

TURTON SCHOOL HISTORY DEPARTMENT – KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – FRENCH REVOLUTION		
Key events	Key people	Key questions/words
<p>The French Revolution began in 1789 as a popular movement to reform the 'absolute' rule of the monarch, Louis XVI. However, by 1793 France was in the grip of the 'Terror', and in 1804 France returned to a dictatorship under Napoleon Bonaparte.</p> <p>A number of factors caused the French Revolution:</p> <p>A feudal aristocracy, called the Estate System, still ruled over the peasants as they had in the Middle Ages. There were 3 Estates: The Clergy (first estate), The Nobles (the second estate), and the peasants and middle class (the third estate).</p> <p>There was a Financial Crisis as the king had run out of money due to expensive wars and an extravagant lifestyle. This was made worse by the fact that only the third estate paid taxes.</p> <p>The 1780s were a time of Famine and bad harvest that saw peasants go hungry and lose their jobs.</p> <p>In 1789, money problems forced the king to call the 'Estates General' - a kind of parliament. He wanted to raise taxes.</p> <p>The Estates did not give him more money, but instead presented thousands of lists of complaints, known as 'cahiers'.</p> <p>When the king tried to close down the Estates, the members took the 'Tennis Court Oath' on 20 June 1789. They declared themselves to be the 'National Assembly' and promised to keep meeting until the government was reformed and a new <u>constitution</u> was drawn up.</p> <p>They were supported by the mob, which stormed the Bastille prison on 14 July 1789.</p> <p>The National Assembly adopted the Rights of Man, which states that: "Men are born free and remain free and equal in rights". They also abolished feudal rules and set up a parliament, called the 'the Convention' similar to Britain's.</p> <p>However, in 1792 Austria and Prussia invaded hoping to intervene on behalf of Louis XVI. A few weeks later the monarchy in France was abolished and Louis XVI was executed in 1793.</p> <p>In 1793 there was a rebellion in the Vendée against the new government that lasted until 1796.</p> <p>The Convention decided to "make Terror the order of the day", and set up the Committee of Public Safety, led by Maximilien Robespierre.</p> <p>It passed the Law of Suspects, which gave the government the right to execute anybody who seemed a danger to the Revolution.</p> <p>This started 'The Terror' – 40,000 people were executed.</p> <p>In October 1795, the Convention used Napoleon Bonaparte and the army to crush riots. It was the end of the power of the Paris mob.</p> <p>Napoleon Bonaparte was a soldier who rose during the Revolution:</p> <p>He seized control of France in 1799 and named himself First Consul.</p> <p>He then made himself Emperor in 1804 until 1815.</p>	<p>Maximilien Robespierre It wasn't long after Robespierre joined the Estates General that the members of the Third Estate (the commoners) broke away and formed the National Assembly. Robespierre was an outspoken member of the National Assembly and a supporter of the <i>Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen</i>. Soon, the French Revolution had begun. Over time, Robespierre began to gain power in the new revolutionary government. He became the leader of the radical "Mountain" group in the Assembly and eventually gained control of the Jacobins. In 1793, the Committee of Public Safety was formed. This group pretty much ran the government of France. Robespierre became the leader of the Committee and, therefore, the most powerful man in France.</p> <p>Napoleon Bonaparte While Napoleon was in Corsica, the French Revolution occurred in Paris, France. The people revolted against the King of France and took control of the country. The royal family and many aristocrats were killed.</p> <p>Upon Napoleon's return, he allied himself with a radical group of the revolutionaries called the Jacobins. He received a position as the artillery commander at the Siege of Toulon in 1793. The city of Toulon was occupied by British troops and the British navy had control over the port. Napoleon came up with a strategy that helped to defeat the British and force them out of the port. His military leadership in the battle was recognized by the leaders of France and, at the young age of 24, he was promoted to the position of brigadier general. After leading a military expedition in Egypt, Napoleon returned to Paris in 1799. The political climate in France was changing. The current government, called the Directory, was losing power. Together with his allies, including his brother Lucien, Napoleon formed a new government called the Consulate. Initially, there were to be three consuls at the head of the government, but Napoleon gave himself the title of First Consul. His powers as First Consul essentially made him dictator of France.</p>	<p>What is a revolution? Why were the peasants annoyed? What was the Estates General? What is causation? What happened to Louis XVI? What was the Terror? Who was Napoleon?</p> <p>Revolution: a forcible overthrow of a government or social order, in favour of a new system.</p> <p>Causation: the action of causing something.</p> <p>Peasant: a poor smallholder or agricultural labourer of low social status (chiefly in historical use or with reference to subsistence farming in poorer countries).</p> <p>Estates General: the legislative body in France until 1789, representing the three estates of the realm (i.e. the clergy, the nobility, and the commons).</p>