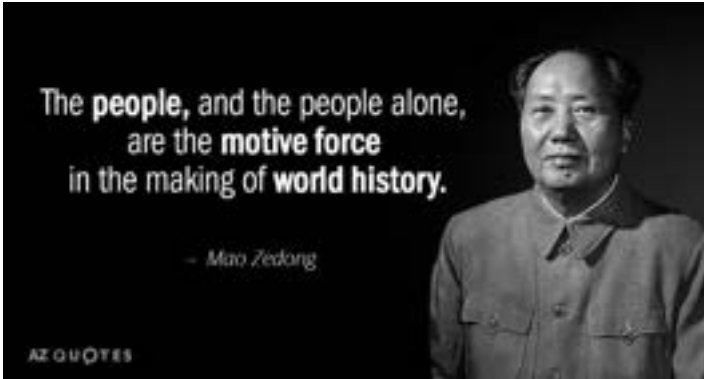


# HAUTLIEU SCHOOL HISTORY DEPARTMENT A Level Induction task

## History (Route E: Communism States in the twentieth century)

### Capitalism or Communism? You decide!



**Overview:** Both our exam modules in the first year of the A level course will be looking at two countries that attempted to set up Communist governments based on Marxist ideas. Russia's (the USSR) experiment began in 1917 and ended in 1991! Ask your parents what they remember

about the USSR. For China their experiment started in 1949 and still continues! A number of compromises have had to be made along the way to retain the one party state in modern day China. In practice it seems that Marx's ideas have been diluted and modified. We'll explore this in greater depth as part of our A level course.

#### Induction Task

**Instructions: OVERALL: Produce a 1000 word (roughly) written analytical response**

- Your answer should show evidence of precise research and critical thinking.
- You must list at the end of your piece any websites and books you've used.
- Your response should be split into the three parts shown below.



#### **PART 1: An analytical Biography on Karl Marx**

**Who was Karl Marx and why did his ideas become an attractive alternative to capitalism? (Aim for at least 500 words, use the bullet points to guide you)**

- Background & influences (Friederich Engels)
- Explain why he became critical of capitalism. Think about the industrial revolution and the problems and hardship it caused and the gaps created between the very rich and poor.
- What did he offer as an alternative? Discuss his idea of socialism and communism as a better alternative to capitalism. Are there any flaws/weaknesses to his argument? Give your opinion and back it up with evidence.
- How did he see this becoming a reality? Which particular countries did he think would be suitable?

## **PART 2: Case Studies Russia and China**

**Why did countries like Russia in 1917 and China in 1949 attempt to establish a new regime based on Marxist ideas? How successful were they in staying true to Marxist ideas in your opinion? (Aim for at least 500 words, use the bullet points to guide you)**

- Show understanding of how the conditions in each country (war, lack of confidence in the existing governments) made Marxist ideas more attractive.
- Identify the key leaders and their parties who successfully took power. (Russia, Lenin & the Bolsheviks and China, Mao & the Chinese Communist Party CCP).
- Were these countries ready to put into place a Marxist state? If not why? Draw upon examples from each country. *For example, Russian Capitalism hadn't developed fully, would Marx have therefore said the conditions in Russia were not right to launch a Communist Revolution?*
- In order to keep power did Lenin and Mao find themselves having to adapt Marxist ideas and even go back on or sacrifice some of their original aims? *For example, neither Lenin nor Mao ever stepped down from their role as leader, is that how Marx saw Communism developing long term? Or was this an adaptation?*

## **PART 3: Judgement**

**Do you think it is fair to call these countries Marxist Communist states? If not why? (Aim for at least 500 words)**

- Ensure that you consider arguments that suggest ***it is*** fair to consider either Russia or China (or both) Communist countries using specific factual examples to support.
- Conversely consider arguments that suggest ***it is NOT*** fair consider them Communist countries using specific factual examples to support.
- Reach a judgement prioritising which side of the argument you think is stronger and explain why.

**Deadline:** Hand in **first lesson in September** to your teacher.

### **Recommended research to start you off**

Try and find your own sources too from reputable websites and books from respected historians. A Level will require you to adopt an investigative approach. (Please quote any direct reference, **avoid cutting and pasting**)

**GCSE level material to get the foundations in place.**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/marx\\_karl.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/marx_karl.shtml)

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/mao\\_zedong.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/mao_zedong.shtml)

<http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/modern-world-history-1918-to-1980/china-1900-to-1976/mao-zedong/>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/lenin\\_vladimir.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/lenin_vladimir.shtml)

**A Level standard reading material**

<http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/marx/context.html> (Karl Marx)

<http://spartacus-educational.com/RUSlenin.htm>

<http://spartacus-educational.com/COLDmao.htm>

**Stretch material**

<http://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/viewpoint/why-marx-still-matters-ideological-drivers-chinese-politics>