

The French Revolution

Summary

The French Revolution was instigated by the unfairness of the tax system in France, the example of the American Revolution, and the bankruptcy of the French monarchy.

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 6th Grade

[Standard 3 Objective 1](#)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 45 minutes each

Background for Teachers

Student Prior Knowledge

Students should be familiar with the concept of a revolution involving people who are dissatisfied and be ready to recognize causes and effects.

As a pre-assessment, ask students (individually or as a group) to come up with a definition or word map for the word "revolution." You might discuss revolutions the students may have already learned about, such the American Revolutionary war, the Industrial Revolution, the Scientific Revolution, and/or the Reformation.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Enduring Understanding

The governed have the right to choose their leaders.

Essential Question

Who should govern?

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to learn: Have a treat for part of the class and only offer it to the students who you've determined are part of the First or Second Estate. Talk about how it feels when there is inequality. For a more specific version of this activity (and a pre-made unit on the French Revolution), visit "[Is Freedom Really Free?](#)" Click on Sixth Grade (on the left), then scroll down to History and find the French Revolution.

Instruction:

Use books, lecture, websites, etc. for students to discover the six main causes of the French Revolution and have students write about the effects.

The six main causes are:

- Political discontent
- Social and Economic discontent
- Discontent of the Bourgeoisie
- The Enlightenment
- The American War of Independence
- Financial Collapse of Government

Encourage students to identify important people in their effect paragraph.

A paragraph on the effects might include the following ideas:

The monarchy ended with the execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

Robespierre led the Reign of Terror until his execution.

The French Revolution officially ended with the coup that placed Napoleon in power.

Strategies for Diverse Learners

As a option, you could use the [3-cause graphic organizer](#) , with the causes: the unfair tax system, the example of the American Revolution, and the bankrupt monarchy.

Extensions

Students could create an inspiration, graphical map, or timeline to explain the French Revolution.

Assessment Plan

Assess student understanding from their graphic organizer, or you could create a game or quiz.

You could also have students answer questions (orally or in writing) such as:

Who should govern or rule?

Should the majority always rule?

How can abuse of power be avoided?

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