

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Perspective: Wealthy Farmer

**Description of Event** Mao Zedong has risen to power of the People's Republic of China in 1949. His powerful Communist Party of China drove the Kuomintang out of power and took over control of China in a bloody military battle. He has just completed his first five years in power which resulted in industrialization of China with assistance from Russia. Now, in 1958, Mao has developed his Second Five Year Plan which is also called 'The Great Leap Forward.' As part of his program, Mao has instituted a land reform plan whereby wealthy landowners must give their lands over to poor peasants. This plan was meant to help enrich the lives of the poor while decreasing the social status and clout of wealthy land lords. This is in keeping with communist ideas which state that a society exists for everyone's benefit. Therefore, under this type of government, rich and poor categories are discouraged so that everybody is equal and will be benefitted by helping their fellow country persons.

**Your Role** As a wealthy farmer, this decision by Mao is terrible for you and your family of five. You have worked hard all your life to farm your family's land which has been in your family for four generations! Your great, great grandfather plowed this land and met with much success. He used his excess money to buy neighboring lands and did very well for himself. Now you are farming the land and you have been fortunate enough to have great crop yields which means that you have expanded over the past 10 years. Mao's decision could not have come at a worse time. Your wife is expecting your sixth child and your land is not producing as well as it used to. You are in danger of having to sell land to pay off debts, but now Mao's government wants to take the land away from you which means you will not be able to pay your debts. You must decide how you will tell your family about this terrible news as it will mean lots of changes in the household.