

# Peter the great assignment

[History](#)



Peter the Great ruled Russia in the 17th and 18th centuries after a long time of bad rulers in Russia. They were once ruled mostly by barbarians, but he wanted to westernize Russia, and open a window to the west. It was tough bringing Russia out of a time of religious rule and poverty. He ended up making Russia one of the greatest empires of the time by improving Russia's army and navy, gaining a lot of land, and bringing major intellectual changes. They were a major Eurasian power. Peter really took Russia out of a major dark age. The people were so attached to the Russian Orthodox Church that they didn't know what to do without it.

The former tsars also took money from the people, and only tried to benefit themselves, and not the people. He had to create a lot of things, not just improve. He needed to give people more of a sense of freedom, without the church. He aimed to give the people a lot more to live for. He brought new things from other nations, educated people, taught them skills to make money, and gave them independence from the Russian Orthodox Church (Greenblatt 32). Peter the Great changed the overall composure of Russia with his military, education and geographical changes and also westernization.

Peter the Great made a lot of army and navy improvements. There was completely no navy. He created Russia's first naval base and commanded for a full size navy within eighteen months (Greenblatt 24). He also needed people to be educated in the strategies and operations of the navy. He couldn't just have an army without any knowledge of it. He sent 50 noble families to Venice, Holland, and England to study shipbuilding, navigation, and seamanship (Greenblatt 26). Peter also went himself to Western Europe

to learn about navy tactics, and to get technicians and shipbuilders to help his navy (Greenblatt 30).

To make a good navy he also wanted to stop the dependence on foreign trade to build and supply his navy. He trained people in Russia to build grenades, make gunpowder, bullets and bombs. There were still certain supplies that had to be imported but this was a major improvement from previous complete dependence. He also called for other supplies that couldn't be imported: weapons that were built to have an advantage in Russia's harsh, icy and snowy conditions (Hughes 72). To do all this he needed money. Because skills were being taught to be good at certain jobs, people were making money.

So, he taxed the people to get money for military supplies, and the building of canals and roads for better military communications. There was also a large draft of peasants into the military (Crowley). The most controversial action Peter the Great took was the shaving of soldiers heads. This went against the laws of the Russian Orthodox Church (Greenblatt 32). Peter did not care about the church any more because he wanted his soldiers to have stealth and the most advantages they could in combat. I believe that improving Russia's army, and creating a Russian military was Peter the Great's most fantastic accomplishment.

He brought it up from nothing and made Russia's military one of the most powerful military's in the world. He taught people military knowledge when no one wanted to learn. The concept of military improvement goes directly to proving my thesis because he really did improve the size and structure of

Russia's military. Russia expanded greatly in Peter the Great's era, mainly because of his military improvements. He first expanded south, but not much. He wanted to just obtain one main port to get trade started. His main goal was in the north west though.

He wanted control of Sweden's main ports in the Baltic Sea. Russia was lacking more main ports for trade and commerce. To do this, he had to start The Great Northern War against Sweden (Hughes 27). With Russia's improvements in the military, Peter thought this wasn't going to be a very hard war, but he was wrong. Sweden didn't want give up their land, but Peter really wanted the land. He really wanted to get the ports on the Baltic Sea. He also was suspected to have wanted control of Poland, but no one could understand why he wanted control of such a small, barely blossoming nation.

Sweden was also Russia's main threat, and he wanted to stop them from expanding incase of anything they could do to hurt Russia in the future (Hughes 27). A quote by Peter the Great explains his look on how he changes Russia " I have a great bundle of grain, but I have no mill and there is not enough water close to build one. But there is water enough distance if only I shall have time to build a canal, but the length of my life is uncertain. Therefore I build the mill first and have only given order to build the canal, which will better force my successors to bring water. " (Woodlock).

It didn't seem to me that Peter the Great gained a lot of land. Russia was already great in size, but he did gain very vital land and ports. Even though Russia was great in size, it lacked major ports and fertile land before Peter

expanded. Russia really needed the ports, and Peter obtained them. This directly links to my thesis because he made Russia a major trading and more of an agricultural nation because of the land he gained. A lot of intellectual changes were brought to Russia under Peter the Great's rule. Peter wanted his military educated and also the common people educated.

He saw that in Western Europe, knowledge of science, math, engineering and navigation was essential to building a good army as well as a nation as a whole. He created the School of Navigation and Maths in Moscow. He also created the School of Medicine, School of Engineering, and the School of Science. He also created a newspaper called the Vedomosti to educate the public about current events. He also sent many young men to Western Europe to see and understand how life was in nations that had education (Trueman). Peter understood the importance of education unlike many of the people in his nation.

He even wanted to further educate himself so he could stay ahead of the game. He studied a lot about the oceans and ships because he really liked the concept. He was a ship builder when he was younger and never lost the love for the sea. He made his own instructions on learning navigation for his people: 1. Learn how to draw plans and charts and how to use the compass and other naval indicators. 2. Learn how to navigate a vessel in battle as well as in simple maneuver, and learn how use all appropriate tools and instruments: namely sails, ropes, and oars, and like matters, on row boats and other vessels. 3.

Discover as much as possible on how to put ships to sea during a naval battle. Obtain foreign naval officers written statements, bearing their signatures and seals, of how adequately you are prepared for naval duties. 4. If, upon his return, anyone wished to relieve from the Tsar favors, for himself, he should learn, in addition to the above enumerated instructions, how to construct these vessels abroad which he would like to demonstrate his skills (Oliva). I believe that Peter was one of the smartest men because of his knowledge of the importance of education. Education was badly missing from Russia and he did all he could to educate the people. This very much supports my thesis because it shows his want for the education and intellect of the people in Russia. My thesis could be disproved by seeing how Peter the Great hurt Russia. Peter heavily taxed the people. A lot of people tried to flee Russia because of the increased taxes, but he stopped them by making the whole town increase for the loss of the person. There were also a lot of serfs in Russia who were very poor and needing of help. Russia was in great poverty, but Peter tried to help it, but then he made the taxes which didn't at all help the situation.

He was also an absolute ruler. Though he wants as bad as most absolute rulers, he still had total control and took money just for himself (Crowley). A townsman living as a serf in Russia during the time of Peter the Great said, " My family and I could barely pay the taxes that were put on us, but we had no choice but to pay them. It was bad before he came, but now it is even worse for me and many others. " (Crowley). Peter did take many taxes, but it was strictly for the betterment of Russia. He used the tax money to pay for military supplies and public buildings.

He didn't take any of it for himself. Even though he might have made life worse for some people, he did help protect them and eventually give them better lives. He was an absolute ruler of Russia, but there wasn't really any other nation that didn't have one. If I had to choose who was one of the best and fairest absolute ruler, it would have to be Peter the Great. Peter the Great really changed the whole view of Russia at the time. He brought the people great things. He changed the army and navy, educated the people, and gained land. He really brought Russia out of a major dark age with a bang.

Peter the Great's impact on world history is very important because it made Russia a great world nation. They were a force to be reckoned with after he made changes. It really made eastern Europe and northern Asia and notable region. Crowley, Robert. "Peter the Great." Elibrary. 12 Jan. 1996. 15 May 2007 [http://elibrary.bigchalk.com/libweb/elib/do/document?urn=urn](http://elibrary.bigchalk.com/libweb/elib/do/document?urn=urn%3Abigchalk%3AUS%3BBCLib%3Bdocument%3B127319397&rendition=)

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This source helped me because it gave me information for my counterargument. I couldn't find much for it, but this book had some good information on some of the bad things about Peter the Great.

It also gave me a primary source about a person living under the rule of Peter the Great and their struggles. Greenblatt, Miriam. Peter the Great and Tsarist Russia. Tarrytown, New York: Benchmark Books, 2000 This source helped me a lot because it gave me a lot of information on Peter the Great's earlier life. It informed me on his childhood and until he grew up into a man and great leader. It helped me with the background information for my essay. Hughes, Lindsey. Russia in the Age of Peter the Great. Great Britain: <https://assignbuster.com/peter-the-great-assignment/>

St Edmunds Bury Press, 1998. This source gave me good information on some of the military strategies and changed better made.

It also gave me a lot of information about the Great Northern War. This source explained about why Peter wanted to stop Sweden and gain ports in the war. Oliva, Jay. Peter the Great. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc. , 1970. This source gave me a primary document which was Peter the Great's instruction on learning navigation. This was a very good primary source because it showed how he like navigation and how he help teach his people. Trueman, Chris. " Peter the Great. " History Learning Site. 19 Sept. 2002. 16 May 2007 [http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/peter\\_the\\_great2.htm](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/peter_the_great2.htm).

This source gave me information on how Peter the Great wanted to educate his people. It told me about the learning facilities and many other things Peter created to help educate his country. Woodlock, Clyde. " Peter the Great. " History Resource Center. 4 Apr. 1994. 15 May 2007 <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/History/hits?r=d=true&gal==1&10=dR=0=19=1&K1616000474=false&new44376=true&RK=1=peter+the+great>

This source gave me a primary source. The source was about his approach toward the leading of his country. It was kind of a metaphor he used to explain it.