 ............................................................................................. 0
The Fundamental Laws 1906 ............................................................................................. 0

The State Duma
The State Duma ................................................................................................................ 0
First Duma, 1906 ............................................................................................................... 0
Second Duma, 1907 .......................................................................................................... 0
Third Duma, 1907 to 1912 ................................................................................................. 0
Fourth Duma, 1912 to 1917 ............................................................................................... 0
Pyotr (Peter) Stolypin ........................................................................................................ 0
Land Reform ...................................................................................................................... 0
Russification ....................................................................................................................... 0
The Lena Goldfield Strike, 1912 ....................................................................................... 0

Russia in the First World War
Russia and the First World War ....................................................................................... 0
Effects of the First World War .......................................................................................... 0

The February Revolution and the Provisional Government
The February Revolution, 1917 ....................................................................................... 0
The Petrograd Soviet ......................................................................................................... 0
The Provisional Government ............................................................................................. 0
The June Offensive, 1917 ................................................................................................. 0
The July Days, 1917 ......................................................................................................... 0
The Kornilov Revolt, 1917 ............................................................................................... 0
Growth in Support for Bolshevik Party ............................................................................. 0

The October Revolution, 1917
The October Revolution, 1917 ....................................................................................... 0
Storming the Winter Palace, October 1917 ...................................................................... 0

The Bolshevik Consolidation of Power, 1917-18
Bolshevik Consolidation of Power ................................................................................... 0
Decree on Land, 1917 ....................................................................................................... 0
Decree on Peace, 1917 ...................................................................................................... 0
Decree on Workers’ Rights, 1917 ..................................................................................... 0
Decree on Nationalities, 1917 .......................................................................................... 0
Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, 1917 .................................................. 0
The Constituent Assembly, 1918 ..................................................................................... 0
The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 1918 ........................................................................ 0
The Communist Party, 1918 ............................................................................................ 0

The Russian Civil War
The Civil War, 1918-1921 ................................................................................................. 0
The Red Terror .................................................................................................................. 0
The Kronstadt Mutiny, 1921 ............................................................................................. 0
The Sovnarkom .................................................................................................................. 0
The Politburo ..................................................................................................................... 0

Economic Policies, 1918 to 1928
War Communism, 1918-1921 .......................................................................................... 0
New Economic Policy, 1921-1924 .................................................................................. 0

People of Russia and the Soviet Union
Tsarina Alexandra ............................................................................................................. 0
Alexander Kerensky ......................................................................................................... 0
General Kornilov .............................................................................................................. 0
Vladimir Lenin .................................................................................................................... 0
Prince Lvov ........................................................................................................................ 0
Grigori Rasputin ................................................................................................................ 0
Leon Trotsky ....................................................................................................................... 0
In this study guide, you will see a series of icons, highlighted words and page references. The key below will help you quickly establish what these mean and where to go for more information.

**Icons**

- **WHAT** questions cover the key events and themes.
- **WHO** questions cover the key people involved.
- **WHEN** questions cover the timings of key events.
- **WHERE** questions cover the locations of key moments.
- **WHY** questions cover the reasons behind key events.
- **HOW** questions take a closer look at the way in which events, situations and trends occur.
- **IMPORTANCE** questions take a closer look at the significance of events, situations, and recurrent trends and themes.
- **DECISIONS** questions take a closer look at choices made at events and situations during this era.

**Highlighted words**

*Abdicate* - occasionally, you will see certain words highlighted within an answer. This means that, if you need it, you’ll find an explanation of the word or phrase in the glossary which starts on page 17.

**Page references**

*Tudor (p.7)* - occasionally, a certain subject within an answer is covered in more depth on a different page. If you’d like to learn more about it, you can go directly to the page indicated.
Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24 is the historical investigation that studies why and how Russia was transformed from an autocratic tsarist government to a communist dictatorship between 1905 and 1924. You will focus on crucial events during this period and study the different social, cultural, political, economic, military and religious changes that occurred.

Purpose
This study will help you understand the complexities and challenges that Tsar Nicholas II faced during his rule. You will investigate themes such as power, law and order, government, revolution, communism, dictatorship, religion, and economy and society. It will enable you to develop the historical skills of identifying key features of a time period and encourage you to analyse and compare sources and evaluate interpretations.

Topics
Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24 is split into 5 key enquiries:

- **Enquiry 1** looks at the tsarist rule in Russia between 1905 and 1914. You will study how the tsars ruled Russia and the reasons for discontent. You will investigate to what extent Nicholas II was able to successfully deal with this in the years before the First World War.

- **Enquiry 2** looks at opposition to Tsar Nicholas II’s rule during the First World War. You will investigate the massive social, economic and political impact the war had on Russia which triggered the February Revolution and led to the tsar’s abdication.

- **Enquiry 3** looks at events between the February and October Revolutions. You will study the impact of Lenin’s return to Russia, the weaknesses and failures of the Provisional Government, and the role played by the Petrograd Soviet. This enquiry culminates with the events of the Bolshevik revolution of October 1917.

- **Enquiry 4** looks at how the Bolsheviks consolidated their power and the Russian Civil War. You will study the actions of the new government from their Decrees of 1917 to the reasons for victory in the Civil War.

- **Enquiry 5** looks at economic changes brought in by the Bolsheviks. You will study why they introduced War Communism, what it was, and its disastrous impact on the people of Russia. You will investigate why the Bolsheviks responded by introducing the New Economic Policy and what opposition that faced. The enquiry finishes by weighing up Lenin’s achievements before he died prematurely in 1924.

Key Individuals
Some of the key individuals studied on this course include:

- Tsar Nicholas II.
- Tsarina Alexandra.
- Rasputin.
- Vladimir Lenin.
- Joseph Stalin.
- Leon Trotsky.
- Alexander Kerensky.
- Pyotr Stolypin.

Key Events
Some of the key events you will study on this course include:

- Bloody Sunday, 1905.
- The Lena Goldfields Strike, 1912.
- The effect of the First World War on Russia.
- The February Revolution, 1917.
- The consolidation of Bolshevik control.
- The Russian Civil War.
- The New Economic Policy.
Assessment
Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24 forms part of paper 2 where you have a total of 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete. You should spend 45 minutes on this section of the paper. There will be 1 exam question, broken down into a, b and c, which will assess what you have learned on the Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24 course.

- Question a is worth 6 marks and will require you to describe two key features of one of two events given. You will need to identify two key features and support each with relevant factual detail.

- Question b is worth 8 marks. This question will require you to cross-reference two sources, explaining how one supports the evidence of the other, supported with evidence from both.

- Question c is worth 16 marks and requires you to explain how far you agree with an interpretation. In your explanation you must evaluate the interpretations, review alternative views, and use your own knowledge of the historical context as well as two sources to come to your conclusion.

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THIS IS A SAMPLE.
REVISION SECTION REMOVED.
Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24

- Russo-Japanese War began
- January 1905 - Bloody Sunday
- June 1905 - Potemkin Mutiny
- October 1905 - St Petersburg Soviet created
- October 1905 - October Manifesto published
- 1906 - Fundamental Laws published
- April 1906 - First Duma opened
- 1906 - Stolypin's land reform introduced
- April 1906 - Lena Goldfields Massacre
- April 1912 - Tsar Nicholas II assumed personal command of the Russian Army
- Russia entered the First World War
- December 1916 - Rasputin assassinated
- February 1917 - International Women's Day Protest sparked the February Revolution
- March 1917 - Tsar Nicholas abdicated
- April 1917 - Lenin returned to Russia and published his April Theses
- June 1917 - The June Offensive
- July 1917 - The July Days
- July 1917 - Alexander Kerensky became the leader of the Provisional Government
- August 1917 - Kornilov Revolt
- October 1917 - October Revolution by the Bolsheviks
- October 1917 - Bolsheviks issued the Decree on Peace
- December 1917 - Cheka created
- January 1918 - Constituent Assembly shut down by Lenin
- March 1918 - The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed
- June 1918 - Introduction of War Communism
- 1918 - Russian Civil War began
July 1918 - Assassination of Tsar Nicholas II and his family
August 1918 - Red Terror began

Russian Civil War ended with a Bolshevik victory

March 1921 - Kronstadt naval mutiny
March 1921 - Decree on Party Unity banned factions
March 1921 - New Economic Policy introduced

December 1922 - USSR created

January 1924 - Lenin died

January 1924 - Lenin died
**INTRODUCTION TO RUSSIA IN THE EARLY 1900S**

Churchill described Russia as, ‘It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.’

### What was Russia like in the early 1900s?

In the early 1900s, Russia was an enormous empire which was economically and agriculturally backwards. It was ruled by an autocratic tsar, who had absolute power, and suppressed all opposition.

### How many ethnic groups lived in Russia in the early 1900s?

Russia had approximately 150 ethnic groups, who spoke over 100 different languages.

### How big was Russia in the early 1900s?

In the early 1900s, Russia was an empire that stretched 6,000 miles, from the Baltic to the Pacific and from the Arctic down to central Asia.

### Which countries did Russia border in the early 1900s?

Russia shared a border with the German Empire in Europe and China in the Far East, as well as Finland in the north and Afghanistan in the south.

### What geographical problems did Russia have in the early 1900s?

The geographical size of Russia causes 6 main problems:

- Due to the size of the country, certain areas were difficult to control as they were far away from the tsarist capital, St Petersburg.
- Communication across the country was poor, leading some areas to be divided and detached.
- There were a lack of railways and useable roads.
- A large amount of land was unsuitable for farming.
- The peasants used backward and inefficient agricultural methods.
- With an increasing population, land was in short supply.

### What type of government did Russia have in the early 1900s?

There were 6 key features of tsarist government:

- The tsars were emperors who ruled with absolute power. Their power was justified by the belief that they possessed the divine right to rule.
- There was an Imperial Council who advised the tsar, whose members came from the nobility. The tsar appointed or dismissed its members, therefore the nobles were often corrupt and more interested in securing their position in the Imperial Council than providing balanced advice.
- There was a Committee of Ministers who ran 13 different departments (increased to 14 in 1900). The ministers were appointed by the tsar and their decisions needed his approval.
- There was a massive bureaucracy to run such a huge country. It was slow and often corrupt.
- Russia was divided into 117 different provinces which were run by the nobles. The governors of the provinces were responsible for enforcing the tsar’s laws, which they could do with some degree of independence.
- It relied on the Imperial Army, the Russian Orthodox Church and the police to keep control.

### How developed was industry in Russia in the early 1900s?

There were 6 main issues with Russia's level of industrialisation:

- It had a low-level of industry but it was growing quickly. By 1914, Russia was the world’s 4th largest producer of coal, pig iron and steel.
Its banking system was backwards and could not support the investment needed to modernise the country.
It lacked workers for new industries as many peasants were tied to their villages because of the debts they owed to their landlords.
There was extreme poverty in Russia, therefore there was little demand for manufactured goods making investment for modernisation very difficult.
The level of industrialisation was uneven across the empire. The industrial cities tended to be in the western parts of Russia.
It lacked a developed transport network. There were few paved roads and although railways were developing, they were inadequate for helping Russia modernise.

What was farming like in Russia in the early 1900s?
There were 6 main issues with Russian agriculture:
- Agriculture was backward with little use of modern technology. Most peasants were subsistence farmers who mainly used traditional methods of farming because they had little to no education or opportunity to modernise.
- The peasants were emancipated in 1861, which meant they were free from serfdom. In practice, serfdom was replaced with debt slavery, forcing the peasants to take on loans in order to buy back their land.
- The Russian countryside experienced frequent famines and crop failures, leading to food shortages and starvation.
- The government failed to successfully deal with famines through a combination of the tsar's indifference to suffering, poor infrastructure, local corruption and the nobles' mismanagement of the land.
- Most peasants were illiterate, poorly informed and resistant to change.
- The village commune, or mir, controlled how the peasants farmed and on which land they farmed. The mir allocated small strips of land to village peasants which was very often an ineffective and unproductive way to farm.

What were conditions like in Russia in the early 1900s?
By the 1900s, the living and working conditions in Russian town were terrible for 3 main reasons:
- Workers usually shared filthy rooms in block-style buildings.
- There could be up to 10 people sharing a room in these buildings, including men, women and children.
- Although working days were officially limited to 11 hours per day, the average working day was 15-16 hours.

What were the main religions of Russia in the early 1900s?
In the early 1900s, the 3 main religions were:
- Russian Orthodox, a form of Christianity, and the official state religion of Russia.
- Judaism. There were about 5 million Jews.
- Islam. There were about 23 million Muslims.

What role did the Church play in Russia in the early 1900s?
The Russian Orthodox Church played a very important role in Russia in 4 main ways:
- It taught the Russian people to love and obey the tsar as the 'Little Father'.
- It underpinned the tsarist government as many Church leaders were from the aristocratic class of Russia's rulers who owned vast country estates.
- It was very conservative in nature and used its influence to block any change in Russia that might upset its position in society.
- It played a large role in education by teaching children to show loyalty to the tsar, his officials, and the Church.

What different social classes existed in Russia in the early 1900s?
There were 7 different groups that made up Russian society by the late 1800s:
- The aristocrats made up about 1% of the population but owned 25% of the land.
The clergy made up 0.5% of the population.

The middle class of small bankers, merchants and professionals made up about 0.5% of the population.

There was a class called ‘urbanities’ which consisted of small tradesmen, shopkeepers, white collar workers and artisans that made up 11% of the population.

Cossacks made up about 2.3% of the population.

The peasants made up about 80% of the population, an overwhelming majority, and were exceptionally poor and illiterate.

About 8% was made up of other groups.

**What different nationalities made up Russia in the early 1900s?**

In the early 1900s, Russia was made up of several different nationalities. The 5 main ones were:

- Slavs (including Belarusians, Russians, and Ukrainians).
- Poles.
- Asians.
- Germans.
- Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians.
GLOSSARY

A

Abdicate - to give up a position of power or a responsibility.
Abolish, Abolished - to stop something, or get rid of it.
Abolition - the act of abolishing something, i.e. to stop or get rid of it.
Agricultural - relating to agriculture.
Agriculture - an umbrella term to do with farming, growing crops or raising animals.
Alliance - a union between groups or countries that benefits each member.
Allies - parties working together for a common objective, such as countries involved in a war. In both world wars, ‘Allies’ refers to those countries on the side of Great Britain.
Archaic - to be very old or old-fashioned.
Aristocracy - the highest social class, whose members gain their power from possessing land, property and money.
Aristocrat - a person who belongs to the aristocracy.
Artillery - large guns used in warfare.
Assassinate - to murder someone, usually an important figure, often for religious or political reasons.
Assassination - the act of murdering someone, usually an important person.
Assembly - a meeting of a group of people, often as part of a country’s government, to make decisions.
Autocracy - a system of government where the ruler has absolute power over their country.
Autocrat - a ruler who has absolute power over their country.

Ceasefire - when the various sides involved in conflict agree to stop fighting.
Censorship - the control of information in the media by a government, whereby information considered obscene or unacceptable is suppressed.
Civil rights - the rights a citizen has to political or social freedoms, such as the right to vote or freedom of speech.
Civilian - a non-military person.
Claim - someone’s assertion of their right to something - for example, a claim to the throne.
Clergy - those ordained for religious duties, especially in the Christian Church.
Commune - a place where a group of people live and work together and share resources.
Communism - the belief, based on the ideas of Karl Marx, that all people should be equal in society without government, money or private property. Everything is owned by the people, and each person receives according to need.
Communist - a believer in communism.
Conscription - mandatory enlistment of people into a state service, usually the military.
Conservative - someone who dislikes change and prefers traditional values. It can also refer to a member of the Conservative Party.
Consolidate - to strengthen a position, often politically, by bringing several things together into a more effective whole.
Constitution - rules, laws or principles that set out how a country is governed.
Constitutional - relating to the constitution.
Constitutional monarchy - a political system in which a monarch's powers and authority are limited by a constitution.
Cooperate, Cooperation - to work together to achieve a common aim. Frequently used in relation to politics, economics or law.
Corrupt - when someone is willing to act dishonestly for their own personal gain.
Coup - a sudden, violent and illegal overthrow of the government by a small group - for example, the chiefs of an army.
Culture - the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.
Currency - an umbrella term for any form of legal tender, but most commonly referring to money.

B

Bolshevik, Bolsheviks - was a Russian radical Marxist revolutionary group, founded by Vladimir Lenin and Alexander Bogdanov in 1903. A Bolshevik is someone who is a member of that party.
Bourgeoisie - the capitalists who owned the means of production, i.e. land, banks and factories, in Marxist ideology.
Boycott - a way of protesting or bringing about change by refusing to buy something or use services.
Bribe, Bribery, Bribes - to dishonestly persuade someone to do something for you in return for money or other inducements.

C

Cabinet - politically, the group of senior ministers responsible for controlling government policy.
Capitalism - the idea of goods and services being exchanged for money, private ownership of property and businesses, and acceptance of a hierarchical society.

D

Debt - when something, usually money, is owed by a person, organisation or institution to another.
Decree - an official order with the force of law behind it.
Democracy - a political system where a population votes for its government on a regular basis. The word is Greek for ‘the rule of people’ or ‘people power’.
Democratic - relating to or supporting the principles of democracy.

Dictatorship - a form of government where an individual or small group has total power, ruling without tolerance for other views or opposition.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat - the belief that, whilst the proletariat would eventually come to rule itself as proposed by Karl Marx, for now they were not ready, and required a ‘dictator’ to guide them until they were able to rule themselves.

Discriminate, Discrimination - to treat a person or group of people differently and in an unfair way.

Dispute - a disagreement or argument; often used to describe conflict between different countries.

Dissolution, Dissolve - the formal ending of a partnership, organisation or official body.

Divine right - the belief held by monarchs or rulers that they are given the right to rule by God.

Economic - relating to the economy; also used when justifying something in terms of profitability.

Economy - a country, state or region’s position in terms of production and consumption of goods and services, and the supply of money.

Empire - a group of states or countries ruled over and controlled by a single monarch.

Estate, Estates - an extensive area of land, usually in the country and including a large house. It tends to be owned by one person, family or organisation.

Exile - to be banned from one’s original country, usually as a punishment or for political reasons.

Export - to transport goods for sale to another country.

Extreme - furthest from the centre or any given point. If someone holds extreme views, they are not moderate and are considered radical.

Famine - a severe food shortage resulting in starvation and death, usually the result of bad harvests.

Foreign policy - a government’s strategy for dealing with other nations.

Free elections - elections in which voters are free to vote without interference.

Front - in war, the area where fighting is taking place.

General strike - occurs when many different groups of workers strike at the same time, often with the aim of bringing a country to a standstill.

Gulag - a forced labour camp in the USSR.

Haemophilia - a genetic blood disorder where the blood does not clot properly.

Heavy industry - the manufacture of large and/or heavy items in bulk, or industries which involve large and heavy equipment and/or facilities. Examples are the iron, coal, steel and electricity industries.

Hierarchies, Hierarchy - the ranking of people according to authority, for example a colonel in the army being higher than a corporal.

Illiterate - unable to read or write.

Import - to bring goods or services into a different country to sell.

Independence, Independent - to be free of control, often meaning by another country, allowing the people of a nation the ability to govern themselves.

Industrial - related to industry, manufacturing and/or production.

Industrialisation, Industrialise, Industrialised - the process of developing industry in a country or region where previously there was little or none.

Industry - the part of the economy concerned with turning raw materials into manufactured goods, for example making furniture from wood.

Inferior - lower in rank, status or quality.

Inflation - the general increase in the prices of goods which means money does not buy as much as it used to.

Infrastructure - the basic physical and organisational facilities a society or country needs to function, such as transport networks, communications and power.

International relations - the relationships between different countries.

Left wing - used to describe political groups or individuals with beliefs that are usually centered around socialism and the idea of reform.

Legitimacy, Legitimate - accepted by law or conforming to the rules; can be defended as valid.

Liberal - politically, someone who believes in allowing personal freedom without too much control by the government or state.

Manifesto - the stated policies or aims of a political party or person, normally published before an election.

Massacre - the deliberate and brutal slaughter of many people.
GLOSSARY

Means of production - resources which enable the production of goods, such as tools, factories and raw materials.

Merchant, Merchants - someone who sells goods or services.

Middle class - refers to the socio-economic group which includes people who are educated and have professional jobs, such as teachers or lawyers.

Military force - the use of armed forces.

Militia - an army created from the general population.

Minister - a senior member of government, usually responsible for a particular area such as education or finance.

Mir - was a village in which the community holds the land jointly but farms it individually in tsarist Russia.

Mobilisation - the action of a country getting ready for war by preparing and organising its armed forces.

Moderate - someone who is not extreme.

Modernise - to update something to make it suitable for modern times, often by using modern equipment or modern ideas.

Monarchists - people in favour of living in a country governed by a monarchy.

Monarchy - a form of government in which the head of state is a monarch, a king or queen.

Morale - general mood of a group of people.

Mutiny - a rebellion or revolt, in particular by soldiers or sailors against their commanding officers.

Mystical - relating to magical, religious or spiritual powers.

Nationalism, Nationalist, Nationalistic - identifying with your own nation and supporting its interests, often to the detriment or exclusion of other nations.

Nobility - the social class ranked directly below royalty.

Noble, Nobles - another word for aristocrat - a member of the highest and richest class in society.

Oath - a solemn promise with special significance, often relating to future behaviour or actions.

Occupation - the action, state or period when somewhere is taken over and occupied by a military force.

Parliament - a group of politicians who make the laws of their country, usually elected by the population.

Patriotic - a strong love of and support for one’s country.

Peasant - a poor farmer.

Police state - a totalitarian country in which the police have a great deal of power to control the people and suppress opposition.

Population - the number of people who live in a specified place.

Poverty - the state of being extremely poor.

President - the elected head of state of a republic.

Prevent, Preventative, Preventive - steps taken to stop something from happening.

Production - a term used to describe how much of something is made, for example saying a factory has a high production rate.

Profit - generally refers to financial gain; the amount of money made after deducting buying, operating or production costs.

Propaganda - biased information aimed at persuading people to think a certain way.

Prosecute - to institute or conduct legal proceedings against a person or organisation.

Prosperity - the state of thriving, enjoying good fortune and/or social status.

Province, Provinces - part of an empire or a country denoting areas that have been divided for administrative purposes.

Purged, Purging - abrupt and often violent removal of a group of people from a place or organisation; medically, to make someone sick or induce diarrhoea as a treatment to rid them of illness.

Radical, Radicalism - people who want complete or extensive change, usually politically or socially.

Rationing - limiting goods that are in high demand and short supply.

Real wages - a person’s income in terms of how much they can buy after taking inflation into account.

Rebellion - armed resistance against a government or leader, or resistance to other authority or control.

Rebels - people who rise in opposition or armed resistance against an established government or leader.

Reform, Reforming - change, usually in order to improve an institution or practice.

Regent - the person who rules when the king is away, incapacitated or too young to rule.

Reign - a period of power, usually by a monarch.

Relief - something that reduces pressure on people, often through financial or practical support.

Reparations - payments made by the defeated countries in a war to the victors to help pay for the cost of and damage from the fighting.

Repress, Repression - politically, to prevent something or control people by force.

Repressive - a harsh or authoritarian action; usually used to describe governmental abuse of power.
Republic - a state or country run by elected representatives and an elected/nominated president. There is no monarch.

Requisition - to take something, usually by official order, such as a government taking food from peasants.

Revolution - the forced overthrow of a government or social system by its own people.

Right wing - a political view with beliefs centred around nationalism and a desire for an authoritarian government opposed to communism.

Riots - violent disturbances involving a crowd of people.

Russification - a policy implemented by the tsars in Russia to enforce Russian culture and language on non-Russian ethnic groups.

Self-determination, Self-determined - in politics, the process where a nation decides its own statehood and whether it will rule itself rather than be part of a larger empire.

Serfdom - the condition or state of being a serf.

Socialism - a political and economic system where most resources, such as factories and businesses, are owned by the state or workers with the aim of achieving greater equality between rich and poor.

Socialist - one who believes in the principles of socialism.

Soviet - an elected workers’ council at local, regional or national level in the former Soviet Union. It can also be a reference to the Soviet Union or the USSR.

State, States - an area of land or a territory ruled by one government.

Strike - a refusal by employees to work as a form of protest, usually to bring about change in their working conditions. It puts pressure on their employer, who cannot run the business without workers.

Subsistence, Subsistence farming, Subsistent - a type of farming in which farmers only grow or produce enough for their own use, with no surplus to sell.

Successor - someone who succeeds the previous person, such as a leader who takes over the role from the previous holder.

Suppress, Suppression - the use of force to stop something, such as a protest.

Tactic - a strategy or method of achieving a goal.

Territories, Territory - an area of land under the control of a ruler/country.

Trade unions - organised groups of workers who cooperate to make their lives better at work. For example, they might negotiate for better pay and then organise a strike if one is refused.

Treaty - a formal agreement, signed and ratified by two or more parties.

Tsar - the Russian word for emperor; can also be spelled ‘czar’.

Ultimatum - a final demand, with the threat of consequences if it is not met.

Upper class - a socio-economic group consisting of the richest people in a society who are wealthy because they own land or property.

Veto - the right to reject a decision or proposal.

Welfare - wellbeing; often refers to money and services given to the poorest people.

Working class - socio-economic group consisting of those engaged in waged labour, especially manual work or industry, who typically do not have much money.

Zemstvos - elected local assemblies, set up Russia in 1864 to administer local affairs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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