

CHAPTER 7 Section 1 (pages 193–196)

Revolution Threatens the French King

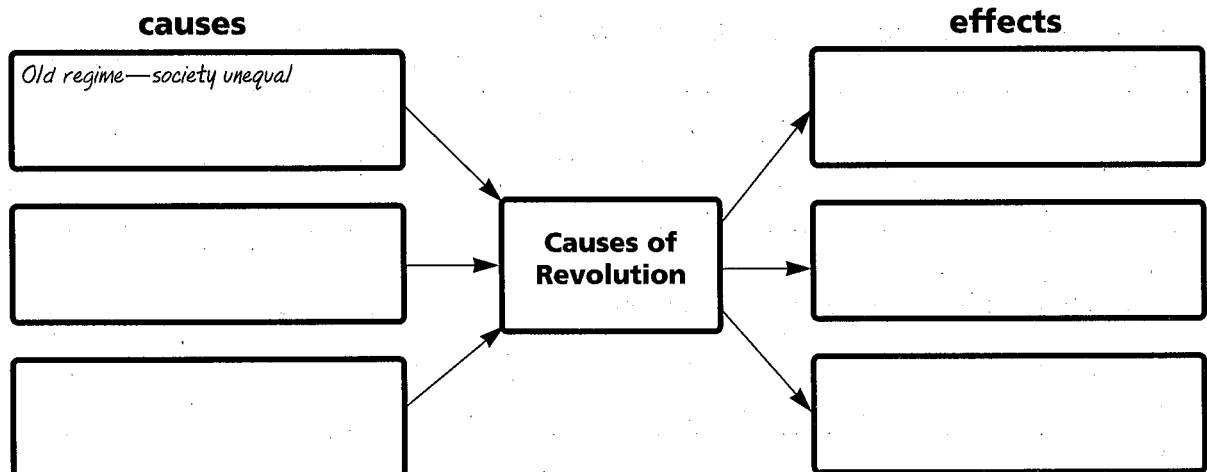
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last chapter, you read about the Enlightenment and the American Revolution.

In this section, you will learn about the beginning of the French Revolution.

AS YOU READ

Use this chart to take notes on important changes that occurred during the Renaissance in Italy.



TERMS AND NAMES

Old Regime System of feudalism

estate Social class of people

Louis XVI Weak king who came to French throne in 1774

Marie Antoinette Unpopular queen; wife of Louis XVI

Estates-General Assembly of representatives from all three estates

National Assembly French congress established by representatives of the Third Estate

Tennis Court Oath Promise made by Third Estate representatives to draw up a new constitution

Great Fear Wave of panic

The Old Regime (page 193)

How was French society unequal?

In the 1700s, France was the leading country of Europe. It was the center of the new ideas of the Enlightenment. However, beneath the surface there were major problems. Soon the nation would be torn by a violent revolution.

One problem was that people were not treated equally in French society. A system of feudalism called the **Old Regime** remained in place. The French were divided into three classes, or **estates**. The *First Estate* consisted of the Roman Catholic

clergy. The *Second Estate* was made up of nobles. Only about two percent of the people belonged to these two estates. Yet they owned 30 percent of the land. They had easy lives.

Everybody else belonged to the *Third Estate*. This huge group included three types of people:

- the *bourgeoisie*—mostly well-off merchants and skilled workers who lacked the status of nobles
- city workers—cooks, servants, and others who were poorly paid and often out of work
- peasants—farm workers, making up about 80 percent of the French people

Members of the Third Estate were angry. They had few rights. They paid up to half of their income in taxes, while the rich paid almost none.

1. What were the three classes of French society?

The Forces of Change (pages 194–195)

Why were the French ready for the revolution?

Three factors led to revolution. First, the Enlightenment spread the idea that everyone should be equal. The powerless people in the Third Estate liked that. Second, the French economy was failing. High taxes kept profits low, and food supplies were short. The government owed money. Third, **King Louis XVI** was a weak, unconcerned leader. His wife, **Marie Antoinette**, was unpopular. She was from Austria, France's long-time enemy, and was noted for her extravagant spending.

In the 1780s, France was deep in debt. Louis tried to tax the nobles. Instead, they forced the king to call a meeting of the **Estates-General**, an assembly of *delegates* of the three estates.

2. What three factors led to revolution?

Revolution Dawns (pages 195–196)

How did the Revolution begin?

The meeting of the Estates-General began in May 1789 with arguments over how to count votes. In the past, each estate had cast one vote. The Third Estate now wanted each delegate to have a vote. The king and the other estates did not agree to the plan because the Third Estate was larger and would have more votes.

The Third Estate then broke with the others and met separately. In June 1789, its delegates voted to rename themselves the **National Assembly**. They claimed to represent all the people. This was the beginning of *representative government* for France.

At one point, the members of the Third Estate found themselves locked out of their meeting. They broke down a door leading to a tennis court. Then they promised to stay there until they made a new constitution. This promise was called the **Tennis Court Oath**.

Louis tried to make peace. He ordered the clergy and nobles to join the National Assembly. However, trouble erupted. Rumors flew that Swiss soldiers paid by Louis were going to attack French citizens. On July 14, an angry crowd captured the *Bastille*, a Paris prison. The *mob* wanted to get gunpowder for their weapons in order to defend the city.

3. Why did the National Assembly form?

A Great Fear Sweeps France

(page 196)

What was the Great Fear?

A wave of violence called the **Great Fear** swept the country. Peasants broke into and burned nobles' houses. They tore up documents that had forced them to pay fees to the nobles. Late in 1789, a mob of women marched 12 miles from Paris to the king's palace at *Versailles*. They were angry about high bread prices and demanded that the king come to Paris. They hoped he would end hunger in the city. The king and queen left Versailles, never to return.

4. What happened during the Great Fear?

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CHAPTER 7 Section 2 (pages 197–203)

Revolution Brings Reform and Terror

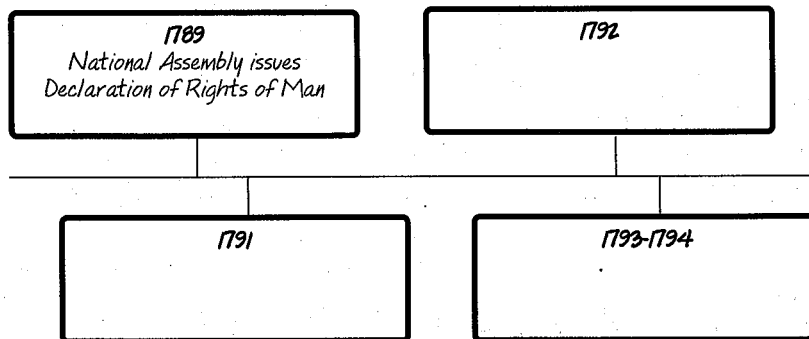
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read how the French Revolution began.

In this section, you will learn what course it took and where it led.

AS YOU READ

Use the time line below to take notes on major events.



TERMS AND NAMES

Declaration of the Rights of Man
Revolutionary statement guaranteeing rights such as liberty and property

Legislative Assembly Assembly that replaced the National Assembly in 1791

émigrés Nobles and others who left France during the peasant uprisings and who hoped to come back to restore the old system

sans-culottes Radical group of Parisian wage-earners

guillotine Machine for beheading people

Maximilien Robespierre
Revolutionary leader who tried to wipe out every trace of France's past monarchy and nobility

Committee of Public Safety
Committee led by Robespierre that tried so-called "enemies of the republic" and had them executed

Reign of Terror Period of Robespierre's rule

The Assembly Reforms France

(pages 197–198)

What reforms resulted from the revolution?

In August 1789, the National Assembly took steps to change France. It made a revolutionary statement called the **Declaration of the Rights of Man**. One new law ended all the special rights that members of the First and Second Estates had enjoyed. Another law gave all French men equal rights. Though women did not get these rights, it was a bold step. Other laws gave the state power over the Catholic Church.

The new laws about the church divided people who had supported the Revolution. Catholic peas-

ants remained loyal to the church. They were angry that the church would be part of the state. Thereafter, many of them opposed the Revolution's reforms.

For months, the assembly worked on plans for a new government. During this time, Louis was fearful for his safety. One night, he and his family tried to escape the country. They were caught, brought back to Paris, and placed under guard. This escape attempt made the king and queen more unpopular. It also increased the power of his enemies.

1. What new laws came into being?

Conflicting Goals Cause Divisions

(pages 198–199)

What groups called for different kinds of changes?

In the fall of 1791, the assembly drew up a new constitution. It took away most of the king's power. The assembly then turned over its power to a new assembly, the **Legislative Assembly**.

This new assembly soon divided into groups. Some wanted an end to revolutionary changes. These were the **émigrés**, nobles and others who had fled France during the uprisings. Another group of assembly members wanted even more *radical* changes. They included the **sans-culottes**. These wage-earners and small shopkeepers wanted a greater voice in government.

2. In what ways did the **émigrés** and **sans-culottes** have opposite goals?
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War and Extreme Measures

(pages 199–200)

What caused the French people to take extreme measures?

At the same time, France faced serious trouble on its borders. Kings in other countries feared that revolution would spread to their lands. They wanted to use force to restore control of France to Louis XVI. Soon foreign soldiers were marching toward Paris. Many people thought that the king and queen were ready to help the enemy. Angry

French citizens imprisoned them. Many nobles were killed in other mob actions.

The government took strong steps to meet the danger from foreign troops. It took away all the king's powers. In 1792, the National Convention—another new government—was formed. It declared Louis a common citizen. He was then tried for treason and convicted. Like many others, the king was beheaded by a machine called the **guillotine**. The National Convention also ordered thousands of French people into the army.

3. What happened to the king?
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Terror Grips France; End of Terror

(pages 202–203)

What was the Reign of Terror?

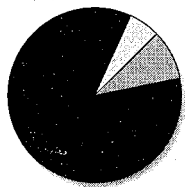
Maximilien Robespierre became leader of France. He headed the **Committee of Public Safety**. It tried and put to death “enemies of the republic.” Thousands were killed. Robespierre's rule, which began in 1793, was called the **Reign of Terror**. It ended in July 1794, when Robespierre himself was put to death.

The French people were tired of the killing and the unrest. They wanted a return to order. Moderate leaders drafted a new, less revolutionary plan of government.

4. Where did the Reign of Terror lead?
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Beheading by Class

More than 2,100 people were executed during the last 132 days of the Reign of Terror. The pie graph below displays the breakdown of beheadings by class.



- First Estate
- Second Estate
- Third Estate

Skillbuilder

1. Which estate had the greatest number of members sent to the guillotine during the Reign of Terror?
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2. Why do you think the most beheadings were in this estate?
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