

Task 1: The NEP and the Peasants

The main problem of the NEP was that it didn't produce enough grain to export. Industrialisation was therefore slowed down because grain was the key source of foreign currency needed to purchase foreign machinery and technology. The problem for Stalin was how to encourage peasants to produce more grain which he could then sell abroad. Fill in the table below to show how different sections of society reacted to the problem of grain procurement:

<u>Bureaucrat</u>	<i>Why is more grain needed and why isn't it reaching the markets?</i>	
<u>Government Official</u>	<i>How would you persuade more peasants to get more grain to the markets?</i>	
<u>Peasant</u>	<i>How and why would you avoid supplying more grain to the markets?</i>	

Task 2: What would you advise?

You are one of Stalin's advisers. Everyone agrees on the need for industrialisation but you have to help him decide how to carry it out. **Decide which policy you think is the better one for Stalin to follow. Give your reasons for choosing that policy and identify three criticisms you could make of the other policy.** You must take into account the circumstances at the end of the 1920s.

Policy 1	Policy 2
Carry on with the NEP policies with some modifications. In particular, increase the price of grain to encourage the peasants, especially the best farmers, to produce more.	Go all out for rapid industrialisation because time is running out. Russia needs to move towards socialism and be able to defend itself. Organise workers into 'shock brigades' to achieve higher production, and keep their wages low so that all available resources can be invested in industry.
This will give the peasants more money to spend on consumer goods, which will encourage growth in industry. This will increase employment and gradually improve wages.	Squeeze peasants hard: keep the price the state pays for grain low and tax the peasants heavily. This will provide extra money to invest in industry, and grain for export in order to buy industrial machinery.
The state will be able to procure more grain for export and for the workers. However, in the short term there will not be so much money for investment, so industrialisation will have to proceed more slowly.	If the peasants do not offer the grain for sale voluntarily, wring it out of them by force as in 1918.
Provide a programme of agricultural help, encouraging peasants to work together and share machinery, and even to join collective farms. The state will provide help with mechanisation, especially tractors, to increase grain production. Develop model farms for peasants to visit and educate them in modern agricultural methods.	Encourage peasants to work on large collective farms which can be farmed more efficiently and productively. The government will provide tractors and other mechanised equipment. This will also reduce surplus labour to go to the cities to work in the new developing industries. Collective farms will socialise the peasants.
This is the only way to avoid a return to the days of War Communism and the conflict with the peasants that had such disastrous results in 1921. Workers will benefit in the long term.	Fast industrialisation will actually help the peasants because it will produce the tractors and equipment they need.

Task 3: Which is the best way towards industrialisation?

Fill in this chart. On one side, make the case for continuing the NEP. On the other side, put the case for a more direct, forced approach:

Continuing the NEP	Ending the NEP/rapid industrialisation

Task 4: Why did Stalin make the Great Turn?

Use the information collected in your notes and the presentation to answer the following questions:

Either:

1. Write three or four paragraphs setting out the reasons why Stalin made the Great Turn. Each paragraph should make a key point and be backed up with further explanation or supporting evidence for the key point.

Or:

2. Draw/create a large annotated diagram showing the issues and debates surrounding the NEP and why Stalin and the Communist Party opted for the Five-Year Plans.

Summary - Why did Stalin make the Great Turn?

1. The NEP was not producing the sort of society that many wanted by the end of the 1920s.
2. There was a continuing debate about the NEP in the CPSU throughout the 1920s: the right-wing of the party wanted to keep it and the left-wing wanted to end it.
3. No Communists liked the outward manifestations of the NEP - the Nepmen and the strength of the private market. Nor did they like being held ransom by the peasants.
4. Urban workers and Communist Party members wanted to move forward to take the revolution on and build a socialist society.
5. The workers were suffering high unemployment rates and low wages.
6. The peasantry were starting to hold back food from the market and food shortages were serious in 1928-1929.
7. There was a war scare in 1928 that increased fears about the USSR's vulnerability to attack and made the need to produce armaments more urgent.
8. In 1928, the decision was taken to end the NEP and to embark on a massive industrialisation programme in the Five-Year Plans.
9. This has been called the Great Turn and it marked a significant shift - economic, political and cultural - in the history of the Soviet Union.