**What was Russia like in 1881?**

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| **The World’s largest state** | **Geography** | Autocracy |
| **The economy** | **Society** |  |

Using this information provide reasons for why Russia was regarded as a ‘backward’ state in the 19th century.

Timeline – Key events of the topic (including the reforms during the reign of Alexander II)

Reasons for the changes in Russian History

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| Change brought about by rulers or government | Change brought about by war | Change brought about by revolution |
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| From 1904 to 1905 Russia fought Japan in a war over territory in the Far East. Russian defeat in this war helped fuel revolution at home during 1905. | In 1855 to 1881 Alexander II launched a period of change | From 1854 to 1856 Russia fought Britain, France and Turkey in the Crimean War, much of the fighting took place on Russian soil. Russia’s defeat was a major reasons for Alexander II’s reforms in the 1860’s. | The decision of the Provisional government (Feb. – Oct 1917) to continue fighting in WWI undermined its authority and assisted the Bolshevik seizure of power. |
| In 1905 the Revolution resulted in the October manifesto which allowed the creation of Russia’s first elected national parliament, the Duma. | Russian involvement in the First world War placed huge social and economic strains on the Empire as it struggled to fight a European War against Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey. | From 1917 to 1924, Lenin forced through reform. This was due in the main to the fact that Russian politics was not democratic for most of its existence. | The October Revolution of 1917 brought about the creation of the world’s first communist state and led to a transformation in the social, economic and political structure of Russia. |
| In the early 18th century a major period of change was brought about by Tsar Peter the Great. | In February 1917 the Revolution resulted in the abdication of the Tsar and the end of the 300 years of rule by the Romnov family. | The Civil War of 1918 to 1921 resulted in major political and economic change under the Bolsheviks. |  |