

Objective: What were the causes and effects of the French Revolution?

Warm-Up: Choose one.

1. Write about a time when you or someone you know had to stand up for what was right.
2. What do you think you know about the French Revolution?

HW:

Pages 336-339, Answer pg. 339 #1-5 on loose leaf



American Revolution

Causes: The 13 British colonies in North America were upset over a lack of **representation** in **Parliament**, and perceived over taxing. This resulted in a short period of protests and demonstrations, until July 4, 1776, when the American Colonists declared **independence**. War followed with the Americans emerging victorious.

Effects: The American Republic, based upon **Enlightenment** ideas, became a symbol of freedom in Europe and Latin America. The **United States Constitution** became a model for liberal government. The American Revolution's success inspired others to revolt against their governments.



French Revolution

Causes: The French Revolution has **political, social,** and **economic** causes. Politically, France suffered under an **Absolute Monarchy**, and most people were denied basic rights, or a say in their government. Socially, France was divided among **3 Estates**, or classes. The 3rd Estate, which constituted 98% of the population, had the fewest rights, the least amount of land, and the heaviest tax burden. Economically, France faced a severe financial crisis due to overspending. Also, bad harvests resulted in food shortages. The Third Estate faced the greatest burden because of these problems.

In **1789**, **King Louis XVI** called the **Estates General**, France's weak legislative body to deal with the crisis. The meeting begins the French Revolution as the Third Estate attempts to better their situation by taking control of government.





Stages of the French Revolution

1st Stage: National Assembly

Third Estate declares itself the National Assembly, vows to write new **Constitution**. (1789)

2nd Stage: Limited Monarchy

New Constitution of 1791 limits the monarchy, sets up a representative assembly.

3rd Stage: Radicals

1792, Radicals take over. Maximillien Robespierre is leader. Reign of Terror, many die as result.

4th Stage: Directory

Moderates return to government. In 1795, 5 man Directory runs country. Government very weak.

5th Stage: Napoleon

1799 **Coup d'etat**... takes control from Directory. 1802 - names himself Emperor of the French. Absolute government again.

Effects: The French Revolution provides an **example** to other nations, especially Latin America. The democratic ideas of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" were spread across Europe. Also, nationalist ideas were spread, which would in turn lead to the **unification** of **Italy** and **Germany**. The growing **Middle Class** asserted their power, and would come to dominate politics throughout Europe as limitations were placed on existing monarchs, or they were ousted in favor of other forms of government.



Video...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITTvKwCyIFY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUrEJBsWLfA>

What STUCK with you?

- On the post-it provided, write one thing that stuck with you today.
- OR
- Answer this question: What was one cause and one effect of the French Revolution?

1. This program opens with a discussion of Louis XVI's inexperience as leader.
How do you think Louis XVI's qualities as a leader led to the French Revolution?
2. What were some of the causes of the French Revolution discussed in this program?
3. What was the "Enlightenment"? Who were some of its major thinkers and writers?
4. Why did the French people have such negative feelings toward Marie Antoinette?
5. What was the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen"? How does it relate to the U.S. Constitution?
6. What was the Third Estate? Which groups in French society did it include?
7. One of the historians interviewed in this program calls the French Revolution "the crossroads of the modern world." What do you think this means? Do you agree with this claim?
8. At first, it seemed that King Louis XVI would cooperate with some of the demands of the Third Estate. Why do you think he ultimately reacted so violently against them?
9. What kind of leader was Robespierre? Do you think he did a good job of representing the wishes of the French people?
10. What was the role of women in the French Revolution? Can you think of some examples of their contribution to the Revolution from this program?
11. Why do you think the initial goals of the Revolution became so distorted during the "Reign of Terror"? Why do you think Robespierre had so much fear of political traitors?
12. What do you think were the most important long-term effects of the French Revolution? What were its legacies?

From Monarchy to Revolution

- King Louis XVI inherited the French throne in 1774
- France was in financial crisis; as taxes rise, a huge percentage of the population was suffering from starvation
- At a meeting of the Estates-General in 1789, the Third Estate revolts and forms the National Assembly
- With the “Tennis Court Oaths” the Third Estate demanded the formation of a Constitutional Monarchy to provide them with more political representation

Questions

1. Which groups in France made up each one of the three estates?
2. What are some of the reasons the documentary gives for the dissatisfaction of the Third Estate?
3. Why do you think King Louis XVI gave in at first to some of the demands of the Third Estate?
4. Marie Antoinette’s nickname was _____, indicating her uncontrolled spending habits as many French suffered from starvation.

The French Revolution in Action

- Leaders of the Third Estate outlined their desire for basic human rights with the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” in 1789
- Maximillian Robespierre assumed a major leadership role in the French Revolution
- Facing repression from the crown, hundreds of French citizens destroyed the Bastille in July of 1789
- The more radical faction of the Revolution, known as the Jacobins, assumed power
- Many French commoners took to the streets to demand change; the monarchs tried to escape but were driven back to Paris in 1791 to face trial

Questions

1. What role did the “Enlightenment” play in driving the French people to participate in the Revolution?
2. Why was the guillotine considered a more humane form of punishment?
3. Jean-Paul Marat published a newspaper called _____ which supported the main political group leading the Revolution, the Jacobins.
4. What do you think the majority of French people wanted to see changed as a result of the Revolution? Why were they so upset?

From Revolution to “Reign of Terror”

- Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were both executed in 1793 as the Revolution continued
- Robespierre formed the Committee of Public Safety to try to restore order in the streets as chaos ruled
- The radical faction within the Revolution seized control and tens of thousands of French were executed by guillotine
- In 1799 the revolutionary phase was officially over as Napoleon seized power

Questions

1. Robespierre stated “Louis must die, that the country can live.” What do you think this quote means?
2. Why do you think the executions by guillotine in France were public events?
3. The _____ was the phase of the Revolution in which huge numbers of French people were executed.
4. What do you think is the greatest legacy of the French Revolution?

One of the most important documents to emerge from the French Revolution was the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” written by the Marquis de Lafayette in 1789. This document was based on the United States Constitution, which had just been drafted and stood as a model for the French republic.

There are many similarities between these two documents, but there are also ways in which they are distinct. Break up into groups of four or five. At the library or using the Internet, locate these two documents. Read the first sections of both documents and explore their similarities and differences. Then, on a piece of posterboard or large construction paper, create two columns, one for each document. In each column, list the five major rights each document secures for its citizens. Be sure to note as well which members of society were afforded these full citizenship rights and which were not.



