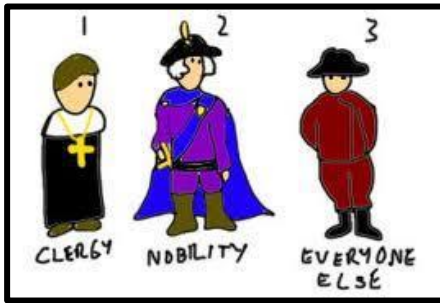




The French Revolution

Enduring Understanding: The global spread of democratic ideas and nationalist movements occurred during the nineteenth century. To understand the effects of nationalism, industrialism, and imperialism, you will explain the causes, key events, and outcomes of the French Revolution, including the storming of the Bastille, the Reign of Terror, and Napoleon's rise to power.



The Three Estates

The French Revolution was inspired by the Enlightenment and the American Revolution.

The French Revolution was caused, in part, by the social imbalance of the *Old Regime*. Under this system, France was divided into three social classes, called estates: the First Estate, Second Estate, and Third Estate.



Political Cartoon Depicting the Struggles of the Third Estate

The **First Estate** was the Roman Catholic clergy, who owned fifteen percent of the land and made up one percent of the population. The **Second Estate**, the nobility, made up two percent of the population and owned up to twenty-five percent of the land. The **Third Estate** made up the majority of the population, with the bourgeoisie, or middle class, at the top. This estate included lawyers, craftsmen, merchants, and peasants. They paid 100% of the taxes in France and owned about sixty percent of the land. They were underrepresented in government and had very little voice in decision making.

Section Review:

1) What inspired the French Revolution?

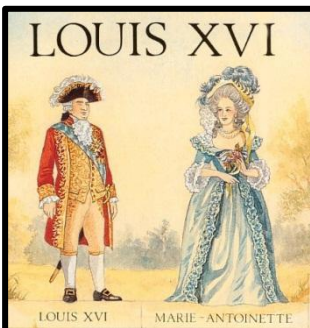
2) What was one cause of the French Revolution?

3) What part of the population was the First Estate? (percent/job)

4) What part of the population was the Second Estate? (percent/job)

5) What part of the population was the Third Estate? (percent/job)

6) Did France have a fair tax system before the French Revolution? Explain.



Another cause of the French Revolution was created by **King Louis XVI**, who was a weak and extravagant leader in a time of crisis. He had incurred great debts caused by war, including French involvement in the American Revolution, and his own spending. His people were already highly taxed, and banks refused to loan him any more money. This required him to call together the **Estates-General**, the French legislative body made up of representatives from each estate.

After the calling of the Estates-General, the Third Estate insisted on a new power structure that would allow every male citizen a vote instead of each Estate collectively having one vote. This change would guarantee them greater representation in the Estates-General. When their request was denied, they seceded (broke-away) and formed the **National Assembly**, a government consisting of delegates from the Third Estate, symbolizing an end to absolute monarchy and the start of representative government in France.



The Meeting of the Estates General



The Signing of the Tennis Court Oath

When the king shut out the Third Estate (the National Assembly) from the proceedings of the Estates General at the Palace of Versailles a few days later, they gathered on the king's tennis courts to write a new constitution for the government called the **Tennis Court Oath**.

Section Review:

- 7) How was King Louis XVI a cause of the French Revolution?
- 8) What was the Estates General?
- 9) How did the Third Estate respond when shut out of the Estates General?
- 10) What is the Tennis Court Oath?

Shortly thereafter, on July 14, 1789, a mob of peasants stormed the **Bastille**, a prison and armory. The peasants got weapons from the Bastille and then tore the Bastille down, because it was a symbol of the King's power. This event triggered the beginning of the French Revolution. (Bastille Day is a national holiday in France and is celebrated every July 14.) Riots then broke out across the countryside as peasants began raiding the homes of nobles, killing and looting in response to their anger at the unfair Estate System and their increased poverty.

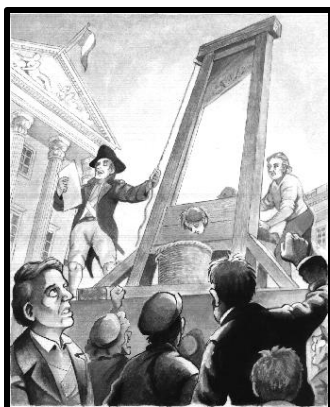


The Storming of the Bastille

In 1791, a **constitutional monarchy** was established in France. This significantly weakened the power of King Louis XVI and granted power to the people in the form of the Legislative Assembly. The revolution became increasingly radical or extreme in nature.

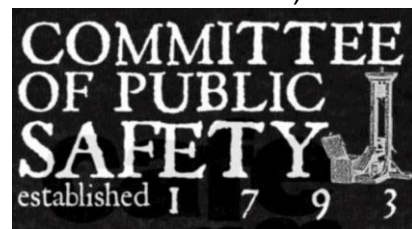
Section Review:

- 11) Why did peasants storm the Bastille?
- 12) What did the peasants gain from the Bastille?
- 13) How did peasants throughout France react to the storming of the Bastille?
- 14) How was the power of King Louis XVI weakened after the storming of the Bastille?



Guillotine

In late 1791, the constitution was set aside, King Louis XVI was imprisoned, and the legislature took over in the form of the **National Convention**. The Convention declared France a republic based on universal male suffrage. This means that all males could vote. The Convention initiated a military draft to raise an army to protect the revolution from the armies of other European monarchs and instituted the **guillotine** (a device used for execution) as a way of protecting the revolution from "enemies" within France. They considered "enemies of the revolution" to be anyone who spoke out against the revolution or did not fully support the revolution.



Many members of the Convention were **Jacobins**, a radical revolutionary group. **Radicals** are people who favor quick and far-reaching changes to set up a new government. From this group, **Maximilien Robespierre** gained increased power until he became the leader of the **Committee of Public Safety** in mid-1793.



Guillotine

Robespierre gained power as a dictator and began the **Reign of Terror** in France. During the Reign of Terror, violence escalated with the mass execution of 25,000-40,000 citizens. These citizens were deemed “enemies of the revolution” and executed by guillotine. Most of those executed were nobles. King Louis XVI and his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette, were also guillotined. Members of the National Convention, fearing for their own lives, determined that Robespierre was too radical and executed him in July of 1794.

Section Review:

15) How was the National Convention an example of a limited government?

16) What did the Convention do to help “protect” the revolution?

17) Who were the Jacobins?

18) What is a radical?

19) How did Maximilien Robespierre come to power?

20) Describe the Reign of Terror?

After the execution of Robespierre, the revolution took a more **conservative**, or traditional, turn. From 1795 to 1799, France was ruled by five moderate men known as the **Directory**. During this time, **Napoleon Bonaparte** was making a name for himself in the French army. When the Directory lost favor in France in 1799, Bonaparte staged a **coup d'état**, swift seizure of government usually by someone within the government, and took the title of **First Consul**.



Napoleon Bonaparte

As ruler of a country that had been unstable for nearly ten years, Napoleon established a national banking system, set up an efficient taxation system, and ended government corruption. He restored the position of the Catholic Church in France, gaining the favor of the people and of the Pope. He also wrote a uniform system of laws known as the **Napoleonic Code**. In 1804, with the support of the people, Napoleon crowned himself emperor. Napoleon began his quest for a European empire and by 1812 controlled most of Europe.

Section Review:

20) Why did the French Revolution become more conservative following the Reign of Terror?

21) How did the Directory rule France?

22) What is a coup d'état?

23) What did Napoleon Bonaparte do for France after his coup d'état?

24) After crowning himself emperor in 1804, what was Napoleon's goal?

Sources

Cover Image 1: O'Connor, Christina. "The French Revolution." History Matters. St. Mary's Secondary School, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <<http://www.historymatters365.com/the-french-revolution.html>>.

Image 1: "I. Interpreting the French Revolution." The French Revolution. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/~lcall/111/week_five.html>.

Image 2: "French People and Society." Relay of Revolutions. Wikispaces, 25 Aug. 2010. Web. 19 June 2014. <<https://3A%2F%2Frelay-of-revolutions.wikispaces.com%2FInNo%2BJuneShin%2B08.25.10>>.

Image 3: "Louis XVI and His Queen Marie Antoinette." Flickr. Yahoo!, 29 May 2006. Web. 19 June 2014. <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/90902897%40N00/156154034/in/photostream/>>.

Image 4: Monnet, Charles. "Estates-General of 1789." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, 15 June 2014. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estates-General_of_1789>.

Image 5: David, Jacques-Louis. "Tennis Court Oath." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, 15 June 2014. Web. 18 June 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennis_Court_Oath>.

Image 6: Martin, Socks 16. "The Storming of the Bastille." Glogster. Glogster, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <<http://www.glogster.com/socks16martin/the-storming-of-the-bastille/g-6n8n5tk48d8v3j4m5hdmaa0>>.

Image 7: "The Guillotine: A Humane Form of Execution - HistoryWiz." The Guillotine: A Humane Form of Execution - HistoryWiz. History Wiz, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <<http://www.historywiz.com/guillotine.htm>>.

Image 8: Wood, Brandon. "The Committee of Public Safety." Vimeo. N.p., 2012. Web. 19 June 2014. <<http://vimeo.com/31889431>>.

Image 9: Turner, Kerry. "Week 11-Reign of Terror." Year 8 History. WordPress, 2 Dec. 2009. Web. 19 June 2014. <<https://nhsboyshistory.wordpress.com/tag/execution-of-louis-xvi/>>.

Image 10: David, Jacques-Louis. "Napoleon Crossing the Alps." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, 18 June 2014. Web. 18 June 2014. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon>>.