

DBQ 22: TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHINA**PART
A**

The following documents provide information about China under the leadership of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. Examine each document carefully. In the space provided, answer the question or questions that follow each document.

Document 1

The following quotations are adapted from Mao Zedong's *Little Red Book* (1964).

A revolution is not a dinner party, or painting a picture; it cannot be leisurely, gentle, kind, courteous, and restrained. A revolution is an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.

Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

Just because we have won a victory, we must never relax our vigilance [watchfulness] against the mad plots for revenge by the imperialists.

According to these quotations from Mao Zedong, what were his goals and methods?

Document 2

In this excerpt, Nien Cheng describes the experience of a friend during the Great Leap Forward.

When Li Zhen [a Chinese teacher and friend of the author] returned to Shanghai, the city was suffering from a severe food shortage as a result of the catastrophic economic failure of the Great Leap Forward Campaign launched by Mao Zedong in 1958. Long lines of people were forming at dawn at Shanghai police stations, waiting to apply for exit permits to leave the country. This was such an embarrassment for the Shanghai authorities that they viewed Li Zhen's return from affluent Hong Kong to starving Shanghai as an opportunity for propaganda.

Source: Nien Cheng, *Life and Death In Shanghai*, Grove Press, 1987 (adapted)

What was the effect of the Great Leap Forward on the people? _____

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Document 3

This excerpt from Nien Cheng describes the beginning of Mao's Cultural Revolution.

Next day, I read in the newspaper that on August 18 Mao Zedong had reviewed the first contingent of the Red Guards in Beijing. . . . His special message to the Red Guards was to carry the torch of the Cultural Revolution to the far corners of China and to pursue the purpose of the Revolution to the very end. Young people all over China received the message from the man they had been brought up to worship as a call to arms. At the early stage of the Cultural Revolution the declared target was still only the "capitalist class," and it was there that the Red Guards focused their attack.

Source: Nien Cheng, *Life and Death In Shanghai*, Grove Press, 1987 (adapted)

How did the Red Guards view Mao? _____

What was Mao's message to the Red Guards? _____

Who was the target of the Cultural Revolution in the beginning? _____

Document 4

This adapted excerpt describes the Cultural Revolution in China.

The Cultural Revolution began with a power struggle. Mao's leadership had been challenged by the Communist Party Congress; in May 1966 he struck back. He attacked moderates for lacking zeal, then targeted his rivals in the leadership. He called on millions of patriotic youths to form the Red Guards to "bombard the headquarters" of government and dislodge his opponents. What followed was a reign of terror. Marauding Red Guards hunted down "class enemies," smashed Buddhist temples and other so-called symbols of feudalism and effectively paralyzed China's government. The country sank close to civil war and worse.

Source: George Wehrfrite, "The Swing Pendulum," *Newsweek*, March 6, 1996

What were Mao's goals during the Cultural Revolution? _____

(continued)

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What was the impact of the Cultural Revolution on China? _____

Document 5

This excerpt offers one view of Mao.

Mao was a TOTAL revolutionary. He didn't want to make peace with the system of feudalism and imperialism responsible for the suffering of the people. . . . Mao was a real communist: He fought for a world without classes and without oppressors. . . . He led the masses to wage armed struggle, to overthrow the system, and put the common people in charge of society. . . . Mao led the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution which spread this truth to every corner of the world: It is right to rebel against reaction! . . . With Mao's leadership, people at the bottom in China became conscious revolutionizers of society. All kinds of new things were accomplished—things impossible under capitalism. In factories, hospitals, schools, farms, and in the arts—the masses developed new socialist ways of doing things and relating to each other. Never before in history did the masses of working people have so much power to change the world.

Source: "Mao Tse-tung: The Greatest Revolutionary of Our Time," Revolutionary Worker Online, <http://rwor.org/a/china/mao.htm> (adapted)

According to this selection, how should Mao be viewed in history? Why?

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Document 6

This cartoon compares Mao and Deng.



Source: Brian Duffy, *The Des Moines Register*, 1985

According to the cartoon, how did the policies of Mao and Deng differ?

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Document 7

These quotations are attributed to Chinese Communist leader, Deng Xiaoping.

It doesn't matter whether the cat is black or white, so long as it catches mice.
To get rich is glorious.
If you open the window, some flies naturally get in.

According to these quotations, what was Deng's economic policy? _____

Document 8

This excerpt describing China's booming coastal provinces and economically depressed rural areas provides insight into the impact of both Mao and Deng on China.

The party (Mao's Communist) offered an ideology open to all citizens. Yet the regime's own blunders have only deepened China's underlying fissures. The fanaticism of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) alienated ethnic minorities. The government misallocated resources to capital-intensive heavy industries and neglected agriculture. . . . State planning restricted the free flow of labor and capital, either across regions or from the countryside to cities. These policies kept people poor and doubled regional income disparities from 1952 to 1978.

At first the reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping reversed this trend. With market forces, not the government, channeling people and money, income disparities fell by 20% between 1979 and 1991. But Deng himself undermined this process with his famous call to "let some get rich first." In practice, this meant giving priority to the coast Private enterprise was encouraged. Foreign investors arrived en masse, pouring more than \$300 billion into China in the 1990s. Within a decade the entire eastern seaboard had been transformed. At the same time, industrial decay spread throughout the northeast as Beijing dragged its heels on reforming state-owned enterprises. Progress in large agrarian provinces stalled as farmers could squeeze no more out of their land . . . By 1999, regional inequalities had returned to 1978 levels.

Source: Minxin Pei, *Newsweek International*, October 28, 2002 (adapted)

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According to paragraph 1, what was Mao's impact on China? _____

According to paragraph 2, how did Deng benefit and hurt China? _____

**PART
B**

Which man should be most honored in modern Chinese history, Mao Zedong or Deng Xiaoping? To answer this question, take the following steps:

- Describe the social, economic, and political goals and policies of both Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.
- Evaluate the impact each man had on China.
- Take a position in answer to the question, for a debate or a seminar. Explain your rationale.