Discussion Questions

Directions: Choose three of the following questions to complete.

1. Peter felt his country had been isolated from progress too long, and he looked to Europe as the center of culture and technology. If you felt isolated in your community today, where would you look for inspiration and ideas for advancement? Would you necessarily need to travel as far and wide as Peter did to find what you need? What other resources could you tap into?

2. Peter struggled to bring Russia out of the Dark Ages and into a more modern existence. Today, many (underdeveloped) developing countries are striving toward the same goal. Are the obstacles faced by such countries today the same ones faced by 17th century Russia? Analyze the similarities and differences you can identify in their situations.

3. Peter sensed a large gap in his background and knowledge and set out to fill that gap by learning everything he could about the world beyond Russia’s borders. Select a current world leader whom you feel could stand to learn more about something important to his or her country’s future. Name the leader, explain what he or she needs to learn, and suggest a strategy for attaining that knowledge.

4. Peter the Great seemed to be completely fascinated by cities. What fascinates you about cities? If Peter were to reappear today, what three cities would you show him? Explain your choices.

5. Peter the Great had his own son killed because of an act of treason. Do you think his son deserved this punishment? How do you think Peter felt about ordering the death of his own son? Do you think he should have done this or was there another option for punishment?

6. Although Peter brought many positive changes to Russia during his reign, he was still a dictator with absolute power. How would you feel if you had lived in Russia during his reign? Would you have been a supporter? Explain the reasons for your answer.

Peter the Great Video

1. At the time of Peter the Great, why was Russia “frozen” in time?
2. At the time of Peter the Great, how many peasants could be found in Russia?
3. Why did Sophia Romanov kill her enemies?
4. Why didn’t Sophia kill Peter?
5. What is a sextant?
6. What was the purpose of Peter’s travels?
7. What was the secret to Holland’s wealth?
8. How did Peter “westernize” Russia?
9. What was St. Petersburg built on?
10. Was Peter a good leader? Explain.