

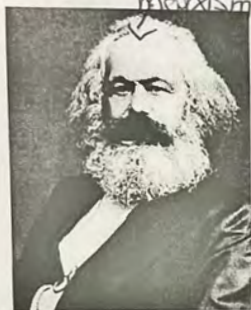
A Communist Party: The Russian Revolution, Communism and 20th Century European History.



A collection of communists (left) and a 'bread line' caused by communism (right)

Questions about the world.

Karl Marx



Communism, and Animal Farm by George Orwell as a result, starts with Marx. Born in Germany in 1818, Marx became a philosopher, writer and politician. He is most famous for writing 'The Communist Manifesto' with fellow German Friedrich Engels in 1848. Marx was a radical thinker and supporter of the working class - society's poorest people - all of his life. He wrote several articles and books about politics. He was also keen to see a change in the way wealth was shared.

Above: Karl Marx. Below: Friedrich Engels.

The Communist Manifesto

This book explained what Communism is and the overall aims of Communism. Marx and Engels argued that major events in history were a result of 'class struggles' between the bourgeoisie (the wealthy and powerful in control of everything) and the proletariat (the weakest and poorest of society). This was the main idea of Marxism: the belief that this struggle was at the centre of everything and that it needed to be addressed.

Marx and Engels argued that the two forces were opposed and peace would not exist until the class divide was removed. They suggested that a revolution was needed and that Communists should lead this. The proletariat would need to take control of things like factories, businesses and government if this revolution was going to be successful. As a result of Marx's working-class support, he had more faith in the proletariat than the bourgeoisie.

Once the revolution was complete, the world would be at peace and the poor would no longer be victims. In theory, it sounds like a great idea, right?



poor class (working) upper class (rich)

Who developed the Communist Manifesto and when was it published?

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels developed the Communist Manifesto, which was published in 1848.

Write a BOYS sentence identifying the two sides in the 'class struggle' of Marxism.

The bourgeoisie were rich and had no problems but the proletariat was poor so they found it unfair.

The Russian Revolution

Nobody was able to do this until 1917. Russia was ruled Tsar (King) Nicholas II, who had great power, great wealth and control over all Russia. The divide between Tsar Nicholas II, the man in charge of Russia, and the peasants of Russia was huge. People were unhappy with this.



Lenin



Nicholas

Lenin and Tsar Nicolas II.

Vladimir Lenin was the leader of the Bolsheviks (the name of the Communist group in Russia) and in November 1917, He successfully gained control of the Russian government. Despite a Russian Civil War in 1923, the Communists stayed in control of Russia for most of the 20th Century. It wasn't until the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 that the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), which is what Russia become known as after Communism succeeded, stopped being a Communist country.



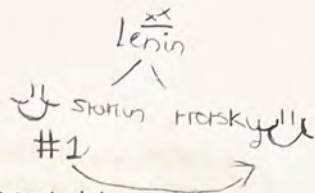
The Soviet Union crest

Write a noun, which, where, who sentence to explain who was in charge of Russia before Lenin took over.

The leader who ruled Russia before Lenin had great power and wealth.

Russia under Stalin

→ bolsheviks



After Lenin's death in 1924, there was conflict between two men to control the Soviet Union: Josef Stalin and Leon Trotsky. The two men seen as natural leaders but, after Stalin took control, Trotsky was pushed aside by Stalin, mainly as he posed a threat to Stalin's ability to rule, and the rest of the Communist Party that controlled the government.



Trotsky and a young Josef Stalin.

The Communist revolution was supposed to create a 'Marxist paradise' where everyone was equal. Did that happen? No. Stalin, alongside the rest of his decision-making politburo, became very powerful and lived a comfortable life. On the streets of Moscow, ordinary Russians worked hard for little reward. Life was unfair and there was no equality. The government constantly lied to the people about how good things were. Did people complain? They couldn't.

The KGB Stalin's secret police, were all-powerful and were a constant threat. People were afraid to criticise the government as they thought the KGB would find out. People would often disappear from their homes in the night and nobody questioned this. They were powerless.



Who took control of Russia after Lenin died and why did he removed Trotsky?

Stalin took control over Russia, because they thought Trotsky was a threat.

Write a the more, the more sentence to explain what the government did that would have made them unpopular.

The more the government spread rumors the more unpopular they would get.