## French Revolution Basics -L1 20pt classwork Name:

The following forms a timeline for the French Revolution. Answer the questions on the right-hand side.

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| The Revolution is very complicated. In general, one can divide the Revolution into 4 phases:* Phase 1: **the *Bourgeois* Revolution**: the middle class rises up, overthrows the *nobility*, and tries to create a constitutional democratic monarchy that values trade and business. Creates substantial but moderate reforms.
* Phase 2: **the *Radical* Revolution**: the former allies of the *Bourgeoisie*, mostly urban poor who are much more *radical* in their ideas, hijack the revolution and attempt to bring about extreme reforms.
* Phase 3: **Moderate Reaction**: the bourgeoisie recapture power and roll back the most extreme reforms. Government does not work, is corrupt, and not well liked.
* Phase 4: **Napoleon**: France’s most successful general ends the revolution and builds an autocratic empire that is based partly on the ideas of the original revolutionaries. France fights and conquers most of Europe before being defeated.
 | **Define each in your own words:*** **Bourgeois Revolution**
* **Radical Revolution**
* **Moderate Reaction**
* **Napoleon**
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| **Important words:*** ***Bourgeoisie*:** another term for middle class. People who have decent jobs and who are fairly wealthy but are not nobility.
* ***Nobles/Nobility*:** people who have been born with wealth and privilege.
* ***Radical*:** extreme. Radical beliefs are extreme beliefs. Radicals are people with extreme beliefs.
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| **The Three Estates**: France was divided into three “estates” which were basically social classes. The 1st Estate were priests. The 2nd Estate were nobles. They followed different laws and did not pay taxes.The other 97% belonged to the Third Estate. This was split between middle class (bourgeoisie), urban poor, and peasants. These people had little wealth and yet had to pay for almost all of the taxes the government collected. They also had to pay taxes to the priests and nobles. | **Label:*** **First Estate:**
* **Second Estate:**
* **Third Estate:**

**Describe the Third Estate****List all the groups to whom the 3rd Estate paid taxes** |
| **Economic Crisis**: the Ancien regime was a bad government. The King could only really tax the Third Estate, who didn’t have all that much money.The government also had a major *debt* issue. France supported America in the American Revolution. However, the war cost so much money that France struggled to pay back the loans it had taken out to fight the war. Adding to the problems, farming was an issue. France’s population had been growing recently. Its inefficient farming system struggled to produce enough food. The result was starving peasants who hated the nobles who further taxed them | **What was wrong with the tax system of the Ancien Regime?****What created the French Debt Crisis?****What other problems faced France?****Important words:*** ***Debt*:** money you owe.
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| **Phase 1: the Bourgeois Revolution** |
| **The Estates General (1789)**The King wanted to change the government but did not have enough power to do it. To help gather power, he called a huge meeting call the Estates General.In the Estates General, each estate had equal representation, 300 delegates. However, the Third Estate thought they should have more representation because 97% of France was in the third Estate.However, the King kept the old system, giving the Third Estate the same voting power as the priests, even though there were 25 million people in the Third Estate and only 150,000 in the Priests. | **What was the Estates General?****Why did the King call it?****Why wasn’t it a fair system?** |
| **Tennis Court Oath**The Third Estate felt cheated and refused to meet in the Estates General. They created their own council called the National Assembly and decided to create a constitution for France.The King did not like this and locked them out of their own meeting chambers.The Third Estate delegates met in an indoor tennis court and decided to continue making the constitution. They swore an oath later known as the Tennis Court Oath—a promise to never break up until France had a constitution.  | **Why did the Third Estate form their own council?****What was the Tennis Court Oath?** |
| **The Storming of the Bastille**When word came to the people of France that the delegates of the Third Estate had taken power into their own hands, the people celebrated. But rumors began to circulate that The King planned to end the Assembly—by force if necessary.The people of Paris feared that war was coming and wanted to arm themselves and show the King that he had no power to fight the will of the people. There was an old castle in Paris called the Bastille—which was now used as a prison where the King’s political prisoners were held, tortured, and sometimes killed.The castle was stormed, some of the King’s soldiers killed, and a few people freed. No weapons were found but it sent a message to the King—he was no longer in control. Many date this attack as the beginning of the Revolution. | **What were the people of Paris concerned about before the Storming of the Bastille?****Why did they attack the Bastille? (2 reasons)****Why is this the “start” of the Revolution?** |
| **Women’s March (1789)**The real turning point is the Women’s March. An army of peasant women attacked the King’s Palace just outside of Paris. They took the King from his palace and brought him to Paris, to a castle in the city called the Tuilleries. Here he would rule France but here he could also be a *hostage* if need be. From here on, the King realized he could not directly fight the revolution and would typically surrender to its demands. | **What motivated the Women’s March?****Why did the Women’s March force the King to obey the Revolution?****Important word:*** ***Hostage*:** someone who can be killed if other people don’t follow your demands.
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| **1789-1791**The third estate took control and created a new government called the National Constituent Assembly. The king went along with it because he was a hostage.The Assembly was *moderate*. Most of the delegates of the Third Estate had been bourgeoisie, who had money and mostly just wanted rights, fair laws, and a more modern economic system. And it was extremely successful for a while. The most memorable acts of the Revolution came from this period. * The last remnant of **Feudalism was abolished** in the first few months.
* A universal code of rights known as the **Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen** was created.
* And finally, the **First French Constitution** was written and signed in 1791, some two years after the beginning of the Revolution.

The King eventually signed the *constitution* and the revolutionary government became a working government—a constitutional monarchy. | **What did the moderate, bourgeois government want?****List 3 great accomplishments of this government.****What kind of government did the constitution create?****Important Words:*** ***Moderate*:** not too extreme. At the middle ground between conservative and liberal.
* ***Constitution:*** a document that makes the rules for what a government can do
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| **Legislative Assembly (1791-1792)**A new government came into power in 1791 called the Legislative Assembly. It was almost entirely made up of middle class *bourgeoisie*. There was still a king but he had almost not power.The Assembly did not do well. France’s economy struggled. * Its debt was still a problem.
* The French currency lost a lot of value.
* Peasants struggled to get food

The King tried to flee in 1791 to join France’s enemies. Many of the more radical people in France wanted to see him executed for *treason*.France was at war now with both Austria and Prussia. France was not doing well in these wars either. And there were political issues too. The poor and radical still wanted more changes. They wanted* Cheaper food prices
* More limits on priests
* Death of the King
 | **Who ruled the Legislative Assembly?****What problems was there with the economy?****Describe the problem with the King****What happened in France’s wars?****Why were the radicals upset with the government?****Important words:*** ***Treason*:** betraying your country
 |
| **Phase 2: Radical Revolution** |
| **The National Convention (1792-1795)**In 1792, the bourgeois lost control of the radicals. Radicals attacked the palace where the King was held and took him prisoner.The radicals also took control of the government by scaring away all the moderates. They created a new government known as the National Convention.  | **How did Radicals take over the Revolution?** |
| **The Reign of Terror (1793-1794)**This new radical government was not nice to its enemies. Those who fought against it died. Those who spoke out against it died. The symbol of this new revolutionary government would be the guillotine, a device used to behead people. The King would be one of the first to meet it. He was executed in 1793.But many more would be executed. Eventually a group called the **Committee of Public Safety** takes over. This is a small council given total power over France. They make it their mission to end all disloyalty to the revolution. Over 13 months, 16,000 people are executed by the government—mostly on suspicion of being anti-revolutionary. | **How did this government treat its enemies?****What is a guillotine?****What was the mission of the Committee of Public Safety?** |
| **Radical Reforms**The National Convention was very radical and it killed a lot of people but it was also quite successful.It passed a law called the *Price Maximum*, which forced people to sell things at a low price. This finally ended the starvation amongst the poor. It passed another law called the *Levee en Masse*, which called up all young men to fight in the army. Their new, huge army easily crushed France’s enemies.This government also:* Abolished slavery
* Gave women rights
* Allowed every man to vote

The people who ran this government truly believed they were creating a better world. For this reason, many people look up to this government as the best part of the revolution, despite how many people it executed. | **What was the Price Maximum? Who did it help/hurt?****What was the Levee en Masse?****What was the result of the Levee en Masse?****Why do some people look up to this government?** |
| **Phase 3: Bourgeois Reaction** |
| **Thermidorian Reaction (1794)**By July, 1794, people had had enough. So many had been killed and so many were afraid of the government that they again revolted.The “Thermidorian Reaction” was when the people finally rose up against the Committee of Public Safety and killed them. The radicals were banned and the bourgeois took over once more. | **Why were people sick of the government?****What is the Thermidorian Reaction?** |
| **The Directory (1795-1799)**The Bourgeoisie created a government called the Directory. It cancelled many of the laws the bourgeois had hated. The Price Maximum was ended. Slavery was reintroduced in many colonies.But the Directory was not a success. The economy crashed again. The government was corrupt. And further revolts happened frequently.The Directory’s answer to both was the army. Again and again the army stepped in to save the government. | **What decisions were reversed by the Directory?****List problems with the Directory** |
| **Phase 4: Napoleon** |
| **Napoleon’s Rise (1799-1804)**France’s greatest soldier was named Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1799, Napoleon led a revolt against the government and replaced the Directory with a military government under Napoleon’s control. | **Who was Napoleon?****How did he come to power?** |
| **Napoleon’s Government**Napoleon believed in many of the ideas of the Revolution but he also believed in order. So he began to recreate France. His most important work was the **Code Napoleon**. This was a complete rewriting of the French legal system. The Code focused on two things: * The same laws should apply to everyone
* Laws should be written so that they make sense to the common person.

The Code Napoleon recognized many of the ideas of the revolution:* Right to a fair trial
* No secret laws
* Equality before the law
* Natural rights

But it was also fairly conservative. It removed the rights women had gained during the revolution, making them to servants to their fathers or husbands. It also made slavery legal again. | **What did Napoleon believe in?****What is the Code Napoleon?****What values of the revolution did the code continue?****What are some problems with it?** |
| **Wars of the Coalitions**France was too strong for any one country to defeat it, so the countries of Europe joined together in *coalitions* to try and defeat it. In all, there were seven coalitions.After the Levee en Masse in 1793, France consistently won these wars. Once Napoleon took control, these wars were even more successful. France began to conquer. By 1806, most of Western and Central Europe was under France’s control. The Code Napoleon was put into effect throughout Europe. Fair trials, natural rights, and constitutions were forced upon many of Europe’s governments.But countries also copied the bad stuff. The Levee en Masse was adopted by most European countries and their armies began to grow in size as well.In 1812 Napoleon made his worst ever blunder. He invaded Russia in the winter. His army froze and starve and only 10,000 of them returned out of the 350,000 he brought.Now the rest of Europe saw their chance to defeat Napoleon. The countries he had conquered rose up again and defeated him in the War of the Sixth Coalition. | **What were the Coalition Wars?****What was the turning point in the Coalition Wars?****What changes occurred in Europe under Napoleon’s control?****How was Napoleon defeated?** |
| **After the Revolution** |
| **Monarchy Restored**In 1815:* France again had a monarchy.
* The nobles returned to a position of extreme wealth.

In these ways the revolution failed. However, there were also successes:* The large inequalities that inspired the revolution never truly returned.
* Feudal privileges remained dead.
* Napoleon’s law code stayed, giving people some rights—even if they would have preferred more.
 | **In what ways was the revolution a failure?****In what ways was it a success?** |

### Wrap Up



Fill out timeline with the following periods: **Ancien Regime, Aristocratic Revolt, Bourgeois Revolution, Radical Revolution, Bourgeois Reaction, Napoleon.**

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| What was achieved or changed by each phase of the Revolution? Who was in charge? |
| **Bourgeois Revolution** | In charge: |
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| **Radical Revolution** | In charge: |
|  |
| **Bourgeois Reaction** | In charge: |
|  |
| **Napoleon** | In charge: |
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