Stalin’s Economic Miracle Socratic Discussion

IB History

**Instructions:**

Stalin achieved a massive development and expansion of the Soviet economy in a very short time frame (1928-1941). The question that we are exploring today is:

***To what extent do the benefits of Stalin’s economic modernization outweigh the costs?***

To explore this question, we will have a team Socratic discussion that attempts to explore the different perspectives that can be used to evaluate Stalin’s economic policies and we will, hopefully, reach some evaluative conclusions. You will be organized into teams of 4. Each member will be responsible for:

1. 15 minutes of direct participation in the discussion and 45 minutes of coaching/support.
2. Actively listening to the discussion so you can enter seamlessly
3. Providing constructive feedback to your team mate in the discussion.

To guide our discussion, we will examine the below questions:

1. What were the most significant gains from Stalin’s Five-Year Plans?
2. What was the cost of the Soviet Union’s rapid economic development?
3. How did Stalin’s command approach to the economy help make the Five-Year Plans more effective?
4. How was the Soviet society impacted by modernization of the economy? Who gained and who lost?
5. Was Stalin’s economic modernization a “necessary evil” or do you believe that he should be condemned for his actions?
6. Should we judge the morality of past events from our modern perspective? What are the benefit and dangers of this judgment?
7. How do we decide what is moral and what is immoral? Do we believe that these are individual, group or humanity decisions?
8. When historians of 2120 look back on 2020, how do you think they will judge us?