**MT5: Communist China**

**Learning Target #5: Communist China**

**Read the summary to answer questions on the next page.**

**The People's Republic of China**

Between 1946 and 1949, civil war raged in China between Nationalist and Communist forces. In October 1949, the Communists were victorious. Their leade1Mao Tse-Tung, renamed the country The People's Republic of China. The communists promised a number of changes:

• Price controls to prevent inflation

• Redistribution of land from owners to workers

• Large-scale industrial development

• A simplified system of Chinese writing, to increase literacy

It was the first time in decades that China was free of Japanese domination. Some of these changes improved life for many in China. But others were disastrous.

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**The Great Leap Forward**

One of Mao's most ambitious programs was the **Great Leap Forward** (1958), which created group farms known as **communes.** At each commune, thousands of people farmed together and lived together in dormitories.

Mao envisioned the Great Leap Forward as a new economic model-China's alternative to the industrial emphasis of Russian communism. Instead, poor planning and severe droughts brought widespread starvation. The program ended in 1960.

**The Cultural Revolution**

In 1966, Mao launched the **Cultural Revolution** (1966)-a campaign to create an equal society of peasants and workers by purging China of intellectuals, capitalists, and other alleged "counterrevolutionaries." The purge was carried out by militia units of young people, mostly teenagers, known as **Red Guards.**

Chaos followed. The Red Guards imprisoned, tortured, and executed civilians-and destroyed art, antiquities, and other materials of China's heritage. The campaign ended around the time of Mao's death in 1976.

**Tiananmen Square**

Tiananmen Square, a public plaza in the city of Beijing, has been the site of many political events-but none as well known as the protests of 1989. Students began the protests for **democratic reform,** and in the six weeks that followed were joined by more than a million Chinese from every walk of life. The government crackdown was brutal. Tanks and troops entered Beijing to suppress the protest, killing and injuring thousands of protesters.

**China transforms**

After the death of Mao, Deng Xiaping took over China and helped steer it in a new direction. The first thing Deng was increased foreign trade and sent students abroad to study and bring back new ideas. He began allowing peasants to lease/rent land and sell their crops so that they could grow their own food and make money. All of these changes helped to increase the industrial production in China resulting in an increase of capital/money coming into China. It also created distrust with the other communist nation, especially the Soviet Union.

**Answer the following question**

1. What happened to china after ww2?
2. How did Mao get the peasants to support his communist revolution?
3. What was the Great Leap forward? (describe in at least three sentences)
4. What was the cultural revolution?( describe in at least three sentences)
5. Who were the red guards and what did they do?
6. What did Deng do for China and what increased as a result of his changes?
7. Who did China mistrust?
8. What happened at Tiananmen Square?

D**irections: The following questions are based on the accompanying documents/graphs/maps/quotes. As you read and analyze (think about) each document/graph/map/quote be sure to:**

1nd - Independently read the chart, passage, and/or map

2nd- Circle words you don’t know. Predict or find the meaning of the words.

3rd- Read the chart, passage and/or map a second time with a partner, highlight information and write side notes.

4th- Answer the questions in complete sentences.

**Document 1:**

Life and Death in Shanghai, Cheng, 1986

When Li Zhen [a Chinese woman] returned to Shanghai, the city was suffering from a severe food shortage as a result of the catastrophic economic failure of the Great Leap Forward Campaign launched by Mao Zedong, in 1958. Long lines of people were forming at dawn at Shanghai police stations, waiting to apply for exit permits to leave the country. This was such an embarrassment for the Shanghai authorities. --*Life and Death in Shanghai*, Cheng, 1986

1. According to document 1, what was the effect of the Great Leap Forward on the people?

**Document 2:**

Mao Zedong, rising leader of the Chinese Communist Party, written report on the peasant movement in central China, 1927.

The present upsurge of the peasant movement is a colossal event. In a very short time, in China’s central, southern, and northern provinces, several hundred million peasants will rise like a mighty storm, like a hurricane, a force so swift and violent that no power, however great, will be able to hold it back. They will smash all the chains that bind them and rush forward along the road to liberation. They will sweep all the imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local tyrants, and evil landowners into their graves.

1. What event is being described in the above paragraph? Cite evidence from the paragraph to proof your point.
2. Why are the Chinese people on the road to liberation?

**Document 3:**

Impact of the Cultural Revolution: http://econfaculty.gmu.edu/bcaplan/museum/comfaq.htm

With the aid of Soviet advisors, Mao set up a Chinese Gulag - an empire of slave labor camps filled with poorly fed “counter-revolutionaries.” As under Stalin, the prisoners could be anyone: former landlords, better-off peasants, civil servants under Chiang’s regime, and eventually out-of-favor members of the Communist Party itself. By most

estimates, the typical slave labor camp population during Mao’s reign was between 10 and 15 million . . . Mao initially let peasants keep their land; then Mao began to seize the land that he had promised the peasants, and force them into collective farms along Stalinist lines. The job was basically complete by 1956. These collective farms seemed too individualistic to Mao, so he went one step further in 1958 and forced the peasants into “communes.” The difference was mainly that all property, not merely the land, became state property.

1. Who were the prisoners?
2. How did Mao gain control over the land?

Document 4: “Mao's Great Leap Forward 'killed 45 million in four years”, *The Independent*, April 2013

State retribution for tiny thefts, such as stealing a potato, even by a child, would include being tied up and thrown into a pond; parents were forced to bury their children alive or were doused in excrement and urine, others were set alight, or had a nose or ear cut off. One record shows how a man was branded with hot metal. People were forced to work naked in the middle of winter; 80 per cent of all the villagers in one region of a quarter of a million Chinese were banned from the official canteen because they were too old or ill to be effective workers, so were deliberately starved to death.

1. How did communist China punish its people? Cite evidence, prove your point.

Document 5:

Mr Dikötter, who has been studying Chinese rural history from 1958 to 1962, when the nation was facing a famine, compared the systematic torture, brutality, starvation and killing of Chinese peasants to the Second World War in its magnitude. At least 45 million people were worked, starved or beaten to death in China over these four years; the worldwide death toll of the Second World War was 55 million.

He argued that this devastating period of history – which has until now remained hidden – has international resonance. "It ranks alongside the gulags and the Holocaust as one of the three greatest events of the 20th century....

members of the rural farming communities were seen by the Party merely as "digits", or a faceless workforce. For those who committed any acts of disobedience, however minor, the punishments were huge.

1. What were the results of the Great Leap forward?

Write a summary describing how communism, under the direction of Mao, affected China and the people. Be sure to describe the great leap forward and the Cultural Revolution.

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