

## Was Tsar Nicholas II an effective leader?

Task 1: Each of the sources below has space around it for you to annotate. Pick out **key details for each one** – then **explain the most important aspect of the source**.

A



Painted by the Russian realist painter, Bogdanov-Belsky in 1908

B

**Adapted from Alexander Kerensky's Memoirs, Crucifixion of Liberty, 1934. Kerensky was a socialist member of the State Parliament.**

He merely believed what his Father had instilled into him. There would be no Russia without Autocracy, Russia and Autocracy were one, and he himself was the impersonation of Autocracy. The daily work of a monarch he found intolerably boring. He could not stand listening to minister's reports or reading them. He liked ministers who could tell an amusing story and did not weary his attention with too much business. When it came to defending his Divine Right his usual indifference left him, he became cunning, obstinate and even cruel, merciless at times.

Task 2: Each of the interpretations below is from a historian. Annotate what they tell you about Nicholas II? **How do they differ?**

"[Nicholas] was handsome and blue-eyed but diminutive and hardly majestic, and his looks and immaculate manners concealed an astonishing arrogance, contempt for the educated political classes, vicious anti-Semitism, and an unshakable belief in his right to rule as a sacred autocrat. He was jealous of his ministers, and he possessed the unfortunate ability to make himself utterly distrusted by his own government. His marriage to Princess Alexandra of Hesse only exacerbated these qualities.

**British Historian Simon Sebag Montefiore, *The Romanovs 1613–1918*, 2016**

"The Tsar and his family left the Winter Palace in St Petersburg to drive through the streets in open carriages for the first time since the troubles of 1905. Crowds flocked to cheer, wave banners, wonder at the decorated streets and thank God for their Tsar. After a round of dinners and balls, the family toured the original heartland of Russia before enjoying a triumphal entry into Moscow. Nicholas led the way on a white horse, to the adulation of confetti-throwing crowds who had gathered beneath the Romanov flags that filled the streets."

**Historians Sally Waller and Chris Rowe, *AQA A Level Textbook***