

Year 12 History: Russian Revolution Summer Holiday Work

Part 1: Watch the following documentaries on Russia under the Tsars. These will give you useful background knowledge and understanding. (total 45 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXPP1j1yahg>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PFQ7Th_rAs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-x4VcmHfxU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1W1b6j8U46k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-qxWWRcN-4>

(If these links do not work, search for “Land of the Tsars” and watch the episodes from Nicholas I on)

Part 2: Do your own reading and research on Russia in Revolution and under the Communists and draw up a timeline from 1917-1953. You can include as many dates as you wish, but the events below must be included with a brief explanation of what they are. We will build on this in Year 12 so it does not need to be complete and you should leave space for more events and detail. (total 60 minutes)

February Revolution	Lenin’s Return in April	October Revolution
Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	Russian Civil War	War Communism
The New Economic Policy	Death of Lenin	The Five Year Plans
Collectivisation	Kirov Assassination	The Show-Trials and Purges
Nazi Soviet Pact	Berlin Blockade	Death of Stalin

Part 3: Read the source below. How valuable this source is to a historian studying Nicholas II and his rule of Russia? (This is an A-Level style question, which I will take in for marking in September). (total 30 minutes)

He merely believed what his father and Pobedonostev [his tutor] had installed into him; there would be no Russia without autocracy; Russia and the autocracy were one; he himself was the impersonation of the autocracy. So the magic circle closed. There was no way out, unless it was into disaster and void. Living in the twentieth century, he had the mentality of the Muscovite Kings. The daily work of a monarch he found intolerably boring. He could not stand listening long or seriously to ministers’ reports, or reading them. He liked such ministers as could tell an amusing story and did not weary the monarch’s attention with too much business. When it came to defending his divine right his usual indifference left him, he became cunning, obstinate and cruel, merciless at times.

Taken from Alexander Kerensky’s memoirs, *Crucifixion of Liberty*, written in 1934. Kerensky was a lawyer who became involved in radical politics. In 1905 he spent time in prison for publishing a socialist newspaper. By 1917 he was a member of the Socialist Revolutionaries and was a member of the Provisional Government that ruled Russia following the overthrow of the Tsar. He was himself overthrown by the Bolsheviks in October 1917 and fled to France where he wrote extensively on the Russian Revolution to attempt to explain his understanding of events to the wider world.

Possible wider Reading:

“Animal Farm” or “1984” both by George Orwell (both superb books that really everybody must read!)

There are hundreds of good history books on the Russian Revolution. Perhaps my favourite, is “A People’s Tragedy” by Orlando Figes (it is long, but incredible)

People’s Century Documentary, Red Flag: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZDXZBnsKRQ> (excellent personal accounts of the revolution and life under the Communists)