Wellington Secondary College
Units 3 and 4, 2012.

VCE HISTORY
Revolutions

HOLIDAY HOMEWORK HANDBOOK

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The Revolutions Course

Over the course of the year we will study two revolutions, one for unit 3 and one for unit 4.

Each unit has the same two areas of study.

Area of study one looks at revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events of the revolution. In this area of study you will look at the pre-existing political situation and the problems associated with it and the new ideology, which arose in response to the problems.

Area of study two looks at creating a new society during and after the initial revolution. In this area of study you will evaluate and analyse the change, which has taken place and whether it was successful or cyclical.

Each Unit has two SACs (In class assessment tasks):

Unit 3 Russian Revolution:

SAC 1: Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events of the Russian Revolution.

SAC 2: Creating a new society post Russian Revolution.

Unit 4 French or Chinese Revolution:

SAC 1: Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events of the Russian Revolution.

SAC 2: Creating a new society post Russian Revolution.

* Full details of the SACs will be advised on the first day of year 12 classes.
**Holiday Homework**

Over the holidays in preparation to succeed in Units 3 & 4 in 2012 please complete the following activities.

Start a glossary in a workbook to gradually add terms and key words in over the course of the year. Begin by defining the following terms:

- Autocrat
- Bolshevik
- Menshevik
- Communism
- Democracy
- Capitalism
- Fascism
- Duma

- Socialism
- Serf
- Left-wing
- Right-wing
- Proletariat
- Soviet
- Liberalism
- Marxism

Research the following people and provide 6-8 dot points that provide some information that details their background, involvement in and contribution to the Russian Revolution.

_Vladamir Lenin (Vladamir Ilyich Ulyanov)_
_Leon Trotsky (Lev Davidovich)_
_Alexander Kerensky_
_Tsar Nicholas II_
_Karl Marx_
_Joseph Stalin (Josef Dzhugashvili)_

Word of advice

Although Wikipedia is a good source to gain basic information in the initial stages of research, it is not appropriate to use as a sole source in VCE history. Please get into the habit of searching for more reliable sources. Such as the ones below:

_http://www.notablebiographies.com_
_http://www.marxists.org_
_http://www.fordham.edu_
Read the following pages which introduce the course then answer the questions in your workbook:

(It may be helpful to research a little about some examples of revolution before responding)

1. What is a revolution? Make a list of what you consider to be the five main features of a revolution and write your own definition.

2. Do revolutions always involve violence? Are their any examples of non-violent revolutions?

3. In your opinion, what is the difference between common crime and vandalism and revolutionary destruction?

4. Why do you think that the original aims of revolutionaries are often changed or compromised, or even abandoned during the course of a revolution?

Best of Luck over the holidays and if you have any questions you can contact me via email. ☺️
Chapter 1
Introduction to the Revolutions Course

Starting to think about the Revolutions course: the big questions

The study of two major revolutions in the course of just one year is an ambitious task. The narrative itself—or story of events—requires a great deal of attention, and so too does the study of the main people, ideas and revolutionary movements. Before you start to study the actual events of the two revolutions, you should begin by understanding the big questions you will answer later. Rather than try to get an overview at the last moment, when the course is completed, let us try to gain an overview first, so that you can think about these issues while you study the revolution itself.

What is a revolution?

The course of study you have chosen is described by just one word: Revolutions. This familiar word calls up dramatic images of heroic leaders urging the revolutionary crowd to take the violent action that will bring down the existing political system, and introduce a new one.

Cultural historian Raymond Williams warns us that the word ‘revolution’ is far more complicated than we might think. He reminds us that ‘revolution’ does suggest some sort of major change in human affairs. This means that we have to ask what changes did occur as a result of the revolution we are studying. We cannot, however, assume that everything changed or, for that matter, that the changes were all for the better. We also have to be ready to admit that some things did not change as much as we might expect.

Williams also points out that ‘revolution’ is closely associated with two other words, ‘revolt’ and ‘rebellion’, reminding us that in most cases—not all—revolution involves a violent rejection of existing authority. The word ‘revolution’ therefore means something much more serious than ‘reform’. Reform can also mean quite considerable political and social change, but it is often carried out peacefully within the existing system. We are studying a process that involves violence, which in turn causes loss of life and destruction of property. We will need to understand the nature of this violence, and the ways in which it was used.
The key issues raised by revolutionary history

Your first line of inquiry concerns the crisis of an existing political and social system. We might tend to assume that the crisis is started by those people in society who are not powerful or wealthy. This is not always so. In many revolutions, the first criticism of the existing order often comes from people who are at the top of the political and social system. In France, for example, some of the most influential critics of the Old Regime came from wealthy nobles, such as the marquis de Lafayette, and from liberally-minded members of the clergy, such as Talleyrand. The starting point of the crisis of a regime might very well be the moment when the regime starts to lose faith in itself, not simply when other people criticise it.

This brings us to the related idea of causes. We now know, with hindsight – the ability to look back – that in France the existing government did fall, and that the revolution did create a new political and social system. It is easy to assume that the revolution was inevitable. In reality, historians still argue very heatedly about the causes of the revolution. You will need to accept that there are different theories, and that you will have to form some opinion as to which ones you believe are correct.

The second key idea is the theme of what the revolution intended to achieve. In many cases, a generation of revolutionaries will have spent quite some time saying what was wrong with the old government, and this leads them to define their ideals for a new political and social system. It is important to look at their theoretical writings, such as revolutionary pamphlets, to clarify what exactly they intended to do once they were in power. These revolutionaries also often found themselves in power quite quickly and unexpectedly, and had to translate their ideals into a real political system and set of laws. It is therefore important to study the constitutions they created to establish a system of government, and the laws they might have designed to create a new social, economic and legal system.

Sudden and complete change?

In theory, the occurrence of revolution implies that the old order will be overthrown, and that a new society will be created.

For Raymond Williams, the first and most important aspect of a revolution is political change. The Revolutions course, however, asks you to investigate far more than this. In general terms, a revolution might be expected to change a number of aspects of a given society. A revolution might change:

- political structures: how the country is governed, and who governs.
- civic and legal structures: how people's rights are defined.
- diplomatic structures: how the country relates to other countries internationally.
- social structures: how society is divided into classes, and who is dominant.
Introduction to the Revolutions Course

- *economic structures*: who owns the means of production (property).
- *cultural/psychological structures*: how people understand themselves in society.
- *gender structures*: how male and female roles are defined.

Keep these categories in mind as you start your study of the revolution, and use them to structure your notes under headings.

**Revolutions create new hopes and demands**

It is also important to remember that revolutions start with a set of ideals, aims and intentions, but the experience of revolution itself often leads people to make new demands. This is partly because a revolution is not a single event: it is a long process that occurs over a number of years, and which becomes a transforming experience in itself. The revolutionary ‘project’ often expands far beyond what the original revolutionaries dreamt of.

In **France**, the revolutionaries of 1789 originally believed that society could be changed by a three-part programme: **political reform** (creating a constitutional monarchy), **administrative reform** (creating an efficient and fair bureaucracy) and **civic reform** (abolishing privilege and creating legal equality for all citizens). As the revolution progressed, however, new demands appeared when the working classes demanded a role in politics, the women’s movement asserted women’s rights, and the slaves in French colonies demanded their rights.

**The role of crowd action and violence**

Another common aspect of the revolutionary experience is the role of protest, crowd action and collective violence. The images of the crowd taking action – such as the attack on the Bastille prison in France, or the march upon the Winter Palace in Russia – is the most common popular image of the revolutionary experience. You will need, however, to look closely at the crowd, and to understand who joined in the action, and why. You will also need to understand that the crowd was not a completely spontaneous, uncontrolled and destructive force. In France, the crowd had a long tradition of collective action, and tended to act for specific reasons and in very deliberate ways. In Russia, the popular movement was also made up of people who had had experience of collective action, whether as urban workers in factory committees, as peasants in village meetings or as soldiers and sailors meeting in their barracks.

In most revolutions, the crowd does use violence as an instrument, but this is not necessarily a sign of mindless brutality or vandalism. As you study the action of the crowd, you will become aware that the crowd used intimidation and violence in a number of deliberate ways. One was strategic: to deal with
those who wanted to stop the revolution. Another was symbolic: to show that
the old order really was gone by destroying its symbols of authority.

The resistance to the new order

A fourth important theme is the idea of resistance. Typically, revolutionaries
claim to create a new and better political and social system based on new
principles. In France, revolutionaries often spoke of their project in terms of
‘Reason’, ‘Progress’ and ‘Humanity’; the principles they defined were, they
felt, ‘Universal’. In Russia, revolutionaries such as Lenin and the Bolsheviks,
for example, referred to ‘scientific’ laws which determined how society
developed, and said that the main force driving change were ‘material’ factors.
They claimed to be carrying out the revolution for the good of ‘the proletariat’,
or working classes. Nonetheless, the revolutionary project is rarely accepted by
everybody in a society.

It is therefore important to remember that revolution often involves its
opposite: counter-revolution, which is the desire to resist, prevent or destroy the
revolutionary project from succeeding. When the counter-revolution uses
military resistance, it often results in civil war, or armed conflict within that
society. You will need to be able to define who resisted the revolution, and
why. You will also need to be able to explain what effect the counter-revolution
had on the revolutionary project, either by preventing it from achieving what it
set out to do, or by forcing the revolution to take strong measures — such as
secret police and the suspension of basic freedoms — in order to deal effectively
with an emergency situation.

This raises the question of responses of the revolutionary government to
resistance. Resistance might come first from members of the Old Regime,
especially members of the royal government, the administration, army and
church. When they call upon foreign powers for help, the situation rapidly
becomes serious. This sort of resistance is predictable, because you would
expect that those who had been powerful would not surrender their position
without a struggle. In France, the revolution faced this challenge by 1792; in
Russia, the revolution rapidly faced massive resistance in 1917 and civil war
began in 1918. It is important that you understand that revolutionary change is
often made in a situation of extreme crisis, not in the relatively calm conditions
that prevail in our own time.

How did the new order respond to resistance?

A revolutionary government finds it equally difficult to face resistance from the
very people whom it is trying to help. If the French Revolution was indeed
based on ‘Reason’, and the Russian Revolution was conducted in the name of
‘the Proletariat’, why did so many people resist them? The responses of a
revolutionary government to challenges are normally very strong, because they feel that the revolution itself is at stake. One form of response is military: the revolutionary government rapidly creates a military force (in France, the citizen armies; in Russia, the Red Army) to meet the emergency. A second response is legal: the revolutionary government will first suspend any laws which granted the freedom to meet and the freedom to speak, and will then create new and special laws to allow it to deal quickly and decisively with its enemies. When this happens, the revolution appears to have betrayed its original ideals. The third response is cultural: the revolutionary government will use many forms of culture – paintings, statues, music and song, parades and ceremonies, cartoon and posters (and, in Russia, photography and the cinema) – to convince people that the new revolutionary order is right, and that its enemies are wrong. It will also try to use the education system to create a new type of citizen who will come to adulthood already convinced of the values of the new society.

**Has the wheel come full circle?**

While we naturally tend to assume that a revolution changes everything, we will discover that this is not necessarily so. If change is an important theme, so too is continuity, that is, the continued survival of some aspects of the old system. You might like to think about whether this can also be described as a ‘revolution’ in the second sense of the word: the turning of something in a full circle until it comes back to its starting point. This second, technical meaning of revolution is hinted at in the two ‘snapshots’, or brief studies, you complete at the end of Unit 3 and Unit 4. For France, you will study the nature of the government and society created by Napoleon Bonaparte by 1804. For Russia, you will examine the government and society created by Josef Stalin by the time of the first Five Year Plan in 1928-1932. In both cases, there is a suggestion that despite the enormous upheaval of the revolution, some things have remained very much the same. Your task will be decide to what extent this is true.

**Historiography – why do the historians still argue?**

Historiography is the study of how historians have written history over a period of time. It aims to trace how historians have tried to explain events, such as a revolution, and to explain why historians differ so much in their interpretations. It is important that you remember that historiography is a part of your course of study, and that you need to have a good grasp of this aspect of revolutionary history.