

OPENING THE RED DOOR

Curriculum Guides – Discussion Questions



LEADER'S GUIDE

Political Realities and Strategic Obstacles

1. What domestic events in Russia began to change the openness to the West and the desire to cooperate as friends and possibly as allies?
 - pp. 1-7 – Gorbachev's desire for reform
 - pp. 32-33 – Unprecedented educational cooperation
 - pp. 41-45 – Desire to reform business/economics disciplines
2. What were some of the first indications that Russia's remarkable freedom of religion law of October 1990 was going to be changed and non-Orthodox churches would face discrimination?
 - p. 97 – Opposition pressures Yeltsin to amend the law
 - p. 133 – Yeltsin signs the amended religious freedom law
3. U.S. policymakers were firm in their commitment to Boris Yeltsin, especially during his presidential election campaign in 1996. Why did this support continue as his administration evolved into a "mafia state" as described by the U. S. Embassy in Moscow?
 - p. 52 – Emergence of Yeltsin
 - pp. 86-88 – US support despite Yeltsin's failures
 - p. 139 – Election of 1996 – substantial US support – fear of Communist Party re-emergence
 - pp. 245-226 – Lack of clarity about who leads democratic forces in Russia
4. Relations between the U.S. and Russia appeared to be promising between the newly elected presidents of both countries in 2000. When did this bilateral relationship begin to deteriorate? Was the growing hostility between these two countries generated by Moscow or were there mistakes made by the U.S. government that also contributed to this tension?

- pp. 181-182 – Domestic terrorism in Russia
5. There appeared to be hope that the newly elected presidents of Russia (Dmitry Medvedev) and the U.S. (Barack Obama) in 2008 could improve the relationship between these two countries? Why didn't this happen?
 - pp. 194-5 – Effort to modify relations btw US & Russia
 6. What were the charges made against the U.S. by the Putin administration and could these accusations have been dealt with through diplomatic negotiations?
 - pp. 183 – Expansion of NATO; US attack on Iraq
 - pp. 191-192 – US was the cause of the 2008 global economic crisis
 - pp. 214-215 – Putin's return to the presidency; US- sponsored riots
 - pp. 220 – West does not participate in Russian Olympics
 7. In increasingly autocratic states, how can people-to-people organizations open doors to cooperative relationships?