

SWINGOMETER

Stalin's Economic Policies

This revision activity works best if you do it with a friend, and talk about it as you do it.

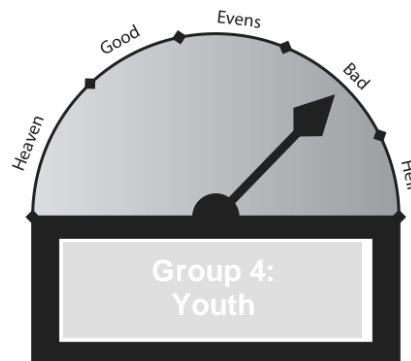
Life under Stalin was not the same for everyone in Russia – different people had different experiences to others, so it is difficult to say how Stalin's changes 'affected Russians' in a general sense.

This activity will help you appreciate whether life got better or worse in Stalin's Russia.

Print off the sheets, and cut out the cards.

Using the large Swingometer, take one of the grey 'group' cards and place it on the scale (as the example on the right).

Then select all the 'experience cards' that might apply to that group, and place them round the scale, in an appropriate position, depending on whether that experience would have been 'heaven', 'good', 'evens' (indifferent), 'bad' or 'hell' for that group of people. Debate your choices with others.

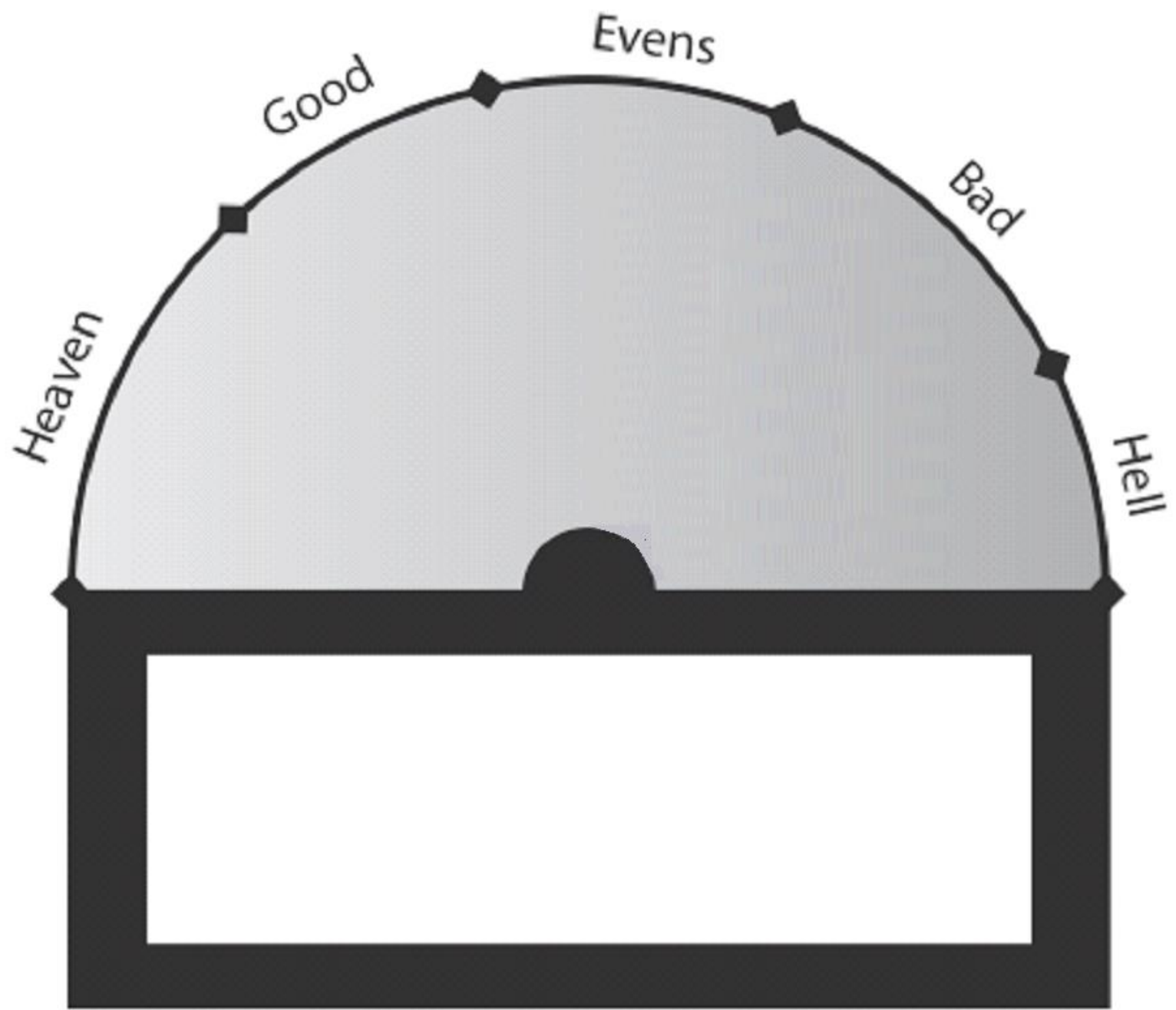


When you have placed all the cards, come to a decision on where you would place the 'swingometer' – on how good life was for that group overall.

Then do the same for the other groups.

Finish by composing a statement about 'The quality of life experience in Stalin's Russia'.

Group 1: Apparatchiks	Group 4: Women and families
Group 2: Industrial workers	Group 5: Pioneers
Group 3: Peasants	Group 6: Opponents



<p>Experience: Farming was run by government officials to meet government targets</p>	<p>Experience: 90% of kolkhoz production was taken by the government</p>	<p>Experience: Every kolkhoz had a motor tractor station</p>
<p>Experience: Russification destroyed national identity</p>	<p>Experience: The Christian and Muslim religions were persecuted</p>	<p>Experience: Divorce was made more difficult and abortion abolished</p>
<p>Experience: 1939: 90% of peasants lived on one of 250,000 kolkhoz or 4000 state farms</p>	<p>Experience: In 1937, 97 million tonnes of grain were produced <i>plus</i> cash crops for export</p>	<p>Experience: 17 million peasants left the countryside to work in the towns, 1928–1937</p>
<p>Experience: There was an increase of alcoholism and crime</p>	<p>Experience: Women were accepted as equals – sent to universities; became doctors; got promoted</p>	<p>Experience: In 1937, 40% of industrial workers and 72% of health workers were women</p>
<p>Experience: Foreign experts and engineers were called in</p>	<p>Experience: Lazy workers and strikers could be shot</p>	<p>Experience: 'Stakhanovites' won medals</p>
<p>Experience: Government officials on the kolkhoz often knew little about farming</p>	<p>Experience: Medals were awarded to women who had more than ten children</p>	<p>Experience: Many poor peasants approved of the massacre of the kulaks</p>
<p>Experience: For projects such as dams or canals, slave labour from the Gulag was used</p>	<p>Experience: The first two 5-Year Plans concentrated on heavy industry</p>	<p>Experience: The Third 5-Year Plan, 1937, promised consumer goods and better housing</p>
<p>Experience: The Moscow underground, Dniepir Dam and the Belomor Canal</p>	<p>Experience: 100,000 people died building the Belomor Canal</p>	<p>Experience: No improvement in standard of living – wages fell</p>

<p>Experience: Much of the modernisation was carried out by labourers from the Gulag</p>	<p>Experience: Workers were bombarded with propaganda</p>	<p>Experience: Atmosphere of terror – informants</p>
<p>Experience: There was no unemployment</p>	<p>Experience: Higher wages for elite workers and apparatchiks</p>	<p>Experience: Perks such as better housing, holidays and special shops for elite workers</p>
<p>Experience: 1938: planners changed the targets to armaments</p>	<p>Experience: Increased production 1928–1937 (e.g. coal four-fold, electricity seven-fold)</p>	<p>Experience: Towns grew, including new industrial centres such as Magnitogorsk</p>
<p>Experience: Industrial housing was overcrowded and rundown</p>	<p>Experience: Food shortages in the towns, especially in the mid-1930s</p>	<p>Experience: Shortages of consumer goods such as shoes</p>
<p>Experience: The number of animals fell, 1928–1937</p>	<p>Experience: By 1940, the USSR was the world's second-biggest economy</p>	<p>Experience: Production targets for every industry, region, factory, foreman and worker</p>
<p>Experience: All children received a free education; literacy had increased to 87% by 1939</p>	<p>Experience: Free universities and training schemes</p>	<p>Experience: Free health care – by 1940 more doctors per person than Britain</p>
<p>Experience: 1928: Stalin restarted forced seizures of grain</p>	<p>Experience: 5 million kulaks were sent to the Gulag</p>	<p>Experience: 1933: there was a famine in the Ukraine (5 million people died)</p>
<p>Experience: The <i>Yezhovshina</i>, Purges and Show Trials</p>	<p>Experience: Censorship and the control of culture (including the cult of Stalin)</p>	<p>Experience: Indoctrination and propaganda</p>