

Year 12 History



Transition Booklet



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A-Level History: Paper 1 – The USSR, 1917–1991: From Lenin to Yeltsin

This course explores one of the most dramatic and important periods in modern world history. You will investigate how the Soviet Union was created, how it became one of the world's most powerful states, and why it eventually collapsed after more than 70 years of

The Course Themes

Theme 1: Communist Governments (1917–1985)

- **How did Communist leaders maintain power?**
- Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution
- Stalin's dictatorship and the Great Terror
- Khrushchev's reforms
- Brezhnev and the era of stagnation

Theme 2: Industrial and Agricultural Change (1917–1985)

- **How did the USSR attempt to transform its economy?**
- War Communism and the NEP
- Collectivisation and the Five-Year Plans
- Industrial growth and economic challenges
- Why did the Soviet economy begin to fail?

Theme 3: Controlling the People (1917–1985)

- **How did Soviet leaders control society?**
- Propaganda and censorship
- Secret police and political repression
- Purges, surveillance and fear
- Challenges to Communist authority

Theme 4: Social Developments (1917–1985)

- **What was everyday life like in the USSR?**
- Education and youth organisations
- Women and family life
- Living standards and housing
- Culture, religion and social change

Theme 5: The Collapse of the USSR (1985–1991)

- **Why did one of the world's superpowers collapse?**
- Gorbachev's reforms: *Glasnost* and *Perestroika*
- Economic and political crisis
- Nationalism and opposition movements
- The end of Communist rule and the rise of Yeltsin

A-Level History: Paper 2 – Mao's China, 1949–1976

This course explores one of the most fascinating and controversial leaders in modern history: Mao Zedong. You will investigate how Mao transformed China from a poor, war-torn country into a Communist state, the impact of his policies on millions of people, and whether his rule improved or damaged China.

The Course Themes

Theme 1: Establishing Communist Rule (1949–1957)

- **How did Mao and the Chinese Communist Party secure control of China?**
- The Communist victory in 1949
- Political campaigns and land reform
- The First Five-Year Plan
- The Hundred Flowers Campaign and Anti-Rightist Campaign

Theme 2: The Great Leap Forward and its Consequences (1958–1965)

- **Why did Mao launch the Great Leap Forward, and why did it fail?**
- Communes and industrial targets
- Economic change and agricultural reform
- The Great Famine
- Challenges to Mao's leadership

Theme 3: The Cultural Revolution (1966–1976)

- **Why did Mao launch the Cultural Revolution, and what impact did it have?**
- Mao's return to power
- The Red Guards and attacks on the 'Four Olds'
- Political purges and violence
- The role of Jiang Qing and the Gang of Four

Theme 4: Social, Cultural and Economic Change (1949–1976)

- **How did life change for ordinary people under Mao?**
- Education and healthcare
- Women and family life
- Religion and culture
- Living standards and the impact of Communist policies

Paper 1: Russia, 1917–1991: From Lenin to Yeltsin

Task 1: Why Did Revolution Happen in Russia?

Create a **one-page information sheet** answering the question:

Your work should include:

- Tsar Nicholas II
- Problems facing Russia before 1917
- The impact of the First World War
- Lenin and the Bolsheviks
- The October Revolution

Include at least **five key facts** and **three images**.

Task 2: Who Was the Most Successful Soviet Leader?

Research the following Soviet leaders:

- Vladimir Lenin
- Joseph Stalin
- Nikita Khrushchev
- Leonid Brezhnev
- Mikhail Gorbachev



Leader	Main Achievements	Main Failures	Overall Success Rating (/10)
Lenin			
Stalin			
Khrushchev			
Brezhnev			
Gorbachev			

Task 3: Investigating Soviet Life

Research **what everyday life was like in the Soviet Union during either the 1930s or the 1980s**. Produce a **fact file or poster** that includes:

- Housing
- Education
- Employment
- Women's roles
- Living standards



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Paper 2: Mao's China, 1949–1976

Task 4: Who Was Mao Zedong?

Create a profile page on Mao Zedong that includes:

- When and where he was born
- How he became leader of China
- Five key events during his rule
- Three interesting facts
- A short explanation of why historians disagree about Mao's legacy

You may present this as:

- A fact file
- A poster
- A timeline
- An information sheet

Task 5: Investigating the Great Leap Forward

Research the Great Leap Forward (1958–1962) and answer the following questions:

- Why did Mao launch the Great Leap Forward?
- What were communes?
- What happened to agriculture and industry?
- Why did famine occur?
- Was the Great Leap Forward a success or a failure?

Task 6: The Cultural Revolution

Research the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) and create a one-page summary sheet explaining:

- Why Mao launched the Cultural Revolution
- Who the Red Guards were
- What happened to teachers and political opponents
- The attack on the 'Four Olds'
- The role of Jiang Qing and the Gang of Four
- The impact on ordinary people

