

**CHAPTER 7 Section 3** (pages 204–208)

# Napoleon Forges an Empire

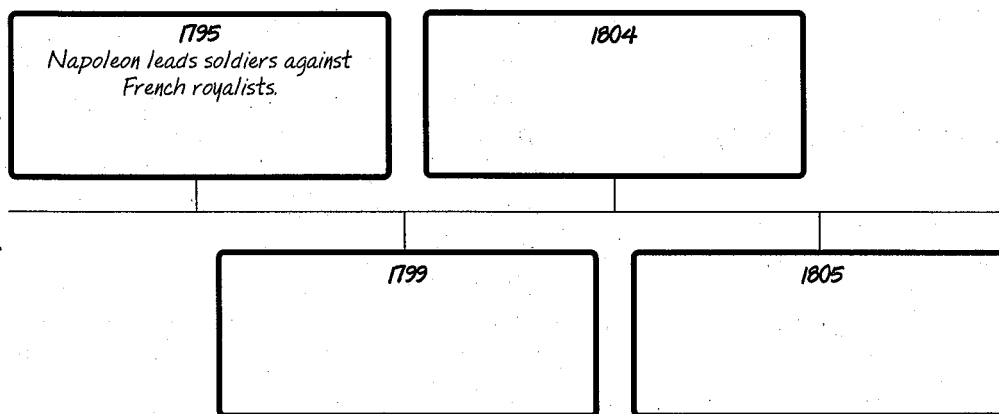
## BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the Revolution's extremes, including the Reign of Terror.

In this section, you will learn how Napoleon grabbed power and brought order to France.

## AS YOU READ

Use the time line below to take notes on Napoleon's changing power.



### TERMS AND NAMES

**Napoleon Bonaparte** Military leader who seized power in France

**coup d'état** A sudden takeover of a country

**plebiscite** Vote by the people

**lycée** Government-run public school

**concordat** Agreement

**Napoleonic Code** Complete set of laws set up by Napoleon that eliminated many injustices

**Battle of Trafalgar** British defeat of Napoleon's forces at sea

## Napoleon Grasps the Power

(pages 204–205)

### *How did Napoleon rise to power?*

**Napoleon Bonaparte** was born in 1769 on the Mediterranean island of Corsica. When he was nine years old, his parents sent him to military school in northern France. In 1785, he finished school and became an artillery officer. When the revolution broke out, Napoleon joined the army of the new government.

In 1795, Napoleon led soldiers against French *royalists* who were attacking the National

Convention. For this, he was thought of as the savior of the French republic.

By 1799, the unsettled French government had lost the people's support. In a bold move, Napoleon used troops to seize control of the government. This was a **coup d'état**, or a sudden takeover of power. Napoleon then assumed dictatorial powers.

### 1. How did Napoleon get control of the government?

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## Napoleon Rules France (pages 205–206)

*How did Napoleon use the Revolution's ideas in his government?*

Napoleon pretended to be the rightfully elected leader of France. In 1800, a **plebiscite**, or vote of the people, was held to approve a new constitution. The people voted for it overwhelmingly, and Napoleon took power as first consul.

Napoleon made several changes that were meant to build on the Revolution's good ideas:

1. He made tax collection more fair and orderly. As a result, the government could count on a steady supply of money.
2. He removed dishonest government workers.
3. He started **lycées**—new public schools for ordinary citizens.
4. He gave the church back some of its power. He signed a **concordat** (agreement) with the pope. This gave him the support of the organized church.
5. He wrote a new set of laws, called the **Napoleonic Code**, which gave all French citizens the same rights. However, the new laws took away many individual rights won during the Revolution. For example, they limited free speech and restored slavery in French colonies.

### 2. What changes did Napoleon make?

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## Napoleon Creates an Empire

(pages 206–208)

*What goals did Napoleon have beyond France's borders?*

Napoleon had hoped to make his empire larger in both Europe and the New World. In 1801, he had sent soldiers to retake the island of present-day Haiti. Slaves in that colony had seized power during a civil war. But his troops failed. Napoleon then gave up on his New World plans. In 1803, he sold the largest part of France's North American land—the huge Louisiana Territory—to the United States.

Napoleon had been stopped in the Americas. So he then moved to add to his power in Europe. In 1804, he made himself *emperor* of France. He took control of the Austrian Netherlands, parts of Italy, and Switzerland. Napoleon's only loss during this time was to the British navy in the **Battle of Trafalgar**. This loss kept him from conquering Britain.

### 3. Where did Napoleon succeed in adding lands, and where did he fail?

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**CHAPTER 7 Section 4** (pages 209–212)

# Napoleon's Empire Collapses

## BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read how Napoleon built his power.

In this section, you learn why he lost it.

## AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to take notes on mistakes Napoleon made.

### TERMS AND NAMES

**blockade** Forced closing of ports

**Continental System** Napoleon's policy of preventing trade and communication between Great Britain and other European nations

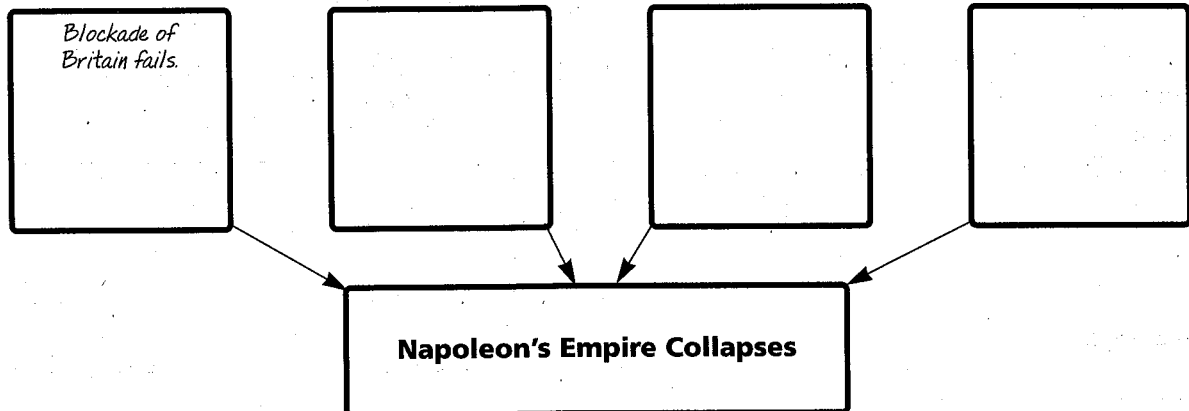
**guerrilla** Spanish peasant fighter

**Peninsular War** War that Napoleon fought in Spain

**scorched-earth policy** Policy of burning fields and slaughtering livestock so that enemy troops would find nothing to eat

**Waterloo** Battle in Belgium that was Napoleon's final defeat

**Hundred Days** Napoleon's last bid for power, which ended at Waterloo



## Napoleon's Three Costly Mistakes

(pages 209–210)

*What mistakes did Napoleon make abroad?*

Napoleon's own personality posed a threat to his empire. His love of power pushed him to expand his empire. His efforts to extend French rule led to his empire's collapse.

Napoleon made three costly mistakes. His first mistake was caused by his desire to crush Britain. He wanted to hurt the British economy. So in 1806 he ordered a **blockade**. This was an effort to stop

all trade between Britain and the other European nations. Napoleon called this policy the **Continental System**. It was supposed to make continental Europe more self sufficient.

The effort failed because some Europeans secretly brought in British goods. At the same time, the British put their own blockade around Europe. Because the British navy was so strong, it worked well. Soon the French economy, along with others on the European continent, weakened.

Napoleon's second mistake was to make his brother king of Spain in 1808. The Spanish people were loyal to their own king. With help from

Britain, bands of peasant fighters called **guerrillas** fought Napoleon for five years. Napoleon lost 300,000 troops during this **Peninsular War**. (The war gets its name from the Iberian Peninsula on which Spain is located.)

Napoleon's third mistake was perhaps his worst. In 1812, he tried to conquer Russia, far to the east. He entered Russia with more than 400,000 soldiers. As the Russians retreated, however, they followed a **scorched-earth policy**. They burned their fields and killed their livestock so Napoleon's armies could not eat what they left behind.

Although the French got as far as Moscow, winter was coming. Napoleon was forced to order his soldiers to head back. On the way home, bitter cold, hunger, and Russian attacks killed thousands. Thousands more *deserted*. By the time Napoleon's army left Russian territory, only 10,000 of his soldiers were able to fight.

**1. What happened to Napoleon in Russia?**

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**Napoleon's Downfall** (pages 211–212)

**What other defeats did Napoleon suffer?**

Other leaders saw that Napoleon was now weaker. Britain, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Austria formed an alliance and attacked France. Napoleon was defeated at the battle of Leipzig, in Germany, in 1813. In 1814, Napoleon gave up his throne and was exiled, or sent away, to the tiny island of Elba off the Italian coast.

Louis XVIII took the throne in Paris. But he quickly became unpopular. The peasants feared the new king would undo the land reforms of the revolution.

News of Louis XVIII's trouble was all Napoleon needed to try to regain his empire. In March 1815, he escaped from Elba and boldly returned to France. He took power and raised another army.

The rest of the European powers raised armies to fight against Napoleon. Led by the Duke of Wellington, they defeated Napoleon in his final battle near a Belgian town called **Waterloo**. This defeat ended Napoleon's last attempt at power, which was called the **Hundred Days**. He was then sent to the far-off island of St. Helena in the southern Atlantic Ocean. He died there in 1821.

**2. What was Napoleon's last attempt at power, and where did it end?**

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