

WEST ISLAND SCHOOL HISTORY DEPARTMENT

Autocracy and Revolt in Russia, 1881-1914

A revision and question guide



THE REIGN OF ALEXANDER III

- **Impact of the assassination of Alexander II.**
- **Alexander III, Pobedonostev and reaction.**
- **Restoration of autocracy, censorship and the policy of Russification.**

The Big Picture : Russia in the late nineteenth century**a) Geography**

Russia was the biggest land empire on the planet. It stretched from Europe in the west to the border with China and the Pacific Ocean in the East. In the south, Russia's borders reached almost to the Middle East, while in the north it included the Arctic Circle. It would later take a whole week of continuously travelling by train to cross Russia – while the sun set on one side of the country, it was rising on the other! This made it very hard for the government to stay up to date with events in the country and to respond to emergencies. Despite its size, much of the Russian Empire was very hard to live in due to the climate and huge areas (such as Siberia) were inhabited by only a few nomadic tribes. Most of the population were concentrated in the European part of Russia in the west.

b) Religion

Russia had its own brand of Christianity known as the Orthodox Church. It was very conservative and did not support changes to Russia. It encouraged people to be happy with their life, however difficult it was, as they would be compensated in heaven. The Orthodox Church supported the Tsar very strongly and accepted him as their leader. The Russian people were very religious and this made some areas of the country more stable. However, not all parts of the Russian Empire were populated by 'Russians'...

c) The Nationalities

There were about 125 million people in the Russian Empire. However, under half of them were actually Russians. In fact, there were at least 18 different peoples living under Russian rule; from Germans to Iranians, Jews to Mongols. These peoples had their own languages, cultures and religions, and often wanted to be independent from the Russian Empire. This meant that there were always groups who opposed the Tsars in certain areas. The Russians often did not like the other peoples in their empire and sometimes violence could break out. This was especially true of the Jews, who were regularly attacked and sometimes even massacred in Eastern Europe (these attacks were known as *pogroms* and often encouraged by the Tsars to distract attention from them when things were going wrong).

d) Society – The Majority

Russian society was considered to be rather 'backwards'. The majority of the people lived a very basic peasant life in villages (about 80% of the population). While most were no longer serfs, they had little freedom. The land they farmed was actually

owned by the village commune (**mir**) who had lots of power over their daily life (marriage, leaving the village etc). They also had to pay their former landlords compensation for fifty years from 1861, the date when Alexander II had granted their 'freedom'. These were known as **redemption payments**. Cities existed in the European part of Russia (St Petersburg was the capital) and were beginning to grow by the late nineteenth century. The Tsars were trying to build factories and industries by this time so that they could share in the wealth and power of countries like Great Britain. The relatively small number of peasants who were able to leave their **mir** and take jobs in these new factories were poorly treated and lived miserably short lives in the terrible conditions of the city slums. Overall, Russia remained a backward economy, still almost entirely reliant on peasant farming.

e) Society – The Minority

At the top of society a very small number of people were fabulously rich. The Tsar employed 15,000 personal servants and needed 20 railway carriages just to transport his luggage. The main landowners of Russia were still a small number of noble families (the aristocracy) – they rarely lived near their farms or took any interest in the peasants. They were only 1% of the population and owned 25% of the land. They also collected redemption payments from the peasants. A small middle class lived in the cities – these were traders, factory owners and professionals working in government jobs or in the professions (lawyers, doctors etc). Overall, wealth was very unfairly shared out in the Russian Empire.

f) The Autocracy

Russia was ruled by one man, the Tsar – it was an '**autocracy**'. The **Romanov** family had now been in power for nearly 600 years. This meant that there was very little chance for the rest of society to have any say in government or to have their problems addressed. The Tsar used the **aristocracy** (nobles/landowners) and his large civil service to run the country. His terrifying secret police, the **Okhrana**, arrested any critics and he could rely on the **Cossacks** (loyal and ferocious mounted soldiers) to crush and massacre any opposition that got out of hand.

Alexander II – 'The Tsar Liberator'

In 1855 Alexander II became Tsar. He admired western European countries and wanted to make Russia more modern like them – he was a **reformer**. This would mean trying to expand cities, make society more fair and develop more industry. He began a programme of reforms which included:

1. **Allowing more political debate** and criticism of his government by reducing censorship and allowing newspapers to be published more freely.
2. **Giving up some of his power** by creating **zemstva** in the regions. These were councils whose members were elected locally and had control over local government. Some of the middle classes in the cities wanted to also have more of a say in how the central government was run, but Alexander II refused to allow this.
3. **Modernising society by freeing the serfs**. This meant that land now passed from the aristocracy to the peasants. However, peasants were not given the land individually – instead it was given to the village communally who ran it together

through the **mir**s. The peasants also had to make yearly **redemption** payments to the aristocracy for fifty years.

Did Alexander II's reforms work?

There were **some successes**. The elected **zemstva** worked well and many of the regions had better government than previously. The serfs got their freedom from the aristocracy and now farmed for themselves. New newspapers and writers were able to spread modern ideas in Russia and, as hoped, new economic ideas began to develop and take shape.

However, these successes also led to **problems** for Alexander II. The lack of censorship meant criticism of the autocracy became common and some groups of educated Russians in the cities began to demand that even more power be taken from the Tsar. The **zemstva** showed that introducing more elected government in Russia might work better than the autocracy. The **emancipation** of the serfs had raised hopes – but soon the new peasants were angry at the **redemption payments** and the fact that they still did not have real freedom due to the **mir**s.

The consequence was a rise in opposition to Tsar Alexander II. Terrorist groups were formed who carried out attacks on the Tsar's government (and its officials) and there were more protests from educated Russians. In the second half of his reign, Alexander II became more **reactionary** and started to try to undo some of his reforms. By 1881 it was too late – Alexander was assassinated by a terrorist group known as **The People's Will** as he drove through St Petersburg.

What effect did the assassination of Alexander II have on Russia?

The most obvious impact was that his son, **Alexander III**, came to power. Alexander III had watched his father's attempts at reform actually lead to more opposition and, ultimately, his murder. The new Tsar was determined not to make the same mistake – he would work hard to roll back the reforms made by his father (as far as possible) and to strengthen the hold of the Romanov Tsars on Russia forever. Historians therefore describe him as a **reactionary**.

Alexander III's new motto was "**Autocracy, orthodoxy and nationalism**". By this he meant that he would do all he could to increase his own power, the influence of the church and the traditional structure of society, and to make all of the different peoples of the Russian Empire more 'Russian'.

What was the influence of Pobedonostev?

Pobedonostev was an aristocrat who fully agreed with Alexander III's reactionary goals for Russia. He was very intelligent and effective at getting things done. Alexander III made him head of the Orthodox Church and he became the Tsar's right hand man. Together, they would introduce a series of reactionary measures that would go a long way to achieving the goals of "autocracy, orthodoxy and nationalism".

The following table summarises the key steps (policies) taken by Pobedonostev and Alexander III. These policies became known as '**Russification**'.

Goal	Reactionary Policy
<p>NATIONALISM</p> <p>To make the different peoples of the Russian Empire more 'Russian'. This would, it was hoped, make them more loyal to the Tsar. He also hoped to get rid of western ideas from Russia.</p>	<p>His reactionary policies were known as 'RUSSIFICATION'.</p> <p>1881 – They encouraged a pogrom against the Jews. Thousands are murdered and many more fled. Pobedonostev said he hoped that "one third will be killed, one third will convert and one third will leave Russia". He follows this up with laws that ban Jews from government jobs.</p> <p>1885 – A law is passed saying everyone in the Russian Empire has to adopt a Russian surname. 100,000 soldiers are sent to Poland alone to enforce the law.</p> <p>1880s – Universities can no longer appoint their own professors; the teaching of history is discouraged. Alexander III was keen to ensure that western ideas stayed out of education.</p>
<p>AUTOCRACY</p> <p>To get as much power back to the Tsar as possible. Reverse the reforms of Alexander III.</p>	<p>1881 Statute of State Security – The Okhrana (secret police) are given power to lock anyone up without a trial. He orders the execution of suspects linked to his father's assassination.</p> <p>1882 Censorship Laws – No-one can now print anything without getting permission from the government first. Mass burnings of books that are seen to contain 'reforming' ideas are organised.</p> <p>1889 – Alexander III creates 'Land Captains'. They are appointed by him and sent to rule in the regions and countryside. They take a lot of the power away from the zemstva and listen only to the Tsar's orders.</p> <p>1892 – Alexander III reduces the number of people who are allowed to vote for the zemstva – now only the rich (largely his supporters) can vote.</p>
<p>ORTHODOXY</p> <p>To change society back to how it had been – the peasants at the bottom, the aristocracy at the top and as little as possible in between.</p>	<p>1881 – Pobedonostev orders 250 new churches to be built in one year. He aims to increase the Orthodox Church's influence over the people (it supports the Tsar). He orders priests to spy on their followers and report to the Okhrana.</p> <p>1885 – Alexander raises school fees and bans children from poor families being educated. It is seen as a waste of money and dangerous as it teaches them to want more out of life.</p> <p>1893 – Peasants are banned from ever leaving the mir. This means that the government can keep an eye on the majority of the population.</p>

Did Alexander III try to introduce any reforming ideas?

1. Alexander III did have some government ministers (apart from Pobedonostev) who still wanted reforms – they felt that to avoid revolution they should make the lives of the people better. He listened to them sometimes – as a result he:
 - Passed laws that improved working conditions for the poor in factories, improving safety and reducing hours.
 - He emancipated all the remaining serfs that had been overlooked by his father.
2. **Famine in 1891** – Alexander III wanted to make sure that Russia could win modern wars. To achieve this he had to develop industry in Russia fast so that he could build weapons. This meant that he helped to create even more factory workers in the city – this contrasted with his goal to turn back the clock in Russia. Worse still, he paid for the industrialisation by selling much of the grain produced by the peasants abroad. In 1891, there was a bad harvest and food in Russia became scarce. Alexander III still sold most of what was left to other countries – the result was a **terrible famine** in which millions of his people died.

How successful was Alexander III?

When we judge how successful someone like Alexander III was, we have to think about what he set out to achieve.

SUCCESES	FAILURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He strengthened the power of the Tsars and successfully dealt with opposition. Alexander III reasserted his power to all corners of the Empire. 2. He largely achieved his goal of keeping the poor in their place. 3. He began the process of industrialising Russia and maintaining her strength in the world. 4. He (eventually) successfully reformed his government's finances – he even ran the country at a profit, perhaps the first Tsar to achieve this. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The famine of 1891 was a disaster for the people of Russia. His lack of action made the Tsars seem to be uncaring and brutal – this stored up resentment against them for the future. 2. During the famine, many of the zemstva organised themselves and provided help for the poor. This made them popular and showed that elected politicians were more efficient and more caring than the Tsar's officials. 3. Policies such as Russification caused really deep and long standing resentment against the Tsars. 4. His ideas were not in touch with the modern world. As contact increased with western countries and literacy spread in Russia, his policies never really had a long term hope of success.

Overall, the best that can be said about Alexander III is that during his lifetime he achieved his basic goal of increasing his power and crushing his opponents. However, his policies did not solve any of the real problems that existed in Russian society – these problems would come back to haunt his son, Nicholas II, who took the throne after Alexander III's death in 1894.

Know your facts?

1. List three facts about the geography of the Russian Empire.
2. Around what proportion of people living in the Russian Empire were 'Russian'?
3. Which group made up the majority of the Russian population?
4. The aristocracy were 1% of the population – what % of the land did they own?
5. For how long had the Romanov family ruled Russia?
6. Who introduced the zemstva and why?
7. Why was Alexander II given the title "the Tsar Liberator"?
8. What year did Alexander III take over?
9. Who was Alexander III's BFF?
10. What is the overall name given to Alexander III's reactionary policies?
11. What was Alexander III's three word motto?
12. How did Alexander III treat the minorities in Russia? Two examples.
13. What was a Land Captain?
14. How did Alexander III use the Orthodox Church?
15. Give two ways in which Alexander III changed education.
16. What tragedy happened in 1891?
17. How could Alexander III be blamed for it?
18. Why did Alexander III ban peasants from leaving the mir?
19. What was Alexander III's main failure?
20. When did Alexander III die?

Did you know?

- Alexander III was so strong that his favourite party trick was to bend iron bars in company!
- When his train derailed in 1888 he used his super strength to rip open the roof and saved everyone in his carriage. However, he was no Wolverine – six years later he would die from kidney problems caused by bruising that he received that day.

PROBLEMS FACING NICHOLAS II 1894-1905

- **Weaknesses of Nicholas II as a Tsar**
- **Witte and industrial growth**
- **Problems facing Nicholas II including the discontent of the peasants, town workers and subject nationalities (ethnic minorities / the peoples)**

What were the personal weaknesses of Tsar Nicholas II?

1. **His Family.** Nicholas II was a devoted family man and spent a lot of his time with his five children. His wife, **Alexandra**, was of German descent and was viewed with some suspicion by the people as a result of her not being 'Russian'. She was strong-willed and appeared arrogant. Alexandra always strongly argued against any kind of power sharing with the people and often dominated Nicholas II. His only son (and heir to the throne) **Alexis** suffered from a rare blood disease called haemophilia which meant that he was always at risk of bleeding to death. The family was very religious and could be influenced by superstition. Nicholas II's family therefore had a negative impact on his position of Tsar; he appeared weak, uncaring and it distracted him from the business of government.
2. **His Personality:** Nicholas II was not suited to being an autocrat and was very different to his father. When he became Tsar in 1894 he confided to a friend that he "never wanted" to be Tsar and that he had no idea what to do. His ministers soon found that he could not assert his point of view face to face and that he found it difficult to concentrate on issues for a long time. He avoided dealing with problems and was often described as being nice but weak by foreign ambassadors.
3. **His Aims:** Under the influence of his wife, Nicholas II still maintained that he would "**preserve the principles of autocracy**" like his father. This meant that he would try to avoid any reforms or changes that might have made him more popular. At the same time, he did not have the strength and intelligence that had allowed Alexander III to be successful in this area.

Nicholas II's weak personality, coupled with his refusal to compromise his role as autocratic ruler of the Russian Empire, set the stage for a reign that would be characterised by tension and conflict. However, it must be remembered that the Tsar still largely had the support of some powerful groups: the aristocracy, the Orthodox Church, the Okhrana and the Cossacks. Many peasants at this point still revered the Tsar (he was known as 'Little Father' to many) and tended to blame the aristocracy and government ministers for their problems rather than the Tsar himself.

What was the economic impact of Sergei Witte's industrialisation on Russia to 1905?

Just before he died, Alexander III had appointed Sergei Witte to be in charge of industrialising Russia (remember, he wanted the factories and industry to increase the power

of the Russian Empire in the world). Witte, who was a bit of a genius, continued with his programme under Nicholas II and made some massive changes to Russia. The table below outlines what he did (policies) and how successful his ideas were:

Policy	Success	Failure
<p>Loans and Currency reform. Witte made the Russian currency, the rouble, easier to trade internationally. This encouraged foreign companies to invest in factories in Russia. He also managed to negotiate huge loans from France which were used to invest in industry.</p>	<p>Between 1893-1900 all this extra investment meant that thousands of factories were built in Russia. Production of things like steel and coal (which meant weapons could be produced and could be sold to foreign countries) increased massively – this made the Russian Empire more powerful in the world.</p>	<p>All of these loans meant that the Russian government became heavily in debt. The factories that were built focused on things like steel, not on more luxury goods that might have made the lives of the people better. Despite the industrialisation, the Russian Empire was still very much behind countries like Britain and Germany.</p>
<p>The Trans-Siberian railway. Witte built a railway that was to run all the way across Russia; from Europe to China.</p>	<p>The railway improved trade and helped Nicholas II's government to control his huge empire.</p>	<p>The railway was very expensive and not fully completed in places. It also gave Nicholas II misplaced confidence that he would be able to fight a successful war with Japan in the East.</p>

What was the social impact of Witte's policies?

In order for these new factories to run, Witte encouraged many thousands of peasants to move to the cities. As the government and factory managers wanted costs to be as low as possible, they paid extremely low wages. The workers had to move into slums, where there was no choice but to share beds in filthy conditions. Disease killed many, as did the very unsafe working conditions in the new factories. The workers were not allowed to form trade unions (support groups that would protect and promote their rights) and were often arrested by the Okhrana if they complained.

The result was large numbers of desperate and frustrated workers being housed together in major cities like St Petersburg. The ideas of the middle class educated opposition groups, who wanted reforms, began to spread among them in a way that would not have been possible had they continued living in the mirs in the countryside (or if they had been happy with the way they were being treated). Therefore, one of the significant failures of Witte's economic policies was that they created a large new group of potential opponents to the Tsar; the factory workers.

In 1903, one of Witte's rivals accused him of being part of a Jewish conspiracy to ruin the country. Bizarrely (but perhaps not unsurprisingly), Nicholas II believed this accusation and forced Witte to resign. Russia had lost one of its few creative and honest leaders.

Which groups were unhappy by 1905?

1. **THE WORKERS IN THE CITIES** (see above)
2. **THE PEASANTS:** Redemption payments, poverty , the mir (see previous section).
3. **THE NATIONALITIES:** These were the ethnic minorities that suffered under Alexander III's policy of 'Russification', which was continued by Nicholas II. As we have seen, this was very unpopular and the army often had to be sent to different regions to keep control.
4. **THE MIDDLE CLASSES:** These were the small group of educated professionals and businessmen living in the cities. They felt that they were now ready to play a role on government (as they had proved in the zemstva in Alexander III's time) and wanted the Tsar to share more power. They began to develop societies and groups for this purpose and some tried to link up with the peasants and workers. These groups will be discussed further in Section 5.

Know your facts?

1. What was the name of Nicholas II's wife and son?
2. Why was his wife unpopular?
3. What disease did his son suffer from? Why is this important?
4. What did Tsar Nicholas II say when his father died?
5. What was Nicholas II's main aim?
6. Who was Sergei Witte?
7. What was Witte's main goal?
8. Give two economic successes of Witte's industrialisation programme.
9. What was the main social effect of his changes?
10. Which groups were discontented by 1905? Why?

Did you know?

- **As Alexandra spoke no Russian (and Nicholas II no German) the royal couple spoke English to each other early in their marriage.**
- **When the pair got married, a huge crowd gathered to watch. Several people died in the ensuing crush as everyone pushed forward to get a better look. Instead of trying to help, the royal couple ignored the chaos and went to dinner. Their reputation for being uncaring was not improved.**

The 1905 Revolution:

- The Russo-Japanese War and Father Gapon and Bloody Sunday (January 1905)
- Key events of the 1905 revolution
- The Potemkin Mutiny and the setting up of Soviets
- The October Manifesto and the reasons why Nicholas survived

As we have seen, by 1905 there was a lot of discontent in Russia among large sections of the population. This discontent was to turn into outright rebellion and revolution as a result of two key events: The Russo-Japanese War and Bloody Sunday.

What was the effect of the Russo-Japanese War on Russia?

Nicholas II went to war with Japan in 1904. While Japan started the conflict with a surprise attack on the Russian army base at Port Arthur, Nicholas II had provoked them by refusing Japanese offers of a peaceful agreement. Nicholas II had been keen to fight for the following reasons:

1. **Distraction:** He was convinced that Japan would be an easy enemy to beat. A quick victory would get him lots of praise and support from his people and would distract them from their problems.
2. **Autocracy:** He wanted to increase his Empire. Japan was trying to take over parts of Korea and China. Nicholas II decided he should use this as an excuse to interfere and capture them for himself.
3. **Trans-Siberian Railway:** Nicholas thought that the new railway would allow him to send a huge army cheaply and easily to the east to fight Japan. As we have seen, the railway did not work as well as he had hoped.

The war went badly for the Russian Empire:

1. The Russian army quickly lost a series of battles with the Japanese. Port Arthur was eventually captured by the Japanese. The Tsar had underestimated the strength of the Japanese army. The Russian army was still poorly organised and lacked modern equipment.
2. The Russian naval fleet was sent on a seven month voyage from Europe to northern China. As soon as it arrived it was almost completely destroyed by the Japanese at the **battle of Tsushima**.

This had a massive effect back in Russia:

1. The people saw these defeats as a national humiliation and were outraged. As the war was so far from most of the population (who lived in the west of Russia), it had never even created the excitement and patriotism that Nicholas II had hoped for in the first place.
2. The Tsar and his government appeared to be incompetent and weak.
3. The war had disrupted the economy. As transport was used for the army and supplies sent with them, things began to run short in the cities. Factories ran out of raw materials and had to shut, which meant that thousands of workers lost their jobs and were made homeless.

4. Food supplies were disrupted and prices in the cities began to rise. As winter got underway, the situation got worse.

By January, the people of St Petersburg were desperate. A priest, **Father Gapon**, led a huge protest march through the city. Their aim was not revolution but to deliver a petition to the Tsar at his Winter Palace asking for:

1. Peace with Japan.
2. Better working conditions. This included higher pay, safer factories, shorter working hours etc.

It is important to note that the 200,000 workers and families who marched with Father Gapon were not trying to get rid of Nicholas II. Indeed, many were loyal to him and had high expectations that, once their 'Little Father' saw how badly off they were, he would enthusiastically support their ideas. Many carried images of him and sang patriotic songs.

Once again, the government badly miscalculated. The police tried to stop the marchers and as a result some scuffles broke out. The army were called and misinterpreted the situation. Perhaps sharing the unsympathetic view of the workers held by the Tsar, the army officer ordered his men to open fire on the crowd. Between 200-500 marchers (the exact figure is not known) were killed and many more wounded. This massacre became known as **Bloody Sunday**.

What was the impact of Bloody Sunday?

It was a terrible blow for the Tsar's government. The belief that the Tsar was the people's 'Little Father' was shattered forever and violence broke out all over the country. In the cities workers went on strike and in the countryside peasants rioted and attacked landowners and local government officials. The **Grand Duke Serge** (Nicholas II's uncle and one of the most powerful men in Russia) was assassinated by terrorists and hundreds of government officials were murdered. This continued throughout the year, becoming known as the 1905 Revolution. Some of the key events were:

Event	Significance
The Potemkin Mutiny	The battleship Potemkin was the most famous ship in Nicholas II's fleet. In June 1905 the sailors decided to join the protests. They threw their officers overboard and set sail on their own. Historians see their protest as mainly being due to frustration at not receiving enough food and pay, rather than a deliberate plan to fight the Tsar. It does appear the sailors had no overall aim; sailing around until they gave themselves up a few months later. However, it was still a terrifying blow to Nicholas II – if he could no longer rely on the armed forces then he was in big trouble.
The Nationalities	Many of the ethnic groups took the opportunity provided by the general chaos to declare themselves independent of the Russian Empire (such as the Georgians and the Poles). Clearly, 'Russification' had failed.

Peasant revolt	As the year went on the Tsar lost control of much of the countryside. Not only were his officials murdered, but peasants were also seizing land from the aristocracy and even killing many of them in the process. It looked like the Tsar's key supporters, the aristocracy, might lose their power completely.
The Soviets	Workers in towns and cities went on strike in September, stopping all trade and work. They set up soviets , which were councils elected by the workers, to organise themselves. The cities were basically taken over and run by these soviets – the workers were happy to follow their instructions whilst ignoring those of the Tsar's officials.

By October 1905, it appeared that Nicholas II had completely lost control of his country. He now only had one choice; compromise.

How did Nicholas II survive the 1905 Revolution?

Nicholas II finally had to offer something in order to stop the revolution. He at least had the good sense to recall **Sergei Witte** to government, who was able to persuade him to follow a double policy:

1. The October Manifesto

This document was published in October of 1905 and promised to give the Russian people more say in government. There would now be an elected **Duma** (parliament) that would help run the country and he also guaranteed that the Russian people would have more rights – these included free speech (remember Alexander III had introduced censorship) and the right to form political parties. Nicholas II also reduced taxes on the poor.

The effect of the October Manifesto was powerful. It really pleased many of the middle class liberals and moderate protesters who wanted more say in government and lower taxes, but who feared what would happen if the Tsar was actually overthrown (chaos, communism etc). They accepted the October manifesto and began to support Nicholas II. They became known as the '**Octobrists**'.

Some of the revolutionary groups wanted more than this (or did not trust Nicholas II) and so did not accept the October Manifesto. Now that the opposition was divided, the second part of the Tsar's policy began.

2. Oppression

Nicholas II ordered the Okhrana to arrest the leaders of the St Peterburg Soviet, exiling 15 of them to the frozen wastelands of Siberia. In Moscow, the army moved in and crushed the soviet there despite heavy fighting with revolutionary groups. The Okhrana also organised terrorist groups known as the **Black Hundreds** who were encouraged (and sometimes paid) to murder revolutionaries and beat up striking workers. Thousands were killed by the Black Hundreds throughout 100 towns and cities over the next couple of months.

By March 1906 the revolution was over and the Tsar's government was back in control of the Russian Empire (including the nationalities). Nicholas had survived for two reasons:

1. Despite the Potemkin Mutiny, **the armed forces had stayed loyal**. He was able to rely on them to retake control once things had started to calm down.
2. **The opposition to Nicholas II was divided by the October Manifesto**. The liberals and middle classes (as well as large numbers of peasants and workers) still trusted the promises of the Tsar and were willing to accept the Duma as a compromise in return for things getting back to normal. This left the revolutionaries and the soviets isolated and the balance of power tipped back in favour of the Tsar.

Check your understanding:

1. In what year did the Russo-Japanese war break out?
2. Which city was lost to the Japanese?
3. What was the name of the disastrous naval battle?
4. Give two reasons why the Tsar was keen to fight the war?
5. In which month of 1905 did Bloody Sunday take place and where?
6. Who was Father Gapon?
7. What did some of the marchers on Bloody Sunday call the Tsar?
8. Who was assassinated by terrorists after Bloody Sunday?
9. What was the Potemkin?
10. What happened in the countryside throughout 1905?
11. What were the soviets?
12. What did the Tsar promise in the October Manifesto?
13. Why did he make these promises?
14. What else did the Tsar do to regain control?
15. Why were the opposition not able to resist?

Did you know?

- Some suspect that Father Gapon was (secretly) a paid agent of the Okhrana. If this is true, then it gives some insight into the inefficiencies of the Tsarist government – one part was paying him to keep the protests peaceful, while another was shooting at him!
- Father Gapon fled Russia to Geneva after Bloody Sunday. On his return, he was welcomed by the anti-Tsarist group known as the Social Revolutionaries. They put him up in a safe house in Finland. Three days later, the house was found to be deserted except for the body of Father Gapon hanging from the rafters.

The Dumas and Stolypin

- The attitude of Nicholas to the first four Dumas
- Stolypin's reforms and repression
- The Lena Goldfield Strike

What was the attitude of Nicholas II to the first four Dumas?

As we have seen, Nicholas II had issued the October Manifesto (which established the Duma) out of necessity; he had to make some compromise or risk being overthrown. He therefore had no intention of really letting the Duma have much say in government.

The first elections for the Duma were held in March 1906 and a majority of anti-government candidates gained office. Nicholas II responded by immediately issuing a set of '**Fundamental Laws**' which stated that "To the Emperor of all the Russias belongs supreme autocratic power". You will remember that by March the revolution had been crushed. Nicholas was feeling confident, spurred on by his ministers and Alexandra. It had seemed that the revolutionaries were right; Nicholas II had no intention of allowing the Duma to have any power.

Did the Dumas achieve anything?

1. **The First Duma 1906.** With its majority of anti-government candidates ('**Cadets**'), the Duma set out to demand some power from Nicholas II to start introducing the reforms that had been demanded by the protest groups and revolutionaries in 1905 (better conditions for workers etc). Nicholas II responded quickly by surrounding the Duma building with soldiers and forcing the elected Duma representatives to go home. He did not allow them to come back, insisting that there would be a new election (which he hoped more supportive candidates would win). The first Duma lasted only 75 days and the 'Octobrists' were sorely disappointed.
2. **The Second Duma 1907.** Perhaps unsurprisingly, the people elected an even more anti-government set of candidates to the second Duma in 1907. Nicholas II was outraged as this time round there were some revolutionaries from groups such as the Socialist Revolutionaries and Social Democrats elected. They did not just want to share power, but to remove the Tsar completely! After only three months the Tsar closed down the Duma again and called for new elections.
3. **The Third Duma 1907-12.** You can probably tell by the fact that this Duma lasted the full five year term that it was more to Nicholas II's liking. This was because he had changed the voting system, which had prevented revolutionaries and opposition groups from winning many seats in the Duma. The majority were now conservatives who basically supported the autocracy and did what Nicholas II told them to do. They therefore achieved no reforms and did not try to make Nicholas share power.
4. **The Fourth Duma was elected in 1912** along the same lines as the third had been. Once again, few anti-government candidates were elected and Nicholas II was able to get his own way. However, as events unfolded after 1912 the Fourth Duma became increasingly resentful of Nicholas II's refusal to allow it to debate important matters. However, this became more significant after 1914.

Overall, the Dumas made little change to the Russian Empire. The first two Dumas demanded power and reform but did not have the power to force Nicholas II to make any concessions. The second two Dumas did not want change or reform as a result of Nicholas II's manipulation of the election rules. The Octobrists had indeed been tricked by the October Manifesto and, given the Tsar's successful repression of the workers and revolutionaries, no longer had the power to do anything about it.

However, in many ways this was only a short term success for Nicholas II. By refusing to share power with the Dumas, he effectively prevented opposition groups from participating in government and politics. This meant that if there was another economic crisis, they would have no choice but to take their complaints to the streets once more.

The Role of Stolypin

In 1906, Nicholas II made an unusually intelligent appointment by selecting **Peter Stolypin** as his Minister of the Interior. He was a tough, clever and ruthless man who was charged with making sure that the revolutionary events of 1905 could never happen again. He went about this in two ways:

1. **Repression.** Stolypin's first action was to get the **Okhrana** moving. Under his leadership, the police and army made a huge number of arrests and ensured that trials were conducted quickly with little chance of those accused of revolution or terrorism being found innocent. In 1906 alone, he hanged 1008 people for terrorism and exiled another 21,000 people to Siberia. A testimony to his success was that the hangman's noose was actually renamed '**Stolypin's Necktie**' by the opponents to the government.
2. **Reforms.** Stolypin was also intelligent enough to realise that repression alone would eventually stop working unless the Tsar managed to get a greater section of the population behind him. The success of the Black Hundreds proved that if the Tsar could make more people grateful and dependent on him, then they would sort out the revolutionaries before things got out of hand again. He focused on the countryside where 80% of the population still lived.

Stolypin's Reforms

His aim was to create a large number of well off peasants who would support the Tsar and be afraid of losing what they had in a revolution. They would then naturally act as a kind of informal police in the countryside, nipping any revolutionary attempts in the bud. He therefore:

1. **Cancelled the redemption payments** entirely. This was very popular and allowed hard working peasants to save some extra money to buy more land.
2. **Abolished the mirs as holders of the land.** Individuals could now own and buy extra land for themselves. As they could now farm for themselves, they would be

- encouraged to work harder – production of food would increase and successful peasants would be able to create ever more profitable and efficient businesses.
3. **Set up a Peasant's Land Bank** which would lend money to peasants who wished to buy land. This created immediate opportunities for peasants to expand their farms. He also opened up new areas of farm land in previously uninhabited areas for those who were living in overpopulated areas and were willing to take a risk (much of this land was very remote and hard to farm).
 4. He continued with Witte's industrial reforms but ensured that **wages were increased** for factory workers. This meant that conditions, while still very bad by modern standards, were seen to be improving and the number of available jobs was increasing. Industrial production increased by 100%.

Both Stolypin's strategies were **successful** in many ways. Terrorist groups were on the run and the lives of huge numbers of Russians were improving, which took some of the support away from anti-government groups. Millions of peasants had bought their own land and the harvests were good, while strikes and unrest decreased in many cities (there were only 220 strikes in 1910, compared to 14,000 in 1906).

However, there were some **negatives** too. While many peasants were able to buy more land, a significant group of the poorer peasants lost all of their land as a result. Many of these were relocated to the new farming areas that Stolypin opened up along the Trans-Siberian railway. However, about half of these had to abandon their new farms as the land was simply too poor to farm. This caused further resentment of the government among many of the poorer peasants.

While workers' wages increased, in some places the cost of rent and food also went up (sometimes by even more). This meant, in some cities, their living conditions did not improve despite their higher income. They had also had their hopes raised by the experience of the 1905 **soviets** and were now much more organised than they ever had been before. Terrorist and revolutionary groups still existed, even though their operations had been reduced.

In 1911 Stolypin was assassinated by one of his own police agents who had been investigating terrorist groups. It turned out that he was actually a double agent. Despite the problems that remained in Russia, it was clear that Tsar Nicholas II had lost his most efficient, productive and brutal minister.

Enter Rasputin

Rasputin is still a very enigmatic and controversial figure in Russian history. He really enters the story in a big way after 1914, but rumours of his influence over the Tsar were beginning to spread from 1906. Rasputin, or the 'Mad Monk' as he became known to some, was a travelling psychic who claimed special powers from God. You may remember that Alexis suffered from haemophilia and it was this that allowed Rasputin to enter the royal household. His fame as a healer had won him the attention of Alexandra, who now summoned him to tend to Alexis. It seems that he was able to help control the condition (how is a mystery, some suspect hypnotism helped to reduce the symptoms) and therefore gained the affection of Alexandra, in particular. As time went on, his charisma and apparent supernatural powers also won him considerable influence over Nicholas II. Once Stolypin was out of the picture, the Tsar and his wife turned to Rasputin for advice on all sorts of government matters. This

is significant as it began to undermine the reputation of Nicholas II. Rumours spread that he was under the spell of an evil wizard and even that Alexandra (who was already unpopular) was having an affair with Rasputin! Consequently, the Tsar's reputation was further damaged in the eyes of his people.

The Lena Goldfield Strike

In 1912 gold miners in Lena, Siberia went on strike. They worked in some of the worst conditions in Russia and were both paid and treated very poorly. The miners refused to work and set up a **soviet** to negotiate with the mine owners. They demanded 30% extra pay, an eight hour working day and better food. Interestingly, the mine owners were willing to negotiate but under pressure from the local government authorities they eventually refused any concessions.

The government then sent soldiers to the Lena goldfields and arrested all the members of their **soviet**. The rest of the miners, now joined by workers from nearby mines, organised a protest march which involved 6,000 men. The army, predictably, chose to respond by opening fire on the demonstrators. At least 250 were killed.

What were the effects of the Lena Gold Field strike?

In many ways, the effects were very similar to Blood Sunday. News of the massacre soon spread to the large cities where workers were ready to respond quickly. Not only were they outraged by another massacre, but they still had their own demands that had not been satisfied. The workers also had experience of organising themselves efficiently from 1905 and once again formed **soviets**.

There was a mass strike organised for May Day in 1912 and the country ground to a halt with 300,000 workers participating. In 1912, there were a total of nearly 2000 strikes, compared to only 422 the year before.

It appeared that the bad old days had returned to Russia. While reforms had been introduced they were not nearly enough to satisfy the workers and the peasants. Politically, the Dumas had been silenced and Nicholas II had therefore cut off any peaceful way for people to seek change. With Stolypin gone, the Tsarist government seemed unable and unwilling to act decisively to satisfy the demands of the Russian people. The revolutionary groups had been quietened by Stolypin's measures but began to reassert themselves after 1912 as we will see in the next section.

Check your understanding:

1. What were the Fundamental Laws?
2. What is an 'Octobrist'?
3. Who were the 'Cadets'?
4. How long did the Second Duma last?
5. Why did the Third Duma support the Tsar?
6. What was 'Stolypin's Necktie'?
7. Give two ways that Stolypin helped the peasants.
8. Explain why higher wages for workers did not mean they were always better off.
9. By how much did Stolypin's measures reduce the annual number of strikes in Russia during his time in office?
10. What happened to Stolypin in 1911?
11. How did Rasputin damage Nicholas II's reputation?
12. What happened in Lena?
13. What effect did this have on the rest of Russia in 1912?
14. Do you think that Stolypin could have saved Russia had he lived?
15. What role do the soviets play between 1906 and 1912?

Did you know?

- **Rasputin's supernatural powers were put to the test in 1917. Some aristocrats, who were worried about his influence over Alexandra, decided to assassinate him. Over the course of several hours, he was: poisoned with cyanide, shot three times, beaten in the head with a dumb bell and finally dumped through an ice hole in a frozen river. When his body was recovered there was water in the lungs, suggesting that he had continued to live under the ice despite everything that had been done to him. This seemingly super-natural ability to avoid death served to enhance the supernatural reputation that he has enjoyed ever since.**

The Growth of Opposition to Tsarist Rule:

- Emergence of opposition groups including the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets), the Octobrists
- Emergence of revolutionary groups including the Social Revolutionary Party and the Social Democrats.
- The split in the Social Democrats – Mensheviks and Bolsheviks

Over the period we are studying, various political parties and organisations emerged who sought to lead the people to force change upon the Tsar. However, these groups all represented different ideas and social groups and consequently responded to events in different ways.

1. MIDDLE CLASSES/LIBERALS – ‘EVOLUTIONARY’ OPPOSITION

These were mainly professionals and business men living in the cities. They were educated and looked to western systems of government for inspiration. In Russia, it had been this group that had begun to get experience of being involved in government through the zemstva.

Following the October Manifesto, they were allowed to form political parties and had high hopes for the Duma. They believed in a **constitutional monarchy**. This meant that the Tsar would still be there, but his role would be mainly symbolic and the real government would be run by the elected officials of the Duma. They believed in slow change (**‘evolutionary change’**) as they were also very afraid that the peasants and workers would destroy their businesses and standing in society if there was a revolution.

Their tactics before 1905 had been to use propaganda, meetings and petitions to put pressure on the government to allow them to reform. They had been very active in the zemstva and had taken on responsibilities where they could (e.g. famine relief). While they had continued these methods during the 1905 revolution, the chaos had ultimately scared them.

They were not completely united. As we have seen, they supported the October Manifesto and stood for election to the Duma. At this point, they split into two groups:

1. **The Constitutional Democratic Party, known as the ‘Cadets’**. They believed that the October Manifesto was only the first step and that the Duma should continue to pressure the Tsar to give up more power. They also believed more reforms were needed; from greater rights for the people to more help for the poor. They therefore supported Stolypin’s reforms and used their positions in the first Duma (especially) to criticise the Tsar.
2. **The Octobrists**. They believed that the October Manifesto had gone far enough for now. A timid bunch, they were worried that if more demands were made then the peasants and workers might be encouraged to start a revolution that they would not be able to control. They therefore supported the Tsar in the Duma (although by the fourth Duma they were moving towards the ideas of the Cadets as result of events

such as the assassination of Stolypin, the Lena Gold Fields Strike and the refusal of Nicholas II to allow them to get involved with any serious issues).

Successes	Failures
<p>The Cadets formed the largest group in the first Duma.</p> <p>Both groups were present in all Dumas, although the Octobrists views dominated the third and fourth.</p> <p>Some rights and reforms were pushed through (see Stolypin section) with their support.</p>	<p>Their activities and influence were limited to only a few cities.</p> <p>Nicholas II largely ignored them and was able to close down the first two Dumas without any problems.</p> <p>After their 'betrayal' of the peasants and workers by accepting the October Manifesto in 1905 they had little influence over the majority of the population and therefore had little chance of challenging Nicholas II's power.</p>

2. THE PEASANTRY – REVOLUTIONARY OPPOSITION

The main revolutionary group in the countryside was the **Socialist Revolutionary Party**. They were formed in 1896 and enjoyed considerable support from the peasants, especially in 1905. They were led by **Victor Chernov**, who argued for a complete revolution. Land should be given to the peasants and everybody should have equal rights. To do this, he wanted to overthrow the Tsar, the Orthodox Church and the aristocracy completely. The Social Revolutionaries saw this as a violent struggle and promoted revolution.

They were inspired by the terrorist group '**The People's Will**' (who started our story with their assassination of Alexander II). They used propaganda to gain the support of peasants, directed and encouraged much of the rioting and violence we have seen in the countryside, and carried out assassinations of government officials.

After the events of **1905 the party split into two groups**. The first group had been convinced that they should unite with the other revolutionary groups of the workers in the cities, while the second group were keen to keep the movement focused on the peasants.

Successes	Failures
<p>Developed a wide base of support – by 1900 half of their supporters lived in the cities.</p> <p>They had 30 representatives elected to the second Duma, illustrating their widespread popularity.</p> <p>They assassinated Stolypin and Grand Duke Serge, as well as 2000 lesser government officials - really damaging the Nicholas II's power.</p> <p>The Okhrana gave them the compliment of describing them as the most dangerous and powerful opposition group in Russia.</p>	<p>The Okhrana managed to infiltrate the group with spies who were able to control and limit their activities to a degree.</p> <p>Their split in 1905 (possibly linked to the above) weakened them as a group. The split prevented them from making alliances with other groups which prevented a combined opposition against the Tsar.</p>

3. THE WORKERS – REVOLUTIONARY OPPOSITION

The **Social Democrat Party** was the main revolutionary group opposed to Nicholas II among the workers in the cities. They believed in the ideas of Karl Marx and aimed to lead a violent revolution that would completely change society (this would become known as communism). The group was formed in **1898** at a time when conditions for workers in the cities was worsening as a result of Witte's programme of industrialisation.

They produced really effective propaganda that spread their ideas among the workers. This mainly took the form of free education and study groups in the factories, as well as a regular newspaper. As the soviets were set up in 1905, the Social Democrats sometimes influenced or even controlled them.

In 1903, they held a conference in London to sort out their aims and methods. The party split into two groups; the **Mensheviks** and the **Bolsheviks**.

Argued about:	The Mensheviks (led by Martov)	The Bolsheviks (led by Lenin)
Revolution	Martov argued that there was no hurry. If they waited, conditions would soon become right to take on the Tsar.	Lenin argued that revolution needed to happen right away – especially as discontent against the Tsar was rising by 1903.
Membership of the Social Democrats	Martov argued that everyone who wanted to join should be able to – this would make the group stronger.	Lenin argued that there should just be small elite in the party. They would then tell the workers what to do in the revolution.
Relationship with the middle class	Martov argued they should work closely with the Cadets and Octobrists. They believed that they would help with the first stage of the revolution. He also argued they should make alliances with other workers groups such as the trade unions – this way, they might make the workers lives better in the meantime.	Lenin argued that there was no room for allies. Only committed revolutionaries could be trusted – he was more willing to look to the peasant revolutionary groups for support. Lenin did not want to help make the lives of the workers better – the more awful their life, the more likely they were to follow him in revolution.

Successes	Failures
Organised many strikes throughout this period. Bolsheviks organised the Moscow strike in 1905. Had over 40,000 members by 1905.	Some historians argue that strikes would have happened anyway. Most strikes throughout the period were organised and run by the workers themselves through their soviets, without the involvement of any of the Social Democrats. They were divided and spent a lot of time arguing and fighting amongst themselves. Police spies infiltrated the group very easily.

Check your understanding:

1. Who were the Cadets?
2. Why did the middle class liberals not join the revolutionary groups?
3. Why did the Octobrists start to behave more like Cadets in the Fourth Duma?
4. What was the name of the revolutionary group associated with the peasants?
5. Why did the Okhrana identify them as the most dangerous opposition group?
6. What happened to them in 1905?
7. Which group in society did the Social Democrats try to lead?
8. Who was Lenin and Martov?
9. What influence did they have over events in 1905?
10. Who did Lenin feel should be allowed in the Social Democrats?

Did you know?

- It would, ironically, be the Cadets and the Octobrists who eventually took over Russia and forced out the Tsar in February 1917. However, Lenin did not give them much of a go at being in charge. In October of the same year, he was proved right when his small group of Bolshevik 'elite' revolutionaries, with the support of the workers soviets, seized power for themselves. Russia would remain communist for the next seventy years.
- Nicholas II and his entire family were executed by the new Bolshevik government in the same year. Perhaps secretly ashamed of what they had done, great care was taken to hide their bodies. It has only been in recent years that DNA tests have finally proved that all of his family were killed that day, finally putting an end to rumours of escape and survival.

1855	ALEXANDER II BECOMES TSAR
1861	EMANCIPATION (FREEDOM FOR) THE SERFS
1881	ALEXANDER II ASSASSINATED BY THE PEOPLE'S WILL. ALEXANDER III COMES TO THE THRONE.
1881	POGROM AGAINST THE JEWS
1881	STATUTE OF STATE SECURITY
1882	'RUSSIFICATION' LAWS PASSED AGAINST THE MINORITIES
1885	CENSORSHIP LAWS PASSED
1889	LAND CAPTAINS CREATED
1891	GREAT FAMINE CAUSED BY INDUSTRIALISATION POLICY. ZEMSTVA WORK WELL TO HELP.
1892	VOTE RESTRICTED TO THE RICH FOR THE ZEMSTVA
1893	PEASANTS BANNED FROM LEAVING THE MIR
1893	SERGEI WITTE APPOINTED MINISTER OF FINANCE. BEGINS HIS MAJOR INDUSTRIALISATION DRIVE.
1894	DEATH OF ALEXANDER III / NICHOLAS II BECOMES TSAR
1896	SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY PARTY FORMED TO ENCOURAGE REVOLUTION AMONG THE PEASANTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
1898	SOCIAL DEMOCRAT PARTY FORMED TO ENCOURAGE MARXIST REVOLUTION AMONG THE WORKERS IN THE CITIES
1903	WITTE FORCED TO RESIGN
1903	SOCIAL DEMOCRAT PARTY SPLITS INTO THE BOLSHEVIKS AND THE MENSHEVIKS
1904	START OF RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

1905	FALL OF PORT ARTHUR TO JAPANESE / BATTLE OF TSUSHIMA
1905	BLOODY SUNDAY
1905	POTEMKIN MUTINY
1905	ASSASSINATION OF GRAND DUKE SERGEI
1905	RECALL OF WITTE TO GOVERNMENT
1905	WORKERS SOVIETS TAKE OVER LARGE PARTS OF THE CITIES
1905	CHAOS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. LANDLORDS MURDERED
1905	SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY PARTY SPLITS
1905	THE OCTOBER MANIFESTO
1905	SETTING UP OF THE OCTOBRISTS
1906	STOLYPIN'S APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR - OPPRESSION AND THE BLACK HUNDREDS. BEGINS HIS REFORMS.
1906	THE FIRST DUMA AND THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS
1907	THE SECOND DUMA
1907-12	THE THIRD DUMA
1911	ASSASSINATION OF STOLYPIN BY THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARIES
1911	RASPUTIN'S INFLUENCE GROWS
1912	THE LENA GOLDFIELD STRIKE

The events in bold have appeared on past examination papers, sometimes more than once.

Part (a) questions test your ability to use your own knowledge to put events in chronological order. More specifically, they are looking for you to show that you can sequence events in the order that they occurred.

Let's use the following question from 2013 as an example:

(a) Study the events that occurred in the years 1881-1912.

The Lena Goldfield strike	The formation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party	The second duma	Alexander III becomes Tsar	The assassination of Stolypin
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Write these events in the correct chronological sequence (3 marks).

How do I answer this question?

Your answer should simply list the events in the correct order – start with the earliest at the top and list them in sequence.

The mark scheme awards marks in the following way:

- **3 marks** for four or more events in the **correct sequence**.
- **2 marks** for three or more events in the **correct sequence**.
- **1 mark** for two or more events in the **correct sequence**.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alexander III becomes Tsar. 2. The formation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. 3. The second duma. 4. The assassination of Stolypin 5. The Lena Goldfield strike. <p>Awarded 3 marks Why? All 5 events are in the correct sequence.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alexander III becomes Tsar. 2. The formation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. 3. The second duma. 4. The Lena Goldfield strike. 5. The assassination of Stolypin <p>Awarded 2 marks Why? The first 3 events are in the correct sequence.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lena Goldfield strike 2. Alexander III becomes Tsar. 3. The formation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. 4. The second duma. 5. The assassination of Stolypin <p>Awarded 3 marks Why? Four events are in the correct sequence. The answer still gets full marks even though the last event has been placed first (as the rest are in the correct sequence).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alexander III becomes Tsar. 2. The second duma. 3. The formation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. 4. The Lena Goldfield strike. 5. The assassination of Stolypin. <p>Awarded 0 marks Why? None of the events are in the correct sequence.</p>

Use these example questions as part of your revision:

(a) Study the events that occurred in the years 1881-1912.

The split in the Social Democrat Party	The Lena Goldfield strike	The assassination of Stolypin	The setting up of the Octobrists	The first duma
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Write these events in the correct chronological sequence (3 marks).

(a) Study the events that occurred in the years 1881-1912.

The appointment of Stolypin	The October Manifesto	The second duma	Alexander III becomes Tsar	The introduction of Land Captains
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Write these events in the correct chronological sequence (3 marks).

(a) Study the events that occurred in the years 1881-1912.

Bloody Sunday	The assassination of Alexander II	Sergei Witte's resignation	The start of the Russo-Japanese War	The October Manifesto
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Write these events in the correct chronological sequence (3 marks).

(a) Study the events that occurred in the years 1881-1912.

The Lena Goldfield strike	The formation of the Social Democrats	The third duma	Nicholas II comes to the throne	The Potemkin mutiny
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Write these events in the correct chronological sequence (3 marks).

Part (b) questions are testing your ability to explain one effect of an event on Russia.

Here is an example of a (b) type question from 2011:

(b) Choose either THE LENA GOLDFIELD STRIKE or THE FIRST DUMA.

Explain one effect on Russia of the event that you have chosen. (4 marks).

How do I answer this type of question?

1. It is only worth four marks. Your answer should be **one short paragraph** in length - get straight to the point.
2. Start your answer with **"One effect of.... on Russia was...."**
3. **Focus on the question.** It only wants you to talk about the effect of the event that you have chosen, not the story of the event itself. An effect means the consequences or what the event led to.

How do they mark this question?

The examiner will place your answer in one of two levels:

Level 1	You may have identified an effect of the event, but you have not supported it with any/much detailed knowledge(1-2 marks)
Level 2	You have identified an effect of the event and you have supported it with detailed knowledge and examples of what happened (3 - 4 marks)

Example answers:

Answer 1:

"One effect of the first duma on Russia was that it ensured that the dumas would have very little power in the future. The criticism of the Tsar from the Cadets in the first duma, plus their demands for more power in government, led to Nicholas II reacting aggressively towards them. This negative attitude led to the Tsar always limiting the dumas in the future, particularly in 1907 when he changed the rules to make sure only friendly candidates would be elected."

Awarded Level 2, 4 marks

Why? This answer achieved full marks as it clearly identified one effect of the first duma, it explained some context and used evidence.

Answer 2:

"The first duma was elected. This annoyed Nicholas who wanted to have all of the power"

Awarded Level 1, 1 mark

Why? One mark is given as there is a mention of one effect (the attitude of Nicholas). However, there are no details or supporting evidence.

Answer 3:

"After all of the violence of Bloody Sunday, the Tsar decided that he must divide the opposition to make them weaker. Luckily, he got advice from Sergei Witte who persuaded him to offer the October manifesto. The October Manifesto gave all sorts of rights to the people, such as more freedom and less censorship. It also gave them a parliament, the duma, which was first elected in 1906.

One effect of the first duma on Russia was that it ensured that the dumas would have very little power in the future. The criticism of the Tsar from the Cadets in the first duma, plus their demands for more power in government, led to Nicholas II reacting aggressively towards them. This negative attitude led to the Tsar always limiting the dumas in the future, particularly in 1907 when he changed the rules to make sure only friendly candidates would be elected.

Another effect of the first duma was that it showed the revolutionary groups that Nicholas II would never listen to anything apart from force."

Awarded Level 2, 4 marks

*Why? This answer deals with one effect of the **duma well**. The point to note is that this student did not focus on the question and wrote twice as much as they needed to – for no extra marks. This student would likely have begun to run out of time later in the exam.*

Here are some example questions to use as part of your revision:

(b) Choose either BLOODY SUNDAY or THE ASSASSINATION OF STOLYPIN.

Explain one effect on Russia of the event that you have chosen. (4 marks).

(b) Choose either THE ASSASSINATION OF ALEXANDER II or THE RUSSO – JAPANESE WAR.

Explain one effect on Russia of the event that you have chosen. (4 marks).

You can invent your own questions by inserting any of the events from the timeline in Section 7.

Part (c) questions aim to test your ability to explain causation. In other words, you are expected to explain why an event happened by discussing at least two of its causes.

Here is an example of a question (c) from 2011:

c) Why did Alexander III carry out a policy of repression in the years 1881-94? (8 marks)

How do I answer this type of question?

1. The focus is on showing that you can give a developed explanation of causes.
2. Write at least two paragraphs focusing on causation. You should have a separate paragraph for each cause.
3. Begin each paragraph with the cause, followed by a developed explanation.
4. Use sign posts at the start of each paragraph to help you to structure your answer and to show the examiner what you are doing ("The first reason why...")
5. Two paragraphs are enough to get the top level. To achieve the highest mark you have to show the links between the causes (i.e. explaining how one cause led to / affected the next).

How do they mark the question?

Level 1	The student writes one or more simple explanations of causes and does not use evidence or examples to support them. (1-2)
Level 2	The student writes about one or more causes and uses some evidence and examples to support them (3-5 marks)
Level 3	The student writes about one or more causes and uses accurate and detailed knowledge and examples to support them. The student also states how the causes lead to the event (in this case why Alexander III began his repression) For full marks you must also show how the two causes linked together to make the event happen. (5-8 marks)

Let's follow this example through to show you how the levels work.

c) Why did Alexander III carry out a policy of repression in the years 1881-94?

Stage 1:

"Alexander III carried out a policy of repression because he was afraid of being murdered and also because he had this angry friend called Pobedonostev who wanted everything to go back in time to like it was."

Awarded Level 1

Why? *The student has identified two real causes that explain why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression. However, they are just general statements and do not have any knowledge to support them.*

Stage 2:

The first reason why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression was because he became Tsar at a time when opposition was steadily increasing to his government. Alexander II had tried to be more relaxed and help his people so that they would not want to rebel as much. However, opposition groups took advantage of this extra freedom to oppose him even more. They eventually murdered him.

The second reason why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression was because of the influence of Pobedonostev. Pobedonostev believed that Russia needed to turn its back on all of the western ideas that had been introduced by Alexander II."

Awarded Level 2

Why? *The student has now developed his two causes into two separate paragraphs and has used **sign posts** to identify where each new cause begins. They have used some own knowledge to support their explanation in each paragraph. However, there is little detailed examples/knowledge used and they have not convincingly shown how the causes led to the repression.*

Stage 3:

"The first reason why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression was because he became Tsar at a time when opposition was steadily increasing to his government. Alexander II had tried to be more relaxed and help his people so that they would not want to rebel as much. He had reduced censorship and granted extra freedom to the serfs through their emancipation. However, opposition groups took advantage of this extra freedom to oppose him even more. In 1881, a terrorist group known as the People's Will even managed to assassinate Alexander III and it looked like the whole Russian Empire might be thrown into chaos. **It was because of this situation that Alexander III decided that he must reverse the failed policies of his father by introducing his repression.**

The second reason why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression was because of the influence of Pobedonostev. Pobedonostev, who was one of the leaders of the Orthodox Church, believed that Russia needed to turn its back on all of the western ideas that had been introduced by Alexander II. He encouraged Alexander III to make "autocracy, orthodoxy and nationality" the most important focus for his government. This gave Alexander III a set of principles that he could follow, which were known as "Russification", which guided him into using repression to ensure that his family once again became absolute and stable rulers of Russia."

Awarded Level 3 (7 marks)

Why? The student has identified two causes and explained them fully. They have used lots of very specific knowledge and examples and have shown how each cause led to the repression. Despite all of this, it does not achieve full marks because it does not show how the two reasons are linked to each other.

Stage 4:

"The first reason why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression was because he became Tsar at a time when opposition was steadily increasing to his government. Alexander II had tried to be more relaxed and help his people so that they would not want to rebel as much. He had reduced censorship and granted extra freedom to the serfs through their emancipation. However, opposition groups took advantage of this extra freedom to oppose him even more. In 1874, a terrorist group known as the People's Will even managed to assassinate Alexander III and it looked like the whole Russian Empire might be thrown into chaos. It was because of this situation that Alexander III decided that he must reverse the failed policies of his father by introducing his repression.

As a result of these fears that he might also be overthrown, it is not surprising that Alexander III would turn to advisers who could help him strengthen the Tsar's grip in Russia. The second reason why Alexander III introduced a policy of repression was therefore because of the influence of Pobedonostev. Pobedonostev, who was one of the leaders of the Orthodox Church, believed that Russia needed to turn its back on all of the western ideas that had been introduced by Alexander II. He encouraged Alexander III to make "autocracy, orthodoxy and nationality" the most important focus for his government. This gave Alexander III a set of principles that he could follow, which were known as "Russification", which guided him into using repression to ensure that the Tsar's once again became absolute and stable rulers of Russia."

Awarded Level 3 (8 marks)

Why? The student has now added a sentence that shows how the first cause led to the second. Remember, most students would be very happy with 7 marks for this question – if you find it easier, stick to the format from stage 3 as you can still achieve a great grade without having to worry about the link.

Here are some example question (c)s that you can use in your revision:

c) Why did Alexander III carry out a policy of repression in the years 1881-94? (8 marks)

c) Why was there growing opposition to Tsar Nicholas II in the years 1894-1905? (8 marks)

c) Why did opposition to Nicholas II grow 1906-1914? (8 marks)

c) Why was there so much unrest in Russia in 1905? (8 marks)

c) Why was Nicholas II able to survive the 1905 revolution? (8 marks)

c) Why did the industrial reforms of Witte not lead to stability in Russia? (8 marks)

c) Why did Stolypin introduce his reforms 1906-11?

Question (d) is a longer essay style question that is designed to test your ability to write with structure, use your own knowledge to create an argument, and your ability to use a source to support your ideas.

Here is an example from 2011:

(d) Study the source below and then answer the question that follows.

Source: From a modern textbook

Around 80% of Russia's population were peasants, most of whom lived in very poor conditions. Some peasants left the land to work in cities such as St Petersburg, where their conditions hardly improved. The Tsar's empire included many different nationalities who resented attempts at Russification.

Use the source, and your own knowledge, to explain why there was discontent in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. (10 marks)

How do I answer this type of question?

1. Read the source and underline any key words, phrases, events, dates or people that you can explain further.
2. Ensure that you refer to the source during the course of your answer.
3. You should write two-three paragraphs. Each paragraph should begin with the factor followed by an explanation of that factor.
4. Try to make links between the paragraphs. Use words and phrases such as *moreover, however, this led to, this meant that, consequently*.
5. In addition to your two-three paragraphs you should write a conclusion. Begin with 'overall' and reinforce the links that you made between the factors.

How do they mark this question?

Level 1	The student makes simple explanations or only selects information from the source without explaining it further. (1-2)
Level 2	The student makes one or more explanations and supports them with their own knowledge. The student gets higher in the level if they support their explanation with their own knowledge and the source. (3-5)
Level 3	The student explains one factor with detailed own knowledge and examples. The explanation must show how the factor they are explaining answers the question. The student scores higher in the level if they also refer to the source. (6-7)
Level 4	The student explains more than one factor using the source and detailed own knowledge. They must show how their explanation of each factor answers the question. To gain nine or ten marks they must show how their factors combined (linked together) to cause the event identified in the question. (8-10)

Here is an example of how the mark scheme works:

(d) Study the source below and then answer the question that follows.

Source: From a modern textbook

Around 80% of Russia's population were peasants, most of whom lived in very poor conditions. Some peasants left the land to work in cities such as St Petersburg, where their conditions hardly improved. The Tsar's empire included many different nationalities who resented attempts at Russification.

Use the source, and your own knowledge, to explain why there was discontent in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. (10 marks)

Stage 1:

"The source shows that lots of the people were peasants. Some of them went to the cities but their life was still rubbish, even in St Petersburg. There were also lots of different nationalities in the empire who wanted to be on their own and not ruled by Russia".

Mark: Level 1, 2 marks

Why? This answer simply rephrases the source – there is no own knowledge present. However, it still achieves two marks as it identifies two or more reasons why people were discontented.

Stage 2:

"One reason why there was discontent in Russia was the very bad living conditions experienced by its people. In the countryside where, as the source states, 80% of the population lived their life was very hard. Most peasants still had to pay back redemption payments from the emancipation which left them with very little for themselves."

Mark: Level 2, 4 marks

Why? Even though they have only discussed one factor, this is enough to get into level 2. This is because: they have signposted at the start of the answer, referred to the source, and used their own knowledge. They would need to add another sentence to get the full five marks for this level.

Stage 3:

"One reason why there was discontent in Russia was the very bad living conditions experienced by its people. In the countryside where, as the source states, 80% of the population lived their life was very hard. Most peasants still had to pay back redemption payments from the emancipation which left them with very little for themselves. Despite these payments, the peasants were still not free. The land that they were paying for was still actually controlled by the village commune (the mir), which also still controlled their lives. Alexander III even passed a law that made it impossible for the peasants to leave the mir without permission. Therefore, they had little opportunity to better their lives or to make a new start elsewhere except, as the source notes, to take the terrible jobs offered by the government in the factories. As

a result, they became increasingly discontented with their lives."

Mark: Level 3, 7 marks

Why? Even though they have still only really discussed one factor, this answer is enough to get to the top of level 3. This is because: they have **signposted** at the start of the answer, **referred to the source**, **used their own knowledge**. **In this case they have really developed their explanation and used precisely selected extra information.** **They have also explained how this factor answers the question (mini-conclusion)**

Stage 4:

"The first reason why there was discontent in Russia was the very bad living conditions experienced by its people. In the countryside where, as the source states, 80% of the population lived their life was very hard. Most peasants still had to pay back redemption payments from the emancipation which left them with very little for themselves. Despite these payments, the peasants were still not free. The land that they were paying for was still actually controlled by the village commune (the mir), which also still controlled their lives. Alexander III even passed a law that made it impossible for the peasants to leave the mir without permission. Therefore, they had little opportunity to better their lives or to make a new start elsewhere except, as the source notes, to take the terrible jobs offered by the government in the factories. As a result, they became increasingly discontented with their lives.

The second reason why there was discontent in Russia was the fact that many of the people who lived in Russia wanted to be independent. **As the source notes, these 'nationalities' resented the policies of 'Russification' that were introduced by Alexander III.** **The Tsar had made everyone in the Russian Empire take a Russian surname and had even encouraged pogroms against the Jews to get rid of them completely. Other nationalities were also targeted; he sent an army to Poland to make sure his policies of Russification were introduced.** **Therefore, many of the ethnic groups in the Russian Empire were very discontented as they were afraid that their culture, and even their language, might be destroyed.**

In conclusion, it was the low standards of living of the peasants and the poor treatment of the nationalities that led to discontent in Russia."

Mark: Level 4, 8 marks.

Why? This answer has been improved by the addition of a fully explained second factor **(note the signpost)**. This has been supported by both **reference to the source** and **detailed own knowledge**. The second paragraph also contains a **mini-conclusion** that shows how it answers the question. A conclusion has been added, but it does not show how the factors are linked together.

Stage 5:

"The first reason why there was discontent in Russia was the very bad living conditions experienced by its people. In the countryside where, as the source states, 80% of the population lived their life was very hard. Most peasants still had to pay back redemption payments from the emancipation which left them with very little for themselves. Despite these payments, the peasants were still not free. The land that they were paying for was still actually controlled by the village commune (the mir),

which also still controlled their lives. Alexander III even passed a law that made it impossible for the peasants to leave the mir without permission. Therefore, they had little opportunity to better their lives or to make a new start elsewhere except, as the source notes, to take the terrible jobs offered by the government in the factories. As a result, they became increasingly discontented with their lives.

In some parts of Russia, these complaints over bad living conditions were made worse by the resentment that was also caused among the nationalities by the policy of 'Russification' carried out by the Tsars. As the source notes, the 'nationalities' (ethnic minorities such as the Poles and Jews) resented the policies of 'Russification' that were introduced by Alexander III. The Tsar had made everyone in the Russian Empire take a Russian surname and had even encouraged pogroms against the Jews to get rid of them completely. Other nationalities were also targeted; he sent an army to Poland to make sure his policies of Russification were introduced. Therefore, many of the ethnic groups in the Russian Empire were very discontented as they were afraid that their culture, and even their language, might be destroyed.

In conclusion, the low standards of living and lack of freedom of the peasants created widespread discontent among the majority of the population. In areas occupied by the nationalities, this resentment was deepened by the fact that the Tsars also attacked the culture and language of the people who lived there. It seemed that the lives of these peasants was made nothing but worse by their experience of living in the Russian Empire."

Mark: Full Marks

*Why? This answer now attains the top of level four. A link between the factors discussed has been shown both at the start of the **second paragraph and in the conclusion**.*

Note that a sensible student may want to develop a third paragraph that explains the reasons why workers in the cities were discontented too – this would be a safety net in case one of their other factors is not considered to be 'fully explained'

Try this one yourself. (Use Wisdom for other past papers)

(d) Study the source below and then answer the question that follows.

Source: From a modern textbook

The 1905 Revolution was followed by a mixture of reform and repression. After the election of the first duma, Stolypin carried out land reform to win over the peasants. At the same time, Stolypin introduced strict repressive measures including the execution of 4000 people.

Use the source, and your own knowledge, to explain the effects of the 1905 Revolution. (10 marks)