

Swanshurst History
Transition materials for
A Level History

Russia 1917-1953



Introduction

We are very glad that you have chosen to continue your historical journey at Swanshurst.

This pack contains a programme of activities and resources to prepare you to start an A Level in History in September. It is aimed to be used after you complete your GCSE throughout the remainder of the summer term and over the summer holidays to ensure you are ready to start your course in September. The jump from GCSE to A level is a huge jump and working through some of these activities will help you to make that jump.

Reading List

Books – Non Fiction

- **Russian History: A very short introduction: Geoffrey Hosking** – This book discusses all aspects of Russian history, from the struggle by the state to control society to the transformation of the nation into a multi-ethnic empire, Russia's relations with the West, and the post-Soviet era.
- **Stalin: A Biography: Robert Service** – A full assessment of Stalin from his early years in Georgia, his youthful activism, his relationship with Lenin, his family and his party members.
- **The Russian Revolution: A Very Short Introduction – S.A Smith** – This focusses on the main events and developments in Soviet Russia between 1917 – 1936.

Books – Fiction

- **The Road of Bones: Fine, Anne** - Based on life in Russia under Stalin, it is a fable about the nature of totalitarianism. It reveals how power corrupts and how quickly the oppressed can become the oppressors.
- **Natasha's Will: Joan Lingard** - A dangerous journey into exile during the Russian Revolution. When Natasha's grandfather is arrested in St Petersburg in 1917, her aristocratic family are forced to flee for their lives.
- **Animal Farm: A Fairy Story: George Orwell** – A well- known classic story detailing the events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Films

- **The Romanovs – An Imperial Family** – A Russian film with subtitles, set in 1917 focussing on the last days of Tsar Nicholas II and the rest of the Romanov family.
- **Enemy at the Gates** – Set in 1942, in the Battle of Stalingrad, the main character, Vasily Zaytsev (played by Jude Law), becomes the poster boy for the Red Army due to his sniper skills.
- **Animal Farm** – The cartoon version of the book, showing the events leading up to the Russian Revolution.

- **Child 44** – Featuring Tom Hardy, the film follows a disgraced member of the Russian military police. Charged with investigating a series of child murders during the Stalin era, where supposedly this sort of crime doesn't exist.
- **Bridge of Spies** – Featuring Tom Hanks, an American lawyer is recruited to defend an arrested Soviet spy in court, and organise an exchange of the spy for a captured American pilot.
- **Goodbye Lenin** – Although not set within the time parameter of the topic, this comedy focusses on a young man who has to protect his fragile Mother who has come out of a long coma from a fatal shock that Communism has ended.

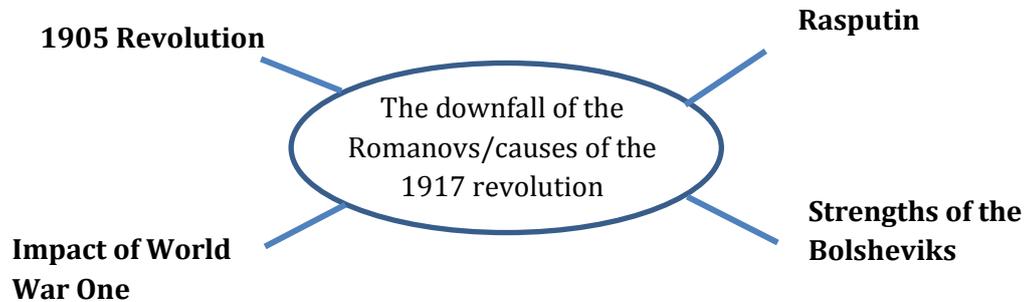
Useful links

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/zq7qtfr/resources/1>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/russia/>

Independent Research

1905-1917 – The downfall of the Romanovs

Task: Create a mind map using the following headings:



1917-1924 – The Bolshevik early years

Task: Consider the questions below:

1. Why was Lenin so popular in 1917?
2. Name 3 events that happened between 1917 and 1924.
3. Did Lenin remain popular?

1924-1934 – Stalin comes to power

Task: Create a fact file on Josef Stalin.

Include: Early life, political beliefs before 1917, role in 1917 revolution, role in Bolshevik party.

1934-1953 – The Terror!

Task:

1. Look up the role of the NKVD in Russia under Stalin
2. Investigate the interrogation techniques used by the NKVD
3. What do you think it was like to live under Stalin?

Required Knowledge and Skills

Key Pre Knowledge topics

1. **Fact File of Russia** – Research the situation in modern day Russia including the following facts:

- Population
- Capital
- Flag
- Currency
- Border countries
- Border continents
- President
- Land area
- Ethnic make-up
- Religions
- Languages

2. **Russian Map work** – Print off a colour A4 map of Russia. Locate and mark the following:

- St Petersburg
- Moscow
- Novgorod
- Arctic Ocean
- Siberian Plane and Peninsula
- Ural Mountains

3. **Glossary of key terms** – Create a glossary of the following words:

- Tsar
- Liberalism
- Revolution
- Intelligentsia
- Serf
- Serfdom
- Zemstva
- Emancipation
- Taxation
- Autocracy
- Slav
- Communism
- Capitalism

- Assassination
- Bolshevik
- Menshevik
- Cheka
- Soviets
- New Economic Policy
- Politburo
- Proletariat
- Bourgeoisie
- Collectivisation
- Gulag
- Totalitarian

4. **Timeline** – Create a timeline of key events of 1905 – 1917. Your first event should be Bloody Sunday and your last event should be the October Revolution.
5. **Romanov Family Tree** – Dating back to Alexander I, create a family tree of the ruling Romanov dynasty.

Baseline Assessment

Essay writing

You will need to complete two essays based on the research you have done. The questions and suggested structure are below:

1. "Tsar Nicholas II was an effective leader". How far do you agree with this statement?

Suggested structure:

Four paragraphs (two arguing each side), and a conclusion.