***1. Why and with what success did Alexander II impose so many reforms?***

**Why:**

1. There is no doubt that one reason was to **strengthen Russia** and thereby to **strengthen Tsardom**.

2. **Fear of revolution from below**. The number of peasant revolts increased. Alexander also referred to this in his Moscow speech in 1856. Some have argued that he tailored his argument to convince the nobility who had to give up land. But it is likely to believe that there was a genuine concern over this matter.

3. **Economic arguments**. Soviet historians/Marxist historians have argued that the feudal economy was in crisis and that the reform was an attempt to introduce a new system of production which would bring more money to the landowners. Others have argued that to emancipate the serfs was a precondition for industrialization. But there is little evidence for that Alexander had a genuine desire to industrialize, except for building railways and that the industries that existed had any problems finding workers.

4. Few people at the time could support or defend the system hence ´**the power of ideas**´ was of some importance. The problem was in what way it should be replaced.

5. **Military arguments**. The very timing of the reform, after the Crimean war, indicates that military reasons were of importance. To make the army more effective would strengthen both Russia and the Tsar. The time of service in the army had to be reduced and this led to the emancipation reform which then led to many of the other reforms.

**With what success?**

The emancipation of the serfs was Alexander's main reform. The serfs were given their **legal freedom**. Land was taken from the nobility and given to the serfs. The nobility was compensated with government bonds. The Emancipation reform had three main weaknesses:

* The peasants had to pay redemption dues for the land for 49 years and it is normally considered that these dues were far too high compared to the land output ie. **the price of the land was too high**.
* Land was not given to the individual but to the local peasant council which redistributed land annually according to the size of the family. This is one explanation for the **population growth**. The result was that the average size of landholding went down. The outcome of the emancipation reform in combination with the population growth, led to the peasants being **worse off economically** (supported by Pipes).
* The fact that land was collectively owned didn't promote innovations in farming techniques.

But it had also positive effects:

1. It was a major step to give the majority of the population their **legal freedom** without any major revolts. A similar reform in the US led to a four year civil war.

2. The number of **peasant revolts** went down after the reform. Christian writes *"The peasant disturbances […] died away"*.

3. The **zemstva** system led to an establishment of political bodies with both noble and peasant representation. The Tsar however refused to allow a Duma.

4. The **legal reforms** are often seen as Alexander´s most successful reform and they survived the repressive policies of his son Alexander III.

5. The **education reforms** were far reaching. The number of students at universities was allowed to increase and censorship was relaxed. Women were allowed to enter universities. But it also led to a growth of a radical intelligentsia and these radicals finally killed the Tsar in 1881.

6. The **army** was also reformed and the term of service was finally lowered to six years and brutal forms of punishment were abolished. But it cannot be concluded that the army gained in strength in any substantial way.

Conclusion:

Alexander´s aim was primarily conservative. He wanted to strengthen Russia and the institution of Tsardom. To do that an army reform was necessary which led to the emancipation reform, zemstvas and legal reforms. Another possible reason was probably fear of revolution from below. As has been clearly shown in the text you will find historians supporting either the ´failure- or the success´ view i.e. that the reforms were insufficient or a first but significant step forward. **Make sure that you can explain both views and that you can support your own conclusion**.

It can be discussed whether his reforms strengthened Russia. What is clear is that they did not strengthen Tsardom. He was faced with opposition from most groups and was finally assassinated in 1881.

***2. What problems did Alexander II face in 1855 and how successful was he in solving them?***

## Problems:

1. The Russian economy was **lagging behind** the Western powers and the gap was **increasing**.

2. Her **industrial sector** was very small and **backward** compared to Western Europe.

3. The **agricultural sector** was backward. More than 80 percent of the population were serfs ie owned by the nobility or the crown. **Productivity was low** and there were no effective incentives or resources to increase production amongst the serfs. Peasant revolts were increasing.

4. The **army** had been defeated by France and Britain in a war fought in Russia. Russia had a standing army of 1 million men, and no reserve, but could only mobilize 60 000 soldiers in Crimea. The reason for this was that there was no effective railway system. The industry had not been able to equip the soldiers with modern long range rifles. Russian soldiers had to serve in the army for 20 years. The system was **expensive and ineffective**.

5. The Tsar was in a problematic situation if he wanted to reform. If the army were to be modernized the time of service had to be reduced. Ex-soldiers returned from the army as free men and if the time of service was reduced most soldiers would survive. The result would be, within a few decades, two social classes. It meant that if the time of service were to be reduced, the serfs had to be emancipated. But the nobility who owned most of the serfs and who gained economically from this system of serfdom, opposed the emancipation. The **nobility** was the key group in supporting Tsardom ie, **the Tsar needed their support**.

## With what success?

The emancipation of the serfs was Alexander´s main reform. The serfs were given their **legal freedom**. Land was taken from the nobility and given to the serfs. The nobility was compensated with government bonds. There were three main weaknesses with the emancipation reform:

1. The peasants had to pay redemption dues for the land in 49 years and it is normally considered as these dues were far too high compared to the land output i.e. **the price of the land was too high**.

2. Land was not given to the individual but to the local peasant council which redistributed land annually according to the size of the family. This is one explanation for the growth in population. The result was that the average size of landholding went down. The outcome of the emancipation reform in combination with the **population growth**, led to that the peasants being worse of economically (supported by Pipes).

3. The facts that land was collectively owned did not promote innovation in farming techniques.

But it had also positive effects:

1. It was a major step to give the majority of the population their legal freedom without any major revolts. A similar reform in the US led to a four year civil war.

2. The number of peasant revolts decreased after the reform. Christian writes "The peasant disturbances […] died away"

## Conclusion:

Russia was lagging behind the Western powers and the gap was increasing. She had been defeated in the Crimean war and it was obvious that the strength of the army was an illusion. The majority of the population were serfs which was an obstacle especially for an army reform.   The emancipation reform put an **end to bondage**. It was a substantial reform and it is worth noting that a similar reform led to a civil war in the US at the same time. But there were also weaknesses with his reforms, in particular the emancipation reform which did not solve the problem with the poverty of the peasantry. But it can be argued that Alexander did what was possible at the time and new reforms could be introduced later (Stolypin made it possible for the individual to buy land in 1906). This ´Rome wasn´t built in one day´- approach is supported by some historians.   It is worth discussing whether his reforms strengthened Russia. What is clear is that they didn´t strengthen Tsardom. Alexander was faced with opposition from most groups and was finally killed in 1881.

***3. Were the reforms and the development in Russia by 1914, sufficient for the survival of Tsardom?***

**Yes:**

1. After the **political reforms** in 1905 Russia had a constitution, a parliament, political parties and a freer press . The importance of this cannot be underestimated. It can of course be argued that it was no real parliament. But you can support your point by arguing that the first step had been taken i.e. a "Rome was not built in one day‘ – perspective. After all, Nicholas II had allowed important reforms. The next step, in the future, could be a constitutional monarchy.

2. Economically Russia was modernizing. **Witte's reforms** had led to an industrial breakthrough and, even if Russia were weaker than many other European states you must keep in mind that we normally compare Russia with other European powers. These powers were in many cases world leading powers. In the 1890s Russian industrial production grew by 126 %. This is twice as much as Kaiser Wilhelm‘s Germany! By the eve of W W I, Russia had the fifth largest economy in the world. We lose sight of this because we only compare her to Germany, Britain etc.

3. **Stolypin's agricultural reform** had started to transform the most important sector of the economy. Russia was after all still an agricultural state. By 1914 50 % of the households owned their own land. This was a very important step forward.

**No:**

1. The Tsar had clearly shown that he was not prepared to accept far-reaching political reforms. By '**undoing**' his reforms of 1905, he showed that there was no fundamental change in the attitude of the Tsar (and the Tsarina – who was very important!). Bring up how the revolutionaries were killed in 1905, the Fundamental Law, how the two first Dumas were dissolved, and how the electoral law was changed.

2. Discuss the **repression of Stolypin** which of course was sanctioned by the Tsar.

3. Discuss that some 50 % of the **Russian peasantry** were excluded from Stolypin‘s reforms. This group, and we are talking about some 50 million people, were extremely poor and of course a potential revolutionary group.

4. Witte‘s reform destabilized the Russian society. An **urban proletariat** which soon became radicalized, was one important result of his reforms. A key point to support the danger of this development, is to show the number of strikes between 1910-14 (see the text)

5. The influence of **Rasputin** was evident well before 1914 and caused irreparable damage to the Tsar and the Tsarina

**Historiography:**

* To a Marxist historian, Tsardom was of course doomed. It was only a question of time until this feudal repressive mood of production would be replaced.
* There are mainly two Western schools. One school believes that Tsardom clearly could have survived. There were of course flaws in the reforms etc. but important steps had been taken (and eventually it was the War which caused the fall of the regime. But that is not a part of this question)
* The second Western school believes that Tsardom was throwing away its last chances for survival by the policies after the concessions. Expectations had been raised for a dawn of democracy but the Tsar did not live up to these expectations. Tsar Nicholas II really showed, especially when he was faced with the final crisis, that he was unable to compromise.

**Conclusion:**

There is no definite answer to this question. I would support the view that Nicholas rule was doomed arguing that his devotion to autocracy, his policies after 1905 and the number of strikes in 1914, all indicated the collapse of Tsardom.

***4. Why did Tsardom survive the revolution of 1905 and not the revolution of 1917?***

## A Why did Tsardom survive the revolution of 1905?

1. The war ended in the summer of 1905/peace in September. The soldiers came home i.e. pressure from war lessened.

2. **Concessions:** The October Manifesto promised a Duma and individual and religious rights. In the November manifesto redemption dues were cancelled for the peasants. The army was now also promised better salaries and fairer treatment.

3. Liberals, peasants and soldiers were satisfied with the concessions. The **army remained loyal** and could be used in December, to crush the left wing revolutionaries.

4. The **revolutionary groups (Bolsheviks, Mensheviks) were divided** and were not prepared for this spontaneous revolt.

5. Foreign powers helped Russia. France and Britain gave **loans** - a strong Russia was a weaker Germany.

6. **Conservative** forces rallied to the help of the Tsar: church, nobility and generals.

## B. What caused the fall of Tsardom in 1917?

3 long terms causes:

1. The **poverty of the peasantry**: write a few words about the effects of Alexander II‘s emancipation reform and that Stolypins‘s agricultural reforms excluded 50 % of the peasants.

2. The **living conditions of the working class**: write about Witte‘s industrialization and the creation of a working class which was soon radicalized and lived in key cities of Russia.

3. The rule of **Nicholas II**: write about his policies after the revolution of 1905, i.e. he promised full democratic rights but how he soon restricted the power of the Duma.

3 short term causes:

1. Write about the **impact of W W I**. How the Tsar made himself Commander in Chief in 1915 and the effects of this event. Write about how the war affected the civilian population and the army. 7,9 million soldiers had been killed, wounded or taken as war prisoners by 1917. Write about how the war affected the relation between the Duma and the Tsar.

2. The **Monk factor**: Rasputin discredited the reputation of the Tsar and the Tsarina. The elite did not remain loyal when the revolution from below started in February 1917. Was this due to the damaging impact that Rasputin had upon the reputation of the royal couple?

3. The Tsar‘s actions when the war had started. Write about the relation between the Tsar and the Duma after 1915 and how he acted in 1917 when the revolution had started.

Important differences between 1905 and 1917:

1. The army remained loyal in 1905 but not in 1917.

2. Pressure from war: there was much more pressure during W W I.

3. Conservative forces had rallied to the help of the Tsar in 1905: church, nobility and generals. But this did not happen in 1917. Why? Was it Rasputin who had destroyed the loyalty of the upper classes?

## Historiography:

**Marxists:** Revolution was inevitable. It came from below i.e. the masses, but the first revolution in 1917 was a bourgeois revolution. The October revolution 1917 was the Great proletarian revolution.

**Norman Stone:** The reforms (Duma, Stolypin) could have saved Russia if it wasn‘t for WW I.

**Wood:** Tsardom was throwing away its last chance when promises from 1905 were unfulfilled- expectations raised in 1905, but were dashed.

**Pipes:** Yes there was a spontaneous uprising from below (common in Russian history). But this time it succeeded due to the fact that it had support from the ruling elite, which no longer supported the Tsar. If so, Rasputin is of great importance.

## Conclusion:

Summarize your main points and emphasize what you consider decisive factors. Show also some important differences between 1905 and 1917 as a part of your analysis.

***5. To what extent did W W I cause the fall of Tsardom?***

**Factors stemming from W W I:**

1. The Tsar made himself **Commander in Chief** in 1915. This resulted in a) more influence to the Tsarina and Rasputin b) defeats in the war linked to the Tsar

2. **Impact of War**: casualties, inflation, bread rations in cities. By early 1917 Russia had lost 1,6 million men, 3,9 million wounded, 2,4 million taken prisoners. (in total 7,9 million). **This is a key point**.

3. The **Tsar's relation with the Duma** opposition deteriorated during the war. In 1915 the combination of Kadets, Octobrists and Progressists, formed a "Progressive bloc" demanding a government 'possessing the confidence of the public'. In 1916 the Duma politician Miliukov questioned whether the incompetence of the government was 'stupidity or treason'! How much should we blame the war for this development? According to Lenin, the war was a 'mighty accelerator'!

**No it was not the war:**

1. **Strikes**: There was a dramatic increase in the number of strikes before the war indicating that there would be a revolution even without W W I. 1910=222 strikes, 1911=466, 1912= 2 032, 1913=2 404, **1914 in just six months=4 098** (increase 1:20)

2. **The Tsar** had neglected to fulfill his promises from 1905. By using the army against what was left of the opposition in Dec 1905, by issuing the Fundamental law in April 1906, by appointing Stolypin who started a 'reign of terror', by changing the Electoral Law in 1907 (so that 1 % of the population controlled 75 % of the seats in the Duma) the Duma developed 'no roots amongst the people'. Trotsky said: "a constitution has been given but autocracy remains" and he described the revolution of 1905 as a "dress rehearsal".

3. **The Tsar** couldn't compromise. He had a 'dogmatic devotion to autocracy'. When the revolution had started in Feb 1917 (but when he was still the Tsar) the Duma opposition asked for last-ditch reforms. The Tsar described it as 'some nonsense from that fatty Rodzianko (Duma politician) and toyed with the idea of using the army upon his own capital. His generals now urged for constitutional reforms, but the Tsar was unable to do it, and abdicated.

4. **Rasputin**: destroyed the reputation of the Tsar and the Tsarina and alienated the upper classes (historiography: was it a revolution from below or from above? Well, when the revolution came in 1917 there was no longer any support from the elite. Why not? Was it Rasputin?)

5. **Poverty of the Peasantry**. Alexander IIs emancipation reform in 1861 had resulted in peasants paying redemption dues which exceeded the land output. Land was not individually owned and was redistributed periodically by the Mir according to the size of the family. By the turn of the century Russia had the highest population growth in Europe. Stolypin made it possible to buy the land from the Mir. Stolypin‘s reforms excluded 50 % of the peasants and they were extremely poor.

6. **The Working class**. Witte and the consequences of 'forced industrialization'.

**Historiography:**

* **Marxists:** the Russian Revolution was inevitable.
* **Norman Stone:** the reforms could have saved Russia if it hadn‘t been for W W I
* **Wood:** by undoing the promises from 1905, Tsardom was throwing away its last chances - expectations were raised but were dashed.

**Conclusion:**

Summarize your main points to support the answer. Impact of war was one very important factor for the revolution – but not the only one.

***6. Compare and contrast the policies of Alexander II (1855-81) and Alexander III (1881-94) of Russia.***

Contrasts = differences, Comparisons = similarities in IB talk.

Comparisons: Both were autocratic rulers, who believed in preserving their rights and refused to institute a national duma. Alexander II resorted to repression after assassination attempts and growth of revolutionary societies, and Alexander III applied repressive measures throughout his reign.

In contrast; Alexander II attempted to reform Russian institutions, such as the army, justice, education, local government, and above all in emancipating serfs. Alexander III failed to reform, followed a policy of Russification, which especially affected the Jewish population.

for sound knowledge of similarities and differences, with balance and analysis.

Possible CLAs:

Compare and contrast Alexander II as the "Great reformer" with Alexander III as the "Great reactionary:

* Even though AII emancipated the serfs, he could be seen as just as much of a reactionary as AIII: the limitations with his reforms were aimed to strengthen the autocracy and was not much of a liberal at all! Both had the aims to strengthening and holding on to autocracy.
* Alexander III's policies in 1880s and 1890s made important steps towards economic modernization and industrialization! Following on from his father's earlier reforms- even though reactionary in social and political terms- reformer in economic terms!
* However, since both Tsars refused to limit their own authority and position- can be argued that neither of them were much of a reformer due to their refusal to change the political structure of Russia- Tsardom!!

***7. How important was Lenin in the Bolshevik seizure of power?***

(Structure: Show the importance of Lenin in the first part of the essay. In the second part you show all other important factors which led to the seizure of power).

## A. Yes, Lenin was important:

1. Lenin had organized a tight revolutionary party ever since the party split in 1903: the idea of an elite party. He was the undisputed leader of the party.

2. Lenin returned in April 1917. Explain his April Theses and how his policy of non co-operation with the Provisional Government would later pay off, i.e. to have "clean hands

3. Lenin was able to communicate with the masses. He used effective slogans (bread, peace and land) and oratorical powers.

4. He timed the October coup.

5. It proved to be important to have a tightly organized political party in the chaos that existed in the autumn of 1917 – that had been one of the ideas behind his decision to organize a party according to this principle.

## B. There were other factors as well which finally led to the Bolshevik seizure of power:

1. **Trotsky's** organization of the October coup is often emphasized when discussing the reasons for the success.

**Weaknesses of the Provisional Government:**

2. The Government had no real authority i.e. the **Dual power**. The government was responsible for national questions while the Soviets controlled local power.

3. This Dual power can be clearly seen in the famous Order Number 1 from March 1917

4. They **continued the war**. Why? The PG had no money i.e. they needed Western capital. They also believed in a victorious war.

5. They **put off land reform**. Land was by far the most important question to poor peasants who made up the army. The PG feared that starting a land reform would make peasants desert the army

6. **Elections were also postponed**.

7. The economic crisis was intensified as the war went on. There was hyperinflation.

8. The PG government was a **coalition** and had problems agreeing on a policy. When Russia needed a strong leadership it had a weak government.

**Other factors:**

9. It is clear that the Provisional Government didn't come to power in a **favorable situation**. The impact of World War I cannot be underestimated. The new government also suffered from old thorny questions like the land question which was not easy to solve during a war. This of course helped Lenin and the party.

## Conclusion:

It was a combination between strengths of the Bolsheviks and Lenin, weaknesses of the Provisional Government and some other factors, which led to the Bolshevik seizure of power, i.e. Lenin‘s success. It must however be concluded that Lenin was of major importance in this process. The Bolsheviks went from obscurity to power within a year.

***8. Why was the Provisional Government in Russia unable to consolidate and maintain its power in 1917?***

After the March Revolution the new republic was in the hands of two powers, tolerating but not supporting each other. The Duma did the work of the government while the Petrograd Soviet had most of the practical power. Their inability to deal with the questions of land and the maintenance of the war effort was the first major failure of the government. The July offensive failed and Kornilov’s attempted coup weakened the provisional government even further. Lenin’s arrival in Petrograd in April and his reorganisation of the Bolshevik Party was a major turning point with the pronouncement of the April Theses. Trotsky’s preparations for revolution, the persistent social and economic problems in Russia, and the refusal of the army to support it brought the Provisional Government down.

***9. “The Bolshevik state under Lenin between 1918 and 1924 was a ruthless dictatorship, caring little for the Russian people.” To what extent do you agree with this statement?***

CLA: Clearly there statements is true, but perhaps can be mitigated by their ideology of pragmatic short term methods necessary to herald in a new era – ideology.

Candidates will probably agree with the general sentiments by making reference to the Cheka, suppression of religion, use of force against the civil service strikes, class warfare, continued political repression during the NEP, the crushing of the Constituent Assembly and the Civil War. The question remains whether these were pragmatic decisions to ensure the survival of the Bolshevik state, which cared little for the Russian people, or that Lenin felt that he was doing the best as he could for the Russian people. Evidence to support this would be the switching from War Communism to the New Economic Policy.

[17+ marks] for fully analytical, and relevant answers with detail, insight, perceptive comments and perhaps different interpretations, which address all aspects of the question.

***10. Evaluate the factors that enabled Lenin to ensure the survival of the Soviet State.***

**CLA: Could be judgment around carrot vs stick.**

Factors could include Lenin’s willingness to deal ruthlessly with potential opposition both within and outside the Bolshevik party – suppression of the Constituent Assembly; the establishment of the Cheka and the Red Terror. The harsh treatment of opponents during the civil war (the death of the Romanov family), the crushing of the Kronstadt Revolt when the sailors demanded a return to soviet power, the establishment of the one-party state and the Ban on Factionalism within the party itself followed by purges could all be considered.

Other factors could include: policies that were approved of by the Russian people or were effective in dealing with a particular crisis; decrees on Land and Peace 1917; the granting of workers control of economic enterprises. War Communism, although unpopular, was important in supplying the Red Army during the Civil War. This helped in defeating the Whites and their foreign allies. The adoption of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921 stimulated economic recovery and increased the popularity of the regime.