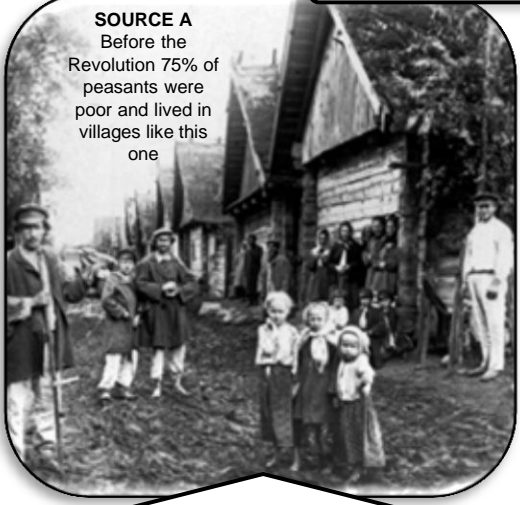


RUSSIAN PRE-REVOLUTION SOCIETY

PEASANT PROBLEMS



SOURCE A
Before the Revolution 75% of peasants were poor and lived in villages like this one

1. Based off the picture how can you tell that the people are poor?
2. What do you think conditions would be like in this village during the winter?

SOURCE B: PEASANT OBSTACLES
Prior to 1861 Russian serfs, who were peasants permanently tied to their landlords, had little to no rights. Serfdom in Russia is often compared to American slavery. Many serfs were subjected to harsh working conditions with no hope for a better life for them or their children. With the peasants freedom in 1861 they were given small amounts of land for which they had to pay the government back. They therefore had small farms and heavy debts, with the result that they were very poor. Most of the peasants could not read or write so they knew very little about how to improve the land. They still used the old farming methods, working on their plots by hand. They envied the rich with their huge estates.

3. List 3 obstacles peasants faced after 1861 once freed from Serfdom?
-
-
-

SOURCE C: INDUSTRIALIZATION

In the early 1900 ' s the Russian government wanted factories so Russia could become rich and powerful like Britain, the USA and Germany. These countries had been through the Industrial Revolution. Industry was also needed to strengthen Russia ' s ability to defend herself. Increasingly success in war meant having large industries to produce ammunition and railway lines to equip and transport armies.

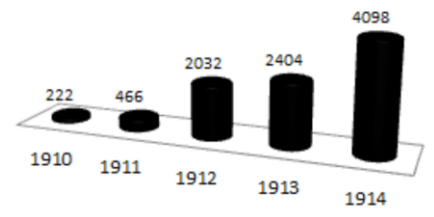
Russian industry grew very quickly. Industrial workers had very hard lives. They suffered long hours and dangerous conditions for very low pay.

The speed of industrialization led to overcrowding in the cities. Many slept in their factories while others lived in uncomfortable barracks and those fortunate to find a flat or a room often had to share with several other families.

It was difficult for the Tsar (Russia ' s ruler) to help the workers. Many Russian factories were owned by foreign companies who invested in Russia because it cost so little to employ Russian workers. If the Tsar passed laws making the foreign companies pay the Russian workers more the foreign companies might take their business elsewhere instead. This would ruin the process of Industrialization that Russia needed.

SOURCE D: STRIKES

Strikes in Russia 1910-1914



WORKERS DISCONTENT

4. Provide at least 2 reasons why the Russian government was eager to Industrialize:

5. What conditions are the Russian factory workers subjected to?

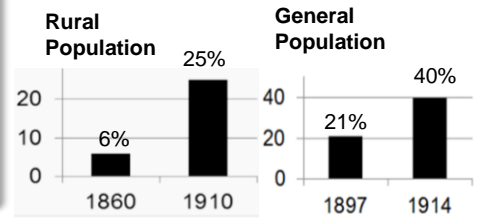
6. Why do you think many people in Russia moved to the cities to work even though conditions were terrible?

7. What conclusions can be drawn from SOURCE D?

8. Why did the Tsar find it difficult to improve the workers' situations?

LITERACY

SOURCE E: RUSSIAN LITERACY RATES



9. What inferences can be made from SOURCES E & F?

SOURCE F: Katerina Breshkovskaia, Socialist Revolutionary Party, memoirs of her revolutionary work between 1896-1903.
"The peasants intensely desire education for their children, for they realized that this was the only way in which they could escape the slavery they themselves had endured."

RUSSIAN SOCIETY STALIN ERA

"Stalin has concentrated enormous power in his hands, and I am not sure he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution . . . Stalin is too rude and this fault becomes unbearable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore I propose to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it a man who is . . . more patient, more loyal, more polite, and more attentive to comrades ..."



SOURCE F—Lenin's directive to the Communist Party Leadership in 1922

LENIN'S VIEW

10. Based off Lenin's quote how does he think Stalin would be as a leader? Cite specific details from the passage to support your answer

FAMINE

SOURCE G—Famine Testimony of Tatiana Pawlichka
 After the harvest, the villagers tried to go out in the fields to look for grain left behind by the harvest; the communists would arrest them and shoot at them, and send them to Siberia. That summer, the vegetables couldn't even ripen - people pulled them out of the ground - still green - and ate them. People ate leaves, nettles, milkweed. By autumn, no one had any chickens or cattle. Here and there, someone had a few potatoes or beets. All the train stations were overflowing with starving, dying people. Everyone wanted to leave the Ukraine because it was said that there was no famine across the border. Very few (of those who left) returned. They all perished on the way. They weren't allowed to leave and were turned back at the border. In February of 1933, there wasn't a cat, dog, or sparrow in the village. There was cannibalism in our village. On my farmstead, an 18 year-old boy, Danylo Hukhlib, died, that his mot younger sisters and brothers cut him up and ate him. The communists cam and took them away, and we never saw them again. People said they took them a little ways off and shot them right away - the little ones and the older ones together. The ground thawed, and they began to take the dead to the ravine in ox carts. The air was filled with odor of decomposing bodies. The wind carried this odor far and wide. It was thus over all the of the Ukraine.

11. Underline or highlight a sentence from Tatiana's testimony that stands out to you the most and write a reactions to it.



THE FIVE YEAR PLANS			
SOURCE H	1927-8	1932	1937
Coal - millions of tons	35.4	64.3	128.0
Oil - millions of tons	11.7	21.4	28.5
Pig-iron - millions of tons	3.3	6.2	14.5
Steel - millions of tons	4.0	5.9	17.7
Electricity - thousand million kilowatt hrs.	5.0	17.0	36.2
Woolen cloth - millions of meters	97.0	93.3	108.3

12. Based off the data from SOURCE H how successful were the 5 Year Plans?

RELIGION

SOURCE I—Joseph Stalin, Moscow, 1953

The party cannot be neutral towards religion, and it conducts anti-religious propoganda against all religions because it stands for science, whereas religion is opposed to science. The party cannot be neutral towards the clergy who poison the minds of the workers. Have we persecuted the clergy? Yes, we have, the only unfortunate thing is that they had not yet been completely eliminated.



13. What reasoning does Stalin give as to why the Communist Party is against religion?

LITERACY RATES

SOURCE J-- Literacy as percent of the population of Russia/USSR

1897	1926	1939	1959	1979
26.3%	56.6%	89.1%	98.5%	99.9%

14. How have literacy rates been effected post Russian Revolution?

From this side of the handout identify two documents that a historian would need to take into account either the source of the document or the author's point of view that might indicate bias and explain.

ESSAY: On a separate piece of paper compose a well written essay comparing life for Russians pre-revolution to life under Stalin. Which situation were the citizens better off under? Cite specific examples from the sources on this handout and/or your notes/book.