The French Revolution Unfolds

Excitement, wonder, and four anguished France as the revolution unfolded at home and spread abroad. Historians divide this revolution into different phases. The moderate phase of the National Assembly (1789–1791) turned France into a constitutional monarchy. A radical phase (1792–1794) of escalating violence led to the end of the monarchy and a Reign of Terror. There followed a period of reaction against extremism, known as the Directory (1795–1799). Finally, the Age of Napoleon (1799–1815) consolidated many revolutionary changes. In this section, you will read about the moderate phase of the French Revolution.

Political Crisis Leads to Revolt

The political crisis of 1789 coincided with the worst famine in memory. Starving peasants roamed the countryside or flocked to towns, where they swelled the ranks of the unemployed. As grain prices soared, even people with jobs had to spend as much as 80 percent of their income on bread. Inflamed by famine and fear, peasants unleashed their fury on nobles who were trying to reimpose medieval dues. Defiant peasants set fire to old manor records and stole grain from storehouses. The attacks died down after a period of time, but they clearly demonstrated peasant anger and an unjust regime.

Vocabulary Builder

Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.

High-Use Word: proclaim

Definition and Sample Sentence

proclaim, p. 217

The mayor proclaimed a city-wide holiday on Monday to celebrate the event.
Special Privilege Ends—“Feudalism is abolished,” announced the proud and wary delegates at 2 A.M. As the president of the Assembly later observed, “We may view this moment as the dawn of a new revolution, when all the burdens weighing on the people were abolished, and France was truly reborn.”

Were nobles sacrificing much with their votes on the night of August 4? Both contemporary observers and modern historians note that the nobles gave up nothing to give up their old manorial dues, exclusive hunting rights, security, and resistance to oppression. Like the writings of philosophes, the declaration further proclaimed that all male citizens were equal before the law. Every Frenchman had an equal right to hold public office, to remain free and equal in rights. They enjoyed natural rights to “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.” Like the writings of Locke and the philosophers, the constitution insisted that governments must protect the natural rights of citizens.

The declaration further proclaimed that all male citizens were equal before the law; every Frenchman had an equal right to hold public office “with no distinction other than that of their virtues and talents.” In addition, the declaration asserted freedom of religion and called for taxes to be levied “with no distinction other than that of their virtues and talents.”

Instruct

Teach

Political Crisis Leads to Revolt

Instruct

■ Introduce: Key Terms Ask students to find the key term factions (in blue) in the text and explain its meaning. Have students brainstorm the advantages and disadvantages of having many different factions.

■ Teach: Discuss the events that led to revolt in 1789. Ask What was the “Great Fear” and what did it lead to? (It referred to rumors of government troops attacking villages and seizing peasant crops; it led peasants to attack nobles.) Why do you think peasants believed the rumors? (Sample: because they were hungry, desperate, and already angry with nobles and the royal family.)

■ Quick Activity: Refer students to the feature French Reaction to the American Revolution. Remind them that the Marquis de Lafayette played a key role in the American Revolution. Have them work in groups and discuss how his exposure to ideas from the American Revolution might have influenced his role and actions in the French Revolution.

Use the Numbered Heads strategy (TE, p. T20) and have each group share their conclusions with the class.

Independent Practice

To help students identify supporting details, ask them to write an eyewitness account of peasants attacking the home of a nobleman. Accounts should include a vivid description of the event, the emotions of the people involved, and the reasons for the attack. Invite volunteers to read their accounts to the class.

Monitor Progress

As students fill in their outlines, circulate to make sure they have identified supporting details and have not included any facts that are not actually in the text. Give these students the opportunity to change their outlines to make sure they are clearly supported by evidence. Ask students what the key term means and how it applies to the text. For example, when students are asked about food shortages, they may erroneously answer that the “Great Fear” was caused by food shortages. You may need to ask students again to read the text to find the key term food shortage and to read the text again to find the rest of the evidence for that term.

Answers

famine and fear of government assault

Caption: The Declaration of Independence and other American writings on liberty and equality inspired people like Lafayette to rebel.
Answer

**Caption**

Although she was compassionate to the poor, she lived extravagantly and was against reforms.

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we won’t have to go so far when we want to see our king,” they sang. Crowds along the way cheered the king, who now wore the tricolor. In Paris, the royal family moved into the Tuileries (TUH lee) palace. For the next three years, Louis was a virtual prisoner.

Checkpoint How did the National Assembly react to peasant uprisings?

The National Assembly Presses Onward

The National Assembly soon followed the king to Paris. For largely bourgeois members worked to draft a constitution and to solve the continuing financial crisis. To pay off the huge government debt—much of it owed to the bourgeoisie—the Assembly voted to take over and sell Church lands.

The Church Is Placed Under State Control

In an even more radical move, the National Assembly put the French Catholic Church under state control. Under the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, issued in 1790, bishops and priests became elected, salaried officials. The Civil Constitution ended papal authority over the French Church and dissolved convents and monasteries.

Reaction was swift and angry. Many bishops and priests refused to accept the Civil Constitution. The pope condemned it. Large numbers of French peasants, who were conservative concerning religion, also rejected the changes. When the government punished clergy who refused to support the Civil Constitution, a huge gulf opened between revolutionaries and the conservative French population between those who supported the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and only seven of the more than 100 French bishops took the oath to support the Civil Constitution. Though the government declared that clerics who opposed the Constitution were "refractory" and removed them from office, these clerics defiantly continued to perform their duties. Pope Pius VI condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and declared all of its provisions void. French Catholics therefore faced a conflict between political loyalty and religious devotion. This caused a divide in the French population between those who supported the constitutional priests and those who followed the refractory clergy.

History Background

Catholic Protest Many historians consider the Civil Constitution of the Clergy to be the first major blunder of the National Assembly. Less than half the French bishops took the oath to support the Civil Constitution. Though the government declared that clerics who opposed the Constitution were "refractory" and removed them from office, these clerics defiantly continued to perform their duties. Pope Pius VI condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and declared all of its provisions void. French Catholics therefore faced a conflict between political loyalty and religious devotion. This caused a divide in the French population between those who supported the constitutional priests and those who followed the refractory clergy.

Answers

Analyzing Visuals because it was the capital and chief city in France

The nobles in the National Assembly voted to give up privileges.

The National Assembly Presses Onward

Instruct

■ Introduce Ask students to read the introductory sentences and the three black headings in this section. Have them predict what they will learn under each heading. Then have them read to find out whether their predictions were accurate.

■ Teach Discuss the National Assembly’s actions. Ask Why did the National Assembly place the French Catholic Church under state control? (to sell church lands to help pay off France’s debt) Do you think the Constitution of 1791 ensured the equality of all men in France? Why or why not? (Sample: No, because not every man could run for the National Assembly.)

■ Quick Activity Ask students to study the map on this page. Ask Why do you think Parisian women were willing to march 13 miles to Versailles? (Sample: because they were very angry that they could not feed their children and were determined to demand action)

To help students understand how far the women walked, as a class make a quick list of places that are about 13 miles from their school.

Independent Practice

Have students suppose that they are living during the French Revolution. Ask them to choose an event mentioned in the text such as the march on Versailles or the establishment of the new Constitution, and write two letters to the editor, one from the viewpoint of someone in the Second Estate and another from the viewpoint of someone in the Third Estate.

Monitor Progress

As students compose their letters, circulate to make sure that they understand how the viewpoints of those in different social classes would differ when viewing the same event.
Radicals Take Over

Instruct

- **Introduce: Key Terms** Ask students to find the key term *republic* (in blue) in the text and explain its meaning. Have them name countries in the world today that are republics (Sample: Brazil, Bhutan, Phnom Penh, India, Nigeria, Philippines, United States).

- **Teach** Ask why did European rulers and nobles denounce the French Revolution? (They feared that ideas of revolution would spread to their countries and bring an end to their power and privileges.) What factors led to the radical phase of the Revolution? (continue economic problems and hostile factions competing for power)

- **Analyze the Visuals** Display Color Transparency 107: The French Plague. Use the lesson suggested in the transparency book to further analyze the political cartoon on this page.

- **Teach** Ask students to describe how his predictions began to come true.

Independent Practice

**Viewpoints** To help students better understand the mixed reactions to the French Revolution, have them read the selection Two Views of the French Revolution and complete the worksheet.

- **Teach** Have students echo the passage on British statesman and writer Edmund Burke. Ask them to summarize his opinion of the French Revolution and describe how his predictions began to come true.

- **Check Reading and Note Taking Study Guide** entries for student understanding.

Answers

- It set up a limited monarchy, created a new Legislative Assembly, replaced the old provinces with 83 departments, abolished provincial courts, and reformed laws.

Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. They didn’t want to lose their privileges and power and feared the influence of the Third Estate’s actions.
2. As giant French rats whose tails form a guillotine.

Rulers Fear Spread of Revolution

European rulers increased border patrols to stop the spread of the “French plague.” Failing those fears were the lurid stories that were told by *émigrés* ([əm'iɡrəz]—noble, clergy, and others who had fled France and its revolutionary forces. Emigrés reported attacks on their privileges, their property, their religion, and even their lives. Even “enlightened” rulers turned against France. Catherine the Great of Russia burned Voltaire’s letters and locked up her critic.

Edmund Burke, a British writer and statesman who earlier had defended the American Revolution, bitterly condemned revolutionaries in Paris. He predicted all too accurately that the revolution would become more violent. “Frets and assassinations,” he wrote, “will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiscation.” Burke warned, “When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away . . . we have no compass to govern us.”

Themes Come From Abroad

The failed escape of Louis XVI brought further hostile rumblings from abroad. In August 1791, the king of Prussia and the king of Austria supported the “plague.”

Connect to Our World

Connections to Today Ask students to describe what the terms left, right, and center mean in politics today. Explain that the political use of these terms began with France’s Legislative Assembly in 1791. Members with similar views always sat together in the meeting hall in Paris. On the right sat those who felt that reform had gone far enough and those who wanted to turn the clock back to 1788. In the center of the hall sat supporters of moderate reform. On the left were the Jacobins and other republicans who wanted to abolish the monarchy completely and bring about radical changes. Today the terms right, center, and left continue to reflect these ideologies and seating arrangements.
Renewed turmoil. Assignats, the revolutionary currency, and abroad, it survived for less than a year. Economic problems fed newly elected Legislative Assembly took office. Faced with crises at home led to hoarding and caused additional food shortages. The radicals or government ruled by elected representatives instead of a monarch. sans-culottes Radicals Fight for Power and Declare War In October 1792, the threat seriously and prepared for war. The revolution was expected to win an easy victory against France, a land divided by revolution and then on Prussia, Britain, and other states. The great powers moved onto the battlefield. Eager to spread the revolution and destroy tyranny abroad, the Legislative Assembly declared war first on Austria and then on Prussia, Britain, and other states. The great powers soon held the upper hand in the Legislative Assembly. In April 1793, both documents emphasized freedom, equality, and natural rights for men. The Declaration of Independence? and the Citizen similar to the American Declaration of the Rights of Man and those demanded by the Americans in the Declaration of Independence and by the English in the English Bill of Rights. Ask students to draw comparisons between the reforms demanded by the French in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and those demanded by the Americans in the Declaration of Independence and by the English in the English Bill of Rights. Then ask students to compare and contrast these documents.

Assess and Reteach
Assess Progress
- Have students complete the Section Assessment.
- Administer the Section Quiz.

Reteach
If students need more instruction, have them read the section summary.

Quick Write: Create a Flowchart
- Ask students to draw comparisons between the reforms demanded by the French in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and those demanded by the Americans in the Declaration of Independence and by the English in the English Bill of Rights. Then ask students to compare and contrast these documents.

Answer
Supporters of the Enlightenment in Europe were pleased with the French Revolution, while European nobles and rulers denounced it.
Objectives
- Identify the basic principles of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen.
- Understand how specific articles support the basic principles of the Declaration.

Build Background Knowledge
Ask students to recall what they know about the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. Remind them that the document was modeled in part after the American Declaration of Independence, which was written 13 years earlier, in 1776, and based in part on the English Bill of Rights, written in 1689. Have students predict what kinds of statements the Declaration of the Rights of Man might contain.

Instruct
- Go over each of the articles listed with students. Help students understand how each of the articles may have affected the lives of French citizens. Have students give one real-life example of each of the four natural rights listed under article 2.
- Ask students how the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen reflects the slogan of the French Revolution, “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.”

Monitor Progress
Remind students that Enlightenment ideas influenced both the French Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. Present students with some Enlightenment ideas or have volunteers name the fundamental ones. (Sample: right to life, liberty, and property) Ask students to identify which articles reflect these ideas.

Thinking Critically
1. Article 6 states that all citizens are equal under the law and have the right to participate in government. This marked a significant change for most French citizens, who were not previously treated equally under the law. 2. Both stated that all men are created equal.

History Background
Origins of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen
In addition to being influenced by the American Declaration of Independence and the English Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen drew its content from other sources as well. The constitutions of individual states such as New Hampshire and Virginia also influenced the Declaration.

The impact of Enlightenment philosophes is clearly seen in the document, too. Montesquieu’s notion of separation of powers is represented, as are Locke’s ideas on natural rights and Rousseau’s theories on the general will and national sovereignty. The physiocrats’ ideas about private property and Voltaire’s notions of protecting individuals against arbitrary police action are also included.

Declarations of the Rights of Man and the Citizen
The National Assembly issued this document in 1789 after having overthrown the established government in the early stages of the French Revolution. The document was modeled, in part, on the English Bill of Rights and on the American Declaration of Independence. The basic principles of the French declaration were those that inspired the revolution, such as the freedom and equality of all male citizens before the law. The Articles below identify additional principles.

Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:
1. Man are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are: liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
3. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else...
4. Law can only prohibit such actions as are harmful to society ...
5. Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative, in its formation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents.
6. No person shall be accused, arrested, or imprisoned except in the case and according to the forms prescribed by law.
7. The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom ...
8. The public forces and for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distributed among all the citizens in proportion to their means.
9. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally protected in their persons, liberty, and property.
10. The law concerning property shall be such that no one can lose it except in a public case, according to the provisions of the public laws.

The Articles below identify additional principles.

1. Impression (AWSS puh siz) n. approval and support
2. Imprescriptible (im prih SKRIP tuh bul) adj. that which cannot be rightfully taken away

Thinking Critically
1. Summarize: Summarize article 6. Why is this article especially significant?
2. Identify Central Issues: What central idea does this declaration share with the American Declaration of Independence?