

1 Definitions

Reading

Skim the two texts below to find words or phrases that fit these definitions

Paragraph 1

- 1. less developed \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. completely in control \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. a male ruler of Russia before 1917 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. the period in European history up to the 1500s \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. a poor person working on the land \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. a worker who worked for the landowner, with very few rights \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. basic, old-fashioned \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. a number of workers refusing to work \_\_\_\_\_

Paragraph 2

- 9. making someone feel stupid or ashamed \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. a system of equal rights, such as the right to vote for everyone \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. a country with an elected government, with no king or queen \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. a political system, where the government controls all production \_\_\_\_\_



Tsar Nicholas II with his wife Tsaritsa Alexandra Feodorovna and their five children, from left; Maria, Alexei (seated on floor), Olga, Tatiana and Anastasia.

At the beginning of the 20th century, compared to the countries of Western Europe, Russia was alarmingly backward. The government of the country was still in the hands of the all-powerful Tsar. In many ways Russian society had changed little since medieval times. Although the peasants were no longer serfs, their lives were hard, their homes primitive, their food poor. There were frequent strikes and riots against these conditions, which exposed the Tsar's weakness.



Soldiers and workers on the streets of Petrograd

Following a humiliating defeat in a war with Japan in 1905, the Tsar promised democratic reform, but it never happened. The First World War against Germany produced similar humiliation for the Russians, and in 1917 a spate of riots and strikes broke out again. The Tsar was deposed and Russia was declared a republic. However, six months later, after a second revolution, a group calling themselves Bolsheviks (Communists) took control. Although it took a civil war for Communism finally to gain control, Russia did not return to rule by the Tsar.

### 3 Reasons for Revolution

### Reading

**Read and order these words to make sentences.**

the Russia by was Tsar ruled

\_\_\_\_\_.

society had much Russian not changed

\_\_\_\_\_.

lives were very the of peasants the hard

\_\_\_\_\_.

many there strikes were riots and

was the weak very Tsar

promised the never reforms happened

Japan war the was with humiliating

were strikes and in 1917 many riots there

the declared was deposed and a Tsar republic was

revolution was led Bolsheviks second there a by the

## 4 The Revolution in Pictures

## Writing

Look at the photos of Russian peasants, and of Tsar Nicholas II. With your partner, write three words in the table that describe each photo. Using the words you have chosen, write three sentences to describe the people you see.



Peasants in a Russian village



Tsar Nicholas II

	Words	Sentences
Russian peasants	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
Tsar Nicholas	1	1
	2	2
	3	3

## 5 The Bolsheviks Take Control

## Reading

Number these sentences in the right order to make a paragraph about the birth of Communism.

Their leader, Lenin, was better organized than their opponents. <input type="checkbox"/>	A few Bolshevik leaders were now in control of all of Russia. <input type="checkbox"/>	They had been unhappy with the new government. <input type="checkbox"/>
Six months after the Tsar was deposed, the Bolsheviks took over. <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Despite this help, the Bolsheviks won. <input type="checkbox"/>	Their opponents were helped by foreign governments. <input type="checkbox"/>

## ANSWER KEY

## 1 Definitions

## Reading

1. backward
2. all-powerful
3. Tsar
4. medieval
5. peasant
6. serf
7. primitive
8. strike
9. humiliating
10. democratic
11. republic
12. communism

## 3 Reasons for Revolution

## Reading

1. Russia was ruled by the Tsar.
2. Russian society had not changed much.
3. The lives of the peasants were very hard.
4. There were many strikes and riots.
5. The Tsar was very weak.
6. The promised reforms never happened.
7. The war with Japan was humiliating.
8. There were many strikes and riots in 1917. (or: 'In 1917,...')
9. The Tsar was deposed and a republic was declared.
10. A second revolution was led by the Bolsheviks.

## 3 The Bolsheviks Take Control

## Reading

1. Six months after the Tsar was deposed, the Bolsheviks took over.
2. They had been unhappy with the new government.
3. Their leader, Lenin, was better organized than their opponents.
4. Their opponents were helped by foreign governments.
5. Despite this help, the Bolsheviks won.
6. A few Bolshevik leaders were now in control of all of Russia.