# Policies and People

Trace how government decisions changed daily life in Mao's China.

**MWH.C.7.4.C** "Describe the effects of the Chinese Communist Revolution, including the repressive economic and social policies of Mao Zedong, the Great Leap Forward and resulting famine, and the Cultural Revolution and political persecution."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline one government action in each paragraph, circle a consequence of that action, and draw an arrow between them to show how the action affected people's lives.

### Revolution in Daily Life

1. In 1949, the Chinese Communist Party won the civil war and founded the People's Republic of China. Mao Zedong promised to remake the country and reduce inequality. The new government took land from landlords and gave it to peasant families, but land reform also brought public trials and executions of people labeled enemies. Soon, officials pressed families to join collective farms, where land and work were managed together rather than by each household. The state also controlled major industries and limited independent political activity. These changes expanded the government's power over both work and daily life.

2. In 1958, Mao launched the Great Leap Forward to rapidly increase farm and industrial output. Rural people were organized into large communes, and officials directed many workers to make steel instead of tending crops. Local leaders reported inflated harvests, while the state collected grain based on those reports. With too little food left in many villages, families faced hunger. The drive also disrupted farming, and a devastating famine followed from 1959 into the early 1960s. Tens of millions died. Fear of criticizing the campaign made it harder for officials to admit mistakes and change course.

3. In 1966, Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, urging young Red Guards to attack people and ideas they called counterrevolutionary. Teachers, officials, and others were publicly humiliated, beaten, imprisoned, or killed. Schools and workplaces were disrupted, and many young people were sent from cities to the countryside. Accusations could turn neighbors or relatives against one another, making ordinary speech risky. Mao used the campaign to strengthen his authority and remove perceived rivals, while political persecution damaged trust and education. The Cultural Revolution ended after Mao's death in 1976, but many families lived with its losses long afterward.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did land reform both change who held land and bring repression?

2. How did decisions made during the Great Leap Forward help cause hunger in villages?

3. How did fear of criticizing the Great Leap Forward affect the response to famine?

4. How did political persecution during the Cultural Revolution affect education and relationships?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75- to 95-word museum label titled "Daily Life Under Mao." Compare effects of policies from two different paragraphs, and explain how one goal of a policy differed from its result.

ANSWER KEY

# Policies and People

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.7.4.C

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one government action in each paragraph, circle a consequence of that action, and draw an arrow between them to show how the action affected people's lives. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How did land reform both change who held land and bring repression? | **The government gave landlords' land to peasant families, but people labeled enemies faced public trials and executions.** |
| 2 | How did decisions made during the Great Leap Forward help cause hunger in villages? | **Officials moved workers from farming to steelmaking and collected grain based on inflated harvest reports, leaving many villages with too little food.** |
| 3 | How did fear of criticizing the Great Leap Forward affect the response to famine? | **Fear made it harder for officials to admit mistakes and change course as the famine developed.** |
| 4 | How did political persecution during the Cultural Revolution affect education and relationships? | **Attacks on teachers disrupted education, while accusations against neighbors and relatives made speech risky and damaged trust.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Daily Life Under Mao: Mao's policies reached beyond government offices and into homes, farms, and classrooms. The Great Leap Forward was supposed to raise production, but pulling farmers into steelmaking and taking grain according to false harvest reports helped leave villages without enough food. During the Cultural Revolution, accusations against teachers and neighbors made speaking openly dangerous and interrupted education. Both campaigns demanded obedience, yet they harmed ordinary people in different ways: one brought widespread hunger, while the other spread fear and damaged trust. These effects show how political power shaped everyday survival and relationships.

Accept other accurate action-and-consequence chains supported by the passage. The museum label should compare effects from two paragraphs, explain a gap between a policy goal and its result, and be 75 to 95 words long.