



Why Russians Overthrew the Tsar in 1917

KS3 Ages 11-14 ⌚ 3 min read

What Was Life Like Under the Tsar?

Tsar Nicholas II ruled **Russia** like a king with almost total power. He didn't share decisions with ordinary people, and there was no real **democracy**. Most Russians were peasants or factory workers living in terrible poverty, while the **Tsar** and rich nobles lived in luxury.

In **1914**, Russia joined **World War One**, which was a disaster. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers died, and the war drained the country of money and food.

Why Did People Get So Angry?

By **1917**, ordinary Russians were starving. Bread was scarce and prices were sky-high. Soldiers at the front had no proper uniforms or weapons. Factory workers had no jobs because factories were making weapons instead of goods to sell.

Think of it like a school where the headteacher keeps all the money and makes terrible decisions, while students go hungry and teachers quit. Eventually, everyone gets so upset they decide to get a new headteacher.

People blamed the **Tsar** for all these problems. They also blamed his wife, **Tsarina Alexandra**, who people thought was making bad decisions while he was away fighting the war.

The Revolution Begins

In **March 1917**, workers and soldiers in the capital **Petrograd** (now St Petersburg) went on strike and protested in the streets. Soldiers refused to shoot the protesters—they joined them instead! The **Tsar** had lost control.

Think of it like a classroom where even the teacher's helpers (the soldiers) decide the teacher isn't fair, so they side with the students.

What Happened Next?

The **Tsar** was forced to give up his throne. He and his family were arrested. Later, a communist leader named **Vladimir Lenin** took over, creating a completely new type of government. This change was called the **Russian Revolution**, and it completely transformed Russia.

The Russian people didn't just want a new leader—they wanted a fairer system where they had a say in how their country was run.