

History
UNFOLDING

RUSSIA'S REVOLUTION AND THE WORLD



MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

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Introduction

The Bolshevik Challenge

In the fall of 1917, Lenin and his Bolsheviks seized control of Russia, ending a brief democratic interlude and bringing forth a new kind of regime the likes of which the world had never seen.

The Russian Revolution was a pivotal event that would shape the entire 20th century. The Marxist ideology that guided the Soviet Union for more than seventy years deeply affected far more than the particular regimes where it was adopted as official dogma. In fact, the communist movement after 1917 profoundly influenced just about every important social, cultural intellectual and political trend of our age. No understanding of the past eight decades is possible without a grasp of the nature and significance of the Russian Revolution.

This booklet uses 12 visual displays to focus on several of the key themes in the story of the Russian Revolution and its world-wide impact. Each lesson uses three visual displays to explore one broad topic. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

Russia Before the Revolution

The illustrations here focus on the conditions in Russia in the decades prior to the Revolution and the growing alienation of a radical opposition to the rule of the Tsar.

Two Revolutions

By late 1916, the disaster of World War I had led Russia to the edge of anarchy and chaos. In 1917, a spontaneous and democratic revolution swept the old order out. Then, a far less spontaneous takeover brought a determined and ruthless group of radical revolutionaries to power.

Terror and Civil War

A bitter civil war between “Reds” and “Whites” provided the context for the extremely harsh form of communism the Bolsheviks imposed. Terror became an accepted tool of policy. As the illustrations here make clear, the results were a disaster.

The Revolution and the World

The Russian Revolution gave Marxism more prestige and many more resources on which to draw. This intense faith and the equally intense opposition to it would affect the entire world for many decades.

Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Many textbooks are full of colorful visuals. However, all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. Only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

DIGITAL IMAGES The booklet's PDF allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions.

DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the projected images. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand social conditions in Russia in the decades before its revolution.
2. Students will understand how bitter radical criticism of Russia's rulers had become by the early 1900s.

Russia Before the Revolution

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

In the late 1800s, Russia was one of the great powers of Europe. Yet it was also very poor. Four out of five Russians were peasants like those shown here. Most of them still lived and worked as they had for centuries. The village was the peasant's world. Often, each peasant worked strips of land scattered throughout the village lands. These strips were assigned by a village commune made up of the heads of the peasant households. Individual ownership of separate farms was not typical. Loyalty was to the village and commune much more than to the nation as a whole.

Illustration 2

Russia was ruled by a monarch called a Tsar. Backing him were rich nobles, the army, the secret police and the Russian Orthodox Church. By the late 1800s, a small middle class of business owners, journalists, doctors, lawyers and others was also emerging. They were often critical of the Tsar's harsh rule. Their children in the universities were often attracted to radical, even terrorist, political movements. The British cartoon on the left comments on this trend, picturing a Russia torn between chaos and anarchy ("nihilism") and the Tsar's dictatorial and militaristic rule. On the right, a radical poster compares the Orthodox Church to a monster spider living off the people. Both images suggest the growing gulf between Russia's rulers and her embittered people.

Illustration 3

By the early 1900s, radical groups in Russia were growing in strength. Among the most important of them were the Bolsheviks, followers of Karl Marx. In 1848, Marx wrote a book called the *Communist Manifesto*. Most industrial workers then—those Marx called the "proletariat"—lived in squalid slums and worked long hours at very low wages. According to Marx, capitalism would over time only make workers more miserable, while their labor would only add to the wealth and power of a tiny ruling class. Marx wrote, "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win." Using this metaphor of chained workers, the Bolshevik poster shown here neatly sums up Marx's ideas. In fact, the Bolsheviks saw themselves as agents of a proletarian revolution that would overthrow capitalism and launch inside Russia the world's first communist society.

Lesson 1—Russia Before the Revolution

Illustration 1



Roger L. Lewis Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Russian Pictorial Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. In 1900, four in five of Russia's approximately 125 million people lived and worked very much the way the peasants in these two photos did. From what you know about Russia, what features in the photos help to show that these are peasants in Russia?
2. From the photos, what do you suppose life was like for the typical Russian peasant? How do the photos fit with what you already know about Russia? What do you find most surprising about them?
3. Many peasants farmed strips of land scattered throughout their village. Often, these strips were assigned to each household by a village meeting of household heads called a "commune." What do you know about these communes?
4. Every few years, the commune would make a new division of these strips. Many peasants liked this commune system. Some did not. Why do you think most peasants liked the system? What do you think some of them disliked about it?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Use the above two images as a starting point in a project designed to compare Russian peasants and U.S. farmers of the late 1800s. First look for more photos or drawings of Russian peasants and American farmers. Your teacher or librarian should be able to help you find sources with such images. Find illustrations that show the differences between the two groups in such matters as use of technology, patterns of land holding, family life, communities, etc. Make photocopies of five to ten illustrations for each of the two groups. Do whatever reading is necessary to understand what the images show. Write brief captions for each image and arrange them in a bulletin board display.
2. Read more about Russian communes in the 1800s and early 1900s. Based on what you learn, create an imaginary map of a typical Russian village. Show the land holdings of peasant families as they would have been assigned by the commune. Use your map to explain the commune system to the rest of the class.

Lesson 1—Russia Before the Revolution

Illustration 2



Cartoon from *Punch*

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Russia was ruled by a king called a Tsar. By the late 1800s, anger toward Russia's tiny wealthy class was spreading. Assassination attempts against the Tsar were not unusual. The cartoon on the left comments on one tense time when "martial law" had been declared. What is martial law?
2. The caption here says "Aut Caesar, aut nihil!" (which means, roughly, "Either Caesar, or nihilism!") In your own words, what do you think this caption means?
3. The Tsar's authority was backed by the army, the secret police, government officials and many wealthy Russians. The cartoon on the right comments harshly on another institution that usually backed the Tsar. Can you tell which one?
4. This cartoon shows how bitter radicals had become toward those in authority in Russia. Why do you suppose they felt such anger toward the Russian Orthodox Church in particular?



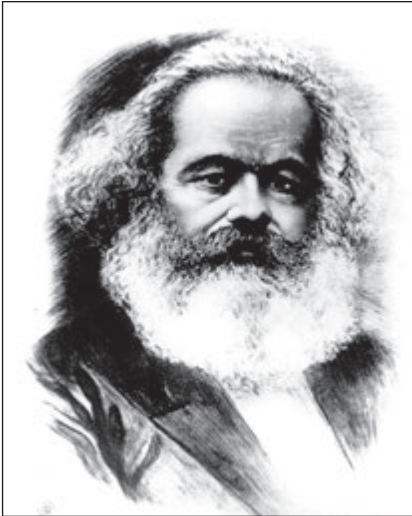
Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Follow-up Activities

1. Socialist and other radical posters or cartoons in Russia in the early 1900s often pictured business, army, government or church officials as giants. Do research to find other examples of radical poster art in Russia in the early 1900s. (One collection is in *Images of Revolution: Graphic Art from 1905 Russia*, by David King and Cathy Porter, Pantheon Books, 1983.) Make photocopies of at least five such posters or other forms of political art. Conduct a discussion in which you explain the giant figures in the images, talk about how the images might have affected people, and discuss whether or not these art works were fair.
2. In 1879, a small group of radical Russian intellectuals and others organized a group called "People's Will." Its aim was to assassinate Tsar Alexander II. The group succeeded in 1881. Read more about People's Will and Tsar Alexander II. Give the rest of the class a brief account of the assassination, why People's Will thought it was justified, and what, if anything, it accomplished.

Lesson 1—Russia Before the Revolution

Illustration 3



John McDonald Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. In the early 1900s, radical groups in Russia grew in strength. In the Russian Revolution of 1917, one group, the Bolsheviks, brought to power the first communist government in the world. The central ideas of communism were first developed fully by the man in the upper left. Can you name him?
2. Marx provided a powerful intellectual attack on “capitalism.” The poster here actually presents Marx’s key ideas in a dramatic way. What is capitalism and who are the capitalists? Which figure stands for the capitalists in this poster? What point is made by portraying the capitalist in this manner?
3. Can you explain who the people carrying the giant capitalist are? Marx called the workers “proletarians,” and wrote, “The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.” How does the poster illustrate this idea?
4. How effective do you think this poster is? What is your own personal reaction to it?

Follow-up Activities

1. Read Karl Marx’s *Communist Manifesto*. As you read it through, keep the above poster in mind. Then write a brief essay about the *Manifesto* and this poster. In your essay, summarize the key ideas in the *Manifesto* in this way: First, explain what the *Communist Manifesto* teaches that is missing from the above poster. Also explain what, if anything, the poster teaches about communism that you think is missing, or not clearly expressed, in the *Manifesto*.
2. Karl Marx said that workers in the most advanced industrial nations would become increasingly oppressed and exploited. This does not seem to have happened. Why not? Discuss this in class, using this poster as a focus for the discussion. In the discussion, try to answer these questions: “What in the poster still seems accurate about capitalism today? What does not seem accurate?”

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand why revolution broke out in Russia in the early part of 1917.
2. Students will better understand how the Bolshevik revolution differed from the one in February of 1917.

Two Revolutions

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

War was the setting for Russia's Revolution. World War I began in 1914. In time, it engulfed most of Europe. Russia fought with Great Britain and France against Germany and Austria-Hungary. By 1916, food shortages, rising prices, and a fear of German conquest were causing chaos in Russia. In February 1917, crowds gathered in the streets of St. Petersburg to protest food shortages and high prices. At first, troops fired on them. But soon many soldiers came to their defense. Almost overnight, a full-scale military revolt swept the city. Within days, Tsar Nicholas II gave up the throne. This was "the February Revolution," the first revolution that year. It gave Russia a few brief months of democracy. But the chaos of war soon undermined its authority and popularity.

Illustration 2

One man above all brought the Bolsheviks to power in a second revolution that year—Vladimir Ilich Lenin. It was his iron will that kept the Bolsheviks focused on seizing control at all costs. Five scenes of Lenin's story are depicted here. Lenin was living in exile in Switzerland when the February Revolution occurred. The Germans helped him return secretly to Russia in April hoping he would create chaos and force Russia to withdraw from the war. Lenin's arrival by train is shown in the upper left. The painting portrays Lenin heroically. Yet in reality, he was to bring about the destruction of individual and political freedom in Russia. In doing so, he would create a new type of state—one that in time would justly be called "totalitarian."

Illustration 3

In October, amidst growing chaos, the Bolsheviks took power in a secret conspiracy involving a few thousand armed Bolsheviks. This was the October Revolution. The Bolsheviks immediately began to put the ideas of Karl Marx into practice. Marx envisioned communism as a classless society in which everyone worked in harmony and shared wealth equally. But he had said little in detail about how communism would work. This Bolshevik poster is typical of many portraying happy peasants, workers, and soldiers in a communist paradise. In reality, the Bolsheviks never came close to achieving this vision, especially with regard to Russia's peasants. Rather than a paradise, the Bolshevik takeover plunged Russia into a long and destructive civil war.

Lesson 2—Two Revolutions

Illustration 1



Russian Pictorial Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Russian Pictorial Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. A great war was a key factor in triggering the Russian Revolution of 1917. What war was that, and in what years did it take place? What part did Russia play in the war and who were its allies and enemies?
2. By 1916, Russians were growing bitter about the war, and millions longed to get out of it. What conditions made the war especially trying for them that year?
3. In February 1917, protest marches in St. Petersburg led to a full-scale revolt. At first, soldiers fired on the crowds. But soon, many more of them turned their guns against the Tsar's forces, as in the photo on the right. In early March, Tsar Nicholas gave up the throne. Why do you think the Tsarist government fell apart so totally and quickly in the spring of 1917?
4. The February Revolution gave Russia a few chaotic months of democracy. There were two revolutions in Russia in 1917. But some say the only real revolution was the one in February. Why do you think they say that? Are they correct? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. In August 1915, Tsar Nicholas II left for the front to take personal command of Russia's forces. Many historians say this was a big mistake. Why? Read more about this decision and what historians think of it. Pretend you are a close adviser to the Tsar. Write a long memo to him urging him not to go to the front.
2. Read more about the events of late February 1917. (Remember, Russia's calendar then was 13 days behind ours. The uprising began in late February by that Russian calendar but in early March by ours.) Pretend you are one of the soldiers in the top photo above. In this photo, you and your fellow soldiers are shown turning your guns against the government. It is the evening after this clash. No one knows what will happen next. Write a long letter home to your peasant family in a village far from St. Petersburg. Tell them what has happened and explain your thoughts and feelings about the events of the day.

Lesson 2—Two Revolutions

Illustration 2



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustration

1. These five scenes depict key moments in the struggle by a ruthless and determined man to seize power in Russia—which he and his political party did in 1917. Name him and his party.
2. The Bolsheviks did not seize power in the Revolution that took place in February of 1917. In fact, Lenin was not even in Russia then. In the upper left, he is shown returning to St. Petersburg by train from Switzerland in April 1917. Why was this moment so important in the history of the Bolshevik takeover?
3. Below that scene, also on the left, Lenin is shown hiding out in the summer of 1917 planning the final Bolshevik takeover. That takeover is shown in the center. In what month did it take place?
4. The other two scenes show Lenin just after the Bolshevik takeover. In your opinion, do these five scenes present Lenin favorably, unfavorably, or in a neutral way? Do you think they offer a fair and accurate picture of Lenin? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** The above poster leaves out many important aspects of Lenin's activities in 1917 and 1918. Each group member should learn more about one of the following:

- Lenin's dealings with Germany in 1917
- The formation of the Cheka in December 1917
- The Constituent Assembly of January 1918.
- The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 1918

In a class presentation, report on and summarize these events. Discuss how they might add to or alter the picture of Lenin presented in the painting.

2. **Small-group activity:** Opinions about Lenin vary. Read more about him. Then find several brief comments on him, from all points of view. Look at authors such as John Reed, Leon Trotsky, B.D. Wolfe, Richard Pipes, Robert Conquest and others. Prepare a list of quotes from such authors. Include at least three "pro" and three "con" quotes about Lenin. Use these to help you guide a class discussion about him.

Lesson 2—Two Revolutions

Illustration 3



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustration

1. According to both Marx and Lenin, the overthrow of capitalism would be followed by the creation of a communist society. This might take some time. But in the end, life under communism would be like the vision of it presented in this poster. In what ways does this Bolshevik poster present the Marxist notion of what a communist society would be like?
2. The Bolsheviks must have believed that images like the one in this poster would appeal to workers and peasants in Russia in 1917. Why? What in the poster would have appealed to them and convinced them to support the Bolsheviks?
3. Does the vision of the future presented in this poster appeal to you? That is, if a society like the one in this poster could actually exist, would you want to live in it? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Look through illustrated books on world history or on the history of the Russian Revolution. Find pictures of pro-Bolshevik posters from the time of the 1917 Revolution. If possible, make photocopies of these posters to use in a bulletin board display. Arrange the posters under these three headings: "Capitalists and the Old Order," "The Revolution Takes Power," "A New Life Under Communism." Title the entire bulletin board display "How Bolshevism Saw Itself."
2. **Small-group activity:** As in Activity 1 above, look through illustrated history books from the time of World War I and the Russian Revolution. Find Bolshevik poster art and World War I political posters from Great Britain, Germany, the U.S. and France. Bring copies of these posters to your group and discuss them. Prepare a presentation to the class on the artistic and propaganda techniques used in these posters.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand how the Civil War kept Russia in turmoil for more than two years after the Bolshevik takeover.
2. Students will understand that Bolshevik terror added to the misery caused by the Civil War.

Terror and Civil War

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

The Bolshevik reality soon differed vastly from what Marxists hoped a communist society would be like. Some say this was partly because the Bolsheviks had to fight a bloody civil war for two years after taking power. In the Russian Civil War, the Bolshevik Red Army, guided by Leon Trotsky, battled several opposing Russian armies. The top photos here show Trotsky and the train he traveled in across Russia supervising Red Army forces. The Bolsheviks called their opponents the “Whites” — white being the color of the royalists who had opposed the French Revolution. The Bolsheviks portrayed the Whites as brutal and heartless. The Bolshevik poster on the bottom here shows White troops burning a peasant home. In fact, both sides committed terrible atrocities during the Civil War.

Illustration 2

From the start, the Bolsheviks used terror tactics and the full power of the state to force peasants to turn over surplus grain to the government. During the Civil War, such tactics grew even harsher, since Lenin was desperate to feed workers in the cities and Red Army soldiers. Often, armed bands were sent to seize anything extra the peasants had. Many peasants rebelled, and millions of them cut way back on what they planted. Then in 1920 and 1921, drought further cut supplies. Massive famine such as Europe had not seen in centuries swept away more than five million people. The photo on top shows a few of the young victims of this famine. The other photo is of a forced labor brigade with its communist supervisor to the side reading a newspaper.

Illustration 3

The poster here shows a Russian peasant crying “help.” By the summer of 1921, harvests in many Russian provinces were less than a sixth of levels before the Revolution. Cannibalism was reported in some areas. In many cities, corpses were everywhere, and epidemics added to the misery. Lenin hated to ask the capitalist nations for help. He finally did, though only indirectly. The response, especially from the U.S., was huge. The American Relief Administration (ARA), headed by Herbert Hoover, sent workers and millions of dollars worth of food. ARA workers are shown in the photo here. At its high point in 1922, the ARA was feeding more than ten million Russians a day.

Lesson 3—Terror and Civil War

Illustration 1



O'Brien Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



WWI Pictorial Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. The Bolshevik takeover in October 1917 was followed by more than two years of bloody civil war. The man in the top photo was the main Bolshevik in charge of the Red Army troops fighting for the new communist government. Can you name him?
2. During the Russian Civil War, Trotsky traveled around in the train shown here supervising the troops and keeping an especially careful watch over many of the Red Army's top officers. Can you guess why the Bolsheviks often doubted the loyalty of those officers?
3. The Red Army fought several armies opposed to the Bolsheviks. Usually these armies are referred to as the "Whites." The poster here shows White forces in a peasant village in rural Russia. What view of the Whites does this poster present? How can you tell this is a Bolshevik poster?

Follow-up Activity

1. Of the generals who led various White forces against the Bolsheviks in the Civil War, the following were among the most important:

Alexander Kolchak
Anton Denikin
Nikolai Ludenich
Peter Wrangel

Read a biography or other source to learn more about one of these generals. Pay attention not only to the battles he fought, but also to the way he dealt with his soldiers and with the civilian population. Also pay attention to his overall political goals. Based on what you learn, give a brief talk to the class about this general. In your talk, comment on the above poster. Give your own views as to how fair this poster is as a picture of the general you have read about and the White forces he led.

Lesson 3—Terror and Civil War

Illustration 2



Golder Collection, Hoover Institution Archives



Sokolov Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Along with the Civil War, another huge problem soon arose in Russia. It caused millions of deaths in 1921 and 1922. From the top photo and from what you know of this period in Russia's history, can you explain what caused these deaths?
2. One cause of the famine was drought. But a bigger cause was Bolshevik mistreatment of the peasants. Starting in 1918, the Bolsheviks forced peasants to give the state any extra grain over and above what they needed for their families. Millions of peasants soon cut way back on the amounts they planted. Why do you suppose they did this? Why would this have added to the harm the drought caused?
3. The Bolsheviks often forced workers to take jobs where the state felt they were needed. The bottom photo shows a work gang with a Bolshevik supervisor on the right reading a newspaper. What do you suppose work on such a gang would be like? Do you think the Bolsheviks were justified in taking such drastic steps? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activity

1. From 1918 to 1920, hundreds of peasant uprisings took place against Bolshevik food policies. In public, Lenin blamed these troubles on wealthier peasants he called "kulaks." He said of the kulaks:

These leeches have drunk the blood of toilers, growing richer the more the worker starved in the cities and factories. These vampires have gathered and continue to gather in their hands the lands of landlords, enslaving, time and again, the poor peasants. Merciless war against these kulaks! Death to them.

Although thousands of peasants were killed by the Bolsheviks at this time, Lenin never fully carried out the vow he made here. But Joseph Stalin did—in the early 1930s. Read about Stalin's war on the kulaks. (A good source is *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* by Robert Conquest, Oxford University Press, 1986.) Write an essay explaining how Stalin fulfilled the promise Lenin made in the above quote.

Lesson 3—Terror and Civil War

Illustration 3



Courtesy Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. This photo shows some Americans and Russians in Russia during the famine of 1921–1922. What are the adults in the photo doing?
2. Starting in the summer of 1921, the American Relief Administration, or ARA, sent food and aid workers who helped to feed up to ten million Russians a day during the famine. The ARA was headed by a man who would later become a U.S. President. Can you name him?
3. Lenin hated to ask the U.S. for this help. When he finally decided to, he had a famous writer named Maxim Gorky make the appeal. Why do you suppose Lenin refused to ask for this help directly himself?
4. Later, after the famine had passed, thousands of Russians who had worked with the ARA were arrested and sent to labor prisons. Why do you think the Bolsheviks did this?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** During the Civil War, England, France, and (to a lesser degree) the U.S. gave some help to various “White” forces fighting against the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, the ARA and other groups from these Allied nations saved millions of Russians then under Bolshevik rule from starvation in the famine. Learn more about both kinds of Western involvement in Russia in the years 1918 to 1922. Based on what you learn, debate this question as a group: “Should the people of Russia in the 1920s have feared or appreciated the U.S. and the other Allies?” Discuss your views with the rest of the class.
2. **Small-group activity:** Read more about Maxim Gorky. If possible, read some of his stories. Discuss them in your group. Then prepare a brief talk to the class on Gorky, his writings, his dealings with Lenin and Stalin, and his views about those two leaders and about the Russian Revolution.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand that the Bolsheviks hoped to trigger a worldwide communist revolution.
2. Students will better appreciate the strong feelings about Bolshevism, pro and con, felt around the world in the 1920s.

The Revolution and the World

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

In early 1918, the Bolsheviks made peace with Germany. But Lenin was not interested in a permanent peace. He fully expected the capitalist nations to attack his communist government (and some actually did help the White forces in the Civil War). Lenin also expected communist revolutions to break out all over the capitalist world. At first this seemed possible. In war-torn Germany, for example, the communist Spartacus League led one uprising. Spartacist leader Rosa Luxemburg is shown in the upper right here. In the Spartacist poster, a giant working class fist scatters terrified capitalist politicians in the German parliament. At the Bolsheviks' urging, the Spartacists attempted a revolution in Berlin in January 1919. But the uprising was quickly crushed.

Illustration 2

Lenin hoped to foment world revolution through the Comintern (short for "Communist International"), an organization of communist parties from all over the world. The photo shows Lenin and others at its first meeting, in 1919. The poster depicts a stereotypical capitalist cowering at the mere name of the Comintern. In fact, the Comintern was never able to bring about a revolution anywhere. But it was still valuable to the Bolsheviks. That's because of the many ways it worked, openly and in secret, to shape opinion around the world and create a favorable image of Soviet Russia. It did this not only among communists, but also among socialists and liberals—through publishing operations, trade deals, support for writers, artists and film makers, within political front groups, and through traditional espionage activities.

Illustration 3

At the heart of communism's appeal has always been a vision of a world of total equality. In this world, all were to work and share equally in a spirit of harmony. The Bolshevik poster on top conveys this vision. Bolshevik reality, however, was far from this ideal. By the early 1920s, the only things all Russians seemed to share were misery and death, as the cartoon on the right suggests. Some critics of communism say that its ideal of total equality is only possible if another noble ideal is destroyed—the ideal of liberty. Whatever the truth, liberty under the Bolsheviks was indeed destroyed in a ruthless drive to remake a world in the name of equality.

Illustration 1



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives



Maurin Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. This is not a Bolshevik poster from Russia. However, it is a communist poster. It shows the working class smashing the capitalists and their political supporters in parliament. What symbol in this poster is used for the working class? What else in the poster reminds you of Bolshevik poster art?
2. This is a poster of the communist Spartacus League, a group that tried to stage a revolution in Berlin in Germany in January 1919. The leaders of this group were Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Rosa Luxemburg is in the upper right. Why might conditions in Germany in 1919 have led these communists to think a revolution could succeed there? Did the Spartacus revolt succeed?
3. Lenin gave aid to the Spartacus League and other communists in Europe in the hope that this would trigger a worldwide communist revolution. Why do you think he felt such a strong need to have his own communist revolution spread quickly to other nations?

Follow-up Activities

1. Look at the poster on page 7 of this booklet. An activity on that page asks you to compare that poster to Karl Marx's ideas in his *Communist Manifesto*. Do the same activity here, except add the above poster to that activity. Write a brief essay on Marx's ideas. Explain which of those ideas are best illustrated by the poster on page 7 and which are best illustrated by the above poster. Also summarize any key ideas you think neither poster illustrates well.
2. Lenin's efforts to spark a communist revolt in Europe were not limited to his verbal support for European communists. In 1920, his Red Army fought off attacks by Poland's forces and then invaded Poland itself. Lenin may well have hoped his forces would march all the way to Germany where they could then help a German revolution. Read more about this war with Poland in 1919 and 1920. Based on what you learn, create a map showing the movements of the Red Army in the fighting there. Use the map in a brief talk about this fighting and its results.

Illustration 2



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives



Whitcomb Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. The photo here shows a 1919 meeting of communists from all over the world. They met to form a worldwide organization called the Communist International, or “Comintern.” Can you identify the second man from the right in the photo?
2. The Comintern was also known as the “Third International,” because there had been two socialist internationals before it. Unlike those two, however, all the communist parties in this third one had to take orders from just one nation’s communist party. Can you guess which nation that was?
3. The Comintern tried to help communist parties in other nations. It also often gave secret help to many groups, artists, writers, filmmakers and others around the world who were not communists. It did this mainly as a way to help Soviet Russia. How would this kind of activity have helped the Bolshevik regime in Russia?

Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** In the 1920s, ‘30s, and ‘40s, the Comintern gave a number of famous writers publicity and other kinds of support. Sometimes the writers knew about this help, but sometimes they did not. Each of your group’s members should learn more about one of the following writers and his or her contacts with people working for the Comintern:

Lillian Hellman	Andre Gide
Ernest Hemingway	Lincoln Steffens
Rolland Romain	John Dos Passos

Each group member should take notes in answer to these three questions:

- What kinds of involvement did the Comintern have with this writer?
- How much was the writer aware of this help?
- Why do you think the Comintern gave this help?

Based on what you learn, present your findings to the class in a discussion of the Comintern, its methods and its objectives.

Lesson 4—The Revolution and the World

Illustration 3



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives



Bolshevism makes all alike.

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Discussing the Illustrations

1. In a way, both of these illustrations refer to the basic goal at the heart of communism. That is the goal of equality. The poster on the left portrays that goal in a direct and positive way. The editorial cartoon on the right comments on it with bitter irony. Explain how each illustration is about the idea of equality under communism.
2. The poster on the left is an example of a style called "Socialist Realism." This soon became the main artistic style approved of by officials in Soviet Russia. From the poster and others you have seen, can you describe some key aspects of Socialist Realism in art? Why do you think the Bolsheviks came to favor this form of artistic expression?
3. The cartoon on the right suggests that "equality" under communism came to mean an equality of misery, poverty and suffering. Do you think the cartoon's view is fair to the Bolsheviks? Why or why not? What is your own overall opinion of the impact of the Bolsheviks on Russia and the world?

Follow-up Activities

1. George Orwell wrote two novels about totalitarian systems like the one the Bolsheviks set up in the Soviet Union. They are *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Read one of these novels. Then prepare a brief talk about this novel and its relevance to the Russian Revolution. To help in your presentation, use at least four of the overheads for illustrations in this booklet.
2. Another novel on communism in these years is *Darkness at Noon*, by Arthur Koestler. Read this novel and write a brief book report on it. In your report, compare the ideas about communism in Koestler's novel to the ideas in this booklet. Be sure to express your own views about the major themes in the novel and the ideas presented in this booklet.

Image Close-ups

Russia Before the Revolution

Illustration 1



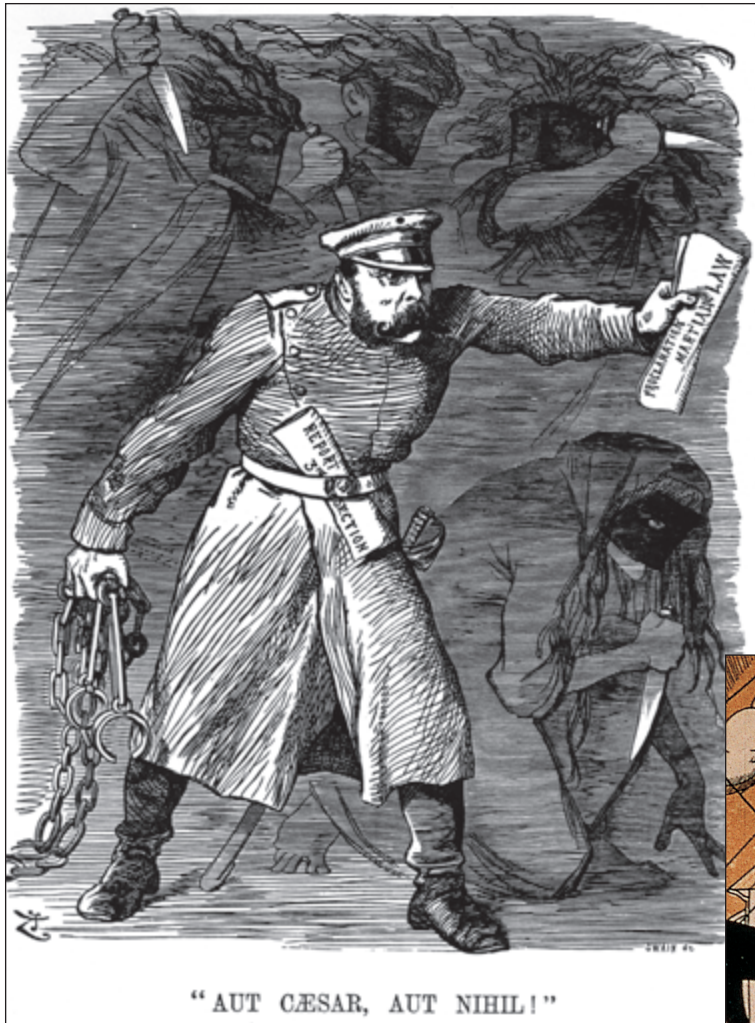
Roger L. Lewis Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Russian Pictorial Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Russia Before the Revolution

Illustration 2



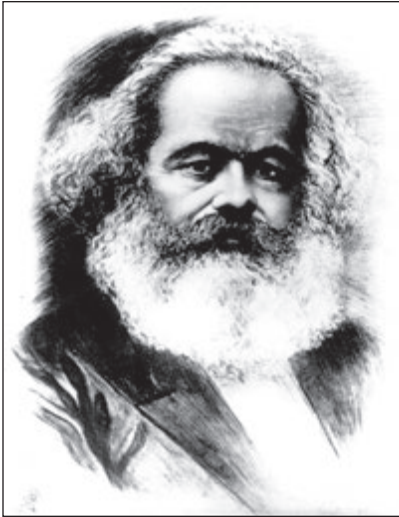
Cartoons from *Punch*



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Russia Before the Revolution

Illustration 3



John McDonald Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Two Revolutions

Illustration 1



Russian Pictorial Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Russian Pictorial Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Two Revolutions

Illustration 2



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Two Revolutions

Illustration 3



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Terror and Civil War

Illustration 1



O'Brien Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



WWI Pictorial Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Terror and Civil War

Illustration 2



Golder Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Sokolov Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

Terror and Civil War

Illustration 3



Courtesy Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives

The Revolution and the World

Illustration 1



Maurin Collection,
Hoover Institution Archives



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

The Revolution and the World

Illustration 2



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives



Whitcomb Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

The Revolution and the World

Illustration 3



Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives



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