

# **The French Revolution**

## *Backwards Planning Curriculum Units*

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# How to Use This Unit

Backwards planning offers an innovative yet simple approach to meeting curriculum goals; it also provides a way to keep students engaged and focused throughout the learning process. Many teachers approach history instruction in the following manner: they identify a topic required by state and/or national standards, they find materials on that topic, they use those materials with their students, and then they administer some sort of standard test at the end of the unit. Backwards planning, rather than just starting with a required instructional topic, goes a step further by identifying exactly what students need to know by the end of the unit—the so-called “enduring understandings.” The next step involves assessment: devising ways to determine whether students have learned what they need to know. The final step involves planning the teaching/learning process so that students can acquire the knowledge needed.

This product uses backwards planning to combine a PowerPoint presentation, activities that involve authentic assessment, and traditional tests (multiple-choice and essay) into a complete curriculum unit. Although the materials have enough built-in flexibility that you can use them in a number of ways, we suggest the following procedure:

1. Start with the “essential questions” listed on slide 2 of the PowerPoint presentation (these also appear in the teacher support materials). Briefly go over them with students before getting into the topic material. These questions will help students focus their learning and note taking during the course of the unit. You can also choose to use the essential questions as essay questions at the end of the unit; one way to do this is to let students know at the outset that one of the essential questions will be on the test—they just won’t know which one.
2. Next, discuss the activities students will complete during the unit. This will also help focus their learning and note taking, and it will lead them to view the PowerPoint presentation in a different light, considering it a source of ideas for authentic-assessment projects.
3. Present the PowerPoint to the class. Most slides have an image and bullet points summarizing the slide’s topic. The Notes page for each slide contains a paragraph or two of information that you can use as a presentation script, or just as background information for your own reference. Use the “show set up” function in PowerPoint to present with “two monitors.” Have yours set to include the ‘notes view’ and let the projector show only the slides to the students.

You don’t need to present the entire PowerPoint at once: it’s broken up into several sections, each of which concludes with some discussion questions that echo parts of the essential questions and also help students to get closer to the “enduring understandings.” Spend some time with the class going over and debating these questions—this will not only help students think critically about the material, but it will also allow you to incorporate different modes of instruction during a single class period, offering a better chance to engage students.

4. Have students complete one or more of the authentic-assessment activities. These activities are flexible: most can be completed either individually or in groups, and either as homework or as in-class assignments. Each activity includes a rubric; many also have graphic organizers. You can choose to have students complete the activities after you have shown them the entire PowerPoint

presentation, or you can show them one section of the PowerPoint, go over the discussion questions, and then have students complete an activity.

**5.** End the unit with traditional assessment. The support materials include a 20-question multiple-choice quiz; you can combine this with an essay question (you can use one of the essential questions or come up with one of your own) to create a full-period test.

**6.** If desired, debrief with students by going over the essential questions with them again and remind them what the enduring understandings are.

We are dedicated to continually improving our products and working with teachers to develop exciting and effective tools for the classroom. We can offer advice on how to maximize the use of the product and share others' experiences. We would also be happy to work with you on ideas for customizing the presentation.

We value your feedback, so please let us know more about the ways in which you use this product to supplement your lessons; we're also eager to hear any recommendations you might have for ways in which we can expand the functionality of this product in future editions. You can e-mail us at [access@socialstudies.com](mailto:access@socialstudies.com). We look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Aaron Willis  
Chief Education Officer  
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# The French Revolution: Backwards Planning Activities

## Enduring understandings:

- Beginning with the reign of Louis XIV, the kings of France vigorously asserted that they ruled by “divine right.” They unified the nation by controlling the nobility and building a powerful military capability.
- The lavish spending on the military, on numerous major wars, on public-works projects and on the lavish lifestyles of nobility and monarchy left France deep in debt by the late 1700s.
- The exemptions that let the nobility and the Catholic Church avoid paying taxes meant the growing tax burden fell heavily on the poor. When drought drove up the price of bread and famine threatened in the 1780s, the burdens of the poor became intolerable.
- The ideas of the Enlightenment emboldened those in France who wanted radical change even as those ideas also undermined the certainty and confidence of France’s aristocratic elites.
- The French Revolution began when the Third Estate demanded the voting strength it needed to dominate the Estates General, which the king had to call to win new taxes. Once the Third Estate organized itself as the National Assembly, it began instituting many radical changes.
- The anger and violence of the crowds in Paris and the peasants in the countryside drove the Revolution further toward radical changes in the summer of 1789 and beyond.
- Several nations united and threatened the Revolution from without. As the French fought a war against the First Coalition, the tension helped push the Revolution to greater and greater excesses. Many thousands were executed during the Reign of Terror in 1793–94, including the king and queen.
- In 1794, a reaction against the Terror and the Committee of Public Safety set in. In time, Napoleon Bonaparte took control and ended the democratic phases of the transformation of France.

## Essential questions:

- What changes in political and economic conditions in the 1700s led to the crisis of the late 1700s and the outbreak of the French Revolution?
- How important in causing the French Revolution were the new Enlightenment ideas about natural rights, democracy, limited government, religious tolerance, and the use of reason in solving social and political problems?
- What, if anything, could king Louis XVI have done differently to keep the rising anger and frustration in France from triggering a full-scale revolution?

- What role did the poor people of Paris and peasants in the countryside play in shaping the Revolution and the way it unfolded?
- Why did the Revolution go through the violent phase known as the Reign of Terror? Was that phase inevitable?
- In what ways did the Revolution fail, in what ways was it thwarted or reversed, and in what ways were its basic ideas and ideals realized?

# Learning Experiences and Instruction

Students will need to know...	Students will need to be able to...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. that the French nobility and clergy's freedom from taxes, set the stage for the Revolution</li> <li>2. that the calling of the Estates General gave the Third Estate, mainly middle class professionals, the chance to launch a process of revolution change</li> <li>3. that high food prices and famine added to tensions in 1789 and led the poor to drastic acts of defiance and rebellion</li> <li>4. that <i>émigré</i> aristocrats and foreign powers threatened the Revolution and created a climate of fear in France in 1792</li> <li>5. that fear and terror reinforced one another in 1793–94</li> <li>6. that “the Terror” produced a reaction in which more moderate leaders slowed or halted the process of revolutionary change.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. read and interpret primary source documents about the French Revolution and its impact</li> <li>2. understand some of the reasons for the upheaval that overtook France in the summer of 1789</li> <li>3. identify some major figures who contributed to the Revolution and be able to explain what they did</li> <li>4. understand and debate certain key controversies having to do various aspects of the French Revolution</li> <li>5. identify causal relationships between various events and developments during this period.</li> </ol>

**These lessons incorporate the following learning activities to help students reach the enduring understandings:**

- Overview of essential questions and basic understandings
- Class discussion of subject matter questions in the French Revolution presentation
- Teacher introduction of common terms and ideas in the essential questions and related projects
- Provide students with primary source materials from which they will complete the related projects in the unit
- Students conduct research in groups to be used later in individual and group projects
- Informal observation and coaching of students as they work in groups
- Evaluation and delivered feedback on projects and research reports
- Students create and present their unit projects
- Posttest made of multiple-choice questions covering the presentation, with one or more essential questions as essay questions

# Project # 1: The Fall of the Bastille

## Newspaper Special

### Overview:

In this lesson, students work in groups as reporters and editors in July 1789, covering the fall of the Bastille, which took place on July 14th. The event demonstrated the power of Paris crowds in keeping up pressure on the National Assembly, which was then starting to reform France's political system in the opening days of the French Revolution. Having collected information about this event and its historical context, students in each group will write articles and lay out a newspaper "front page" and an "editorial page" in which they will present their stories and provide commentary by key observers of the events of July 1789 in Paris and France as a whole.

### Objectives:

In completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- better understand the events of the July 14, 1789, the storming of the Bastille and the significance of the Bastille in the early stages of the French Revolution
- write news stories and editorial content regarding the fall of the Bastille
- create "front pages" highlighting the details and impact of that event.

### Time required:

Four class periods

### Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, printer, word-processing and publishing software such as Microsoft Word and Microsoft Publisher (should you elect to have students complete the project electronically), poster board, glue (if you want students to assemble pages manually), copies of newspapers of the era (on microfilm or online, if available), the "Bastille Day Information Form" (provided)

### Methodology:

Divide the class into several small groups. Each group should first gain greater background knowledge about the fall of the Bastille on July 14, 1789. The fall of the Bastille occurred four weeks after the Third Estate began meeting as the National Assembly and just three days after King Louis XVI had dismissed the popular finance minister Jacques Necker. Huge crowds

began demonstrating throughout Paris over the next days, and rumors of all sorts spread, adding to popular anger and anxiety. Several places were attacked, including some weapons arsenals or locations suspected of storing weapons for use against the populace. On the 14th, a crowd marched to the Bastille hoping to seize its supplies of arms and gunpowder. The fortress and prison fell later that day to attacks by a mob of about a thousand people and some sympathetic soldiers.

Ask students to speculate as to how a newspaper in France might have covered the events of early July 1789 in Paris, in particular the events of July 14th. Next, explain to the students that they'll be working in groups to create newspaper "front pages" covering the fall of the Bastille. In addition to basic news coverage of the Bastille and related events on a front page, students should include an "editorial page" that includes the newspaper's own editorial, opinion columns, letters to the editor, and perhaps editorial cartoons and others illustrations.

Each group should try to include most of the following on its front page or editorial page:

- A front-page headline story on the events of July 14th
- Other articles on recent events in Paris, at the National Assembly in Versailles, and around the rest of France
- A story on Louis XVI, his privy council and their decision to dismiss Jacques Necker
- A story about the Bastille and its governor Bernard-René de Launay
- An account of the various troops stationed in and around Paris and their actions during the events of early and mid-July 1789
- Opinion columns by famous observers of the Revolution, such as Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine
- The newspaper's own editorial about the fall of the Bastille
- Several letters to the editor about the situation from the following: a poor peasant living about 100 miles from Paris; a shopkeeper in Paris; a wealthy merchant from Nantes; a bishop from a noble family in Lyon

Once you've introduced the lesson to the class, have students begin research using the related Web sites and by filling out the "Bastille Day Information Form" to assist them in completing the project. Allow sufficient time for students to complete their research. Once finished, students should take their information and shape it into news stories to include on the front page and editorial page.

### **Evaluation:**

Once student groups have completed their front pages, evaluate the finished product using a suitable rubric. You may wish to use a school- or district-developed rubric, or the sample rubric included with this lesson.

## Suggested Web resources:

The following is a sampling of possible resources for the small group's work. You should supplement this list by assisting students in finding related information via a reputable search engine.

### Images of the Bastille:

- [http://www.google.com/search?q=the+bastille&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB\\_en&biw=1181&bih=560&prmd=ivnsb&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=Z4ATr60JsGysAKZtNnUDw&sqi=2&ved=0CDkQsAQ](http://www.google.com/search?q=the+bastille&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB_en&biw=1181&bih=560&prmd=ivnsb&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=Z4ATr60JsGysAKZtNnUDw&sqi=2&ved=0CDkQsAQ)

### Other articles on the Bastille and early phase of the French Revolution:

- [http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/revolution/storming\\_of\\_bastille.shtml](http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/revolution/storming_of_bastille.shtml)
- <http://bastille-day.com/history/Storming-Of-The-Bastille-July-14-1789>
- <http://blog.catherinedelors.com/the-14th-of-july-1789-what-really-happened-on-bastille-day/>
- <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/bastille.html>
- <http://mattstodayinhistory.blogspot.com/2008/07/bastille-day-july-14-1789.html>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storming\\_of\\_the\\_Bastille](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storming_of_the_Bastille)
- <http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/Paris/Monuments-Paris/Bastille.shtml>
- <http://www.flowofhistory.com/units/eme/16/FC105A>
- <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/lesson36.htm>
- <http://www.marxists.org/history/france/revolution/timeline.htm>
- [http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/tennis\\_oath.html](http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/tennis_oath.html)
- <http://web.archive.org/web/19981206201151/http://pluto.clinch.edu/history/wciv2/civ2ref/burke.html>
- <http://www.ushistory.org/paine/rights/index.htm>

# The Bastille Day Information Form

<p><b>Stories and/or editorial comments you worked on</b></p>	
<p><b>Significance of stories or editorials (i.e., why they should be included in the newspaper)</b></p>	
<p><b>What the stories show about the fall of the Bastille specifically</b></p>	
<p><b>What the stories show more generally about the early phase of the French Revolution</b></p>	

# The Bastille Day Newspaper Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Student score
<b>Research</b>	Information form completely filled out; evident that story or stories were well researched	Information form filled out; adequate information included in the story or stories	Information form incomplete; sketchy information included in the story or stories	Information form incomplete; little or no relevant information included in the story or stories	
<b>Historical accuracy</b>	Highly detailed, accurate or plausible portrayal of events or ideas	Portrayal of events or ideas generally accurate or plausible	Portrayal of events or ideas rarely accurate or plausible	Inaccurate portrayal of events or ideas	
<b>Creativity</b>	Layout of newspaper pages shows exemplary level of creativity and thought	Layout of newspaper pages shows generally high level of creativity and thought	Layout of newspaper pages somewhat difficult to read; flow of page generally acceptable	Layout of newspaper pages very difficult to read; flow of page unacceptable	
<b>Additional criteria as set by teacher</b>					
<b>Overall group score</b>					

# Project #2: Leaders and Crowds—An Illustrated Timeline of the French Revolution

## Overview:

In this lesson, a small group of students helps the class better understand the entire course of the French Revolution, focusing in particular on the role of revolutionary leaders and the part played by crowds in Paris and elsewhere. They do this by creating an illustrated timeline showing major events in the revolution from 1789 to 1799. The timeline should try to identify and clarify the way events among revolutionary leaders and representative bodies interacted with, influenced, and were affected by revolutionary crowds and popular uprisings.

## Objectives:

As a result of completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- better identify the key turning point events in the French Revolution
- visually conceptualize the key events and unfolding developments of the revolution
- better understand the dynamic process by which the actions of revolutionary leaders affected popular feeling, and the way the public mood, especially in Paris, affected the actions of the revolutionary leaders.

## Time required:

Three class periods (with one period for a presentation to the class)

## Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, word-processing software, a printer, and the “Illustrated French Revolution Timeline Student Handout” (provided).

## Procedures:

Explain to the students in this small group that this activity will help them remember the important sequence of key events in the French Revolution. It should also help them better understand certain important aspects of the upheaval, its causes and its consequences.

In this lesson, a small group of students will create an illustrated timeline of the important turning points in the French Revolution from 1789 to 1799. The revolution unfolded in the context of massive discontent in Paris, other towns and cities, and in many parts of the French

countryside. The big revolutionary decisions of this decade were made by various political leaders—from King Louis XVI and his close advisers, to the French nobility and the Catholic Church hierarchy, to moderate and radical members of the Third Estate, to various professionals, journalists, and other leaders of factions and political clubs. Meanwhile, all of these political leaders had to contend with a great many popular demonstrations, riots, uprisings, organized marches, and other actions. At times, these outbursts of popular anger were responses to actions by the leaders. At other times, these outbursts helped to goad leaders to act and further move the revolutionary process along. The timeline students create should attempt to illustrate and clarify this dynamic interaction between the leaders and the ordinary citizens caught up in this revolutionary upheaval.

Have students in the group refer to the suggested Internet and/or print resources to find appropriate events and illustrations to include in their timelines. The three timelines included in the Web resources below are all very detailed and extensive. To simplify the group's task, students should study these timelines and select only the key 20 to 30 most important events and developments. This process of selecting a few dates from the timelines will enable the group to think through more thoroughly what was and was not most significant in the entire course of the French Revolution.

Give the group a large piece of butcher paper and ask them to sketch its timeline in pencil. The timeline should contain the following components:

- A straight horizontal line with small vertical lines spaced evenly to designate the years 1789 through 1799
- Above the horizontal timeline, place the names, and where possible illustrations, of important leaders, political meetings, or other events at which major official decisions about the Revolution were made.
- Below the timeline, place boxes showing scenes of mob action, demonstrations, marches, or popular uprisings that had an effect on the course of the French Revolution; these boxes should include text and pictures and should be connected to the timeline with lines showing the appropriate dates.

Ask students to double-check the dates on their timeline to make sure they are correct.

Once students have followed the steps above to create the timeline, ask them to look for patterns of interaction between elements above the timeline and those below it. Did any of the popular expressions or actions follow from or lead to major decisions by political leaders and representative bodies? Are there other significant relationships among the items students have placed on their timeline? For each relationship they recognize, ask them to draw arrows between the relevant items.

Display the group's timeline in the classroom, and ask them to give a presentation in which they use their timeline as an aid in teaching the rest of the class about the key phases and turning points in the French Revolution.

## Evaluation:

At the end of the debate, evaluate student work using a suitable rubric. A sample rubric is included with this lesson, which you may either use or adapt to meet your individual circumstances.

## Web resources:

### Images of the French Revolution

- [http://www.google.com/search?q=the+bastille&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB\\_en&biw=1181&bih=560&prmd=ivnsb&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=Z4ATTr60JsGysAKZtNnUDw&sqi=2&ved=0CDkQsAQ](http://www.google.com/search?q=the+bastille&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB_en&biw=1181&bih=560&prmd=ivnsb&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=Z4ATTr60JsGysAKZtNnUDw&sqi=2&ved=0CDkQsAQ)
- [http://www.google.com/#sclient=psy&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB\\_en&source=hp&q=Images+of+Paris+crowds+French+Revolution&rlz=1R2SKPB\\_en&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&oq=&pbx=1&bav=on.2,or.r\\_gc.r\\_pw.&fp=c488823cce0a6f39&biw=1176&bih=532](http://www.google.com/#sclient=psy&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB_en&source=hp&q=Images+of+Paris+crowds+French+Revolution&rlz=1R2SKPB_en&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&oq=&pbx=1&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.&fp=c488823cce0a6f39&biw=1176&bih=532)
- [http://www.google.com/#sclient=psy&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB\\_en&source=hp&q=Images+of+French+Revolution&rlz=1R2SKPB\\_en&aq=f&aqi=g-clg-b3&aql=&oq=&pbx=1&bav=on.2,or.r\\_gc.r\\_pw.&fp=c488823cce0a6f39&biw=1176&bih=532](http://www.google.com/#sclient=psy&hl=en&rlz=1R2SKPB_en&source=hp&q=Images+of+French+Revolution&rlz=1R2SKPB_en&aq=f&aqi=g-clg-b3&aql=&oq=&pbx=1&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.&fp=c488823cce0a6f39&biw=1176&bih=532)

### Timelines

- <http://www.marxists.org/history/france/revolution/timeline.htm>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_the\\_French\\_Revolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_French_Revolution)
- <http://faculty.unlv.edu/gbrown/hist462/resources/chrono.htm>

# Illustrated French Revolution Timeline Student Handout

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Facts and illustrations on each item</b>	<b>Reasons for including information on each item</b>
<b>Key actions by leaders opposed to the revolution</b>		
<b>Key actions by leaders seeking to further the revolution or defend it</b>		
<b>Key popular uprisings or other actions that affected the revolution in important ways</b>		

# Illustrated French Revolution Timeline Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Student score
<b>Timeline:</b> completeness	Extremely thorough, containing all the major events and trends	Somewhat complete, containing most of the major events and trends	Somewhat incomplete and missing several of the major events and trends	Almost wholly incomplete, lacking most of the major events and trends	
<b>Timeline:</b> use of illustrations	Illustrations all clearly explained and related to major events and trends	Some illustrations clearly explained and related to major events and trends	A few illustrations clearly explained, but some not related to major events and trends	Fails to use illustrations to explain major events and trends	
<b>Timeline:</b> significance of facts and relationships	All events explained clearly and many key relationships between leadership decisions and popular actions well clarified	Most events explained clearly and some key relationships between leadership decisions and popular actions clarified	Only some events explained and very few relationships between leadership decisions and popular actions clarified	Few or no events and relationships clarified well or at all	
<b>Cumulative score</b>					

# Project #3: Terror and Revolution— A Panel Discussion

## Overview:

In this lesson, a small group of students plans and conducts a panel discussion on the role and morality of the Terror in the French Revolution. One student moderates the discussion, while others play the parts of several historical figures in a debate about the role of state-controlled terror in the French Revolution and the morality of accepting or justifying it. The moderator sparks the discussion by presenting a short passage from a speech by Maximilien Robespierre. As the student role-players debate, the rest of the class watches and listens. When the moderator decides to open up the discussion, other students may then join in with questions of their own.

## Objectives:

As a result of completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- identify several key leaders, participants or observers of the French Revolution
- better understand the reasons some revolutionary leaders gave for supporting the Terror
- better appreciate the sharp differences of point of view of many key figures in the French Revolution.

## Time required:

Four class periods (with one period for a presentation to the class)

## Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, word-processing and PowerPoint software, a printer, the “The Revolution and Terror Student Handout” (provided)

## Procedures:

Assign students to one small group. The group’s task is to prepare to conduct a panel discussion in which the group members will take the parts of various observers or participants in the French Revolution and discuss the role of terror in that upheaval. One student in the group will play the role of the panel organizer and act as a moderator. Each of the other group members will take the part of one of the following figures:

- Marquis de La Fayette
- Comte de Mirabeau
- Georges Danton
- Olympe de Gouges
- Jean-Paul Marat
- Charlotte Corday
- Thomas Jefferson
- Thomas Paine

Depending on the group's size, you may wish to have more than one student work on researching each of these individuals—as long as one of those students is responsible for role-playing that individual during the panel discussion. Students should refer to the suggested Internet and/or print resources to learn more about the famous French Revolution–era figures they have been assigned. Not all of the figures listed here experienced the specific phase of the revolution known as the Terror, which took place from June 1793 to July 1794. However, students should be able to infer much as to how each figure would have reacted to that phase based on that figure's overall views about the revolution in general.

The panel discuss will open with each role-player reacting to the following passage. It is a short statement by Maximilien Robespierre, the radical Jacobin leader who at one point had nearly dictatorial power in France through his leadership of the Committee of Public Safety. On February 5, 1794, Robespierre gave a speech explaining his political theory and principles. In the speech, he justified the use of terror in defending democracy.

From Robespierre's "Republic of Virtue":

*If the strength of popular government in peacetime is virtue, the strength of popular government in revolution is both virtue and terror; terror without virtue is disastrous, virtue without terror is powerless. Terror is nothing but prompt, severe, and inflexible justice; it is thus an emanation of virtue; it is less a particular principle than a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to the most urgent needs of the fatherland.*

Students should try to learn enough about the figure they have been assigned to gain a sense of how that particular individual would respond to the above quote. What would that individual approve of most? What might he or she disagree with most? What alternative view about terror and the revolution would the figure hold? Have students in the group use the Student Handout to take notes on how their figures would respond to the passage. They can use these handouts to plan their opening remarks in the panel discussion.

At the start of that discussion, the above statement by Robespierre should be displayed prominently. Each panel participant will make some opening remarks responding to this statement. It is the moderator's job to ask them to clarify their remarks and to invite responses from others. Students role-playing historical figures from the time of the French Revolution

should also feel free to respond to one another's opening remarks as they believe their historical figures might have.

The moderator should develop a set of questions ahead of time and let the panel participants know in advance what those questions are. The moderator may wish to use a PowerPoint presentation to focus attention on these questions as a way to keep the discussion on track. Here are some suggested questions:

- What do you most agree with in Robespierre's statement?
- What do you question or disagree with in Robespierre's statement?
- What role, if any, did you play in the Revolution, and what was your view about the use of political violence and terror of the sort Robespierre defends in his statement?
- Of those taking part in this panel, whose view do you agree with most? Why?
- Of those taking part in this panel, whose view do you disagree with most? Why?

After each participant's opening remarks, the moderator should encourage students in the audience to ask questions as well, with the understanding that they are asking each student to respond as would the historical figure the student is role-playing.

### **Evaluation:**

After the group's presentation, you should evaluate students based on their presentation skills as well as on their research skills in completing the "The Revolution and Terror Student Handout." While you may wish to develop your own rubric for this project, a sample rubric is included as a guideline.

## Suggested Web resources:

The following is a sampling of possible resources for the small group's work. You should supplement this list by assisting students in finding related information via a reputable search engine.

### Robespierre's "Republic of Virtue" speech (three translations)

- <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/virtue.html>
- <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/robespierre-terror.html>
- [http://teachers.sduhsd.k12.ca.us/tpsocsciences/world\\_history/dem\\_ideals/robespierre.htm](http://teachers.sduhsd.k12.ca.us/tpsocsciences/world_history/dem_ideals/robespierre.htm)

### The Terror

- <http://europeanhistory.about.com/od/thefrenchrevolution/a/hfr7.htm>
- <http://www.port.ac.uk/special/france1815to2003/chapter1/interviews/filetodownload,20545,en.pdf>

### Marquis de La Fayette

- <http://www.ushistory.org/valleyforge/served/lafayette.html>
- <http://www.ucumberlands.edu/academics/history/files/vol11/MichelleBrown99.html>
- <http://xenophongroup.com/mcjoynt/lafy-4.htm>

### Comte de Mirabeau

- <http://www.answers.com/topic/honor-mirabeau>
- <http://bastille-day.com/biography/Mirabeau>
- <http://age-of-the-sage.org/historical/biography/mirabeau.html>

### Georges Danton

- <http://www.nndb.com/people/658/000092382/>
- <http://www.answers.com/topic/georges-danton>
- [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Georges\\_Danton](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Georges_Danton)

### Olympe de Gouges

- <http://womenshistory.about.com/od/olympedegouges/a/Olympe-De-Gouges-And-The-Rights-Of-Woman.htm>
- <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1791degouge1.html>
- <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/488/>

### **Jean-Paul Marat**

- <http://www.nndb.com/people/630/000092354/>
- <http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/146/2/reflecting-on-the-life-of-a-revolutionary-jean-paul-marat>
- <http://www.marxists.org/history/france/revolution/marat/index.htm>

### **Charlotte Corday**

- <http://www.answers.com/topic/charlotte-corday>
- [http://www.alstewart.com/publicfiles/HISTORY\\_corday.htm](http://www.alstewart.com/publicfiles/HISTORY_corday.htm)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlotte\\_Corday](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlotte_Corday)

### **Thomas Jefferson**

- <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/592/>
- <http://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/french-revolution>
- <http://sc94.ameslab.gov/TOUR/tjefferson.html>

### **Thomas Paine**

- [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Thomas\\_Paine](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Thomas_Paine)
- <http://www.nndb.com/people/295/000047154/>
- <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/B/tpaine/paine.htm>

# Revolution and Terror Student Handout

<b>Name of historical figure researched:</b>	
<b>This figure's main role in the French Revolution</b>	
<b>This figure's attitudes generally toward the more radical factions in the Revolution</b>	
<b>This figure's views about the use of terror as a revolutionary practice</b>	

# Revolution and the Terror Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Student score
<b>Handout:</b> summing up the important facts about this figure's role in the French Revolution	Student identifies essential facts accurately and explains their importance clearly	Student describes some key facts accurately and has a good sense of their importance	Student describes a few details about this figure adequately but not with a good sense of their importance	Student describes a few details but not very accurately at all	
<b>Handout:</b> understanding how this thinker would regard radical factions and the use of terror in the Revolution	Student clearly and effectively explains this figure's views about the radical factions and the use of terror	Student adequately explains this figure's views about the radical factions and the use of terror	Student only vaguely describes this figure's views about the radical factions and the use of terror	Student fails to describe clearly this figure's views about the radical factions and the use of terror	
<b>Presentation:</b> contribution to the salon discussion	Student makes a substantial contribution to the panel discussion and performs the assigned role effectively	Student makes an adequate contribution to the panel discussion and performs the assigned role acceptably	Student makes a minimal contribution to the panel discussion and to performing the assigned role	Student has makes no contribution to the panel discussion and performs the assigned role poorly	
<b>Cumulative score</b>					

# Extension Activities

1. The Haitian Revolution is often called the “forgotten revolution” because it happened so close chronologically to both the American and French Revolutions. It was the only successful slave-led revolution in history and thus is significant in its own right. Create a Venn diagram and compare the events of the Haitian Revolution to either the American or French Revolutions and see what similarities and differences emerge.
2. Watch one of the movie versions of *A Tale of Two Cities* or *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. Write a review of the movie in which you compare what is portrayed with what actually happened.
3. Create and illustrate a timeline of the events of the French Revolution from the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI in 1774 to the consulship of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1799. Be sure to show the connections between events and their far-reaching consequences as well.
4. Have each student research, write, and answer one question that analyzes the impact of the French Revolution on the 19th and 20th centuries. Allow each student to ask their question in a group setting and allow the rest of the class to answer that question in turn.

# Discussion Questions

1. How did more than a century of debt contribute to the downfall of Louis XVI?
2. How did Enlightenment philosophy contribute to the French Revolution?
3. How does the destruction of the Bastille symbolize the fall of the ancient regime?
4. How was the Declaration of the Rights of Man similar to the U.S. Declaration of Independence?

# The French Revolution: Multiple-Choice Quiz

1. Which of the following was *not* a direct cause of the French Revolution?
  - A. foreign war debt.
  - B. domestic debt from building projects, etc.
  - C. involvement in the American Revolution.
  - D. heavy taxation on the peasantry and middle class.
  - E. the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.
2. Which of the following Enlightenment philosophers influenced the French Revolution?
  - A. Rousseau and Locke
  - B. Cicero and Archimedes
  - C. Shelley and Burton
  - D. Aquinas and Abelard
  - E. none of the above
3. \_\_\_\_\_ was the dominant figure on the Committee for Public Safety during the Reign of Terror.
  - A. Marat
  - B. Danton
  - C. De Gouge
  - D. Robespierre
  - E. Capet
4. Much of the debt left to Louis XVI was from the building of the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. Pont de Gard
  - B. Eiffel Tower
  - C. Palace of Versailles
  - D. Louvre
  - E. Petite Trignon
5. What was the name of the political group that would ultimately control France during the Reign of Terror?
  - A. Jacobin
  - B. Girondins
  - C. Masons
  - D. Scottish Rite
  - E. all of the above

6. Who was the Financial Minister who nearly single-handedly ran the French economy before he was ousted from power?
  - A. Marat
  - B. Danton
  - C. Robespierre
  - D. Necker
  - E. Capet
  
7. The destruction of the \_\_\_\_\_ is usually marked as the beginning of the French Revolution.
  - A. Bastille
  - B. Seine Bridge
  - C. Tulleries
  - D. Louvre
  - E. none of the above
  
8. The Declaration of the Rights of Man was based on what American document?
  - A. Constitution
  - B. Bill of Rights
  - C. Gettysburg Address
  - D. PL 94-142
  - E. Declaration of Independence
  
9. The *sans culottes* made up a large segment of the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. National Assembly
  - B. Committee of Public Safety
  - C. mobs of Paris
  - D. French Army
  - E. all of the above
  
10. The First Estate represented the \_\_\_\_\_ of France.
  - A. aristocracy
  - B. middle class
  - C. peasantry
  - D. clergy
  - E. none of the above

11. The Second Estate represented the \_\_\_\_\_ of France.
- A. aristocracy
  - B. middle class
  - C. peasantry
  - D. clergy
  - E. none of the above
12. The Third Estate represented the \_\_\_\_\_ of France.
- A. aristocracy
  - B. king
  - C. middle class and the peasantry
  - D. clergy
  - E. none of the above
13. The divine right of the \_\_\_\_\_ was one of the contributing factors to the French Revolution.
- A. clergy
  - B. aristocracy
  - C. kings
  - D. peasantry
  - E. civil servants
14. What Corsican general assumed the consulship of France in 1799 and became emperor in 1804?
- A. Marat
  - B. Danton
  - C. De Gouge
  - D. Bonaparte
  - E. none of the above
15. Who published a pamphlet declaring that the Third Estate was “everything”?
- A. Danton
  - B. Marat
  - C. Rousseau
  - D. Robespierre
  - E. Sieyès

16. Much of the economic and tax systems in France before the Revolution were based on \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. feudalism
  - B. Marxism
  - C. mercantilism
  - D. liberalism
  - E. none of the above
17. The \_\_\_\_\_ was created as a humane means of execution.
- A. electric chair
  - B. noose
  - C. rack
  - D. guillotine
  - E. none of the above
18. The \_\_\_\_\_ imprisoned the King and Queen of France on August 10, 1792.
- A. National Assembly
  - B. Paris Commune
  - C. Third Estate
  - D. Committee of Public Safety
  - E. Council of 500
19. The Reign of Terror ended on July 27, 1794 with the \_\_\_\_\_ Reaction.
- A. Themodorian
  - B. Robespierrian
  - C. Lumiarian
  - D. Pilnitz
  - E. Dantonian
20. The Tennis Court Oath declared that the National Assembly would continue to meet until its members \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. drafted the Declaration of the Rights of Man
  - B. wrote their own version of the Magna Carta
  - C. drafted a new constitution
  - D. created a French Bill of Rights
  - E. none of the above

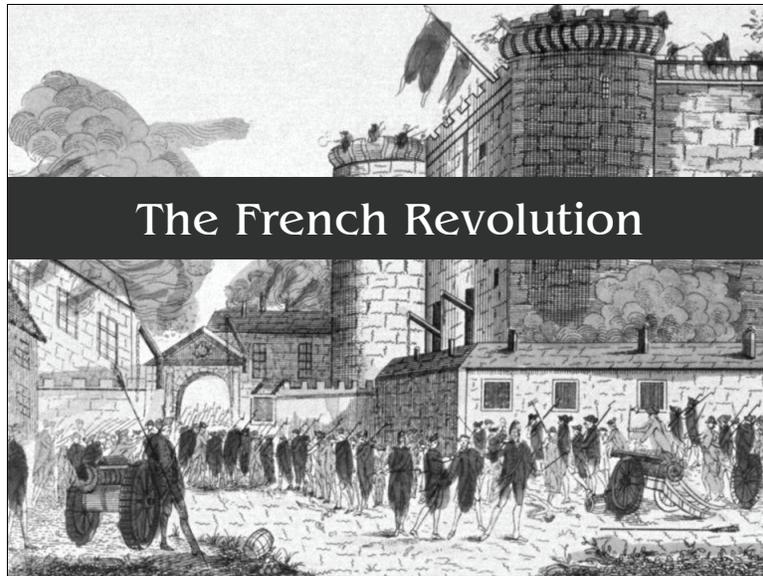
# The French Revolution: Multiple-Choice Quiz Answer Key

1. E
2. A
3. D
4. C
5. A
6. D
7. A
8. B
9. E
10. D
11. A
12. C
13. C
14. D
15. E
16. A
17. D
18. A
19. A
20. C









Between 1789 and 1799, France underwent a violent revolution that overthrew the French monarchy, established a republic with a constitution, degenerated into a period of terror and executions, and ended with a military *coup d'état*. The revolution is considered to be one of the most controversial and significant events of the modern era. It brought to life in Europe the Enlightenment ideals of equality, freedom, and democracy, which would provide the basis for reform movements and new political philosophies in the 19th century.

## Essential Questions

- What changes in political and economic conditions in the 1700s led to the crisis of the late 1700s and the outbreak of the French Revolution?
- How important in causing the French Revolution were the new Enlightenment ideas about natural rights, democracy, limited government, religious tolerance, and the use of reason in solving social and political problems?
- What, if anything, could king Louis XVI have done differently to keep the rising anger and frustration in France from triggering a full-scale revolution?

## Essential Questions (continued)

- What role did the poor people of Paris and peasants in the countryside play in shaping the Revolution and the way it unfolded?
- Why did the Revolution go through the violent phase known as the Reign of Terror? Was that phase inevitable?
- In what ways did the Revolution fail, in what ways was it thwarted or reversed, and in what ways were its basic ideas and ideals realized?

## Absolutism

- Absolute monarchs didn't share power with a counsel or parliament
- "Divine Right of Kings"



King James I of England

The period lasting roughly from 1600 to 1800 is often referred to as the Age of Absolutism. Monarchs during this time exercised complete authority and did not share power with a council or cabinet.

Absolutism was tied to the concept of "Divine Right of Kings"—the idea that monarchs had been appointed by God and were responsible only to God. Thus, no one could question their judgment. Historians often identify James I of England as one of the first absolutist rulers. Not only did James believe that monarchs should hold total power (a belief that led him to clash with Parliament on several occasions), but he also wrote extensively about the Divine Right of Kings. In his work *The True Law of Free Monarchies*, he stated that "Kings are called gods...because they sit upon God his throne in the earth and have the count of their administration to give unto him."

## The Seigneurial System



Receiving a seigneurial grant

- Feudal method of land ownership and organization
- Peasant labor

Since the Middle Ages, France and other European countries were structured on a system called feudalism. Part of this system was a method of land ownership and organization known as seigneurialism or manorialism.

Most, but not all of the nobility in France owned land. The term *seigneur* referred to the nobles who did own land. Seigneurs used peasant labor to work their lands. In 18th-century France, the nobility owned about 25 percent of the land yet paid little in taxes. Under the seigneurial system, the nobles could tax the peasants who lived on their land. Taxation of the peasantry ended up providing the seigneurs with a major source of revenue.

## Louis XIV

- Ruled from 1643–1715
- Reduced the power of the nobility
- Fought four wars
- Greatly increased France's national debt



France before the Revolution is often referred to as the *ancien régime*; during this period of more than 130 years (spanning both the 17th and 18th centuries), the country had just two rulers. The first, King Louis XIV, had a powerful impact on France during his long reign (1643–1715) and is considered by many as the epitome of an absolutist ruler. He centralized power in himself at the expense of the nobility, removing them from positions as governors and ministers and relegating them to the role of courtiers at the royal palace at Versailles.

Louis implemented policies that led France to emerge as the dominant power in continental Europe. He increased the nation's standing army and fought four wars between 1667 and 1713. These wars added to France's international standing and prestige, but left the country deeply in debt. Louis increased this debt by undertaking both public construction (such as new networks of roads and canals) and royal building projects, including the grand palace at Versailles. He also spent huge sums maintaining a lavish lifestyle for the royal court at Versailles. He attempted to offset France's mounting deficits by increasing taxes on the peasants, but by the time of his death the country still remained heavily in debt.

## The Seven Years' War



Louis XV



French and English troops fight at the battle of Fort St. Philip on the island of Minorca

- Louis XV
- War fought in Europe, India, North America
- France ends up losing some of its colonial possessions
- Increases French national debt

Louis XV (1715–1774) proved to be incapable of dealing with France's financial problems and increased the debt by involving France in the Seven Years' War. The war pitted the British and Prussians on one side against the French, Austrians, and Russians on the other. Fighting took place not just in Europe, but also in India and in North America, where the war was known as the French and Indian War because France allied with Native Americans against the British and American colonists. Though the war ended up a stalemate in Europe, France suffered defeats to the British in North America and in India; as a result, it was forced to cede some of its colonial possessions. Much of the burden of paying for the war fell on the peasantry.

## The Three Estates

- First Estate: clergy
- Second Estate: nobility
- Third Estate: the rest of society
- The Estates General



Cartoon depicting the three Estates

In French society, the people were divided into three categories called estates. Each estate had specific roles and privileges. The First Estate consisted of the Church, the Second Estate was the nobility/aristocracy, and the Third Estate included most of the rest of French society—the peasants and the “common people.” The Third Estate, the poorest group, provided most of the nation’s taxes. Tax dollars were used to pay for wars, to pay for the kings’ palaces, to support the wealthy lifestyle of the aristocracy, and to pay for other public projects.

France’s nominal attempt at a parliament was called the Estates General, which was established in 1602. Though it had once served a key role, by the 17th century its importance had declined greatly. In fact, the Estates General did not even meet from 1614 until 1789.



## The Third Estate



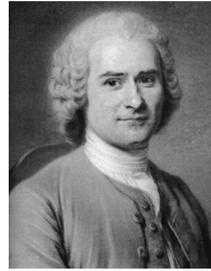
- Taxation
- Crop failures

The Third Estate had long labored under an obsolete tax code that placed the majority of France's tax burden upon its shoulders. With this heavy debt already a drain on their purse, bad weather in the 1780s caused widespread crop failures that resulted in grain shortages which pushed the price of bread, the staple of the French diet, too high for most peasants to buy. This would prove to be another factor leading to a revolution.

## The Enlightenment



John Locke



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

- New ideas about society and government
- The social contract

The Enlightenment was a period of intellectual ferment that gave rise to a range of new theories about society, government, philosophy, economics, and religion. The concepts of liberty, equality, and democracy were becoming popular through the writings of thinkers such as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Thomas Paine. Enlightenment philosophers and writers attacked the aristocracy and the monarchy, drawing much of their inspiration from the concept of the social contract.

The social contract was a feature of the writings of both Locke and Rousseau. It stated that a ruler rules at the behest of the people. If a ruler is unjust, according to the social contract, then the people have the right and the duty to replace that ruler.

## The American Revolution

- France supported the colonists against Great Britain
- Revolutionary ideals



Marquis de Lafayette

France strongly supported the colonies against Britain—its archenemy—during the American Revolution. The French government sent troops, ships, and cash to the Americans. The French, however, could ill afford to spend money on a foreign war that would yield little return for them.

The ideals of the American Revolution—and the Enlightenment principles that informed these ideals—inspired men like the Marquis de Lafayette to raise and lead regiments of their own troops to fight in America. French soldiers in America ultimately got to see firsthand both the price of liberty and its benefits. The success of the colonies in winning their independence also proved that it was possible for “the people” to throw off burdens placed upon it by an oppressive regime.

## Discussion Questions

1. Powerful and widespread anger among France's poor built up and burst forth in the French Revolution. Was this anger due more to France's all-powerful kings from Louis XIV to Louis XVI, or to the French aristocracy?
2. The wars France fought during the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV made France powerful, but they also helped bring on the French Revolution. How?
3. Which do you think was a more important cause of the French Revolution: the ideas of the Enlightenment or material factors such as drought and shortages of bread?

1. Answers may vary. Some may see the wealthy aristocrats who paid no taxes as the key source of peasant anger. Others may see the kings, who limited the aristocrats' powers but who spent lavishly in many ways as the source of the oppression peasants endured.
2. The wars established France as Europe's main continental power, but they drained and indebted France badly, requiring more taxation, which fell heavily on the poor and, in time, turned them against the social system.
3. Answers will vary and should be discussed. The question presents students with the broader issue of the role of ideas versus the role of material conditions in causing change. Some may stress the way the Enlightenment ideas led many to desire fundamental change, whereas others will see the drought and high price of bread as generating a mood of desperation that led people to act in revolutionary ways.

## Financial Crisis



Finance Minister Jacques Necker

- Jacques Necker
- Tax on property
- Calling of the Estates General

The expenditures France made on the American Revolution—along with the huge sums the king spent to maintain his lavish lifestyle—worsened its already precarious financial situation, and by the late 1780s the government lay close to bankruptcy. King Louis XVI’s Finance Minister, Swiss banker Jacques Necker, knew that the poor had already been taxed as much as possible and therefore a new source of revenue had to be found. Necker proposed levying a tax on all property: this essentially meant that the First and Second Estates—the Church and the nobles—would now have to pay taxes. Needless to say, neither of these groups supported this plan. The aristocracy, who saw their exemption from taxation as a birthright, refused to even discuss the issue. The Church, which had grown wealthy on tithes and property holdings, also rejected the idea of having to pay taxes on its lands. Since the First and Second Estates had balked at his plan, Necker urged the king to call a meeting of the Estates General in order to get the property tax implemented.

## The Estates General

- One vote per estate
- Clergy and nobility usually joined together to outvote the Third Estate
- Met in Versailles in May 1789
- Voting controversy



A meeting of the Estates General

Each estate had one vote in the Estates General, despite the fact that the First and Second Estates only represented three percent of the population of France. In addition, since the first two estates always voted together, if the Third Estate disagreed with them there was little it could do with its single vote.

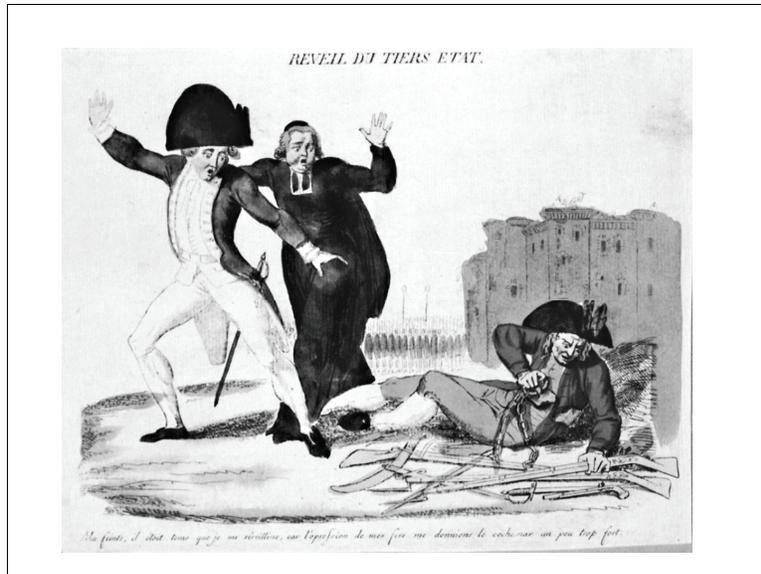
When the Estates General convened in Versailles in May 1789, the First and Second Estates had about 300 delegates each, while the Third Estate had about 600 delegates. A controversy over voting arose almost immediately, as the Third Estate demanded that rather than having one vote per estate, each delegate be given a vote. This would have allowed the Third Estate the opportunity to gain a majority. The king, however, rejected this proposal.

## The National Assembly



- The Third Estate took action and established its own government
- On June 17, 1789, the National Assembly was formed

After weeks of frustrating debate over voting, the representatives of the Third Estate declared themselves the “National Assembly” and claimed that they were France’s true representative body. They invited members of the other estates to join them, and some members of the clergy and aristocracy did so. The National Assembly was inspired by the influential Abbé Sieyes, who had earlier published a pamphlet that proclaimed the Third Estate and the nation were one.



Note to teacher: Take a few moments to discuss this cartoon, titled “The Third Estate Awakens.” Compare it with the earlier cartoon in slide 6 on the Three Estates.

## Confrontation With the King

- Louis XVI ordered the Third Estate locked out of the National Assembly's meeting hall
- The Tennis Court Oath
- The king reverses his position

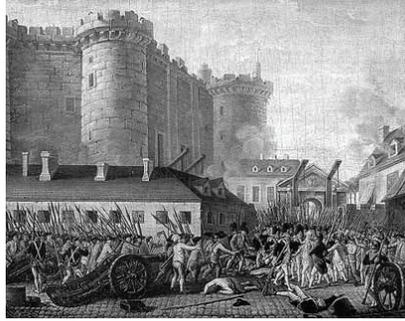


Artist Jacques Louis David's depiction of the Tennis Court Oath

Louis ordered that the National Assembly be locked out of its meeting place. He continued to insist that the estates meet separately and that the National Assembly be disbanded. The National Assembly responded by moving to a nearby tennis court, where they vowed not to leave until France had a constitution. This "Tennis Court Oath" gained the Assembly popularity among the working class and poor, and they even drew some of the more open-minded clergy and nobles to their side as well.

On June 27th, the king reversed his position and ordered the first two estates to join the National Assembly. He also decided to call French troops into Paris to try to keep a lid on the volatile situation.

## Storming of the Bastille



- Rioting in Paris in early July
- Firing of Necker
- July 14th: a mob storms and takes the Bastille

When rumors spread that the King was amassing troops, rioting started in the streets of Paris. On July 11th, Louis fired Necker, whose advocacy of easing the tax burden on the lower classes had made him quite popular among the Third Estate. Mobs in Paris reacted by seizing weapons from one armory and then attacking the Bastille, a prison and armory that was a prime symbol of royal absolutism. After a furious battle between the crowd and the prison guards, the Bastille fell; French soldiers had refused to stop the attack, a sign that Louis was losing further control. After the battle, the mob completely destroyed the Bastille.

The fall of the Bastille became the main symbol of the revolution. It also marked the end of the king's ability to enforce his authority.

## The Great Fear

- Rebellion spreads
- Peasants destroy the countryside
- End of feudal privileges



The revolution quickly spread to the countryside. Peasants, armed with pitchforks and other rudimentary weapons, overran estates and country houses and seized and destroyed records. To restore order, the National Assembly abolished feudal privileges on August 4th, thus making all French citizens equal in the eyes of the state.

## The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen



- Adopted by National Assembly on August 27th
- Enlightenment ideals
- Outlined basic freedoms held by all
- Asserted the sovereignty of the people
- “*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*”

Just as the Declaration of Independence had laid out the ideals of the American Revolution, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen set forth the ideals of the French Revolution. Adopted by the new French National Assembly on August 27, 1789, the document embodied the Enlightenment concepts of freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment. The first three articles read:

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.

Article 5 proclaimed limits on government authority, stating that, “The law has only the right to forbid those actions that are detrimental to society. Anything that is not forbidden by law may not be prevented, and none may be compelled to do what the law does not require.” Although the Declaration did not create a new constitution, it did create a new government with the King as a figurehead. Sovereignty now lay with the people rather than with the monarch. The principles of the Declaration were most clearly captured in the slogan of the French Revolution: “*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*” (“Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”).

## The March of Women

- Lower classes still unsatisfied
- Thousands of starving women and peasants march on Versailles
- Louis forced to return to Paris



Though the lower classes undoubtedly endorsed the ideas expressed in the Declaration, the issuing of the document still did not satisfy them—largely because the king refused to accept either the Declaration or the National Assembly’s abolition of feudalism. Louis had consequently abandoned Paris and moved to the royal Palace of Versailles in order to avoid the turmoil in the city. Meanwhile by October, food shortages had become critical again. On October 5th, a starving crowd of thousands of women marched on Versailles in order to get the king to accept the National Assembly’s measures. By the time they reached the royal palace, the march had become a mob. The National Guard attempted to maintain order, but the mob attacked the palace. Only when the king agreed to return to Paris was some semblance of order restored. Once back in the capital, the king and his family were essentially imprisoned in the Tuileries Palace.

## Civil Constitution of the Clergy



Cartoon depicting the confiscation of Church lands

- Financial crisis
- National Assembly confiscates and sells off church lands
- Church also secularized, reorganized
- Clergy oath of loyalty

Because the French economy still lay in chaos, the National Assembly decided to nationalize all church property and abolish monasteries. The confiscated lands were used as collateral to back paper currency called *assignats*. The church lands were then sold to bring in much-needed revenue; consequently, many churches were shut down.

The church was also secularized and reorganized under a new “Civil Constitution of the Clergy”: bishops and priests would be popularly elected, paid by the state, and required to sign an oath of allegiance to the constitution.

The National Assembly’s anti-Church measures caused a rift in French society and alienated a significant portion of the country’s population, most of whom were devout Catholics. From this time on, the peasants frequently opposed further revolutionary changes.

## Discussion Questions

1. In the meeting of the Estates General in the spring of 1789, the Third Estate demanded that each delegate be given one vote. Why was this demand so important to the Third Estate?
2. The Tennis Court oath may be seen as the first action that can be called truly “revolutionary” in the French Revolution. Why?

1. With the old rule of only one vote per estate, the first two estates could always outvote the Third Estates. But in the Estates General of 1789, the Third Estate had as many delegates as both the First and Second Estates combined. With a few supporters from those estates, a united First Estate with one vote for each delegate would dominate the proceedings.
2. It was the point at which the Third Estate officially and for the first time defied the king and his government and acted to form a new kind of governing system.

## Discussion Questions (continued)

3. The National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen on August 27 1789. Why was this not enough by fall of 1789 to satisfy many of the poor and stop them from rioting and protesting?
4. The “Civil Constitution of the Clergy” angered many in France, including large groups of peasants. It turned many peasants against the Revolution. Why do you think the National Assembly passed this measure? Why do you think many peasants turned against the Revolution because of it?

3. Answers will vary and should be discussed. Students may stress the vast wealth and power of the Church as justification for the action the National Assembly took. Others may see this action as arrogant in ignoring the deeply held feelings of millions whose support the revolutionaries needed.
4. Many members of the National Assembly were rationalists and were distrustful of “superstitious religion” and they wanted to seize the land. Many peasants remained loyal to the church.

## Flight of the King

- *Émigrés*
- Louis XVI and his family attempted to flee France
- They were arrested at Varennes



The capture of Louis XVI at Varennes

While the National Assembly was busy restructuring the relationship between the state and the church, Louis XVI and his family attempted to flee France. Many of the French nobility had left the country since July 1789; some of these *émigrés* (as they were known) had met with other European rulers and sought aid to fight against the revolution. Louis, who had been held prisoner in Paris since the mobs had forced him to leave Versailles, decided to try and join the *émigrés*. He and his family were caught, however, at the city of Varennes which lay only miles from the Austrian border. This attempt to escape further discredited Louis in the eyes of the public.

## Reaction from Other Countries



- Declaration of Pillnitz
- Possible foreign intervention

Illustration depicting Prussian King Frederick William III, Austrian Emperor Leopold II, and the Comte d'Artois, Louis XVI's brother

Other European rulers viewed events in France with dismay. They not only feared the possibility that the situation in France could undermine stability in Europe as a whole, but that the revolutionary fervor there could possibly even spread to their own countries. One result of this was the Declaration of Pillnitz, in which the monarchs of Austria and Prussia stated their willingness to intervene in France under certain circumstances—mainly to protect the French royal family. Most people in France saw the Declaration of Pillnitz as an affront to their nation's sovereignty, and several clamored for the government to declare war on Austria, which they viewed as the primary threat.

## New Constitution

- Constitutional monarchy
- New Legislative Assembly
- *Sans-culottes*



Painting depicting the 1791 constitution

After two years of argument, the National Assembly produced a constitution in September 1791. The document removed most of the king’s powers and provided for a new Legislative Assembly with the power to create laws. Though the constitution formalized France’s new status as a democracy, it did not solve the continuing problems of the national debt and of food shortages. The search for solutions to these problems led to a split in the Legislative Assembly. Radicals in the Assembly wanted to go beyond the constitution and make further changes that would give more power to the people. The most radical group in Paris was the *sans-culottes* (“those without knee breeches”), so named because they wore long trousers instead of the knee-length style of pants worn by the upper classes. They were wage-earners and shop keepers who wanted to exert more influence on the government even though they did not sit in the Assembly. The *sans-culottes* constituted a large segment of the Paris mob. Of the other factions in the Assembly, moderates supported some change while conservatives supported a limited monarchy. Outside of the Assembly there still existed a royalist faction—mainly nobles who had become *émigrés*—who wanted to restore the monarchy.



Note to teacher: The painting in this slide is an allegorical depiction of the 1791 constitution. The woman on the pedestal represents the constitution, the soldiers at the left represent the National Guard, and the other people represent the citizens of France. You may want to take a few minutes to discuss this painting with the class.

## War With Austria



Painting of the Battle of Valmy, 1792

- France declares war
- War of the First Coalition
- *Levee en masse*

In April 1792, France declared war on Austria, partly as a response to the Declaration of Pillnitz and partly because of a desire by the radicals to spread the revolution throughout Europe. The conflict became known as the War of the First Coalition, as Prussia joined Austria against France. The wartime atmosphere in France would eventually influence the Revolution and spill into the streets of Paris, when mobs attacked the Royal family again in August, fearful that a Coalition victory could restore Louis to power.

By early 1793, Austria and Prussia had been joined by Great Britain, Holland, and Spain. With the war at this time going badly for France, the National Convention decided to institute a draft called the *levee en masse*; it involved conscription of all able-bodied men between 18 and 25 into the army, which grew to 800,000 by 1794. The *levee* represented the first mass draft of soldiers on the European continent.

During 1793–94, France focused on defending itself against invasion; in the following year, French troops went on the offensive and occupied the Low Countries, the Rhineland, Switzerland, and parts of Spain. The Treaties of Basil in 1795 ended the war with Prussia and Spain. In 1796, French armies—commanded by a young officer named Napoleon Bonaparte—invaded Italy, won a series of battles against Austrian troops, and occupied strategic areas. The victories in Italy forced Austria to make peace with France, and the War of the First Coalition ended in 1797.

## Discussion Questions

1. Suppose Louis XVI had succeeded in escaping from France in June of 1791. How might the French Revolution have been different?
2. Why do you think France was successful in its war against the First Coalition even though that coalition was made up of some of the most powerful states in Europe?

1. Answers will vary and should be discussed. The escape could well have succeeded, so the question does force students to consider how a different outcome of such an event might push history in different directions.
2. Answers may vary, but students should see that France mobilized vast reserves of manpower through its draft, and that many of them may have fought with special dedication to defend the Revolution.

## The Radicals Take Over



Paris crowds storm the Tuileries

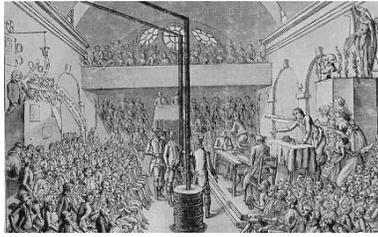
- Paris mob stormed Tuileries
- Louis and family seek aid of Legislative Assembly
- Arrested and deposed

Meanwhile in August 1792, the Paris Commune (the governing body of the city of Paris) led an angry mob, which had been controlled since Lafayette and the National Guard had fired on them the previous year, and attacked the royal family in the Tuileries, killed all of the king's Swiss guards, and forced Louis to seek refuge in the Legislative Assembly. He was taken prisoner, however, and the Assembly voted to depose him. King Louis XVI and his queen, Marie Antoinette, would never rule or see each other again.

The Legislative Assembly called for a new election to a National Convention to draft another new constitution for the French republic.

## The National Convention

- First met on September 21, 1792
- Revolutionary Calendar
- Monarchy abolished; France officially becomes a republic
- Factions: Jacobins vs. Girondins



A Jacobin club

The National Convention was the new legislative body that replaced the National Assembly. The first act of this new government was to officially remove the King from the French government. France was declared a republic. The National Convention also discarded the traditional Gregorian calendar in favor of a Revolutionary Calendar; the year 1792 was labeled as Year 1.

Two main factions dominated the National Convention. Jacobin clubs were radical political groups that had sprung up throughout France during the Revolution; initially, the Jacobins had total control of the National Convention. A split soon developed, however, between the Jacobins and the Girondins, who represented the provinces. The Girondins were soon expelled from the Jacobins because they were too moderate. The most radical Jacobins were called “The Mountain” because they sat in the highest seats of the hall where the National Convention met. All three groups agreed that Louis had committed treason, but only the Mountain demanded his execution.

## Leaders in the National Convention



Jean-Paul Marat



Georges Danton

One of the most prominent Jacobin leaders was Jean-Paul Marat, who had been an early advocate of abolishing the monarchy. He advocated the elimination of any of the “enemies of the Revolution” and thus supported the September 1792 massacres, in which 1200 political prisoners in the jails of Paris were killed by Jacobin-supported mobs. One of the most radical members of the National Convention, Marat strongly condemned the Girondins for being too moderate; the Girondins in turn saw him as an increasingly dangerous demagogue. On July 13, 1793, Marat was stabbed to death in his bathtub by Charlotte Corday, a young Girondin.

Another important Jacobin leader was Georges Danton, a member of the Commune of Paris who had helped organize the attack on the Tuileries and the overthrow of the monarchy. In the new republic, he became minister of justice. A member of the National Convention, he dominated the first Committee of Public Safety.

## Robespierre



- Lawyer
- Radical Jacobin
- Most controversial figure of the French Revolution

It was a country lawyer named Maximilien Robespierre who would come to symbolize much of the fanaticism of the French Revolution. First as a member of the National Convention and then as the head of the infamous Committee of Public Safety, he sought to have all of the ideals of the Revolution enforced and, in doing so, perverted the ideals so many had struggled to attain. In his own words, "...To establish and consolidate democracy, to achieve the peaceful rule of constitutional laws we must finish the war of liberty against tyranny... We must annihilate the enemies of the Republic at home and abroad or else we perish..."

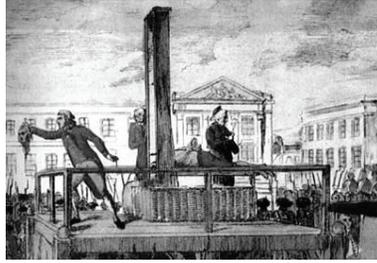
## The Guillotine

- Dr. Joseph Guillotin
- Intended as a more humane method of execution
- Thousands guillotined during the French Revolution



In October 1789, Dr. Joseph Guillotin proposed to the National Assembly that those condemned to death should be beheaded rather than hung, burned, or drawn and quartered. He argued that beheading was not only a quicker and more humane way to die, but that adopting a uniform method of execution would also be more democratic. In 1791, the Assembly consented and made the guillotine the official method of execution for France. It would soon become a prominent symbol of the French Revolution. The guillotine was first used in 1792; the crowd that had gathered to watch the new machine in action disliked it because death occurred too quickly—they preferred the gallows instead. During the course of the Revolution, thousands died by guillotine; at the height of its use in the city of Paris, over 1200 people were executed during a 13-month period (May 1793 to June 1794).

## Execution of the King



- On January 17, 1793, Louis XVI was convicted of treason
- He went to the guillotine four days later on January 21, 1793

The Mountain convinced the National Convention to charge Louis XVI with treason for conspiring with Austria and Prussia against France. He was found guilty and sentenced to death. He was guillotined.

## The Committee of Public Safety

- Created to cease an internal rebellion in 1793
- Given dictatorial power
- Ruled France for nearly a year



A citizen petitions the Committee of Public Safety

After the execution of the king, the National Convention declared war on Britain and Holland, who had joined the First Coalition against France (Spain later joined the Coalition as well). Meanwhile in the spring of 1793, a pro-monarchy revolt broke out in the region of La Vendee in the French countryside. In order to deal with the crisis, the National Convention created a Committee of Public Safety, which was given broad powers in order to cease the uprising. Initially headed by Danton, the Committee ended up ruling with almost dictatorial power for about a year. This development ultimately proved fatal for the Revolution.

The duties of the Committee of Public Safety seemed mundane enough at first. The Committee was charged with the tasks of drafting conscriptees into the French army via the *levee en masse*. The Committee soon went beyond this, however, and rapidly expanded its authority in order to safeguard the revolution. Its leading members were Danton, Marat, and Robespierre. Initially, Danton dominated the committee; however, he began to advocate more conciliatory policies and by the summer of 1793, he had been replaced by Robespierre and the more radical Jacobins. Robespierre would transform the committee into an instrument by which he could rid himself of rivals and enemies. He used the power of the Committee to more or less seize control of the National Convention, which he then induced to give the committee even more power. By this point, the Committee was essentially a dictatorship.

## The Reign of Terror



The execution of Marie Antoinette

- July 1793–July 1794
- Executions
- Death of Robespierre

Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety held power from July 1793 to July 1794, a period that has come to be known as the “Reign of Terror.” This period included a series of purges that took place in which nearly 40,000 people Robespierre labeled as “enemies” of the Revolution went to the guillotine. The Reign of Terror spared no one: nobles, clergy, and members of the Third Estate all were killed. Among the famous figures executed during this period were Danton, members of the National Convention who opposed Robespierre, and Queen Marie Antoinette.

Finally in July 1794, some members of the National Convention, fearing for their own safety, had Robespierre and his followers arrested and sent to the guillotine. The Reign of Terror had ended.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the new National Convention established a Revolutionary Calendar with the year 1792 labeled as Year 1?
2. Why do you think the events of 1792 and 1793 led the National Convention to depose Louis XVI and execute both him and, later, Queen Marie Antoinette? Do you think it was wise for the new leaders of France to do this? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think the most radical factions in the National Convention in 1792–93 were able to gain power over all the others?

1. Answers will vary. This question may seem to be about a trivial aspect of the French Revolution, but it is also a revealing one. Students could discuss the way many of France’s revolutionary leaders were inspired by Enlightenment thinking to reject much of Christian tradition as hopelessly backward and seek a total transformation to base all aspects of culture on “reason” as the reformers viewed it.
2. Answers will vary. Students should note the threats to France from the First Coalition, Louis XVI’s attempt to flee when many *émigré* aristocrats were plotting with foreign leaders, growing violence and some resistance to the Revolution inside France, etc.
3. This is a speculative question. Answers will vary and should be discussed thoroughly.

### Discussion Questions (continued)

4. Robespierre was the most famous leader on the Committee of Public Safety and he backed its Reign of Terror completely. He justified it this way: "...To establish and consolidate democracy, to achieve the peaceful rule of constitutional laws we must finish the war of liberty against tyranny... We must annihilate the enemies of the Republic at home and abroad or else we perish..." What conditions inside and outside France in 1793–94 do you think Robespierre saw as justifying this statement? Do you think those conditions did justify the statement? Why or why not?

4. Answers here will vary, but some of the factors mentioned in the answer for Question 2 in this section may apply here. Students should be encouraged to debate all sides of the second of the questions asked here.

## The Thermidorean Reaction

- Robespierre overthrown on 9 Thermidor
- Committee of Public Safety dismantled
- Jacobin clubs disbanded
- New constitution adopted in August 1795
- Executive branch known as the Directory



9 Thermidor meeting of the National Convention

The overthrow of Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety became known as the Thermidorean Reaction because it took place on the date of 9 Thermidor on the Revolutionary Calendar. The Committee of Public Safety was dismantled and so were all the Jacobin clubs. Some churches reopened, many political prisoners were released, and *émigrés* began returning.

In order to prevent any official group from dominating and taking over the national government the way the Committee of Public Safety had, another new constitution was adopted in August 1795. It created a two-house parliament which appointed an executive Directory of five men. Although supposedly democratic, the new constitution only gave the right to vote to about 20,000 men—mostly from the upper middle class.

## The Directory



Cartoon depicting the errors and bad judgment of the Directory

- Promoted middle class interests
- Financial crisis
- Food shortages
- Riots in Paris
- Rise of Napoleon

The Directory's tenure was marked by scandal, financial troubles, and political strife. It promoted middle class interests, which irritated the working poor. Combined with runaway inflation and food shortages, the people of Paris rebelled once again. The Directory had to call in the army to put down the riots. One such riot in 1795 was ended by the intervention of the army under the leadership of Napoleon Bonaparte. As a reward for his actions, Napoleon was given command of French forces fighting the Austrians in Italy.

## Napoleon Bonaparte

- Popularity rises after victories over the Austrians
- Conflict with Britain
- 1799 *Coup d'état*
- The Consulate



Napoleon's victories over the Austrians in Italy forced an end to the war and allowed France to gain extremely favorable terms in the subsequent peace treaty. Napoleon's achievements made him a national hero.

He next received command of an army training to invade England. Napoleon, however, felt an invasion might not be the best strategic move and decided instead to strike at British colonial possessions and attempt to take Egypt. French troops moved in and assumed control of the country; however, the British navy under Admiral Horatio Nelson destroyed the French fleet at Abukir Bay in 1799, leaving Napoleon stranded in Egypt.

Meanwhile back in France, the Directory was becoming more and more unpopular because of widespread corruption and its inability to solve the country's economic problems. With the Directory on shaky ground, Napoleon saw an opportunity to seize power. He abandoned his troops in Egypt and returned to France. On November 9, 1799, with the support of the army in France, he executed a successful *coup d'état* and overthrew the Directory. The French Revolution was over.

A new government called the Consulate was put into place. The Consulate was in theory a republican form of government headed by three consuls, of which Napoleon was first consul. He quickly took complete control of the entire government. In 1802, Napoleon was made consul for life.

## Napoleon Becomes Emperor



1804: Napoleon crowns himself emperor

In a lavish ceremony in 1804, Bonaparte crowned himself Emperor Napoleon I. The great revolutionary ideals and goals of the old Republic disappeared into the imperial government of a former Corsican general who had assumed absolute power. The French Revolution had come full circle: a country that had deposed a king had gained an emperor.

## Legacies of the French Revolution

- End of absolutism
- Power of nobles ended
- Peasants became landowners
- Nationalism
- Enlightenment ideals



As is the case with all historical events, opinions may vary on their significance or impact. What is agreed upon is that the Revolution brought an end to absolutism in France. Even when the monarchy was restored, it was not absolutist in nature. With the abolition of feudal privileges, the nobles lost their power and eventually their lands. The peasants and middle class came to possess land for the first time, and France became a nation of small landowning farmers.

The Revolution and the foreign wars associated with it also gave the French people a strong sense of national identity. Loyalties had shifted from a king or queen to the nation. This “nationalism” that began in France was spread by revolutionary and Napoleonic armies to the rest of Europe. The struggle for national liberation became one of the most important themes of 19th- and 20th-century European and world politics.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man was an outstanding example of the expression of Enlightenment ideals concerning freedom, equality, and rights. These ideals, along with the notion of equality before the law, would provide the basis for reform movements and new political philosophies in the 19th century.

## Discussion Questions

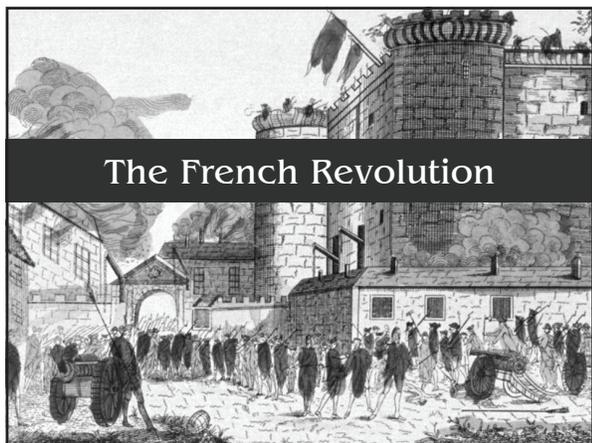
1. The new constitution of 1795 set up a parliament and the Directory in order to prevent a small official group like the Committee of Public Safety from taking over the national government again? Why do you think unrest continued even after the Directory took over?
2. Disorder only ended when Napoleon took power. Many historians see Napoleon as having ended the French Revolution. Yet many of the Revolution's accomplishments did persist into the future. What were some of its key accomplishments?

1. The parliament was based on a very limited suffrage. Most people could not vote for it; the Directory became mired in corruption; etc.
2. Key accomplishments were the ending of feudalism; turning many peasants into property owners; limiting the power of the Church and establishing religious toleration; a law code that treated citizens as equal, at least theoretically; etc.









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### Essential Questions

- What changes in political and economic conditions in the 1700s led to the crisis of the late 1700s and the outbreak of the French Revolution?
- How important in causing the French Revolution were the new Enlightenment ideas about natural rights, democracy, limited government, religious tolerance, and the use of reason in solving social and political problems?
- What, if anything, could king Louis XVI have done differently to keep the rising anger and frustration in France from triggering a full-scale revolution?

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### Essential Questions (continued)

- What role did the poor people of Paris and peasants in the countryside play in shaping the Revolution and the way it unfolded?
- Why did the Revolution go through the violent phase known as the Reign of Terror? Was that phase inevitable?
- In what ways did the Revolution fail, in what ways was it thwarted or reversed, and in what ways were its basic ideas and ideals realized?

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## Absolutism

- Absolute monarchs didn't share power with a counsel or parliament
- "Divine Right of Kings"



King James I of England

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## The Seigneurial System



Receiving a seigneurial grant

- Feudal method of land ownership and organization
- Peasant labor

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## Louis XIV

- Ruled from 1643–1715
- Reduced the power of the nobility
- Fought four wars
- Greatly increased France's national debt



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## The Seven Years' War



Louis XV



French and English troops fight at the battle of Fort St. Philip on the island of Minorca

- Louis XV
- War fought in Europe, India, North America
- France ends up losing some of its colonial possessions
- Increases French national debt

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## The Three Estates

- First Estate: clergy
- Second Estate: nobility
- Third Estate: the rest of society
- The Estates General



Cartoon depicting the three Estates

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## The Third Estate



- Taxation
- Crop failures

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## The Enlightenment



John Locke



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

- New ideas about society and government
- The social contract

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## The American Revolution

- France supported the colonists against Great Britain
- Revolutionary ideals



Marquis de Lafayette

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## Discussion Questions

1. Powerful and widespread anger among France's poor built up and burst forth in the French Revolution. Was this anger due more to France's all-powerful kings from Louis XIV to Louis XVI, or to the French aristocracy?
2. The wars France fought during the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV made France powerful, but they also helped bring on the French Revolution. How?
3. Which do you think was a more important cause of the French Revolution: the ideas of the Enlightenment or material factors such as drought and shortages of bread?

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## Financial Crisis



Finance Minister Jacques Necker

- Jacques Necker
- Tax on property
- Calling of the Estates General

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## The Estates General

- One vote per estate
- Clergy and nobility usually joined together to outvote the Third Estate
- Met in Versailles in May 1789
- Voting controversy



A meeting of the Estates General

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## The National Assembly



- The Third Estate took action and established its own government
- On June 17, 1789, the National Assembly was formed

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## Confrontation With the King

- Louis XVI ordered the Third Estate locked out of the National Assembly's meeting hall
- The Tennis Court Oath
- The king reverses his position



Artist Jacques Louis David's depiction of the Tennis Court Oath

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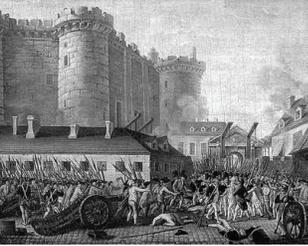
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## Storming of the Bastille



- Rioting in Paris in early July
- Firing of Necker
- July 14th: a mob storms and takes the Bastille

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## The Great Fear

- Rebellion spreads
- Peasants destroy the countryside
- End of feudal privileges



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## The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen



- Adopted by National Assembly on August 27th
- Enlightenment ideals
- Outlined basic freedoms held by all
- Asserted the sovereignty of the people
- “*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*”

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## The March of Women

- Lower classes still unsatisfied
- Thousands of starving women and peasants march on Versailles
- Louis forced to return to Paris



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## Civil Constitution of the Clergy



Cartoon depicting the confiscation of Church lands

- Financial crisis
- National Assembly confiscates and sells off church lands
- Church also secularized, reorganized
- Clergy oath of loyalty

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## Discussion Questions

1. In the meeting of the Estates General in the spring of 1789, the Third Estate demanded that each delegate be given one vote. Why was this demand so important to the Third Estate?
2. The Tennis Court oath may be seen as the first action that can be called truly "revolutionary" in the French Revolution. Why?

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## Discussion Questions (continued)

3. The National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen on August 27 1789. Why was this not enough by fall of 1789 to satisfy many of the poor and stop them from rioting and protesting?
4. The “Civil Constitution of the Clergy” angered many in France, including large groups of peasants. It turned many peasants against the Revolution. Why do you think the National Assembly passed this measure? Why do you think many peasants turned against the Revolution because of it?

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## Flight of the King

- *Émigrés*
- Louis XVI and his family attempted to flee France
- They were arrested at Varennes



The capture of Louis XVI at Varennes

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## Reaction from Other Countries



- Declaration of Pillnitz
- Possible foreign intervention

Illustration depicting Prussian King Frederick William III, Austrian Emperor Leopold II, and the Comte d'Artois, Louis XVI's brother

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## New Constitution

- Constitutional monarchy
- New Legislative Assembly
- *Sans-culottes*



Painting depicting the 1791 constitution

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## War With Austria



Painting of the Battle of Valmy, 1792

- France declares war
- War of the First Coalition
- Levee en masse

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## Discussion Questions

1. Suppose Louis XVI had succeeded in escaping from France in June of 1791. How might the French Revolution been different?
2. Why do you think France was successful in its war against the First Coalition even though that coalition was made up of some of the most powerful states in Europe?

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## The Radicals Take Over



Paris crowds storm the Tuileries

- Paris mob stormed Tuileries
- Louis and family seek aid of Legislative Assembly
- Arrested and deposed

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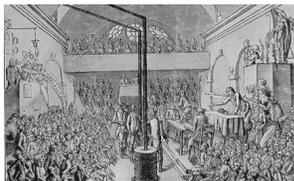
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## The National Convention

- First met on September 21, 1792
- Revolutionary Calendar
- Monarchy abolished; France officially becomes a republic
- Factions: Jacobins vs. Girondins



A Jacobin club

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## Leaders in the National Convention



Jean-Paul Marat



Georges Danton

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## Robespierre



- Lawyer
- Radical Jacobin
- Most controversial figure of the French Revolution

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## The Guillotine

- Dr. Joseph Guillotin
- Intended as a more humane method of execution
- Thousands guillotined during the French Revolution



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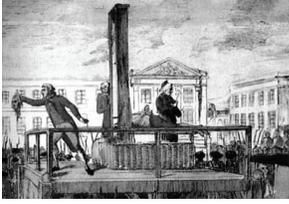
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## Execution of the King



- On January 17, 1793, Louis XVI was convicted of treason
- He went to the guillotine four days later on January 21, 1793

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## The Committee of Public Safety

- Created to cease an internal rebellion in 1793
- Given dictatorial power
- Ruled France for nearly a year



A citizen petitions the Committee of Public Safety

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## The Reign of Terror



The execution of Marie Antoinette

- July 1793–July 1794
- Executions
- Death of Robespierre

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## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the new National Convention established a Revolutionary Calendar with the year 1792 labeled as Year 1?
2. Why do you think the events of 1792 and 1793 led the National Convention to depose Louis XVI and execute both him and, later, Queen Marie Antoinette? Do you think it was wise for the new leaders of France to do this? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think the most radical factions in the National Convention in 1792–93 were able to gain power over all the others?

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## Discussion Questions (continued)

4. Robespierre was the most famous leader on the Committee of Public Safety and he backed its Reign of Terror completely. He justified it this way: "...To establish and consolidate democracy, to achieve the peaceful rule of constitutional laws we must finish the war of liberty against tyranny...We must annihilate the enemies of the Republic at home and abroad or else we perish..." What conditions inside and outside France in 1793–94 do you think Robespierre saw as justifying this statement? Do you think those conditions did justify the statement? Why or why not?

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## The Thermidorean Reaction

- Robespierre overthrown on 9 Thermidor
- Committee of Public Safety dismantled
- Jacobin clubs disbanded
- New constitution adopted in August 1795
- Executive branch known as the Directory



9 Thermidor meeting of the National Convention

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## The Directory



Cartoon depicting the errors and bad judgment of the Directory

- Promoted middle class interests
- Financial crisis
- Food shortages
- Riots in Paris
- Rise of Napoleon

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## Napoleon Bonaparte

- Popularity rises after victories over the Austrians
- Conflict with Britain
- 1799 *Coup d'etat*
- The Consulate



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## Napoleon Becomes Emperor



1804: Napoleon crowns himself emperor

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## Legacies of the French Revolution

- End of absolutism
- Power of nobles ended
- Peasants became landowners
- Nationalism
- Enlightenment ideals



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## Discussion Questions

1. The new constitution of 1795 set up a parliament and the Directory in order to prevent a small official group like the Committee of Public Safety from taking over the national government again? Why do you think unrest continued even after the Directory took over?
2. Disorder only ended when Napoleon took power. Many historians see Napoleon as having ended the French Revolution. Yet many of the Revolution's accomplishments did persist into the future. What were some of its key accomplishments?

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