



# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

NAME|

BLOCK|



## ~ THE REIGN of LOUIS XVI (pgs. 64-74)



- Was not ready or very interested in ruling France
- Often left very important decisions to other people
  - Did not do a lot to improve conditions for the Middle Class (*bourgeoisie*) and lower classes as he had little contact with them
  - Louis found it difficult to rule France for the following reasons:
    - Laws and languages were different throughout France
    - Some laws were based on ancient Roman law, while some were based on local customs
    - Many people in France did not speak French; spoke Breton, German or various dialects according to the region
- Merchants and artisans had to pay taxes and duties at border stops; shipping goods from Paris to the Mediterranean Sea was incredibly expensive as by the time it reached the port, about 20 taxes had to be paid!!!
- Poverty was an issue throughout the country and Louis XVI had no support from the *bourgeoisie*, as they were tired of paying taxes and frustrated with the system

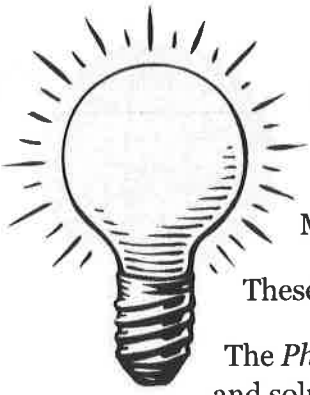


## ~ LOUIS XVI and MARIE ANTOINETTE (pgs. 64-74)

- Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette married in 1770
- The union between Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette meant to create peace and better ties between France and Austria; unfortunately, she was very unpopular from the start because she was Austrian
- French Aristocrats disliked her attitude; She did not care, she carried on and loved the high life
- Marie Antoinette's spending was so out of control and reckless, she spent France's yearly income on a diamond necklace → naturally, people were outraged
- She did things on a whim; she chose unqualified ministers; she got rid of people if she did not like them, even if they were doing a good job
  - ex. She wanted to get rid of A.R Turgot, because he wanted to tax nobles



“I have seen all.  
I have heard all.  
I have forgotten all.”  
—Marie Antoinette



## NEW IDEAS | THE ENLIGHTENMENT (pgs. 68-70)

~ Freedom of Thought, Will & Conscience

Many of the ideas came from thinkers known as the *Philosophes* (Philosophers)

These ideas were a catalyst for the French Revolution

The *Philosophes* were men and women who discussed society, politics, religion, science and solutions to social problems in salons

They believed in the ability of science and scientific reasoning to explain the world (the Enlightenment is also known as the Age of Reason)

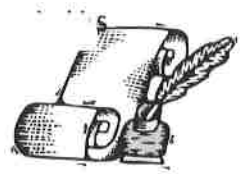
Madame de Pampadour had many salons during her lifetime, and protected free-thinkers from royal officials; women's rights were also being discussed

Many of the philosophies born of this period in time were against religion, as they were views as old-fashioned

→ Science and human intelligence/thought = high importance

→ Empiricism – Knowledge is only possible through experience

...many philosophies came into conflict with the church and refused to accept its teachings as they were → the church and the monarchy had to change to they would be forced to go.



Jean - Jacques Rousseau	Voltaire	Montesquieu
Society needed a social contract, where everyone agreed to live by certain rules	Against the church Despised injustice	Believed rulers should work with parliaments
Believed in natural law, a law where people have a naturally good will, and is destroyed by outside forces like government and modern society	Believed in freedom of thought and speech Believed the pen was mightier than the sword	



Enlightenment ideals prompt the French to revolt against their traditional monarchy

→ The ideals of LIBERTY, EQUALITY and FRATERNITY



~ **THE REVOLUTION BEGINS (pgs. 72-74)**

Money spent by Louis XIV and his successors, came by taxing and exploiting the lower and middle classes

The French expressed their outrage and displeasure with the government with riots

The middle class, working class and a few aristocrats demanded some kind of democracy, like the limited democracy in England

French officers and soldiers took part in the American Revolution

France continued to have famine, as thousands were close to starvation

Families would break up because they could not support their children; 40, 000 children were abandoned

The British Industrial Revolution also put a lot of people out of work, and unemployment became a larger issue in France

If Louis XVI was criticised, he would imprison or execute → By now, Louis XVI was losing popularity and he wanted solutions, so he turned to the Estates General...

~ **THE ESTATES GENERAL**

Louis XVI called the Estates General only when his government was in serious crisis

France had a parliament known as the Estates General, which only met as a result of royal command including representatives from three states...

The members of the first estate were the clergy, the second were the Aristocrats and third, the middle class

The third estate had twice as many delegates as either of the other two estates; each estate was voted as a block.

France helped the American's to fight Britain; French officers and soldiers were sent to take part in the American Revolution, which lead to independence.

Americans made a point of protecting the freedoms of the individual, which were documented in the Declaration of Independence



# *"It is not a revolt, it is a revolution."*

## ~ THE SPIRIT OF THE REVOLUTION GROWS

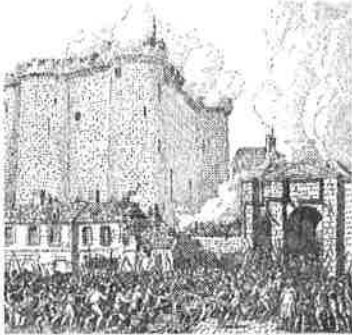
The people of France were working together, and events that took place, made people believe in the spirit of the Revolution

Comte Mirabeau, a brilliant speaker and leader, declared that he would form a new government known as the National Assembly → The main goal was to create a new constitution



Delegates retreated to the royal tennis courts angry, after Louis XVI tried to lock up the site of the meeting → the spirit was strong, and delegates took the oath, and pledged that they would continue to meet until France had a new government

## ~ THE STORMING & THE FALL OF THE BASTILLE



More riots over the high price of bread, break out in Paris

Mob begins attacking prisons in an aim to free political prisoners

The Revolution grows at such a speed that Louis XVI and his council cannot control the spread; Louis XVI sends out mercenaries to "finish off" the Revolution → TOO LATE!!!

On July 14 1789, a great mob attacks the royal prison fortress, the

Bastille

After the fall of the Bastille, citizens form their own army called the National Guard

→ Peasants in the countryside were aware of the Revolution, but they were also fearful of the future

Peasants stormed the chateau of the Aristocrats, burned them to the ground, and killed hundreds, they invaded officers and burned feudal certificates and paper that recorded their obligations to the Lord

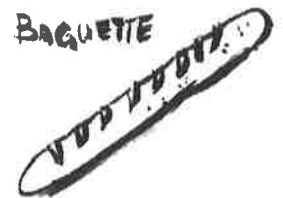
## ~ PARIS & LOUIS XVI

August 4 1789, the National Assembly met in Versailles → abolished all feudal rights and privileges, ended serfdom, and declared people equal before law

The people felt that government needed to come to Paris and not be isolated in Versailles

National Assembly could not solve the hunger and poverty in the country, and in October, crowds of women met in Paris to march to Versailles to meet Louis XVI

Women attacked the National Assembly, Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, then agreed to return to Paris



## ~ DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN & THE CITIZEN



The National Assembly passes the Declaration of the Rights of the Citizen; this document is like the American Declaration of Independence, and lays out the basic human rights for all

The declaration guaranteed freedom of Thought, Speech, Religion, Security and Property; also put limits on the power of the government

Once in Paris, the National Assembly worked quickly to draft and establish a new constitution; most of the old system was cast aside, and all nobles were declared obsolete

RESULT → Everyone was given the title of citizen, the government seized control of the church and its property

## ~ THE REVOLUTION DEVOURS ITS OWN CHILDREN

The French Revolution turned on its leaders

Leaders who wanted a revolutionary republic that fell under suspicion were arrested and executed

No political parties; people joined political clubs so they can be with people who shared their views and common goals; people handed out pamphlets about meetings

The Jacobins and Girondists were the two main clubs

Jacobins were the most famous political club of the French Revolution. At that time, the term was popularly applied to all supporters of revolutionary opinions.

Girondists were members who came from an area called Gironde

Both were middle class and moderate, but they both became involved in a power struggle, and the Girondists lost. The vast majority of them were sent to the guillotine.

## ~ THE SANS CULOTTES & REVOLUTIONARIES

Lead by writer Jean-Paul Marat; consisted mostly poor people from the outskirts of Paris who resented the bourgeoisie and despised the reforms that benefitted the business class

They attacked anyone who was not a supporter or in favour of the Revolution

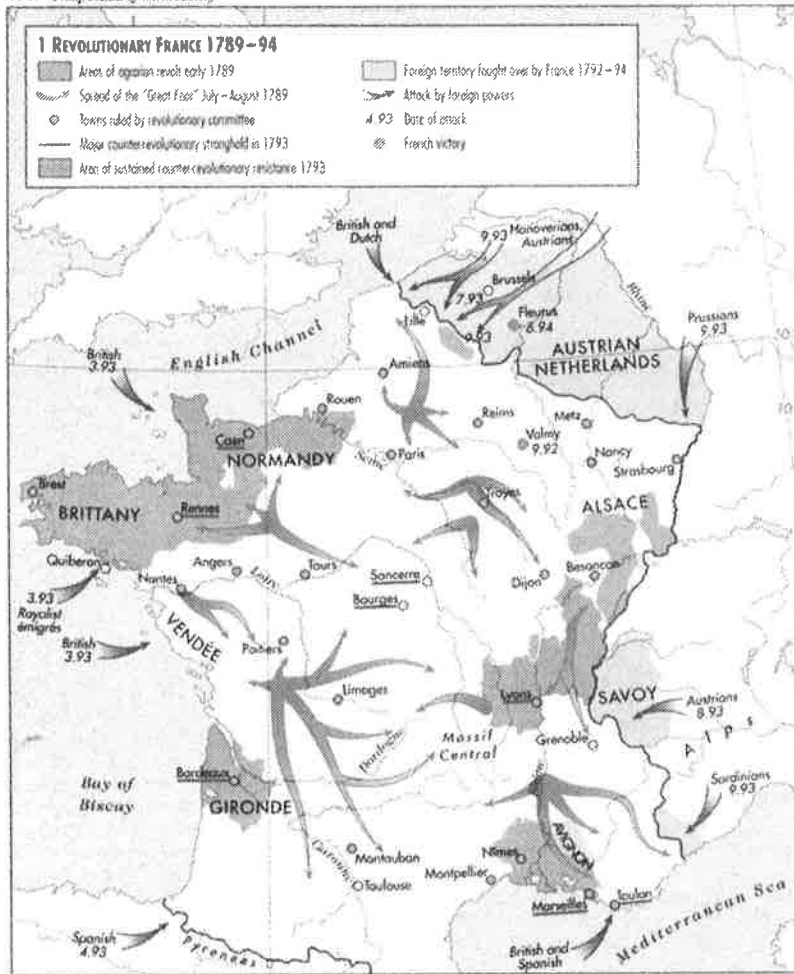
They supported radicals and wanted to execute Louis XVI and the Aristocrats

Jean- Paul Marat, Jacques Danton and Maximilien Robespierre were leaders of the Revolution but....Marat was murdered in his bathtub by Charlotte Corday, a Girondist in 1793

Danton and Robespierre with the help of important Jacobins, would eventually take control of the National Assembly and the Revolution

## ~ THE REVOLUTION WARS

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▲ The French Revolution did not occur simultaneously throughout the country, but spread out into the countryside from urban centres. Some areas remained stubbornly resistant to revolutionary rule, but by the mid-1790s even these were brought under the control of central government. The crowned heads of Europe feared the spread of revolutionary fervour into their own

countries, and were thus anxious to quell the revolutionary French. However, the Austrians were eventually defeated at Fleurus, while the Prussians were repulsed in Alsace, as were the Sardinians in Savoy, the Spanish in the south, and the British on the Vendée coast and the Mediterranean. Avignon (a papal state) was incorporated into France in 1791.

Many European regimes were nervous about what was happening in France

France was about to be invaded by forces that included many European émigrés who wanted to restore Louis XVI's power

France declared war on Austria in the spring of 1792

Marat, Danton & Robespierre, make patriotic speeches, telling the people that foreign troops would destroy the country

→ French armies won a victory at Valmy

The National convention wanted Louis XVI to be tried for his crimes → He was tried and found guilty and guillotined January 21 1793

Marie Antoinette was also tried and found guilty, she was guillotined October 16 1793

## ~ THE REIGN OF TERROR & THE FALL OF MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE

All enemies and Girondists were arrested and imprisoned

Between 1793-94, was known as the Reign of Terror

Law suspects provided for the arrest if anyone noble family or who held an important place in office before the Revolution

If you were unable to provide a signed certificate of Citizenship, it would result in immediate arrest or worse, execution

*The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny is in keeping them ignorant.*



Food speculators were guillotined and all granaries and bakeries placed under state control

Danton was beheaded in 1794 → about 37000 people were guillotined during the Reign of Terror

Robespierre ruled France with the powers of a dictator, because he had destroyed all opposition to the government and made changes in France...



- The metric system was introduced,
- the Revolutionary calendar had been introduced
- The army was made more efficient
- New schools and universities were made to educate the population

Robespierre took away all the property of the émigrés

People started to fear the dictatorship, so they sought out Robespierre; in an attempt to kill himself, he was quickly arrested and guillotined → The Reign of Terror was over

Radical Jacobins immediately replaced by the Thermidoreans, named after the eleventh month in the Revolutionary calendar; they tried desperately to bring peace...

### ~ THE DIRECTORY

The rule of Robespierre was replaced by the Directory, which was controlled by the middle class

The new government gave most of the power to people of property, which brought a return to special privileges for people with money

Therefore, only people with money could vote and elect members to government

Days of equality were over, and many of the advances made by the poor were gone

Soon enough the Directory would disappear as Napoleon Bonaparte, would establish a new monarchy by calling himself the Emperor of France

*The people to fear are not those who disagree with you, but those who disagree with you and are too cowardly to let you know.*



*The French Revolution was an important event in the history of civilization! People of the largest and one of the most influential countries in Europe made a republic based on the principles of FREEDOM-DEMOCRACY-EQUALITY. There were setbacks like the Reign of Terror, and a return to monarchy under Napoleon, but much of the progress made during the Revolution survived. Ideas about democracy and the rights of the individual spread quickly and were very worrisome to absolute monarchs in Austria and other countries. The concept of war changed because all the resources of countries were being used to fight the enemies of the Revolution. Traditional wars were fought using armies however, the Revolutions were fought by regular people for everyone. The forces of the French Revolution would change the future of Europe economically, politically and socially. Dying to find out what happens next? **On to the next chapter...***





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