

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

STUDY AND EXAM GUIDE

2ND EDITION

HTAV

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REVISION CHECKLISTS

AREA OF STUDY 1: CAUSES OF REVOLUTION (1896–26 OCTOBER 1917)

Below are all of the key knowledge outcomes for Area of Study 1 (AOS1) in the VCE History Study Design. You may be required to answer a SAC or an exam question about any of these.

Revise each outcome carefully. Test whether you can explain it to another person or write about it in a practice exam question. Once you have revised each item, tick it off the checklist below.

There are four types of key knowledge outcomes. Basically, you need to be able to explain how each of the following *caused* the revolution. More specifically:

KEY KNOWLEDGE OUTCOME TYPE	WHAT YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO DO
 the events and conditions that contributed to the outbreak of revolution	Can you explain the causes and effects of each of these events? Can you explain how they were significant in bringing about a revolutionary situation?
 the ideas that played a significant role in challenging the existing order	Can you explain how these inspired Russians to challenge their government?
 the role of individuals in challenging or maintaining the power of the existing order	Can you explain how the actions of this person helped strengthen and/or weaken the government?
 the contribution of popular movements and political parties in mobilising society and challenging the existing order.	Can you explain how these groups gained the support of Russians and challenged the government ?

Notes	Test
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RUSSIA AOS1 KEY KNOWLEDGE	
Key Movements and Their Ideas	  Kadets and liberal ideas
	 Octobrists
	 Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs)
	  Mensheviks and Marxism
	  Bolsheviks and Marxism–Leninism
TOPIC 1 1905 Revolution (January–October 1905)	 Tsar Nicholas II
	 Institutional weaknesses and tensions in Tsarist Russia
	 Economic and social inequalities in Tsarist Russia
	 Reasons for discontent with the Tsarist autocracy
	 Workers' protests

RUSSIA AOS1 KEY KNOWLEDGE		Notes	Test
...continued	⚡ Soldier and sailor mutinies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	⚡ Bloody Sunday massacre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOPIC 1 1905 Revolution (January– October 1905)	⚡ Defeat in Russo-Japanese War	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	🗨️ Demands for liberal reforms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	👥 Peasant uprisings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	⚡ The October Manifesto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	👤 Pyotr Stolypin's reforms and repression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOPIC 2 Repression and Reform (1906–1914)	⚡ Fundamental Laws of the Empire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	⚡ Limitations of the Dumas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	⚡ World War I (WWI): military defeats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOPIC 3 World War I and the Collapse of Tsarism (1914–February 1917)	⚡ WWI: criticism of the tsar in the Duma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	⚡ WWI: economic effects on Russia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	👤 Tsarina Alexandra and Grigori Rasputin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	⚡ 👥 Events of the February Revolution (including workers' strikes, soldiers' and sailors' mutinies, and the tsar's abdication)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	TOPIC 4 Dual Authority and the Rise of the Bolsheviks (March–October 1917)	⚡ Dual Authority (the relationship between the Provisional Government and Petrograd Soviet)	<input type="checkbox"/>
⚡ Effectiveness of the Provisional Government		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
👤 Vladimir Lenin		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⚡ Lenin's return and the April Theses		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
👤 Alexander Kerensky		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⚡ June Offensive		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⚡ July Days		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⚡ Kornilov Affair		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
👤 Leon Trotsky		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⚡ Events of October 1917 (including the Military Revolutionary Committee [MRC] and the Bolshevik seizure of power)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you want to achieve the highest marks on the exam, it is very helpful to gather and memorise a range of quotations that illustrate different **historical perspectives** (views of people at the time) and **historical interpretations** (views of historians) of the causes of the Russian Revolution.

A good target would be to gather three quotations on each of the following:

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS		Notes	Test
RUSSIA AOS1	The role of Tsar Nicholas II in the development of the revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Causes and significance of the 1905 Revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Causes of the February Revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Role of the Provisional Government in the development of the revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Role of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the development of the revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Causes of the October Revolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOPIC 1: 1905 REVOLUTION (JANUARY–OCTOBER 1905)

KEY KNOWLEDGE	CAUSE	EFFECT	SIGNIFICANCE
<p>Economic and social inequalities in Tsarist Russia</p> <p>Bloody Sunday (9 January 1905)</p> <p>Workers' protests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Poor working conditions (e.g. average worker had a thirteen-hour day, paid less than one rouble a day). ▶ Anger over firing of four workers at Putilov steelworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Father Georgy Gapon wrote a petition to the tsar seeking 'truth, justice and protection' and demanded improved working conditions and a democratically elected Duma. ▶ 150,000 protesters marched to Winter Palace. ▶ 200 protesters killed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Destroyed myth of benevolent tsar. ▶ Tsar viewed as 'Bloody Nicholas'. ▶ 400,000 workers went on strike in January 1905, triggering many other protests through 1905. ▶ By October 1905, general strikes had broken out in fifty cities.
<p>Liberal ideas and reforms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bloody Sunday created dissatisfaction with autocracy and tsar's failure to listen to protesters. ▶ Tsar called for petitions for reform in an effort to defuse growing revolutionary tensions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Critics of the tsar united as the Union of Unions in May 1905, adopting the slogan, 'We can no longer live like this!' ▶ Union of Unions demanded reforms, including civil rights, elections based on a universal franchise and a legislative Duma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tsar dismissed growing demands for democracy, arguing, 'I will never agree to the representative form of government, because I consider it harmful to the people whom God has entrusted to me'. ▶ More Russians were drawn to the idea of democracy, increasing criticism of the autocracy. ▶ Members of the Union of Unions established the Kadet party in October 1905.
<p>Economic and social inequalities in Tsarist Russia</p> <p>Peasant uprisings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Peasants believed land belonged to all who work it, and they resented the gentry who owned the best one-sixth of the land. ▶ Breakdown of law and order after Bloody Sunday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Peasant rebellions broke out across Russia from June 1905. ▶ 3000 manors destroyed, peasants redistributed land and wealth. ▶ Gentry fled the countryside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tsarist regime lost control of the countryside.
<p>Defeat in Russo-Japanese War</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The war took place in the far east, 7000 km from central Russia, stretching supply lines. ▶ Russian commanders used outdated tactics such as cavalry charges, and failed to use modern radio communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Russian army routed after suffering 90,000 casualties in Battle of Mukden (February 1905). ▶ Russian navy lost entire Baltic Fleet in forty-five minutes of fighting in Battle of Tsushima (May 1905). ▶ Russia surrendered to Japan and was forced to cede territory in Treaty of Portsmouth (September 1905). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tsarist regime humiliated by Japan, which was perceived as 'inferior'. ▶ Poor morale in the Russian armed forces led to a series of mutinies.

KEY KNOWLEDGE	CAUSE	EFFECT	SIGNIFICANCE
Soldier and sailor mutinies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Soldiers had poor conditions (e.g. forced to eat maggoty meat on Potemkin). ▶ Low morale due to defeat in Russo-Japanese War. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 400 mutinies in Russian army in 1905 and 1906. ▶ Sailors of the Battleship Potemkin mutinied (June 1905), murdering their officers and taking over the ship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tsarist regime humiliated and powerless. ▶ Potemkin mutiny triggered the Odessa massacres, as 2000 pro-mutineer protesters were killed (July 1905).
October Manifesto (17 October 1905)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Union of Unions called for nationwide general strike demanding liberal reforms. ▶ General strike paralysed St Petersburg and Moscow (13 October 1905). ▶ St Petersburg Soviet (self-governing workers' council) established; by 17 October 1905, fifty soviets had been created in cities across Russia. ▶ Tsar could not raise enough reliable soldiers to put down the strike by force. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Count Sergei Witte convinced tsar to promise political concessions. ▶ Tsar issued the October Manifesto, which promised liberal democratic reforms, including civil rights, elections based on universal suffrage, and a legislative Duma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Tsar promised to end the autocracy. ▶ In the short term, the manifesto helped end protests and created optimism that Russia would become a democracy. ▶ In the long term, the tsar's failure to commit to democratic reform caused anger and disillusionment, leading to overthrow in the February Revolution.

VIEWPOINT

KEY QUOTATION

Leon Trotsky

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The events of 1905 enhanced the class consciousness of Russian workers and peasants, and they gained experience they would use in 1917.

'The events of 1905 were a prologue to the two revolutions of 1917, that of February and that of October.'

Stephen Smith

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

After 1905, Russians no longer saw the tsar as a benevolent ruler. This would enable more extreme revolutionary action in 1917.

*'The 1905 revolution had **destroyed the people's loyalty to their "little father" the tsar.***

Orlando Figes

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

While it failed to bring about change, the 1905 Revolution increased the organisation and assertiveness of Russians in seeking change.

*'Although the regime succeeded in restoring order, it could not hope to put the clock back. **1905 changed society for good.***

Richard Pipes

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

The 1905 Revolution showed that Russian society contained fatal divisions that tsardom could not contain.

*'The country was **boiling over from anger, envy, and resentment** ... which until then had been contained by awe and fear' of the tsar. When Russians 'lost respect for the government, there was **nothing to hold society together.***

Q d) Using Source 9 and your own knowledge, explain how Bolshevik rule impacted workers and peasants after 1917. (5 marks)

UNPACKING THE QUESTION

- There are two key knowledge outcomes assessed by this question. You must discuss workers and peasants to achieve full marks.
- The verb 'explain' means you need to give a step-by-step explanation of a historical process.
- The scope of the question is impacts. That means you need to explain ways that these social groups were affected or how their lives changed.
- The question instructs you to use Source 9. You will need to select two substantive quotations from this source to support your response.
- The question instructs you to use 'your own knowledge'. This means you need to extend beyond the points in the sources, and include other points. To get full marks, you will need some specific evidence (such as laws, facts, dates, battles, statistics, quotations, etc.).

UNPACKING THE SOURCE

- Quickly skim the source to get a general understanding of what it is about.
 - » This is an interpretation that says the Bolsheviks were not very popular, and they stayed in power using ruthless methods.
 - » A list of Bolshevik actions is given, targeting different problems and affecting different groups of the population.
 - » Not all of the points relate to workers and peasants. You need to re-read the source closely to pick out the most relevant points.
- Then, closely re-read the source. This will ensure you have not missed anything and will allow you to select useful quotations. Underline or highlight three short quotations that reveal at least one way workers were affected, and at least one way peasants were affected. For example:
 - » Source 9 states that 'Sovnarkom dispatched armed squads to seize grain'
 - » Source 9 states that 'when workers voted for Mensheviks ... the Bolsheviks declared the elections invalid and sent in armed units'.

GATHERING EVIDENCE FROM YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE

- Initially, the Bolsheviks issued reform decrees aimed at improving the lives of peasants and workers:
 - » Decree on Land (26 October 1917) redistributed the gentry's land to the peasantry.
 - » Decree on the Eight-Hour Working Day (29 October 1917) gave workers the eight-hour workday, and the Decree on Workers' Control (14 November 1917) gave workers democratic control of the factories.

- However, during the period of civil war and War Communism, Bolshevik rule became more repressive:
 - » Five million peasants were conscripted into the Red Army.
 - » Excessive grain requisitioning triggered a famine that caused five million peasant deaths in 1921.
 - » Workers were subjected to military discipline and paid meagre rations under the system of War Communism.

ANSWERING THE QUESTION

Writing tip: The best responses will smoothly integrate quotations from the sources and meaningfully connect these to your argument. For example, 'The Duma became increasingly dissatisfied with the Tsarist regime's inept management of the war effort, which is reflected in Source 1 by Milyukov's question, "Is this stupidity or is this treason?"'

Practise starting a sentence with a quotation, and ending it with an explanation of what the quotation refers to. Then, practise starting a sentence with your own fact, and ending with a quotation that backs this up. You can see examples of both strategies in the sample response below. Try using some of these connective phrases in your own writing:

The source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... captures the idea that exemplifies the belief that reflects the fact that however, in reality but this is misleading, because ... 	Your factual knowledge
Your factual knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... reflected in the source by described in the source as depicted in the image as highlighted by the source through ... 	The source

SAMPLE RESPONSE, WITH CONNECTIVE PHRASES HIGHLIGHTED

Initially, the effects on workers and peasants were positive. The Decree on Land (26 October 1917) meant peasants no longer had to pay rent to the gentry, as they could seize and redistribute the gentry's land. The Decree on the Eight-Hour Working Day (29 October 1917) fulfilled a basic workers' demand, and the Decree on Workers' Control (14 November 1917) gave them democratic control of the factories. Workers and peasants gained democratic rights in local soviet elections. However, after the Civil War began, Bolshevik rule had negative effects. Source 9 highlights that 'Sovnarkom dispatched armed squads to seize grain' from peasants at gunpoint, **which explains why there was** a famine that killed five million peasants in 1921. Workers launched strikes over the harsh discipline and meagre rations of War Communism, **which are alluded to by the source's claims that** 'strikes ... were put down' and there was a 'concentration of state violence'. (152 words)