

History 12
Block: _____

Name: _____

The Great Leap Forward 1958-1962 (China's Second Five-Year Plan)

Purpose: Turn the People's Republic of China (PRC) into a modern industrial state as soon as possible. They would "leap" many of the stages advanced nations went through, and instead would jump from an agricultural nation to an industrial nation.

Reasoning: By revolutionizing China's industry and agriculture they could catch up and overtake major nations (Britain and the United States).

Context: Mao made the announcement while in the Soviet Union, and may have been trying to establish a Chinese path to communism that did not blindly follow the Soviet model.

Method: The dedicated efforts of the Chinese people would push China from a rural agricultural nation to an urban, industrial one.

Harness China's greatest resource, its people.

Make great advances in two areas "General Steel" and "General Grain":

1. Agriculture: Collectivised peasants working in communes would produce enough a surplus to sell abroad to raise money for the expansion of Chinese industry.
2. Industry: with their own hands workers would create a modern industrial economy to compete with the United States and the Soviet Union.

Industry:

- Emphasis on Heavy Industry; scale of project more important than economic value
- "Emperor of the Blue Ants" span bridges, canals and dams all done with bare hands (e.g. Tiananmen Square 100 acre, larger than Red Square)
- Backyard furnaces: promoted communal activity, poor quality steel
- Complete state control of wages, prices, and targets.

Criticisms:

- Not really planned at all, more like projections made to impress Mao. Targets and quotas were set and reset, not based on sound economic analysis.
- China lacked technical skills, managerial know-how, efficiently run factories and a proper transport system and the inability to turn raw materials into consumer goods
- Lack of coordinated planning across the nation
- Mao refused to accept criticism for the failures, instead blamed them on sabotage and counter-revolutionaries

Agriculture:

Methods:

- Agriculture was an important complement to industrialisation

- Forced the peasantry into forming 750,000 **collectives** because it freed up workers for the more important priority, industry. Also, the CCP believed the peasants were overeating and having larger families, and less food was making its way to the cities.
- In the Great Leap Forward the CCP urged families to go from 750,000 collectives to 70,000 communes. Each commune was made up of 750,000 brigades, and each brigade was made up of 200 households.
- PRC controlled the communes including farming methods, sale and distribution of produce, and setting of prices.
- Private farming was not allowed, and peasants needed internal passports to travel from one commune to another.
- Chinese believed in "Lysenkoism" a Soviet scientist who believed he could increase crop yields by 16 times. Crazy methods. (e.g. Sparrowcide)
- Prison camps and labour camps for any "rightists" who opposed the agricultural laws.
- Cadres and production officials reported all production targets were being met, which led to more starvation as their quotas were taken by the state.

Results

- Led to the greatest famine in Chinese history. 50 million starved to death (Shandong 7.5 million, Anhui 8 million, Henan 7.8 million, Sichuan 9 million, Qinghai 1 million, Tibet 1 million).
- In 1962 demonstrations against the famine and the communes spread throughout China and the government prepared to impose martial law.
- Mao refused to take the blame for the famine, he blamed it on peasants hoarding grain, mistakes by local officials in carrying out their orders, and bad weather from 58-61 that caused droughts and floods.
- In 1962 Mao withdrew from political decision making and instructed President Liu Shaoqui and CCP General Secretary Deng Xiaoping to solve the starvation crisis which they did by allowing private farming and markets to operate.

Assignment: *Was the Great Leap Forward a success or a failure?*

What conditions would have to be met in order for an economic plan like the Great Leap Forward to be considered a success?

- Create a T-Chart that looks at both sides of the issue.
- Include as many arguments as possible on each side of the debate, and support your arguments with explanations and evidence from your textbook and information sheets.

Great Leap Forward Was a Success	Great Leap Forward was a Failure
• Include as many fully explained arguments as possible supported by evidence	• Include as many fully explained arguments as possible supported by evidence

Marking Rubric

Categories	Incomplete/Does Not Meet Expectations 1	Approaching Expectations 2	Meeting Expectations 3	Exceeding Expectations 4
Important Arguments That Explain why the Great Leap Forward Was a Success Are Included	-Many arguments about the success of the GLF are not included	-Some of the arguments about the success of the GLF are not included	-Most of the arguments about the success of the GLF are included, and fully described	-All of the arguments about the success of the GLF are included
Important Arguments That Explain why the Great Leap Forward Was a Failure Are Included	-Many arguments about the failure of the GLF are not included	-Some arguments about the failure of the GLF are not included	-Most of the arguments about the failure of the GLF are included	-All of the arguments about the failure of the GLF are included
Student Developed Sophisticated Criteria That Helped Make A Reasoned Judgment About What Would Make An Economic Plan Successful	-No criteria is created	-Criteria is developed but may be too simple or too few criteria are developed to help determine if the GLF was a success or failure	-Most of the criteria created helps decide if the GLF was a success, but some simplistic criteria is included	-Criteria created is highly sophisticated and helps student make a reasonable decision about whether the GLF was a success or a failure
Arguments Are Fully Explained and Supported by Relevant and Accurate Evidence	-Arguments are not explained or supported by relevant and accurate evidence	-Several of the arguments are not fully explained, or lack relevant and accurate supporting evidence	-Most of the arguments are fully explained and include relevant and accurate supporting evidence	-Arguments are fully explained and include relevant and accurate supporting evidence

Table 3.1: Production under the second Five-Year Plan

<i>Industrial production</i>	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964
Coal (millions of tonnes)	131	230	290	270	180	180	190	200
Steel (millions of tonnes)	5.4	8	10	13	8	8	9	10
Oil (millions of barrels)	1.5	2.3	3.7	4.5	4.5	5.3	5.9	7
Chemical fertilisers (millions of tonnes)	0.8	1.4	2.0	2.5	1.4	2.1	3.0	3.6
Cotton cloth (billions of metres)	5.0	5.7	7.5	6.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	4.0

Table 3.2: Production of manufactured goods

<i>To an index of 100</i>	1959	1960	1961	1962
Light industrial	100	91.2	78.4	70.0
Heavy industrial	100	90.0	66.4	44.2

Table 3.3: China's agricultural record 1952-62

<i>Year</i>	<i>Grain production (millions of tonnes)</i>	<i>Meat production (millions of tonnes)</i>	<i>Index of gross output value of agriculture</i>
1952	163.9	3.4	100.0
1953	166.8	3.8	103.1
1954	169.5	3.9	106.6
1955	183.9	3.3	114.7
1956	192.8	3.4	120.5
1957	195.1	4.0	124.8
1958	200.0	4.3	127.8
1959	170.0	2.6	110.4
1960	143.5	1.3	96.4
1961	147.5	1.2	94.1
1962	160.0	1.9	99.9

What trends in the quantity of food production can be deduced from the table? What clues does the table provide to the character of the famine that afflicted China in this period?

