Power in Petrograd

Trace how revolution led to a government that struggled to hold power.

TOT.C.3.2.A "February Revolution and the Provisional (Kerensky) government,"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline problems that drove the February Revolution, circle decisions made by the Provisional Government, and number two results of those decisions. Use your marks to trace why the government lost support.

From Protest to Provisional Government

1. On February 23, 1917, according to the Julian calendar then used in Russia, women in Petrograd marched for bread and an end to the war. Soldiers fighting World War I had suffered huge losses, while civilians faced shortages and rising prices. Strikes spread as workers joined the crowds. Tsar Nicholas II ordered troops to restore order, but many soldiers refused to fire on protesters and joined them instead. With his authority collapsing, Nicholas abdicated on March 2 in the Julian calendar. Historians call these events the February Revolution because the protests began in February by Russia's calendar.

2. After the tsar stepped down, lawmakers from the Duma formed a Provisional Government. Prince Georgy Lvov first headed it. Alexander Kerensky served as justice minister and later became prime minister in July. The new government promised civil liberties and elections to a Constituent Assembly that would decide Russia's future political system. Yet it chose to keep fighting in World War I, hoping to honor commitments to Russia's allies. It also delayed major land reform until the assembly could meet. For soldiers and land-hungry peasants, these decisions left the most urgent problems unresolved.

3. At the same time, the Petrograd Soviet, a council of workers' and soldiers' representatives, claimed influence over troops and city workers. This created a struggle over authority often called dual power: the Provisional Government held official office, but the Soviet could shape what happened on the streets and in military units. In June, a Russian offensive against enemy forces failed, deepening anger about the war. As the government lost support, the Bolsheviks demanded that power pass to the soviets and promised peace and land. In October, according to Russia's Julian calendar, the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the response of soldiers turn protests into a crisis for Nicholas II?

2. How did a choice by the Provisional Government keep one cause of the February protests alive?

3. Why did holding official office not give the Provisional Government full control?

4. How did the government's land policy make the Bolsheviks' message more appealing to some peasants?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are advising Kerensky in July 1917. Write a short note proposing a decision about war or land that differs from government policy, using two facts from the passage to explain why it might win support and naming one obstacle it would still face.

ANSWER KEY

Power in Petrograd

HIGH SCHOOL · TOT.C.3.2.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline problems that drove the February Revolution, circle decisions made by the Provisional Government, and number two results of those decisions. Use your marks to trace why the government lost support. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the response of soldiers turn protests into a crisis for Nicholas II?	**Many soldiers refused Nicholas's order to fire on protesters and joined them, weakening his authority before he abdicated.**
2	How did a choice by the Provisional Government keep one cause of the February protests alive?	**It kept Russia in World War I, although opposition to the war had helped drive the protests.**
3	Why did holding official office not give the Provisional Government full control?	**The Petrograd Soviet also had influence over workers and troops, creating a struggle over authority.**
4	How did the government's land policy make the Bolsheviks' message more appealing to some peasants?	**The government delayed land reform, leaving land-hungry peasants' needs unmet, while the Bolsheviks promised land.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Prime Minister Kerensky, announce a plan to give land to peasants rather than wait for the Constituent Assembly. Many peasants wanted land, but your government has delayed reform. A plan that addresses their needs could win their support. One obstacle remains: the Petrograd Soviet influences workers and soldiers, so your government may struggle to carry out its plan.

Accept other passage-supported cause-and-effect explanations. For the open task, look for a policy change, two relevant facts, a plausible effect on support, and an obstacle.