

# Vocabulary Cards

Underpinning the era covered in the biography  
*Nina Kosterina: A Young Communist in Stalinist Russia*  
By Jennifer Phillips



# What is an *Activ*?

# Activ

- It means activist
- After the Russian revolution, the new government focused on how to create “little activists” among the country’s children
- Their hopes? That children would:
  - Help build a society of citizens who embraced Communism and shunned religions
  - Challenge bureaucracy and corruption
  - Know how to read and write
  - Focus on community instead of individual needs

What does *Bolshevik* mean?

# Bolshevik

- “One of the Majority”
- A term used by Vladimir Lenin and the group in the Russian Social-Democratic Workers’ Party that seized control of the government in 1917
- Eventually, the Bolsheviks changed their name to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

# What is *Censorship*?

# Censorship

- Restrictions on the information that citizens can access

How Would You Define *Communism*?



# Communism

- A political and economic system in which property is owned by the state or community
- All citizens are supposed to share in the common wealth, more or less according to their need

# What is a *Gulag*?

# Gulag

- The type of Russian labor camp used to imprison criminals and political enemies
- Gulag is an acronym for the Russian words, Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps

What does *Komsomol* mean?

# Komsomol

- The Young Communist League
- The Communists organized the Komsomol in 1918 to bring together different youth organizations involved in the Russian Revolution
- It had members from ages 14 to 28 trained to spread Communist teachings and prepare for future membership in the Communist Party
- When Communism collapsed in the Soviet Union, so did the Komsomol - it disbanded in 1991

# Who Was *Vladimir Lenin*?

# Vladimir Lenin

- Bolshevik leader of the Russian revolution of 1917 that overthrew the monarchy and established a people's government
- Strong believer in socialism, yet allowed certain anti-socialist economic policies in an attempt to provide food and jobs for citizens
  - This angered other leaders, such as Joseph Stalin, who began to challenge his power
- He died in 1924 after a series of strokes

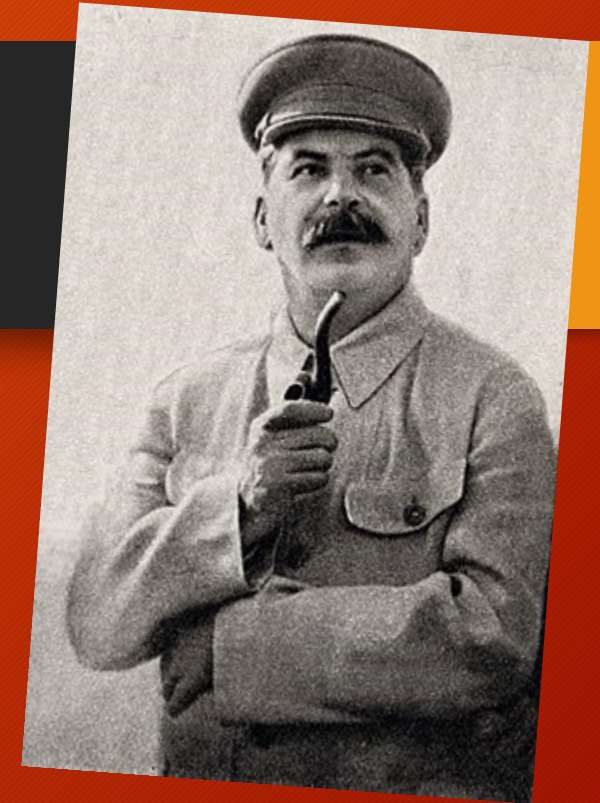


# Who Was *Joseph Stalin*?



# Joseph Stalin

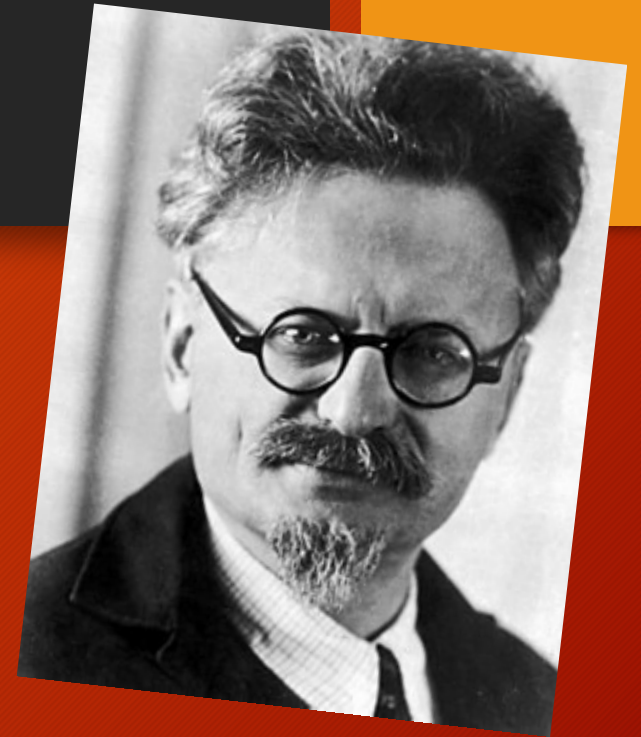
- Instrumental leader in the Russian revolution to overthrow the monarchy and establish a people's government
- Began to challenge the leadership of Vladimir Lenin and took control of the new Communist government after Lenin's death in 1924
- Ruled Russia with an iron fist as a fear-driven police state until 1953



# Who Was *Leon Trotsky*?

# Leon Trotsky

- Considered a key thinker behind the Bolshevik revolution who worked to put Marxist beliefs into place through the new government
- Fell out of favor when he began criticizing Joseph Stalin's evolution to a dictatorship
- Arrested and exiled in 1928
- People suspected of supporting him were known as Trotskyites and either killed or imprisoned
- Continued to criticize Stalin from afar, was convicted of treason and then assassinated in Mexico in 1940



What does *USSR* mean?

# USSR

- The organization of separate Russia and Baltic states in 1922 into one country called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or Soviet Union
- Its territory was the largest in the world, stretching from the Baltic and Black seas to the Pacific Ocean
- In its final years, it consisted of 15 Soviet Socialist Republics
- By December 1991, the USSR had virtually ceased to exist as the government structure came apart and several states began declaring their independence

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Visit for more background on Nina Kosterina and her era  
Suggest other vocabulary terms or materials you would find helpful!

Happy Learning!