Paths to Revolution

How unrest produced rival movements in Tsarist Russia

TOT.C.2.4 "Explain the rise of the Mensheviks, Bolsheviks, and Socialist Revolutionaries in Tsarist Russia, the 1905 Revolution, and revolutionary terrorism."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two conditions that fueled opposition, circle one strategy for each socialist group, and number three events that show how protest in 1905 led to a limited government response.

Different Answers to Tsarist Rule

1. At the start of the twentieth century, Tsar Nicholas II ruled an empire where most people had little say in government. Millions of peasants wanted more land, while factory workers faced long hours, low pay, and dangerous conditions. Industrial growth packed workers into cities, where strikes and political ideas spread quickly. The police censored newspapers, watched activists, and arrested opponents. Because legal ways to change the government were limited, some Russians joined underground socialist movements. These movements did not agree on who should lead a revolution or how to win support. Their disagreements shaped rival parties and very different methods of protest.

2. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, or SRs, drew support from peasants and demanded that land be transferred from large owners to those who worked it. Its Combat Organization used political assassinations, including the killing of a government minister in 1904, hoping to weaken the regime. Not all SR members took part in violence. The Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, which focused on workers, split in 1903 into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Lenin's Bolsheviks favored a tightly organized party of committed activists. Mensheviks favored a broader party and expected a longer period of political change before socialism.

3. In January 1905, troops fired on peaceful marchers seeking reforms in St. Petersburg, on a day later called Bloody Sunday. The shootings intensified anger at the tsar. Strikes, peasant uprisings, and a naval mutiny spread during the 1905 Revolution; defeat in a war with Japan added to the crisis. Nicholas II promised civil liberties and an elected assembly, the Duma, in the October Manifesto. Yet he kept major powers and later limited the Duma's authority. The revolution did not end tsarist rule, but it showed that workers, peasants, and soldiers could challenge it, while revealing that reforms might not settle their demands.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did conditions under Nicholas II help underground socialist movements gain supporters?

2. How did the Bolsheviks' and Mensheviks' plans for political change differ after their split?

3. Why did some SRs turn to political assassinations, and how did this method differ from their land goal?

4. How did Bloody Sunday help turn discontent into the 1905 Revolution, and why might the October Manifesto have failed to settle demands for change?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 65 to 85 word museum label explaining how blocked political change and unrest helped produce different revolutionary strategies in Tsarist Russia. Connect at least two socialist groups, the 1905 Revolution, and revolutionary terrorism, and explain one key difference between groups.

ANSWER KEY

Paths to Revolution

HIGH SCHOOL · TOT.C.2.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two conditions that fueled opposition, circle one strategy for each socialist group, and number three events that show how protest in 1905 led to a limited government response. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did conditions under Nicholas II help underground socialist movements gain supporters?	**Peasants wanted land and workers faced harsh conditions, while censorship and arrests limited legal ways to seek change. Some people therefore joined underground movements.**
2	How did the Bolsheviks' and Mensheviks' plans for political change differ after their split?	**Bolsheviks favored a tightly organized party of committed activists. Mensheviks favored a broader party and expected a longer period of change before socialism.**
3	Why did some SRs turn to political assassinations, and how did this method differ from their land goal?	**The SR Combat Organization used assassinations to weaken the regime. Assassination was a method of attack; transferring land to those who worked it was a goal.**
4	How did Bloody Sunday help turn discontent into the 1905 Revolution, and why might the October Manifesto have failed to settle demands for change?	**The shootings intensified anger, followed by strikes, uprisings, and a naval mutiny. The manifesto promised liberties and a Duma, but Nicholas II kept major powers and later limited the Duma.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In Tsarist Russia, peasants wanted land and workers faced harsh factory conditions, while police blocked many legal routes to change. Socialist groups offered different answers. SRs sought land for peasants, and some used assassinations to weaken the regime. Bolsheviks called for a tightly organized party, while Mensheviks favored a broader one. After troops shot peaceful marchers in 1905, strikes and uprisings spread. The tsar promised a Duma but kept major powers, so demands for change remained.

Accept labels that accurately connect restricted political change and social unrest to the rise of socialist groups, distinguish at least two groups, and explain terrorism as a tactic used by some SRs rather than all revolutionaries.