

members of the bourgeoisie because of its restrictions on trade. Revolutionaries were influenced by the success of England's Glorious Revolution (1688-1689) and the American Revolution (1775-1783).

Short-term causes of the French Revolution include a number of events which occurred during the time immediately before the revolution. The year 1789 featured the worst famine in memory. Hungry, impoverished peasants were unable to pay their taxes. As plans were made for a meeting of the Estates-General, these peasants feared that nobles were seeking greater privileges. Attacks on nobles occurred throughout France throughout the year.

Long- and Short-Term Causes

Things very seldom happen in a vacuum. Historically, events or changes occur due to a combination of short-term and long-term causes.

Long-term causes are also known as underlying causes. Long-term causes can stem back many years.

Short-term causes are also known as immediate causes. Short-term causes occur close to the most when change or action takes place.

Long-term causes of the French Revolution include everything previously discussed, such as the bankruptcy of the French government and the unfairness of life under the Old Regime. The Assembly of Notables voted down taxation for the nobility in 1787, leaving the question of increasing tax revenues unanswered. Additionally, the system of mercantilism angered many

Illustrate your understanding of the difference between long- and short-term causes. Select an event from recent history, or from your own life. Describe this event and both its long- and short-term causes.

The Estates-General

France's Louis XVI was left with no choice but to call for a meeting of the Estates-General in order to find a solution to the country's financial crisis. The Estates-General was a political body made up of representatives from the three estates, and this group had

not met since 1614. The king's convening of the Estates-General set in motion a series of events which ultimately led to abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a completely new socio-political system for France.

During the winter of 1788-1789, members of the three estates elected representatives for the Estates-General. People wrote *cahiers*, traditional lists of grievances. These *cahiers* asked for nothing out of the ordinary—just requests for moderate changes.

Define *cahiers*. _____

May 5, 1789

The Estates-General met on May 5, 1789. Voting was conducted by estate, with each estate casting a single vote. This meant that the First Estate and the Second Estate could operate as a bloc to stop the Third Estate from having its way.

Representatives from the Third Estate demanded that voting be conducted based on population. Since the population of the Third Estate was so large, voting by population would give the Third Estate a tremendous advantage.

The Estates-General could not reach an agreement on voting. Deadlock resulted.

With which group do you agree—with the First Estate and Second Estate, which supported voting by estate, or with the Third Estate, which supported voting by population? Explain your answer.



The Tennis Court Oath by Jacques Louis David.

The Tennis Court Oath

The Third Estate reacted to the deadlock by declaring itself to be the National Assembly. Louis XVI responded to this by locking the Third Estate out of the meeting. The Third Estate relocated to a nearby indoor tennis court. In this tennis court, members of the Third Estate vowed that they would stay together and create a written constitution for France.

On June 23, 1789, Louis XVI relented to the demands of the Third Estate. The king ordered the three estates to meet together as the National Assembly. The National Assembly would vote, by population, on a constitution for France.

Primary Source: The Tennis Court Oath

"The National Assembly, considering that it has been summoned to establish the constitution of the kingdom, to effect the regeneration of the public order, and to maintain the true principles of monarchy; that nothing can prevent it from continuing its deliberations in whatever place it may be forced to establish itself; and, finally, that wheresoever its members are assembled, there is the National Assembly;

"Decrees that all members of this Assembly shall immediately take a solemn oath not to separate, and to reassemble wherever circumstances require, until the constitution of the kingdom is established and consolidated upon firm foundations; and that, the said oath taken, all members and each one of them individually shall ratify this steadfast resolution by signature."

Does the text of this document call for the overthrow of the French monarch? Explain your answer using quotes from the text.

Analyzing Political Cartoons



A contemporary political cartoon, showing the Third Estate welcoming the nobles and the clergy to the ranks of the National Assembly, June 30, 1789.

Based on your knowledge of how the National Assembly was formed, do you believe that the above political cartoon is an accurate portrayal of its first official meeting on June 30, 1789? Explain your answer.



Marie Antoinette and her children.

Four Phases (Periods) of the French Revolution

The French Revolution lasted from 1789 until 1799. This ten-year period saw many changes in France. The French Revolution is divided into four phases, each named for the governmental body which ruled the country at the time.

- National Assembly (1789-1791)
- Legislative Assembly (1791-1792)
- Convention (1792-1795)
- Directory (1795-1799)

Although people tend to think of revolutions as violent eruptions that do not last very long, the historical reality is that revolutions can take several years before they are complete. Why do you think that the French Revolution lasted for a decade?

Storming of the Bastille

Despite acquiescing to the demands of the Third Estate, Louis XVI did not actually want a written constitution. The king planned to use his troops to control the National Assembly. When news of the king's plan to use military force against the National Assembly reached Paris on July 14, 1789, people stormed the

Bastille, a prison which served as a symbol of royal power used as an arsenal. Weapons seized from the Bastille were used by the people of Paris to riot against the government.

Today, July 14 is celebrated as Bastille Day, the official start of the French Revolution.

Why did Parisians storm the Bastille?



STORMING THE BASTILLE

Uprising in Paris and Beyond

Following the storming of the Bastille, Parisians organized their own government, which they called the Commune. Very quickly, small groups—factions—competed to control the city of Paris.

The Paris uprising soon spread throughout France. Nobles everywhere were attacked. Records of feudal dues and tax bills were destroyed. Many nobles decided to leave the country; those who fled abroad became known as *émigrés*.

Nobles who fled France became known as what? _____
