

# The French Revolution (1789-1799)

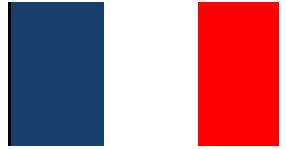
Headings	Notes															
THE CAUSES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>France’s absolute monarchy</b> – France was still ruled by the old feudal system (<b>ancien régime</b>) in the late eighteenth century with <b>Louis XVI</b> as the <b>absolute monarch</b> (he had total control over the country, claiming he had <b>a divine right to rule</b>). Louis’ wife, <b>Marie Antoinette</b>, was Austrian and unpopular with the French people as they lived a very extravagant lifestyle at a time when the French economy was poor.</li><li>• <b>The Enlightenment</b> was the movement of thinkers who valued science and reason above faith or authority as the basis for society in the eighteenth century. France was particularly engaged in the movement with writers such as <b>Voltaire</b>, <b>Rousseau</b> and <b>Montesquieu</b>. Their criticisms of the ancien regime and Louis’ absolute monarchy were widely read throughout France, leading to many challenging the idea that kings had <b>a divine right to rule</b>.</li><li>• <b>Social divisions in France</b> – French society was split into ‘<b>Three Estates</b>’.</li></ul>															
	<table><tr><th>First Estate</th><th>Second Estate</th><th>Third Estate</th></tr><tr><td>Clergy (priests and bishops)</td><td>Nobility (wealthy landowners who controlled the government and army)</td><td>The common people (everyone from well-off doctors, lawyers, teachers and merchants to poor peasants and labourers)</td></tr><tr><td>Approx. 100,000 people</td><td>Approx. 400,000 people</td><td>Approx. 25 million people</td></tr><tr><td>Did not pay taxes</td><td>Did not pay taxes</td><td>Paid taxes</td></tr><tr><td>Owned 10% of the land</td><td>Owned 60% of the land</td><td>Many peasants still lived under feudal law</td></tr></table>	First Estate	Second Estate	Third Estate	Clergy (priests and bishops)	Nobility (wealthy landowners who controlled the government and army)	The common people (everyone from well-off doctors, lawyers, teachers and merchants to poor peasants and labourers)	Approx. 100,000 people	Approx. 400,000 people	Approx. 25 million people	Did not pay taxes	Did not pay taxes	Paid taxes	Owned 10% of the land	Owned 60% of the land	Many peasants still lived under feudal law
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The impact of the American Revolution</b> – the French people were inspired by the events of the American revolution but the country’s economy had been bankrupted by its military support during the War of Independence. By the late 1780s, the government’s finances were in crisis which led to Louis XVI calling the first <b>Estates General</b> in 1775.</li></ul>																
Keywords	Summary															
Absolute monarch Ancien régime Louis XVI Marie Antionette The Enlightenment First Estate Second Estate Third Estate Estates General	France was still ruled by the old feudal system ( <b>ancien régime</b> ) at the end of the 18th century with <b>Louis XVI</b> as <b>absolute monarch</b> . Louis's wife <b>Marie Antoinette</b> was Austrian and unpopular with the French as they lived a very extravagant lifestyle at a time when the French economy was poor. <b>The Enlightenment</b> and its criticism of the old regime and the absolute monarchy were widely read throughout France and other European countries, leading many to begin challenging the idea that kings had a divine right to rule. By the late 1780s, government finances were in crisis, leading Louis XVI to convene the first <b>Estates General</b> in 1775 years where the <b>First Estate</b> (clergy), <b>Second Estate</b> (Nobles) and <b>Third Estate</b> (Common people) would vote on matters of the state.															

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<b>THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Estates General was a French parliament made up of three parts, each representing the three Estates. On the <b>5<sup>th</sup> May 1789</b>, the Estates General met at Versailles but could not agree on how voting should proceed.</li> <li>• The First and Second Estates wanted one vote for each estate so they could combine and outvote the Third Estate by two to one.</li> <li>• The Third Estate wanted one vote per member so that they could outvote the other two estates 621 votes to 593.</li> <li>• The Third Estate declared that they represented the French people and named themselves the <b>National Assembly</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They met on the Versailles tennis courts after they were locked out of their meeting room by the other two Estates where they swore the <b>Tennis Court Oath</b>; they would stay until a constitution for France was drawn up.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>The Storming of the Bastille</b> – tensions continued to rise in Paris during the summer of 1789 due to rising food prices and shortages. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The royal family were very much disengaged with the struggles of their people as seen when Marie Antionette declared “<b>Let them eat cake</b>” as she did not understand the people could not afford cake no more than they could afford bread.</li> <li>• The <b>citizens of Paris</b> feared the King would use the army to shut down the National Assembly so they formed their own <b>militia</b>, the <b>National Guard</b>, in response.</li> <li>• On the 14<sup>th</sup> July 1789, a large, angry crowd of <b>sans-culottes</b> (urban workers who supported the Revolution) attacked the <b>Bastille Prison</b> in Paris, stealing weapons and ammunitions as well as killing all active duty guards and beating the prison governor to death. The attack on the Bastille would become a symbol of the crushing of the old system and is still celebrated as <b>Bastille Day</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Keywords</b> Estates General National Assembly Tennis Court Oath The Storming of the Bastille “Let them eat cake” Militia National Guard Sans-culottes Bastille Day	<b>Summary</b> The <b>Estates General</b> met in Versailles but no agreement could be made in regards to how the voting should work. In protest, the Third Estate upon declaring themselves the <b>National Assembly</b> met on the Versailles tennis court where they swore the <b>Tennis Court Oath</b> ; they would stay until a constitution for France was drawn up. The royal family were disengaged with the sufferings of the French people with Marie Antoinette showing this through her comment, “ <b>Let them eat cake</b> ”. This comment was followed by the Storming of the Bastille when the Parisian sans-culottes attacked the Bastille Prison in Paris on the 14 <sup>th</sup> July 1789, creating a symbol of the crushing of the old system. It is still celebrated as <b>Bastille Day</b> each year. The Parisian citizens formed their own <b>militia</b> , the <b>National Guard</b> , in response to fears the King would fight them.

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Headings	Notes
<b>REVOLUTION IN FRANCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Reforms of the National Assembly</b> – The middle class, peasants and labourers around France began to attack the houses of nobles' and bishops'.</li> <li>• The National Assembly passed reforms such as abolishing the feudal system and tithes paid to the Church.</li> <li>• <b>The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen</b> was passed in August 1789 which declared all men are born free and equal. This document would lead to the modern document, United Nations' <b>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Symbols of the revolution</b> included the slogan '<b>Liberty, Equality and Fraternity</b>' as well as a new <b>tricolour flag</b> for France. This flag had the blue and red representing the colours of Paris on either side of the white of the royal family. This was to symbolise the people's power and dominance over royalty.</li> <li>• <b>The Flight to Varennes</b> – in <b>June 1791</b>, Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette escaped Paris while disguised as servants but were caught at the town of <b>Varennes</b> and returned to Paris.</li> <li>• <b>War with Austria</b> – The National Assembly declared war on Austria in <b>April 1792</b>. The Austrians were supported by the Prussians, winning several early victories over the ill-prepared French army. These defeats led to the sans-culottes suspecting King Louis of helping enemies of France. They stormed the <b>Tuileries Palace</b> where the royal family had been placed under house arrest and imprisoned them.</li> <li>• <b>The First French Republic</b> – huge numbers joined the French army to protect the country from those they believed wanted to stop the Revolution, helping the army defeat these enemies. The new <b>National Convention</b> declared France a <b>republic</b> (government without a king where the people are sovereign). During the celebrations, mobs broke into Parisian prisons where they executed over 1,000 '<b>enemies of the revolution</b>' in the <b>September Massacres</b>.</li> <li>• <b>The end of the French Monarchy</b> – Louis XVI was tried by the Convention and found guilty of treason for which he was executed at the <b>guillotine</b> in <b>January 1793</b>. Nine months later, Marie Antoinette was also executed. Britain, Spain and the Netherlands responded by declaring war on France.</li> </ul>
<b>Keywords</b> Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' Flight to Varennes Tuileries Palace First French Republic National Convention September Massacres Guillotine	<b>Summary</b> The <b>National Assembly</b> made various reforms such as abolishing the feudal system and tithes. They passed <b>the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen</b> which proclaimed that all men are born equal and free. The slogan of the revolution became ' <b>Liberty, Equality and Fraternity</b> '. The royal family tried to flee ( <b>The Flight to Varennes</b> ) but were captured & returned to Paris. As war was declared on Austria, the sans-culottes descended on the <b>Tuileries Palace</b> to arrest the King for suspected treason. The <b>National Convention</b> announced the <b>First French Republic</b> . The September Massacres saw over 1, 000 ' <b>enemies of the revolution</b> ' executed. <b>Louis XVI</b> was <b>executed</b> by the <b>guillotine</b> in January 1793, marking the end of the monarchy.



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Headings	Notes
THE REIGN OF TERROR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794)</b> was a leading member of the <b>Jacobins</b> (a radical French political group) and very popular with the Paris sans-culottes. He became president of the <b>Committee of Public Safety</b> which was founded after the declarations of war on France.</li> <li>• The Committee assumed absolute power and launched the <b>Reign of Terror</b>. Anybody who was even suspected of betraying the Revolution was punished under the <b>Law of Suspects</b>. Such punishments included the crushing of a <b>rebellion</b> in the <b>Vendée</b> which resulted in the deaths of nearly 250,000 people. There was also a mass enlistment into the French army to fight the combined armies that had declared war on the country.</li> <li>• By June 1794, people expected the Reign of Terror to end. Robespierre, instead, intensified it. He went as far to target members of the National Convention, turning the one loyal sans-culottes against him.</li> <li>• On the <b>27<sup>th</sup> July 1794</b>, <b>Robespierre</b> was arrested, tried and <b>executed</b> along with his supporters</li> <li>• The end of the French Revolution was marked by the formation of <b>The Directory</b>, a more moderate government in 1795.</li> </ul>
THE RESULTS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Directory was overthrown in <b>1799</b> by <b>Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)</b> who would later declare himself <b>Emperor of France</b> in <b>1804</b>.</li> <li>• The revolution's ideas and slogan of '<b>Liberty, Equality, Fraternity</b>' spread to other European countries as people began to call for better democracy and the abolishment of monarchies.</li> <li>• All over Europe, the power of the <b>nobility was reduced</b> dramatically as the <b>middle class</b> gained more and more political power.</li> <li>• The ideas of the French Revolution and the American Revolution, <b>inspired some Irishmen to fight for the liberty of Ireland</b> which resulted in the <b>1798 United Irishmen Rebellion</b>.</li> <li>• The French Rebellion marked the idea of <b>nationalism</b> ('<b>the Birth of a Nation</b>') as more and more people desired to rule their own country by sovereign, democratic means rather than being ruled by imperial powers.</li> <li>• The <b>metric system</b> of weights and measurements (meters and kilos) and the decimalisation of currency were invented and are still used to this day in all but three countries around the world.</li> </ul>
Keywords	Summary
<p>Maximilien Robespierre</p> <p>Jacobins</p> <p>Committee of Public Safety</p> <p>Reign of Terror</p> <p>Napoleon Bonaparte</p> <p>1798 Irish Rebellion</p> <p>Nationalism</p> <p>Metric System</p>	<p><b>Maximilien Robespierre</b>, a leading member of the political group, the <b>Jacobins</b> would come to power in France when he was elected as president of the <b>Committee of Public Safety</b>. They launched the <b>Reign of Terror</b>, punishing anyone suspected of betraying the Revolution. Robespierre was overthrown and executed in 1794 as the French Revolution came to its end. He was replaced by a more moderate government, The Directory in 1795. The Directory itself was overthrown by <b>Napoleon Bonaparte</b> who would later declare himself <b>Emperor of France</b>. The French Revolution would inspire a call for better democracy, the reduction of the power of nobility across Europe, the <b>1798 Irish Rebellion</b>, the rise of <b>nationalism</b> and the <b>metric system</b>.</p>

# The French Revolution (1789-1799)

Keywords	Definition
<b>Absolute monarch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A political system in which the king or queen has sole power to decide the laws without the restriction of a government or constitution.</li> </ul>
<b>Ancien Régime</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The political system in France before the 1789 Revolution.</li> </ul>
<b>Bastille</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A medieval fortress in Paris that was used as a prison for enemies of the king.</li> </ul>
<b>Bourgeoisie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The middle class or wealthier members of the Third Estate.</li> </ul>
<b>Committee of Public Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A group of twelve men selected by the National Convention in 1793 to govern France. It was dominated by Maximilien Robespierre.</li> </ul>
<b>Corvée</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peasants of the Third Estate were required to provide unpaid labour instead of tax payments.</li> </ul>
<b>Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outlined basic rights that people were entitled to, e.g. freedom of religion and freedom of speech.</li> </ul>
<b>Democracy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'rule by the people'; a form of government where the people decide how the country is run and who will represent them.</li> </ul>
<b>Émigré</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A noble who fled France during the Revolution.</li> </ul>
<b>Jacobins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A group of politicians with extreme ideas who supported the Revolution.</li> </ul>
<b>Liberté, Egalité et Fraternité</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular slogan during the French Revolution that promoted the idea that people should be free, treated equally and treat one another like brothers and sisters.</li> </ul>
<b>Reign of Terror</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A period from 1793 to 1794 of harsh and violent measures that saw the execution of 16,000 counter-revolutionaries by the Committee of Public Safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Republic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A country where the people elect their leaders in free and fair elections. The head of state is an elected president rather than a king or queen.</li> </ul>
<b>Revolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A rapid and significant change in society, politics, technology or the economy.</li> </ul>
<b>Sans-culottes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The people of Paris who supported the Revolution. It translates as 'without knee-length trousers' as they wore long trousers instead of the expensive silk breeches and stockings worn by the rich.</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis Court Oath</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A solemn promise made by members of the National Assembly never to separate until a written constitution was created for France.</li> </ul>
<b>The Enlightenment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A period from the late 1600s to the early 1800s when writers and thinkers questioned traditional ideas such as the divine right of kings. Also known as the Age of Reason.</li> </ul>
<b>The Estates General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An assembly called by the king and made up of representatives from each of the three estates.</li> </ul>
<b>The Three Estates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The three social groups that existed in France before the Revolution: the First Estate (Clergy), the Second Estate (Nobles) and the Third Estate (Commoners).</li> </ul>