

Pre-Sixth Day work and summer reading

QEGS History Department

Unit 1: Russia, 1917-1991: From Lenin to Yeltsin

Unit 2: Mao's China, 1949-76

Essential reading:

Unit 1: Russia in revolution –in this booklet

Unit 2: Imperial China and the Chinese revolution – in this booklet. Introduction to Chinese History – in this booklet.

Recommended reading:

Unit 1: “A people’s tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891-1924” by Orlando Figes

Synopsis: Vast in scope, based on exhaustive original research, and written with passion, narrative skill and human sympathy, *A People's Tragedy* is the definitive account of the Russian Revolution for a new generation. It has won the Wolfson History Prize, the WH Smith Literary Award, and the Longman/*History Today* Book of the Year Award.

Unit 2: “Wild Swans: Three daughters of China” by Jung Chang

Synopsis: Few books have had such an impact as *Wild Swans*: a popular bestseller which has sold more than 13 million copies and a critically acclaimed history of China; a tragic tale of nightmarish cruelty and an uplifting story of bravery and survival.

Through the story of three generations of women in her own family – the grandmother given to the warlord as a concubine, the Communist mother and the daughter herself – Jung Chang reveals the epic history of China's twentieth century.

Breath-taking in its scope, unforgettable in its descriptions, this is a masterpiece which is extraordinary in every way.