

# Explain it!

## The Bolshevik coup of October/November 1917

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

In your GCSE, you may be asked to 'explain' an event or situation; for example:

<b>Why was the Provisional Government weak?</b>	<b>How did the Provisional Government fail to solve its problems?</b>
<b>How did the war help to undermine the Provisional Government?</b>	<b>How did poverty help to undermine the Provisional Government?</b>
<b>How did giving people freedom help to undermine the Provisional Government?</b>	<b>Why did the Bolsheviks grow more powerful from March to November 1917?</b>
<b>Why did the Bolsheviks grow more popular from March to November 1917?</b>	<b>How did Lenin help the Bolsheviks rise to power from March to November 1917?</b>
<b>How did the Bolsheviks seize power in November 1917?</b>	<b>Why were the Bolsheviks able to take over the government in November 1917?</b>

You answer such questions by thinking of 'reasons' why (or 'ways' how), evidencing them with facts, then explaining HOW that reason produced the outcome.

Following is a table of 44 facts about the Bolshevik rise to power, March- November 1917. Cut up all the cards.

- 1 Put each of the ten grey 'explain cards' in the middle of a table, or use Bluetack to stick it to a whiteboard.
- 2 From the 44 facts, find those you might cite in your answer – for each fact you choose, explain its significance to the question.
- 3 Use the facts you have chosen to construct an answer which *explains* the question.

2 million Bolsheviks by August 1917	14 March 1917	7 November 1917	Abolition of the death penalty
'All power to the Soviets'	An attempted Bolshevik Revolution failed (July 1917)	<i>Aurora</i>	Bolsheviks gained control of the Petrograd Soviet (September 1917)
Congress of Soviets	'Dual Government'	Efficient Bolshevik party organisation	Food shortages in the towns
Free elections set for 25 November 1917	Freedom of the press	Harvest failures	Inflation
Kerensky justice minister	Kornilov's rebellion (August 1917)	Lenin was in hiding in Finland	Lenin was the figurehead and accepted leader
Lenin's <i>April Theses</i>	Lvov resigned and Kerensky took over (July 1917)	Mutiny at the Kronstadt naval base (May 1917)	Opposition from the Communists and the Social Revolutionaries
Order No. 1 (12 March 1917)	'Peace, Bread, Land'	Peasants were demanding to own their own land	Petrograd Soviet
<i>Pravda</i>	Prince Lvov prime minister	Rationing failed to end the food shortages	Red Guards
Red Guards took over key buildings (6 November 1917)	Release of all political prisoners	Right to strike	Splits between Kadets and Mensheviks
The 'June Offensive' failed disastrously	The Germans smuggled Lenin back to Russia (April 1917)	The government forcibly gave the land back to the nobles	The Petrograd garrison refused to go to the front (3 November 1917)
Trotsky led the coup of 6/7 November	Vote for all men and women over 21	Weak industrial economy	Winter Palace