



EDEXCEL INTERNATIONAL GCSE (9–1)

HISTORY

DICTATORSHIP AND CONFLICT IN THE USSR, 1924–53



Student Book

Simon Taylor

Series Editor: Nigel Kelly



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SAMPLE

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SAMPLE

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is written for students following the Edexcel International GCSE (9–1) History specification and covers one unit of the course. This unit is Dictatorship and Conflict in the USSR, 1924–53, one of the Depth Studies. The History course has been structured so that teaching and learning can take place in any order, both in the classroom and in any independent learning. The book contains five chapters which match the five areas of content in the specification:

- The leadership struggle, 1924–29
- Five Year Plans and collectivisation
- Purges, show trials, the cult of Stalin and the revision of history
- Life in the Soviet Union, 1924–41
- The Second World War and after, 1941–53

Each chapter is split into multiple sections to break down content into manageable chunks and to ensure full coverage of the specification.

Each chapter features a mix of learning and activities. Sources are embedded throughout to develop your understanding and exam-style questions help you to put learning into practice. Recap pages at the end of each chapter summarise key information and let you check your understanding. Exam guidance pages help you prepare confidently for the exam.

Learning Objectives Each section starts with a list of what you will learn in it. They are carefully tailored to address key assessment objectives central to the course.

Timeline Visual representation of events to clarify the order in which they happened.

Activity Each chapter includes activities to help check and embed knowledge and understanding.

Source Photos, cartoons and text sources are used to explain events and show you what people from the period said, thought or created, helping you to build your understanding.

44 PURGES, SHOW TRIALS, CULT OF STALIN THE USSR, 1924–53

3.1 THE REASONS FOR THE PURGES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand how Kirov's murder helped lead to the purges
- Understand how Stalin's desire for total control was a key reason for the purges
- Understand how economics and Lenin's **legacy** both contributed to the purges.

KEY TERM

Old Bolsheviks the name given to highly respected Party members who had worked alongside Lenin and participated in the revolutionary struggle

Lenin had felt it necessary to use the secret police (the Cheka) to prevent opposition to Bolshevik rule. Under Stalin, the secret police and prison camps (Gulags) were hugely expanded as Stalin started a campaign of mass arrests and executions known as 'the purges'. This period in history is often referred to as the 'Great Terror' and was triggered by the murder of the highly popular politician, Sergei Kirov.

THE MURDER OF KIROV

SOURCE A

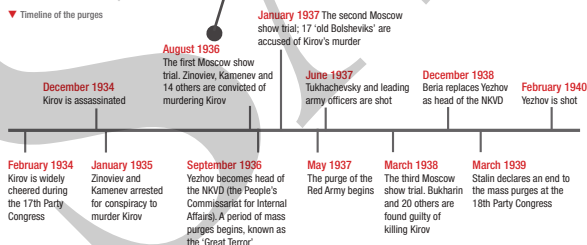
Sergei Kirov (1886–1934).



On the afternoon of 1 December 1934, Kirov entered Leningrad party headquarters to continue a busy day of work. As well as being Party boss for this important city, he was a member of the Politburo. As Kirov made his way to his office, he did not seem to notice the absence of the usual NKVD guards. Waiting for him, however, was Leonid Nikolayev – a bitter, recently expelled Party member. Nikolayev drew his Nagant M1895 revolver, the standard issue side-arm for the army and police. In Tsarist times, and shot Kirov in the back of the neck. Kirov died instantly.

Stalin immediately claimed that the assassination had been part of a plot led by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev to **overthrow** his government. Stalin argued that strong measures were needed to destroy this threat to the country. Within weeks of Kirov's death, the purges started. Thousands of Party members were arrested in Moscow and Leningrad, and shot. As the timeline shows, **Old Bolsheviks** were also arrested and accused of organising Kirov's murder.

▼ Timeline of the purges



Key term

Useful words and phrases are colour coded within the main text and picked out in the margin with concise and simple definitions. These help understanding of key subject terms and support students whose first language is not English.

LIFE IN THE SOVIET UNION, 1924–41 THE USSR, 1924–53

75

SOURCE F

The celebrated female pilots Polina Osipenko, Valentina Grizodubova and Marina Raskova. In 1938, they set a world record for the longest non-stop direct flight by women when they flew nearly 6,000 km from Moscow to the south-eastern tip of Siberia.

ACTIVITY

Study Source F. All three of the pilots were awarded the status of Hero of the Soviet Union, one of its highest awards. Use the worldwide web to research other female Heroes of the Soviet Union. Which story of achievement do you find particularly impressive and why?



CHANGES IN FAMILY LIFE

Many Communists believed that marriage was traditionally a form of **slavery**. The wife became, in effect, the property of her husband and had to submit to his will. When the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917, they set out to change this.

- In order to weaken the authority of the husband, a woman no longer had to take her husband's surname on marriage. She also did not need to gain his permission to take a job.
- To prevent women being trapped in unhappy or abusive relationships, divorce was made easier.
- The Soviet Union became the first European country to legalise **abortion** on demand, in order to give women greater choice over reproduction.
- If couples did marry, it was through a civil rather than a church ceremony. By removing the religious element of the ceremony, the Communists hoped to reduce the status of marriage.

By the 1930s, the unintended consequences of these reforms were beginning to create serious problems for the regime. The Soviet Union went from having the highest marriage rate in Europe to the highest divorce rate. Half of marriages ended in separation. Instead of helping women, the easy availability of divorce was mainly used by men to abandon their wives and children. As a result, many women were left to bring up families entirely unsupported by the father.

The breakup of families also led to gangs of abandoned children living on the streets of towns and cities. They begged, stole and caused trouble. Dealing with this problem took up a considerable amount of government time and resources. Furthermore, the greater use of abortions led to a fall in birth rates. In Moscow in the late 1920s, for example, abortions outnumbered live births by three to one. This was at a time when millions more workers were needed by the state to carry out rapid industrialisation.

Extend your knowledge

Interesting facts to encourage wider thought and stimulate discussion. They are closely related to key issues and allow you to add depth to your knowledge and answers.

Recap

At the end of each chapter, you will find a page designed to help you consolidate and reflect on the chapter as a whole.

Recall quiz

This quick quiz is ideal for checking your knowledge or for revision.

Exam-style question

Questions tailored to the Pearson Edexcel specification to allow for practice and development of exam writing technique. They also allow for practice responding to the command words used in the exams.

Skills

Relevant exam questions have been assigned the key skills which you will gain from undertaking them, allowing for a strong focus on particular academic qualities. These transferable skills are highly valued in further study and the workplace.

30 FIVE YEAR PLANS, COLLECTIVISATION THE USSR, 1924-53

ACTIVITY

- Divide into two groups. One group should come up with three key positives about industrialisation; the second should develop three key negatives.
- Debate which side has the better points.

SOURCE

MAGNITOGORSK

The construction of the vast steelworks and new city at Magnitogorsk highlights both the success and failures of Stalin's industrialisation drive. The site chosen couldn't have been more difficult. It was a remote, uninhabited area next to a mountain with unusually high levels of iron ore, leading to the plant's name, Magnetic Mountain. Conditions were so hard that the average workers stayed for just 82 days. These were the lucky ones. Magnitogorsk could not have been built without the labour of 40,000 political prisoners.

EXAM-STYLE QUESTION

A01 A02

SKILLS PROBLEM SOLVING, REASONING, DECISION MAKING, ADAPTIVE LEARNING, INNOVATION

KEY TERM shock workers

HINT

18 THE LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE, 1924-29 THE USSR, 1924-53

RECAP

RECALL QUESTIONS

- When did the Bolsheviks seize power in Russia?
- What was the official name of the Communist state?
- Why was the Communist Party badly shaken in 1924?
- Who did Lenin once describe as a 'wonderful Georgian'?
- Which power struggle candidate was named after a prison warden?
- What popular policy did Stalin suggest in the power struggle?
- Who did Stalin team up with in order to defeat Trotsky?
- What was the name given to the alliance between Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky?
- Which policy was most closely identified with Bukharin?
- Which anniversary did Stalin celebrate in December 1929?

CHECKPOINT

STRENGTHEN

S1 For both Stalin and Trotsky, create a spider diagram showing their strengths in one colour and weaknesses in another.

S2 Who were Stalin's political allies and opponents in 1924, 1926 and 1928?

S3 In 1929, was Stalin a left-wing or right-wing Communist?

CHALLENGE

C1 How big a mistake do you think Lenin made in criticising all the other leaders?

C2 Given his success in the Civil War, why was Trotsky so easily defeated in the power struggle?

C3 Why do you think Stalin changed his policy outline throughout the power struggle?

SUMMARY

- When the Bolsheviks seized power they wanted to create the world's first Communist state, although there was no agreed way of how this should be done.
- In 1924, a power struggle developed following the death of Lenin. The main contenders were Stalin, Trotsky, Kamenev, Bukharin and Zinoviev.
- Policy debates formed an important part of the power struggle. The left wing, led by Trotsky, preferred rapid industrialisation and worldwide revolution.
- The right wing, led by Bukharin, supported the NEP and socialism in one country.
- Stalin changed his views throughout the power struggle, partly for tactical reasons, but also as a response to changes in the Soviet Union's domestic and international position.
- Stalin was a clever and ruthless politician. He claimed he was Lenin's successor. He was also prepared to make and break alliances and expel his rivals.
- Stalin's biggest advantage was his position as General Secretary. He was able to fill the Party with his supporters and then win votes in crucial meetings.
- Stalin's opponents made important mistakes, including not publishing Lenin's Testament and continually underestimating Stalin.
- Although he was not the favourite to begin with, by 1929 Stalin had defeated all of his rivals and became the new leader of the Soviet Union.

Hint

All exam-style questions are accompanied by a hint to help you get started on an answer.

Checkpoint

Checkpoints help you to check and reflect on your learning. The Strengthen section helps you to consolidate knowledge and understanding, and check that you have grasped the basic ideas and skills. The Challenge questions push you to go beyond just understanding the information, and into evaluation and analysis of what you have studied.

Summary

The main points of each chapter are summarised in a series of bullet points. These are great for embedding core knowledge and handy for revision.

Exam guidance

At the end of each chapter, you will find two pages designed to help you better understand the exam questions and how to answer them. Each exam guidance section focuses on a particular question type that you will find in the exam, allowing you to approach them with confidence.

Advice on answering the question

Three key questions about the exam question are answered here in order to explain what the question is testing and what you need to do to succeed in the exam.

Pearson Progression

Sample student answers have been given a Pearson Step from 1 to 12. This tells you how well the response has met the criteria in the Pearson Progression Map.

Commentary

Feedback on the quality of the answer is provided to help you understand their strengths and weaknesses and show how they can be improved.

EXAM GUIDANCE: PART (B) QUESTIONS

A01 A02

Question to be answered: Explain two effects on the Soviet Union of Stalin's policies towards ethnic minorities. (8 marks)

- Analysis Question 1:** What is the question type testing? In the question, you have to demonstrate that you have knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied. You also have to make judgments about historical events to consider what the effects of them were. In this particular case, it is knowledge and understanding of Stalin's policies towards ethnic minorities and their effect on the Soviet Union.
- Analysis Question 2:** What do I have to do to answer the question well? Obviously you have to write about Stalin's treatment of ethnic minorities. But it isn't just a case of writing everything you know. You have to write about two effects. Effects are things which the subject you are given causes to happen. The key to explaining the effect of an event is explaining the link between it and an outcome. So, for example, an effect of you doing a lot of revision should be that you can answer the questions in the exam better. You would explain this by emphasising how you know more facts, how you take to spend less time trying to remember things, how you have looked at more examples of how to answer questions, etc.
- Analysis Question 3:** Are there any techniques I can use to make it very clear that I am doing what is needed to be successful? This is an 8-mark question and you need to make sure you leave enough time to answer the other two questions fully (they are worth 22 marks in total). Remember that you are not writing an essay here. You are providing two effects and enough historical detail to explain why the event had these effects. Therefore, you need to get straight in to writing your answer.

The question asks for effects, so it's a good idea to write two paragraphs and to begin each paragraph with phrases like 'One effect was...' and 'Another effect was...'. The use of phrases in your answer such as 'this led to...' as a result of this, 'this brought about' and 'this resulted in' will help demonstrate that you are focusing on effects.

The word 'explain' is important because it tells you that you have to do more than just state what the effect was. You need to use your knowledge of the period to explain how the effect led to the outcome. So 'this led to...' states an effect, but 'this led to... because at this time...' is moving towards an explanation.

You cannot get more than 2 marks if you explain only one effect. However, you are required to explain only two effects and you will not gain credit for a third. If you write about more than two, your better two will be credited and the third ignored.

86 LIFE IN THE SOVIET UNION, 1924-41 THE USSR, 1924-53

Answer A

Stalin did not treat ethnic minorities very well. This is surprising because he was from Georgia and so from a minority group himself. He had also worked on Communist policy towards ethnic minorities under Lenin and had argued for their equal treatment. From the mid-1930s onwards, Stalin followed harsh policies towards ethnic minorities, limiting their rights and freedoms. In total, there were over 170 ethnic groups in the Soviet Union, so Stalin's policies had a big effect on these communities.

The second effect was after the war, Stalin was becoming old and increasingly had tempered and paranoid. He was also anti-Semitic. This all combined to make him want to persecute the Soviet Union's Jewish population. Stalin therefore followed a policy which discriminated against this minority group.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of Answer A?

This answer is heading in the right direction. The first paragraph correctly states that from the mid-1930s, ethnic minorities were treated harshly. However, it provides little detail to support this point. Similarly, the decision to focus the second paragraph on the rise of anti-Semitism is a good one, but it needs to include some more examples besides the brief mention of this.

Answer B

One effect of Stalin's policies towards ethnic minorities was a loss of local culture. The Soviet Union was a multi-ethnic state, with over 170 minority groups. When the Communists first took power, they encouraged ethnic minorities to celebrate their own cultures and speak their local languages. The Communists did not want to be seen as cruel like the tsars. However, Stalin did not like local cultures being celebrated. This is because he wanted everyone to have the same outlook, and way of life. As a result, in the 1930s all minority groups had to learn Russian as a second language. Many local language newspapers were closed down. This culture was made out to be the best. Celebrating local culture came to be seen as a sign of disloyalty to the Soviet Union and so many people stopped doing it.

Another effect of Stalin's policies towards ethnic minorities was an increase in human suffering. Stalin was paranoid and distrustful and he decided that minority groups living near border areas could not be trusted. They included the Volga Germans and Finns living in the west of the country, as well as Koreans living in the east. He wrongly believed that if the Soviet Union was invaded, these groups would not be loyal. As a result, just before the German invasion of 1941, these minority groups were forcibly relocated by the NKVD to remote areas in central Asia. Being taken away from their homes and forced to start new lives in a harsh landscape was incredibly difficult for these involved.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of Answer B?

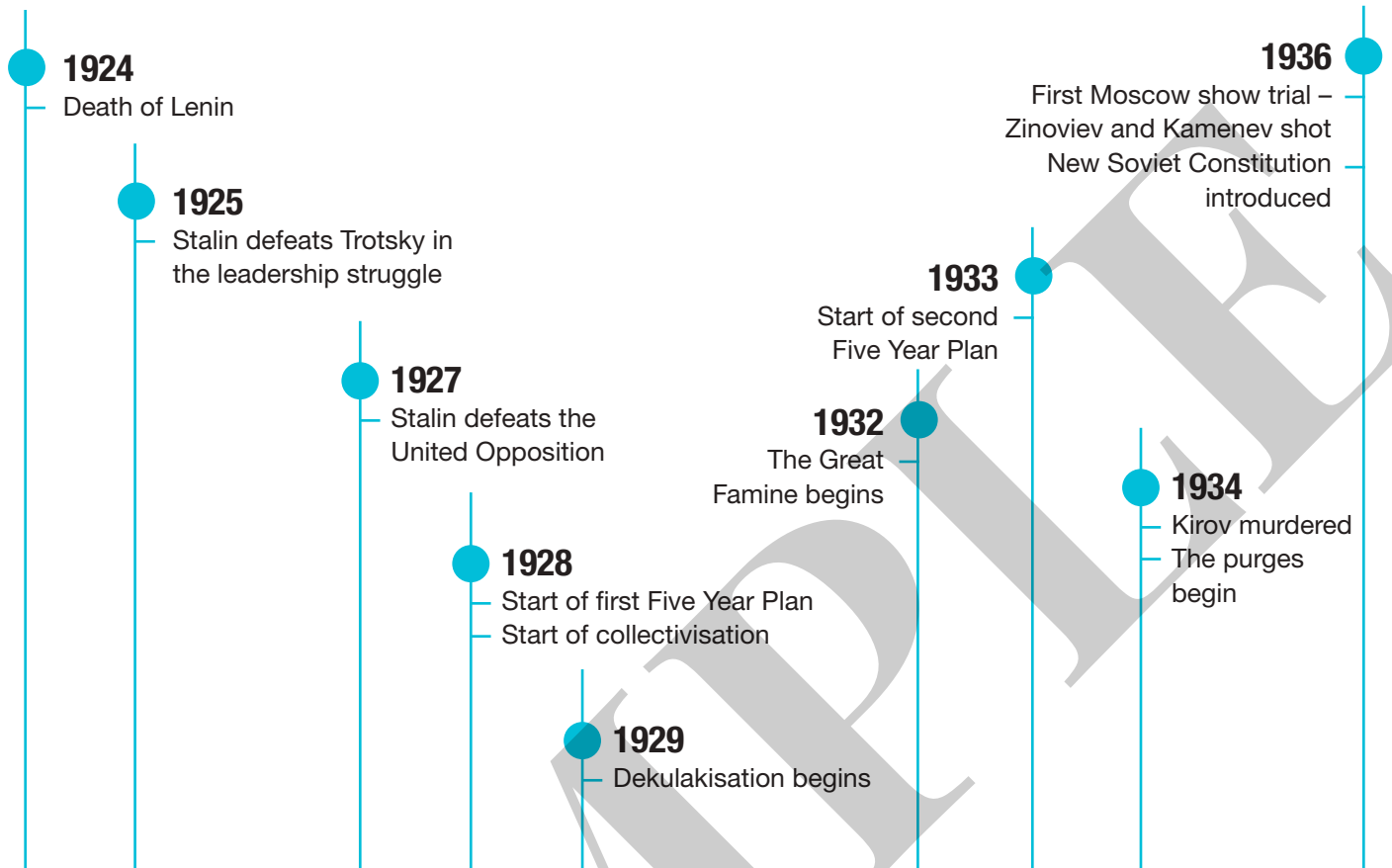
This is an excellent answer. It identifies two effects and provides detailed support for them both. There is no need to look for ways to improve this answer; you should just learn from it.

Challenge a friend

Use the Student Book to set a part (b) question for a friend. Then look at the answer. Does it do the following things?

- Provide two effects
- Provide 3-4 lines of detailed historical knowledge to explain why the event caused the outcome (effect) you have identified.

If it does, you can tell your friend that the answer is very good!

TIMELINE – THE USSR, 1924–53**1924****1930**

1926
General Strike
in Britain

1928
Fleming discovers
penicillin

1929
Wall St Crash
St Valentine's Day Massacre

1933
Roosevelt introduces New Deal
Hitler becomes German
Chancellor

1934
Long March in China

1935
Nuremberg Laws in Germany

1936
Spanish Civil War begins

TIMELINE – WORLD

1937

Purge of the military begins

1938

Last show trial – Bukharin is shot
Start of third Five Year Plan

1939

Stalin declares end to the purges

1940

Trotsky assassinated by a Stalinist agent in Mexico City

1941

German invasion of the Soviet Union. Red Army retreats on all fronts

1943

German Sixth Army surrenders at Stalingrad

1945

Germany surrenders unconditionally
Fourth Five Year Plan launched

1949

Soviet Union tests its first atomic bomb

1953

Discovery of the 'Doctors Plot'
Death of Stalin

1940

1950

1939

Outbreak of Second World War

1944

D Day Landings

1945

End of Second World War
United Nations founded

1952

Elizabeth becomes Queen of England

1949

Establishment of the People's Republic of China

1948

Declaration of the state of Israel

1947

Marshall Plan announced
Gandhi assassinated

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2. FIVE YEAR PLANS AND COLLECTIVISATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand why Stalin decided to launch the twin policies of industrialisation and collectivisation
- Understand how these two policies were implemented
- Understand the positive and negative results of industrialisation and collectivisation.

The Communists seized power in 1917 and had bold plans for the future. Many of these plans were put on hold during the moderate years of the New Economic Policy (NEP). However, in 1928, Stalin signalled the return of radicalism by plunging the Soviet Union into a vast and untried economic experiment. The impact of this 'second revolution' was extraordinary. Under a series of Five Year Plans, the Soviet Union became a chaotic building site of factories, steel mills, mines, canals, railways and power plants. A heavy industrial base was developed from almost nothing.

In the countryside, peasants were ordered to give up their land and form collective farms. The results were disastrous. Collectivisation caused a famine in which 5 million people died. Instead of experiencing modernisation and prosperity in their villages, peasants found themselves eating grass, tree bark and sometimes even their own children to survive.

For Stalin, in pursuit of a Communist paradise, this human misery was judged a price well worth paying.

2.1 STALIN AND INDUSTRIALISATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand Stalin's economic aims
- Understand Stalin's policy of industrialisation
- Understand the successes and failures of those policies.

KEY TERMS

collectivisation the organisation of agricultural land into one great area which was farmed communally by the peasants rather than them working on small individual farms

mechanised using machines instead of people or animals

In the late 1920s, Stalin began the twin economic policies of rapid industrialisation and forced **collectivisation**. As Source A shows, his aims were clear.

- Stalin wanted to create a modern economy, based on heavy industry and a highly **mechanised** farming sector.
- He wanted the Soviet Union's economy to be able to compete with the advanced countries of the West, and eventually overtake them.
- He wanted to make the Soviet Union economically **self-sufficient** in order to prepare it for war.

For Stalin, these economic aims were so important that there was no time to lose. Failure, as he warned in 1931, would result in the destruction of the Soviet Union. The truth of this was seen just 10 years after he made this speech. In 1941 the Soviet Union faced invasion by around 4 million highly trained German soldiers. Thanks to Stalin, the country's economy was ready.

SOURCE A

Part of a speech made by Stalin to the First All-Union Conference of Industrial Managers, 4 February 1931.

People ask if the pace can be slackened. No! To slacken the pace would mean falling behind. And those who fall behind get beaten. Old Russia was continually beaten for her backwardness – her military, cultural, political, industrial, agricultural backwardness. That is why Lenin said on the eve of the October Revolution: 'Either perish, or overtake and outstrip the advanced capitalist countries.' We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or we shall go under.

REASONS FOR INDUSTRIALISATION

KEY TERM

ideologically based on a set of beliefs; in this case communist beliefs

Stalin had many reasons for launching his policy of rapid industrialisation.

- Economically it seemed to offer a better alternative to the NEP.
- **Ideologically**, it would remove class enemies and move the Soviet Union towards communism.
- Militarily, it would prepare the country for war.
- Politically, it promised to increase Stalin's power.

THE FAILINGS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

In the late 1920s, the Soviet economy was based on the ideas of the New Economic Policy, first introduced by Lenin in 1921. It had the following key features.

- Money was reintroduced.
- Forced grain seizures from the peasants were stopped.

- Peasants could sell their surplus grain for profit.
- Small businesses and factories could be privately owned.
- Businesses could make and keep their profits.
- Only the largest industries were controlled by the state.

However, the economic performance of the NEP had been disappointing for many Communists. As the following table shows, although the economy had recovered well from the damage done by the Civil War, it had not fully caught up with the last years of Tsarism. Furthermore, the Soviet Union lay far behind the economies of the West. Even France, which was hardly regarded as a great industrial power, managed to produce more coal and steel than the Soviet Union. High rates of unemployment added to the feeling that the NEP was no longer working and needed to be replaced with a policy of rapid industrialisation.

▼ Economic performance from 1913 to 1926

	▼ 1913	▼ 1921	▼ 1926
Factory production (millions of roubles)	10,251	2,004	11,083
Coal (millions of tonnes)	29	8.9	27.6
Steel (thousands of tonnes)	4,231	183	3,141

KEY TERM

capitalist (economy) a capitalist economy was the way the countries of the West ran their economies. It went against the principles of Communism

IDEOLOGICAL REASONS

The NEP also fell out of favour on ideological grounds. It meant the Soviet Union had a **capitalist** economy, in which the factories and businesses tended to be owned by a few wealthy individuals and many workers were treated unfairly. Two groups of people who were closely identified with the NEP came to be hated by the Communists.

- **Nepmen.** An insult used by the Communists to describe people who had set up businesses under the NEP and become successful.
- **Bourgeois experts.** Another negative term invented by the Communists to describe former factory owners and managers from Tsarist times who were given jobs in the large state-owned factories. Although their skills were needed, they were strongly disliked because few of them were Communists, even though they held important positions.

Stalin's policy of rapid industrialisation promised to get rid of these class enemies. The whole economy would be taken into state hands and run for the benefit of all.

There was another ideological benefit. According to Marxist theory, communism could only exist in a highly advanced industrial nation. However, the Soviet Union was still a mainly rural land. Rapid industrialisation was therefore needed to turn peasants into workers and create a country of towns and cities, complete with mines, steelworks and factories. Only then could it advance towards full communism.

FEAR OF INVASION

The Civil War had shown how hostile the outside world was to the Soviet Union. Britain, France, the USA and Japan had all intervened on the side of the White armies. Churchill had even spoken about strangling 'Bolshevism in its cradle'. In 1927, fears of invasion returned. Three events convinced the Soviet

KEY TERMS

official someone in a position of authority in an organisation

propaganda information, true or false, that is intended to make people think or behave in a certain way

diplomatic an arrangement in which each has representatives in the other's country

command economy the state decides what, where and when something is produced

ACTIVITY

You are the BBC's foreign correspondent based in Moscow in 1929. Create a script for a radio broadcast explaining Stalin's decision to abandon the NEP in favour of a policy of rapid industrialisation. You could bring in experts to interview, including Stalin himself.

THE NATURE OF INDUSTRIALISATION

▼ **Figure 2.1** Central planning under the Five Year Plans

1 Gosplan decided on overall targets for each industry in the Soviet Union.

2 These overall targets were then broken down into targets for each region.

3 The regions set targets for each factory, workshop, mine, etc.

4 The managers of each industrial enterprise set targets for each foreman (the main worker in charge).

5 The foremen set targets for each shift and even individual workers.

government that the outside world was rapidly turning against them, and they decided that a Western invasion was near.

- The British government, accusing Soviet **officials** of spreading revolutionary **propaganda**, searched the Soviet trade mission in London and then broke off **diplomatic** relations.
- In China, the Communists under Mao Zedong were attacked by their political opponents, the Nationalists, resulting in a civil war.
- A Soviet diplomat (Pyotr Voykov) was assassinated in Poland.

The Communists had misunderstood the situation. There had never been any invasion threat to the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Stalin realised that the country was dangerously unprepared for war. To defend itself, it needed to develop a heavy industrial base to produce vital materials like iron and steel. It also needed an **armaments industry** to make **tanks**, planes and ammunition. As Stalin made clear in speeches like Source A, the quicker the Soviet Union industrialised, the better. It was a matter of national survival.

POLITICAL MOTIVES

For Stalin, launching a policy of rapid industrialisation brought clear political advantages. It allowed him to divide his political opponents on the right wing of the Party, including Bukharin, thus completing his victory in the struggle to hold power. Being in charge of such a far-reaching policy also greatly improved Stalin's authority in the Party. It is no coincidence that he called it the 'second revolution'. Stalin was placing himself alongside Lenin, leader of the 'first revolution' in October 1917.

In 1924 the 'State Committee for Planning', more often called Gosplan, was a little-known government department. It had a small staff of 34 people, most of whom had backgrounds in industry rather than the Party. They produced advice on economic policy. The importance of Gosplan was transformed by Stalin's decision to turn the Soviet Union into a modern, industrial power as quickly as possible. Gosplan was given the task of creating a series of Five Year Plans (see Figure 2.1). These set out ambitious economic targets for the whole of the Soviet Union. Gosplan also developed the plans in great detail, so that even workers had individual goals.

An economy organised in this way is known as a **command economy** and it was a completely new idea. Administering the Five Year Plans was a huge task and Gosplan, based in Moscow, soon employed over half a million officials.

THE FIRST THREE FIVE YEAR PLANS

Between 1928 and 1941, there were three Five Year Plans. All had the following common features:

- Heavy industries, such as coal, oil, iron, steel and electricity, were prioritised.
- Consumer industries, which made things for ordinary people such as shoes and clothing, were overlooked.
- All of the plans were declared complete ahead of schedule.
- Although the targets were rarely met, important advances in industry were made.

▼ Overview of the three Five Year Plans

	▼ FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN OCTOBER 1928 TO DECEMBER 1932	▼ SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN JANUARY 1933 TO DECEMBER 1937	▼ THIRD FIVE YEAR PLAN JANUARY 1938 TO JUNE 1941
Main aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand heavy industries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand heavy industries. Develop new chemical industries. Improve railway, canal and road transport links. Make some consumer goods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand heavy industries. Armaments production.
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The economy grew by a huge 14 per cent each year. Coal and iron output doubled. Steel production increased by one-third. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More realistic targets were set. Big advances continued to be made in heavy industry. Other important areas of the economy started to be developed. Gains were made in chemical industries such as fertiliser production. New transport schemes such as the Moscow Metro and Moscow canal were completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 1940, one-third of government investment was spent on defence. The basis of a powerful arms industry was laid. Nine new aircraft factories were established.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many targets were not met. Targets were set at unrealistic levels. Many factories struggled to obtain the necessary resources. There was a lack of skilled workers. Living and working standards declined dramatically. Many products were of extremely poor quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite promises to raise living standards, consumer industries received little investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan ran into difficulties because Stalin’s purges led to the arrest of many experienced factory managers and Gosplan officials. The Plan was cut short by the Nazi invasion of Russia in June 1941.

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

The high growth rates achieved under the first Five Year Plan seem even more impressive when compared to the rest of the world at the time. Many countries were in the grip of an economic depression, caused by the collapse of the Wall Street stock market in 1929. In the USA, for example, industrial production had fallen by around 40 per cent by 1932 and unemployment was 25 per cent.

KEY TERM

rations a fixed amount of something that people are allowed when there is not enough

STAKHANOVITES

For many workers, being part of the Five Year Plans gave their lives a sense of excitement and purpose. This was helped by a massive propaganda campaign. Posters like Source B celebrated their efforts. One of the cleverest but most controversial propaganda campaigns focused on the efforts of a miner called Alexei Stakhanov.

In August 1935, Stakhanov mined 102 tonnes of coal in 6 hours. This was 14 times the output of a normal miner. He was rewarded with 1 month’s wages, a new apartment and a holiday. He also became the centre of a huge publicity campaign promoting ‘the Stakhanovite Movement’.

- Propaganda posters and news reports held him up as a model Soviet worker.
- Statues were built in his honour.
- Stakhanov toured the country, encouraging other workers to follow his example.
- Workers were promised rewards such as a new flat, higher wages or bigger **rations** if they managed to exceed their targets like Stakhanov.

SOURCE B

'The Reality of our Program is Real People: It's You and Me'. A 1931 Soviet propaganda poster.



ACTIVITY

- 1 What do you think the poster in Source B is saying?
- 2 What different views might Soviet workers have about its message?

As a result of the Stakhanov Movement, many people were encouraged to work harder. Within a year, almost one-quarter of industrial workers were categorised as Stakhanovites. But this also created difficulties. 'Recordmania' occurred and managers had to spend a lot of time dealing with attempts to set new production records. This disrupted normal working patterns. Other workers did not like the pressure on them to work harder. Some Stakhanovite workers were even attacked. The word 'Stakhanovite' soon came to mean a pushy person who was more interested in helping themselves rather than their colleagues.

In the 1980s, the Communist Party finally admitted the truth behind Stakhanov's amazing achievement. It had been a publicity stunt. Instead of working alone, Stakhanov had been supported by a team of fellow miners. The authorities had also provided him with state-of-the-art equipment.

SOURCE C

Alexei Stakhanov at the coal face, passing on tips to a fellow miner.



ACTIVITY

- 1 Why do you think the Soviet government decided to lie to its people about Stakhanov's achievements?
- 2 In what other ways was there a culture of lying under Stalin's rule?

EXAM-STYLE QUESTION

A04

SKILLS ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION,
CREATIVITY

Study Extract A. What impression does the author give about the first Five Year Plan? You must use Extract A to explain your answer. **(6 marks)**

EXTRACT A

From a book about Stalin's rule, published in in 1995.

In 1930 work began on a dam on the Ural River to supply the steel factory in Magnitogorsk with water. There was competition between left and right river banks: 'Everyone to the dam! Everything for the dam!' The dam was built in a record 74 days, well ahead of schedule. One contemporary writer wrote: 'The Magnitogorsk dam was the school at which people began to respect Communist miracles.' But it was not deep enough and the water froze, and a new dam five times as big was started almost immediately. When it was completed the first dam was submerged.

HINT

To do well in this question, look at the evidence selected by the author. Can you see a viewpoint being made deliberately?

SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF INDUSTRIALISATION

By 1941, the Soviet Union had been transformed from a mainly agricultural society into a powerful industrial nation. In a speech in 1933, Stalin proudly set out the achievements of his policy (Source D).

SOURCE D

Stalin speaking about the first Five Year Plans in 1933.

We did not have an iron and steel industry, the basis for the industrialisation of the country. Now we have one.

We did not have a tractor industry. Now we have one.

We did not have an automobile industry. Now we have one.

We did not have a machine-tool industry. Now we have one.

We did not have a big and modern chemical industry. Now we have one.

We did not have a real and big industry for the production of modern agricultural machinery. Now we have one.

We did not have an aircraft industry. Now we have one.

In output of electric power we were last on the list. Now we rank among the first.

In output of oil products and coal we were last on the list. Now we rank among the first.

SUCCESSSES OF INDUSTRIALISATION

The successes of industrialisation covered several aspects:


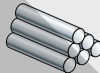


- Heavy industry was the biggest success. As the table on the following page shows, in the space of 12 years, oil output had more than doubled, and coal, iron, electricity and steel production had multiplied.
- Advances were made in transport. There was a large expansion of the railway and canal networks, allowing goods to be transported more efficiently.

- The Five Year Plans created a modern armaments industry. These factories and the weapons they produced were crucial in defeating Nazi Germany in the Second World War.
- The Plans increased the size of the **working class** and turned the Soviet Union into a more urbanised society.
- There were some gains for the workers. Unemployment vanished. Cheap meals were provided in factory canteens. Those workers lucky enough to be categorised as Stakhanovites benefited from improved wages and living conditions.

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Under the Five Year Plans, many factories were built in areas that had never previously been industrialised, including Siberia, the Ural Mountains and central Asia. When Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, these factories were out of range of German bomber aircraft and could continue producing vast numbers of tanks, guns and aircraft. This helped the Soviet Union to defeat Nazi Germany.

▼ Industrial output during the first three Five Year Plans. These figures are based on Soviet sources and so cannot be considered completely accurate

	▼ 1927	▼ 1932	▼ 1937	▼ 1940
Coal (millions of tonnes) 	35	64	128	150
Steel (millions of tonnes) 	3	6	18	18
Oil (millions of tonnes) 	12	21	26	26
Electricity (million kWh) 	18	20	80	90

ACTIVITY

- 1 Use the table to work out the percentage growth rates in each industry between 1927 and 1940.
- 2 Which industries did particularly well?
- 3 Do you think any industries would have concerned the Soviet authorities?

KEY TERM

showpiece project special project like the Moscow underground, designed to impress the rest of the world

The three Five Year Plans included many **showpiece projects**, designed to prove that communism was better than capitalism (see Figure 2.2). Stalin's obsession with big schemes has been referred to as 'Giganto-mania'.

THE FAILURES OF INDUSTRIALISATION

Despite what Stalin was telling the people, there was another side to industrialisation. The Five Year Plans were often delivered at enormous cost to workers, and the supposed successes were highly exaggerated.

- The quality of goods produced in the factories was very low. This was because the Plans set targets for quantity, not quality, and so this was all that factory managers focused on.
- There were high levels of waste. Lack of transport as well as poor organisation and planning meant that items produced by factories were often stored on site and allowed to decay, rather than being used.
- Most of the targets set by Gosplan were unrealistically high. Factory managers were under huge pressure to meet their targets, and often turned to bribery and sometimes outright theft in order to obtain vital supplies for their factories. Failure to meet production targets could result in imprisonment.



- 1 Chelisbinsk. A major tractor producing centre. By 1940 it had turned out around 100,000 tractors.
- 2 Gorky. An important centre of motor vehicle manufacturing.
- 3 Magnitogorsk. A new city and site of the Soviet Union's largest steel plant.
- 4 Novosibirsk. An important location for the building of machine tools.
- 5 Stalingrad. A centre of heavy industry. By 1939 its 'Red October' tractor works was producing half the tractors in the Soviet Union.
- 6 The White Sea Canal. A 227 km waterway connecting the White Sea to the Baltic Sea. It was built in just 20 months.
- 7 Moscow–Donetsk Railway. An important railway line, connecting the capital with Ukraine.
- 8 Built by 75,000 workers, the first line of the Moscow Metro was opened in 1935. Its stations were elaborately designed and it was seen as a showpiece of Soviet achievement.
- 9 Moscow–Volga Canal. An important 128 km waterway, connecting the capital with Europe's longest river, the Volga. This meant goods could be more easily moved through central and southern Russia.
- 10 Trans-Siberian Railway. Originally constructed between 1891 and 1914, 7,000 km of track were modernised under the second Five Year Plan.
- 11 Dnieper Dam. At 61 metres high and stretching 800 metres across the River Dnieper, it was the world's largest hydro-electric dam on its opening in 1932.

▲ Figure 2.2 The major achievements of Stalin's three Five Year Plans

- Lying about production figures was common. To avoid arrest, factory managers tended to exaggerate successes and hide failures. Gosplan officials at the regional level were under similar pressure to exceed their targets and so would falsely increase production levels. A similar process would happen with the top officials in Moscow. As a result, official Soviet statistics were extremely unreliable.
- Some of the showpiece projects started under the Five Year Plans relied on forced labour. The White Sea Canal, for example, was built by 100,000 prisoners from the Gulags. Around 12,000 died during construction.

ACTIVITY

- 1 Divide into two groups. One group should come up with three key positives about industrialisation; the second should develop three key negatives.
- 2 Debate which side has the better points.

SOURCE E

The largest blast furnace in the Soviet Union under construction at Magnitogorsk.



- Overall, the Plans gave little thought to improving the lives of ordinary workers (see Chapter 4). With millions of peasants pouring into the towns and cities, a housing shortage developed.
- Between 1928 and 1941, there were continuous shortages of consumer goods, such as clothes, shoes and furniture. This was because Stalin prioritised heavy industry and defence. Standing for hours in shop queues became a feature of everyday life.
- Working conditions were very difficult. Seven-day working weeks and long hours were common. Basic safety standards were ignored, so accidents at work were frequent. Under the third Five Year Plan, internal passports were introduced to stop workers moving from town to town in search of better-paid jobs.

MAGNITOGORSK

The construction of the vast steelworks and new city at Magnitogorsk highlights both the success and failures of Stalin's industrialisation drive. The site chosen couldn't have been more difficult. It was a remote, uninhabited area next to a mountain with unusually high levels of iron ore, leading to the plant's name, Magnetic Mountain. The first **shock workers** arrived in March 1929 to begin breaking the ground. By 1932, there were 250,000 workers were on site and steel production had begun.

Magnitogorsk became a symbol of Soviet achievement and the story of its construction was publicised throughout the Soviet Union. But the propaganda did not mention that a significant amount of the steel it produced was of poor quality. Nor did it focus on the grim reality of everyday life. The initial promise of building a bright, clean Socialist city of the future was never realised. The majority of workers lived in mud huts, wooden shacks and tents, with no heating or bathroom facilities. Conditions were so hard that the average workers stayed for just 82 days. These were the lucky ones. Magnitogorsk could not have been built without the labour of 40,000 political prisoners.

EXAM-STYLE QUESTION

A01

A02

SKILLS

PROBLEM SOLVING, REASONING,
DECISION MAKING, ADAPTIVE
LEARNING, INNOVATION

KEY TERM

shock workers workers who exceeded production quotas and were assigned to an especially urgent or hard task

'The main effect of Stalin's three Five Year Plans on the Soviet Union in the years 1928–41 was the rapid development of Soviet industry.' Do you agree?

You may use the following in your answer:

- the development of Soviet industry
- transport links.

You **must** also use information of your own.

(16 marks)

HINT

Top-level answers need to be analytical. This means that instead of just describing Stalin's three Five Year Plans, you need to base your answer around its specific effects.

2.2 STALIN AND COLLECTIVISATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand Stalin's policy of collectivisation
- Understand opposition to collectivisation and how it was overcome
- Understand the successes and failures of those policies.

The Soviet Union was founded on the idea of an alliance between the urban workers and peasantry. Lenin called it the *smychka* (meaning collaboration in society, or union) and it is why the Soviet Union's flag contained a hammer (signifying the workers) and sickle (a farming tool, the symbol of the villagers). In 1929, Stalin introduced a major change to how agriculture had been organised under Lenin's New Economic Policy. Peasants were forced to give up their privately owned land and form it into large-scale, state-controlled farms. Stalin had many reasons for collectivising agriculture.

- Economically, he wanted to modernise an old-fashioned farming system. He also wanted a guaranteed supply of grain in order to feed the workers and to sell it abroad to pay for industrialisation.
- Ideologically, Stalin, like many Communists, believed that peasants were not really supporters of communism. So he wanted to change the way farming was organised to ensure they followed true communist methods.
- Politically, Stalin wanted to extend Communist control over the countryside. He also saw this policy as a way of weakening his opponent, Bukharin, in the struggle for power.

ECONOMIC REASONS

Stalin believed that collectivisation was necessary in order to modernise the Soviet Union's inefficient and outdated farming system. Although there were some exceptions, most farms in the 1920s were small and often divided into strips, similar to English farming in the Middle Ages. Most crops were sown and harvested by hand. Machinery such as tractors and **combine harvesters** were rarely used, and chemical fertilisers to boost crop production were almost unknown. This meant that farm output in the 1920s was so low that food shortages were a constant problem.

Stalin saw collectivisation as the solution. Because **collective** farms would be much larger, modern machinery could be used. These, it was planned, would be supplied by the state through huge Motor Tractor Stations. Experts would also teach peasants to farm in more modern ways. The result would be big increases in food production. This in turn would aid the drive to industrialise in three ways.

- 1 The workers in towns and cities would be well fed.
- 2 The government could sell more food abroad to pay for expensive foreign technology.
- 3 By mechanising the farms, fewer people would be needed to work on the land. This would release valuable labour to work in the new factories.

IDEOLOGICAL REASONS

Collectivisation was a key part of Stalin's mission to build communism across the Soviet Union. Just like in the cities, Stalin believed that the NEP was pushing the country in the wrong ideological direction.

This was because the NEP encouraged peasants to behave like capitalists:

- They were allowed to own property.
- They could sell their produce for profit.
- If they were rich enough, they could employ landless labourers to work on their land.

The Communists argued that class divisions had developed in the countryside (see Figure 2.3) and they identified the **kulaks** as their major enemy.

► **Figure 2.3** The different classes of peasant during the New Economic Policy



Kulaks

Better-off peasants who owned enough land to make a reasonable living and live in a more comfortable house. In Russian, 'kulak' means 'fist' or 'grasping' and reveals how less well-off peasants in the villages resented the richer peasants.



Middle peasants

Owned a small amount of land and lived in the villages.



Poor peasants

Did not own any land. Hired themselves out as labourers on the farms of their wealthier neighbours.

Collectivisation seemed to offer a good way of building communist values in the countryside.

- Because private landownership would be abolished, everyone would be of the same status.
- As all the produce would go to the state, peasants would no longer be motivated by the desire to make money. They would instead be working for the good of the nation.
- Instead of working on individual farms, peasants would learn to work together.
- Collective farms would have shared facilities, such as canteens and gyms. These would develop a community outlook.

POLITICAL REASONS

Collectivisation was partly about political power. Firstly for Stalin, opposing the NEP and supporting collectivisation was one way of gaining the upper hand in the power struggle against Bukharin.

Secondly, it was about power for the Communist Party. While it was strong in the towns and cities of Russia, it had little control over what went on in the countryside – there were simply not enough party workers to govern such a vast area. This lack of control scared the Communists. Collectivisation was one way of enforcing their authority over the countryside.

THE GRAIN PROCUREMENT CRISIS

KEY TERM

grain procurement the policy of buying or seizing essential farm produce from the peasants in order to feed the workers in towns and cities

The short-term cause of collectivisation was the **grain procurement** crisis of 1927–28. The government found that it could not buy enough grain to feed the urban workers. The reasons for the grain shortage were as follows.

- The peasants had reduced grain production because of the low prices being paid by the state.
- Some farmers were withholding their grain from the market in order to push prices up.

The result was rationing in the cities. Many in the Party now turned against the peasants. One solution, of course, would have been to pay the peasants more



▲ Figure 2.4 The Communist vision of a collective farm and farming under the NEP

ACTIVITY

Study the two pictures in Figure 2.4 carefully. Note down as many differences as you can between the two farming systems.

THE NATURE OF COLLECTIVISATION

In December 1929, Stalin called for a policy of all-out collectivisation. As Source F shows, the Communists liked to show this as a **voluntary** process. Party officials, they claimed, would go into the villages and tell the peasants about the advantages of joining a collective farm. A vote would then be held, in which the villages would willingly agree to combine their farms.

SOURCE F

Official Soviet photograph showing peasants voluntarily voting to join a collective farm.



This approach rarely worked. Most peasants had no wish to collectivise. They wanted to work their own individual farms in their own way. They had no wish to be told what to grow and what animals to breed. Wild rumours also stated that collectivisation would lead to the sharing of wives and beds.

Instead of agreeing to go into collective farms, the majority of peasants rebelled. They disrupted collective farm meetings and attacked Party officials. Rather than hand over their property, many peasants set fire to their farms, and killed and ate their animals. The result was nearly civil war in the countryside. Stalin was forced to send in the army and secret police to enforce his policy violently.

OPPOSITION OF AND REMOVAL OF THE KULAKS

The majority of peasants objected to collectivisation, but the biggest objection came from those with the most to lose: the kulaks. They had worked hard under

SOURCE G

An anti-kulak propaganda poster from the early 1930s. The slogan at the top of the second reads: 'The Kulak is the Worst Enemy of Poor Peasants'. The box below it says, 'No Place for Kulaks in Complete Collectivisation Regions'.



the NEP and made enough money to buy additional farm land and sometimes even hire workers. As Source H shows, they were not prepared to give this up without a fight. However it would be wrong to see the kulaks as a wealthy **elite**. Most were only slightly richer than the average peasant. This small difference did not matter to the Communists. They believed the kulaks were a dangerous class enemy. In their propaganda, kulaks were shown as greedy capitalists, who occupied all the best land and exploited the poorer peasants. They also selfishly hid grain in order to increase food prices while the workers went hungry. In 1929, Stalin gave a shocking order: ‘Liquidate the kulaks as a class.’

SOURCE H

From an account by a Communist Party official, who took part in the collectivisation process.

So this was ‘Liquidation of the evil kulaks as a class!’ A lot of simple peasants being torn from their native soil, stripped of their worldly goods and shipped to some distant labour camps. Their outcries filled the air. As I stood there, distressed, ashamed, helpless, I heard a woman shouting in an unearthly voice... The woman held a flaming sheaf of grain in her hands. Before anyone could reach her, she had tossed the burning sheaf of grain into the thatched roof of the house, which burst into flames. ‘Infidels! Murderers!’ the distraught woman was shrieking. ‘We worked all our lives for our house. You won’t have it. The flames will have it.’

Kulaks were forbidden from joining collective farms. Instead they were rounded up by dekulakisation squads, made up of army units, secret police and gangs of loyal party members from the cities. Soon, however, the term ‘kulak’ lost any real meaning, as it was applied to anyone who opposed collectivisation, rich or poor. The numbers involved in the dekulakisation drive rapidly escalated. Thousands were simply shot on the spot. Around 2 million were loaded onto cattle trucks, transported to Siberia and imprisoned in forced labour camps run by the secret police. Others were exiled closer to home, but on land deliberately chosen as it was too poor to farm.

KOLKHOZES AND MOTOR TRACTOR STATIONS

After the brutal process of collectivisation, the peasants’ new reality became either the state farm (*sovkhoz* in Russian) or the kolkhoz, meaning collective farm. The state farms tended to be far larger than the collective farms. The peasants who worked on them were treated as ‘outdoor workers’ and paid a fixed wage by the government.

Most peasants ended up working on a collective farm. By 1940, 240,000 kolkhozes had been created across Russia. A typical kolkhoz had the following features.

- They were made up of 50–100 families.
- Each kolkhoz was run by a chairman, who was a Communist Party member from the town.
- The hours the peasants worked and their jobs were set by the state.
- The state decided what was to be grown and supplied the equipment.
- The majority of the kolkhoz produce was taken by the state for a fixed low price.
- This money was then shared out among the peasants. The peasants were very badly paid.
- Peasants were not allowed to leave the kolkhoz to work in the towns.
- After 1935, peasants were given a small area of land to farm for themselves, on which they could also keep a limited number of farm animals.

ACTIVITY

Read Source H carefully.

- 1 What can we learn from this source about collectivisation?
- 2 Did anything in this source surprise you? If so, why?

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

In Soviet propaganda, kolkhozes were shown as large, modern units. The reality was very different. The average kolkhoz was based on the old village. It contained 76 families who lived in the same houses as before, and had only 60 cattle, 94 sheep and goats, and 26 pigs.

SOURCE I

A Soviet joke from the 1930s.

Q: How do you deal with mice in the Kremlin?

A: Put up a sign saying 'collective farm'. Then half the mice will starve, and the rest will run away.






As part of the **modernisation** drive, Motor Tractor Stations (MTSs) were set up to rent out farm machinery to groups of collective farms. By 1940 there was one MTS for every 40 collective farms. However, the stations had a number of weaknesses. They never had enough tractors to meet demand. The tractors were often unreliable because they were badly built in the first place and then badly maintained; the 'mechanics' tended to be peasants who lacked the necessary skills. It was also expensive to hire the machinery, and this put off some collective farms. As a result, traditional farming methods, such as harvesting by hand and using the horse-drawn plough, continued to be used.

The MTSs became hated by many peasants because the officials running them were responsible for ensuring the collective farms handed over their grain **quotas**. In addition, each MTS had a political department. Its job was to spread Communist propaganda and to spy on the peasants. Trouble-makers on the farms could be arrested very quickly.

SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF COLLECTIVISATION

▼ Agricultural production in the Soviet Union. These figures are based on Soviet sources and so cannot be considered completely accurate

By 1935, over 90 per cent of Soviet farmland was collectivised. Despite peasant opposition, collectivisation did bring benefits to the Soviet Union, and to Stalin personally. These successes, however, came at a cost.

	▼ 1928	▼ 1929	▼ 1930	▼ 1931	▼ 1932	▼ 1933
Grain harvest (millions of tonnes) 	73.3	71.7	83.5	69.5	69.6	68.4
State procurement of grain (millions of tonnes) 	10.8	16.1	22.1	22.8	18.5	22.6
Grain exports (millions of tonnes) 	0.3	0.18	4.76	5.06	1.73	1.69
Cattle (million per head) 	70.5	67.1	52.3	47.9	40.1	38.4
Pigs (million per head) 	26.0	20.1	13.6	14.4	11.6	12.1

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

The table above shows that although state procurement levels went up between 1928 and 1933, the state always procured considerably less grain than the full harvest. This was because the collective farms had to hand over a large proportion of their harvest to the MTS as payment for the use of machinery. Grain had to be kept for seed and animal feed. A small portion was also distributed to the collective farmers themselves.

ACTIVITY

How well can you 'spin' the statistics?

- 1 Take on the role of a Gosplan official. **Compile** a short report for the public, emphasising the successes of collectivisation.
- 2 Write a second report from an exiled opponent who has got hold of the same figures. What critical remarks could they make?

FAILURES OF COLLECTIVISATION

The short-term impact of collectivisation was a collapse in food production. As the above table highlights, between 1928 and 1933, grain harvests fell by 7

per cent. Falls in livestock were more dramatic – cattle numbers almost halved. Although this did not cause famine in the cities, the standard of living for urban workers dropped sharply. The amount of meat they ate fell by two-thirds, for example. After 1935, grain production began slowly to recover, but it took 20 years for animal numbers to regain their pre-collectivisation levels.

In the medium to long term, Stalin's hopes of creating a modern, highly productive farming system never emerged. This was because of the following:

- The Motor Tractor Stations did not have enough machinery. What little they had tended to be badly maintained and expensive to hire.
- Dekulakisation had removed the most skilled and productive farmers.
- Above all, productivity was poor. As the peasants did not own the land they worked on and were very poorly paid, they had no reason to work hard. Instead they did just enough to avoid being fined.
- Instead of working hard on the collective farms, peasants put most of their energy into their small private plots. Making up just 4 per cent of the farmed area, they supplied the majority of the Soviet Union's vegetables, fruit, meat and milk.
- Despite countless attempts at reform by later Soviet leaders, the collective farms system remained a major area of weakness in the Soviet economy.

THE GREAT FAMINE, 1932–33

Collectivisation contributed to a widespread famine in 1932–33. Although exact numbers are not known, estimates suggest that 4–5 million people died.

The hardest-hit region was Ukraine. Despite being known as Europe's 'breadbasket' because of its vast, rich farmland, millions of Ukrainians died from starvation. To survive, people ate earthworms, tree bark, mice, ants and even human flesh. The Soviet **regime** printed posters declaring: 'To eat your own children is a barbarian act', but more than 2,500 people were convicted of cannibalism after eating dead bodies.

In Ukraine, the famine is known as the Holodomor, which means 'extermination by hunger'. Its causes are many, and include a long drought and the chaos caused by collectivisation. Animals were killed in huge numbers and the most experienced farmers were deported. The new collective farms were badly run, as most managers came from the towns and had no experience of farming. The peasants, bitter about losing their land, put little effort into their work, including the crucial tasks of sowing seeds in spring and harvesting in autumn.

For all these reasons, food production in Ukraine, like the rest of Russia, fell rapidly in the period 1932–33. These years would have been difficult anyway, but a famine developed because of what the state did next. Even though agricultural output was reduced, grain quotas taken by the state were raised to unrealistic levels. When the quotas were not met, Stalin claimed it was deliberate **sabotage**. Communist officials from the towns, supported by the army and secret police, headed into the villages and took all the food they could find, leaving the peasants with nothing.

KEY TERM

sabotage to secretly damage or destroy something so that it cannot be used

When famine set in, instead of giving help, the state continued its policy of brutal food seizures. If peasants were found hiding even one or two ears of corn, they were exiled or shot. Military checkpoints were set up to prevent starving

SOURCE J

A statue, named the 'Bitter Memory of Childhood,' and dedicated to the child victims of the Ukrainian famine. It is located in the National Museum 'Memorial to Holodomor victims', Kiev, Ukraine.



peasants from leaving the famine-hit areas. Publicly, Stalin's government denied there was any problem and refused offers of foreign aid. Meanwhile, as the table of agricultural production showed, grain continued to be sent abroad.

The Holodomor was a man-made tragedy. Some historians suggest that Stalin deliberately caused it for political purposes. He wanted to punish the peasantry for their heavy resistance to collectivisation. He also saw it as a way of breaking the spirit of the Ukrainian people. Ukraine had its own distinctive culture and many of its people wished for independence outside of the Soviet Union. Famine was Stalin's way of ensuring this did not happen.

EXTEND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

WAS THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE GENOCIDE?

Genocide is defined by the United Nations as an attempt 'to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group'. Academics and political leaders are divided over whether the Holodomor should be classed as a genocide. Those who believe it should argue that Stalin used starvation as a deliberate weapon to terrorise the Ukrainians into obedience. Opponents point out that millions of non-Ukrainians also died in the famine, and so it cannot be seen as an attack on only one national group.

SUCCESSSES OF COLLECTIVISATION

Despite its clear horrors and chaos, for Stalin collectivisation was economically a success. By taking over all the farms, the state managed to secure a guaranteed supply of grain. This was then used to:

- feed the workers in the towns and cities – by 1934, rationing of bread and many other foods ended
- sell abroad, to pay for new industrial equipment.

As a result, although the decline in grain production no doubt worried Stalin, he was much more interested in grain procurement levels. As the table earlier shows, these increased notably on 1928 levels (although less so in 1932).

Collectivisation also delivered another resource vital to industrialisation: people. Over 19 million peasants had moved to the cities. Once there, they supplied much-needed labour for the new factories.

Politically there were positives for Stalin. The decision to abandon the NEP and launch collectivisation was an important reason for Stalin's defeat of Bukharin in the power struggle.

The countryside was under total Communist control for the first time. The violence of collectivisation, combined with the famine, destroyed the independent spirit of the peasantry. Meanwhile, everyday life on collective farms involved close monitoring.

- The Motor Tractor Stations were used to monitor the countryside and spread Communist propaganda.
- The collective farms were run by members of the Communist Party.
- A system of internal passports meant peasants could not leave their farms unless they had official permission.

It is no surprise that many peasants complained of a '**second serfdom**'.

KEY TERM

second serfdom until the late 19th century, many peasants in Russia were owned by landlords and called serfs. The lack of basic freedoms led many peasants in the 1920s to draw comparisons with their own situation

Finally, it was an ideological victory. Stalin had taken a significant step towards building his vision of Communism. By 1936, 90 per cent of farms had been collectivised. Two key elements of capitalism – private land ownership and private enterprise – had therefore been largely removed from the countryside. In addition, by removing the kulaks, class divisions were ended.

▼ The 'balance sheet' for collectivisation

▼ FAILURES

- Two million peasants were deported to Siberia.
- Five million peasants died in the Great Famine.
- The most ambitious farmers were lost.
- Grain harvests fell.
- Livestock numbers did not recover until the 1950s.
- The MTSs did not provide enough tractors.
- Collective farms were unproductive.

▼ SUCCESSES

- A guaranteed grain supply was secured to feed the towns.
- Grain was exported to help pay for industrialisation.
- Peasants moved to towns and cities and became workers.
- The Communist Party gained control over the countryside.
- Stalin increased his political power.
- Communism was created in the countryside.
- Private land ownership was abolished.
- Class divisions were removed.

SOURCE K

A government poster from the 1930s showing the benefits of collectivisation, compared to the outdated methods of the NEP. It was entitled 'Day of harvest and collectivisation'.



ACTIVITY

Imagine that a Communist official from the local MTS and a collective farm worker were seeing the poster in Source K for the first time. Plan out a possible conversation between the two. What would they say to each other about farming in the 1920s, and about how they think collectivisation had worked out?

EXAM-STYLE QUESTION

A01

A02

Explain **two** effects on the Soviet Union of Stalin's decision to abandon the New Economic Policy in 1928. **(8 marks)**

HINT

To do well in this question, you need to include accurate and relevant historical information to prove your points.

RECAP

RECALL QUESTIONS

- 1 Which organisation was in charge of the Five Year Plans?
- 2 How long did the first Five Year Plan last?
- 3 What sector of industry did all three Five Year Plans prioritise?
- 4 Why did the third Five Year Plan last only 3.5 years?
- 5 Why did Alexei Stakhanov become a household name in the Soviet Union?
- 6 Which group of people did the Communist Party identify as their main enemy in the countryside?
- 7 What was a collective farm known as?
- 8 How many collective farms had been created by 1940?
- 9 Which region was hit particularly hard by the Great Famine?
- 10 What happened to grain procurement levels between 1928 and 1933?

CHECKPOINT

STRENGTHEN

- S1** Note down four reasons why Stalin was not happy with the Soviet economy under the NEP.
- S2** Produce a two-sentence definition of each of the following terms: Gosplan; Five Year Plans; collectivisation; Motor Tractor Station.
- S3** Find four statistics that show that Stalin's economic policies were successful. Then find four statistics that show them to be a failure.

CHALLENGE

- C1** Was there one main reason why Stalin wanted to industrialise the Soviet Union?
- C2** Create a spider diagram showing the economic, political and social effects of both collectivisation and rapid industrialisation.
- C3** 'An industrial success but an agricultural failure'. Do you agree with this view of the Five Year Plans and collectivisation?

SUMMARY

- Stalin aimed to turn the Soviet Union into a modern, industrial country, with an up-to-date farming system.
- He began a policy of rapid industrialisation to get the country ready for war and because he saw it as a way of moving towards full communism.
- To industrialise the Soviet Union as quickly as possible, Gosplan created three Five Year Plans, setting out ambitious economic targets for the economy.
- Heavy industry was the main priority of the Five Year Plans. Impressive gains were made in iron, steel, coal, oil and electricity production.
- For ordinary workers, life was very tough under the Five Year Plans. Industries that made things for ordinary people received little investment.
- To make people work harder, workers were encouraged to copy the example of Stakhanov.
- In order to support the process of industrialisation, from 1928 Stalin ordered all farms to be collectivised.
- Collectivisation was a deeply unpopular policy, and many peasants resisted by killing their livestock and burning their farms.
- Collectivisation came at a huge cost. Millions were deported or died in the Great Famine. Farm production fell.
- Stalin saw collectivisation as successful, mainly because the state gained a guaranteed supply of grain.

EXAM GUIDANCE: PART (A) QUESTIONS

Study Extract A.

EXTRACT A

From a history of the Soviet Union published in 2008.

Although production had increased, many of the official targets were never met. However, large-scale fraud on the part of local administrators allowed Stalin to claim that the Plan had been ‘over-fulfilled’. Local Party officials who failed to meet their production targets were demoted, sacked, or in some cases put on trial and executed as enemies of the state. Under enormous pressure, many local administrators lied about the amount of raw materials that they had been able to produce, creating the impression that targets had been exceeded. Nonetheless, in reality, few production targets were actually achieved.

A04

SKILLS

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION,
CREATIVITY

Question to be answered: What impression does the author give about the overall success of Stalin’s first Five Year Plan?

You must use Extract A to explain your answer.

(6 marks)

1

Analysis Question 1: What is the question type testing?

In this question, you have to make an inference from what the extract says to show what impression the author set out to create. The key to analysing the extracts is to understand that the author deliberately chooses how they write. They will make a choice about what language to use, what tone to adopt and what content to include to create an impression.

2

Analysis Question 2: What do I have to do to answer the question well?

Obviously you have to read the extract carefully and work out what the author is trying to make you think. Has the author set out to give a positive or negative impression, or have they set out to suggest that an event/policy or movement was significant/ineffective, successful/unsuccessful? The language and tone of the source will help you see this. Are there any especially ‘emotional’ words? Has the author deliberately included things or left things out?

3

Analysis Question 3: Are there any techniques I can use to make it very clear that I am doing what is needed to be successful?

This is a 6-mark question and you need to make sure you leave enough time to answer the other two questions fully (they are worth 22 marks in total). Therefore, you want to answer this question as quickly as you can. A good way to do this is to answer the question straight away.

You could begin with:

'The impression the author is trying to give about the overall success of the first Five Year Plan is...'

You now have to prove it. A good way to do this is to say:

'I think this because of the language and tone...'

(You can then quote Extract A to prove what you are saying about language and tone.)

'I also think this is true because of the content the author has chosen....'

(You can then quote Extract A to prove what you are saying about content choice. For example, the author creates a bad impression by not talking about the achievements of the first Five Year Plan.)



Answer A

The author gives the impression that the Five Year Plans were not very successful. I think this because of the language and tone of the extract.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of Answer A?

It correctly identifies the overall impression of the extract. However, it needs to back up the statement with evidence from the extract.



Answer B

The author suggests that the Five Year Plans were overall a failure. I think this because the author brings in a lot of evidence to support this negative view. The extract talks about 'few production targets' being met, and about how officials had to try to cover up their failings by lying. This suggests that despite the official claims, the economy was not that successful. I also think this because the tone of the source is negative. The author used words like 'failed', 'sacked', 'demoted' and 'few', which create an impression of things going wrong.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of Answer B?

This is a very good answer. It has identified the overall impression of the source and provided plenty of evidence from the source to explain this.

Challenge a friend

Use the Student Book to find a source to set a part (a) question for a friend. Then look at their answer. Does it do the following things?

- State a valid impression from the source
- Provide at least 3–4 lines explaining how language, tone and content choice prove this.

If it does, you can tell your friend that the answer is very good!