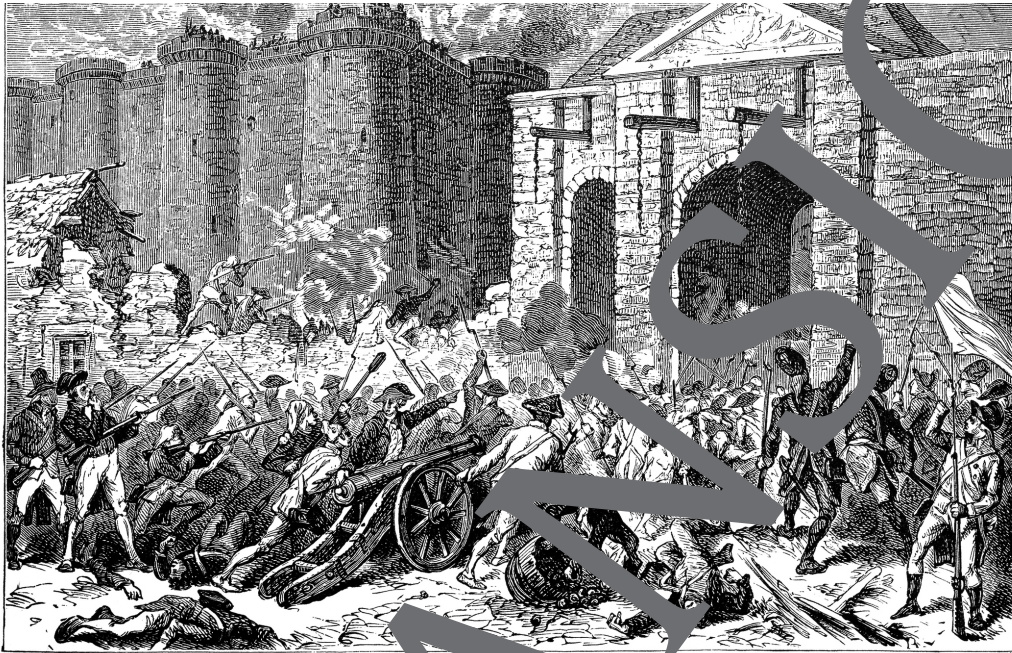


I.E.16

People's revolutions

The French Revolution – The unfolding of the fight for freedom

Andreas Hammer



Der Sturm auf die Bastille vom 14. Juli 1789 gilt als der Beginn der Französischen Revolution. Die Bürgerinnen und Bürger drückten ihren Unmut aus und kämpften für die Prinzipien „Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit“. In diesem Beitrag gehen die Schülerinnen und Schüler den Hintergründen, dem Verlauf und den Folgen der Revolution nach.

KOMPETENZEN

Klassenstufe: 8

Dauer: 2 Unterrichtsstunden plus Test

Kompetenzen: Die Ständegesellschaft erklären; die sozialhistorischen Aspekte vor der Revolution wiedergeben; die Generalständeversammlung analysieren; sich mit der Terrorherrschaft der Jakobiner auseinandersetzen; die Leistungen und Ergebnisse der Französischen Revolution erläutern; die Bedeutung der Erklärung der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte von 1789 bewerten

Thematische Bereiche: Absolutismus, Französische Revolution, Menschen- und Bürgerrechte, Terrorherrschaft

Medien: Texte, Bilder, Karikatur

Auf einen Blick

1. Stunde

Thema: Absolutism – Recapitulation

M 1 Absolutism in France – A short recapitulation

Inhalt: Die SuS wiederholen zentrale Begriffe und Sachverhalte des Absolutismus

2. Stunde

Thema: The social situation of peasants before the revolution

M 2 The life of farmers before the revolution

Inhalt: Die Lernenden vergleichen die Lebensumstände des dritten und des zweiten Standes.

Benötigt: Beamer/Whiteboard zur Projektion der Abbildungen

3. Stunde

Thema: Change in consciousness on the eve of the revolution

M 3 What were the reasons for the revolution?

Inhalt: Die Jugendlichen vergleichen Verhaltensweisen von Mitgliedern des dritten Standes zu unterschiedlichen Zeiten und erkennen die Herausbildung eines revolutionären Denkens.

4. Stunde

Thema: The Estates-General – auxiliary body of the king or representation of the entire French people?

M 4 The Assembly of the Estates General

Inhalt: Die SuS informieren sich über den historischen Kontext der Eröffnung der Generalständeversammlung, erarbeiten die Positionen des Königs und der drei teilnehmenden Stände und rekonstruieren die historische Situation in einem Rollenspiel.

Benötigt: Entsprechende Sitzordnung für das Rollenspiel, Klingel, Glocke oder Hämmerchen für den „König“ als Versammlungsleiter

5. Stunde

Thema: Myths as part of national history

M 5 The “storming” of the Bastille – Myth and reality

Inhalt: Die Lernenden analysieren und bewerten den Stellenwert der Einnahme der Bastille für die französische Geschichte. Anschließend informieren sie sich mithilfe einer Internetrecherche über den Tag des Deutschen Einmarsches in Paris sowie über die Relevanz des 9. Novembers in der deutschen Geschichte.

Benötigt: Beamer/Whiteboard, Internetzugang

6. Stunde

Thema: Freedom and equality as maxims of the French Revolution

M 6 The Declaration of Human and Civil Rights

Inhalt: Die Jugendlichen analysieren und bewerten ausgewählte Artikel aus der Erklärung der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte.

7. Stunde

Thema: The end of the monarchy

M 7a/b From monarchy to republic

Inhalt: Die Lernenden diskutieren die Hinrichtung des Königs.

Benötigt: Puzzleteile, Beamer/Whiteboard

8. Stunde

Thema: Robespierre's reign of terror

M 8 Freedom and equality through terror?

M 9 Glossary

M 10 Vocabulary list

Inhalt: Die SuS setzen sich kritisch mit der Herrschaft der Jakobiner auseinander.

Benötigt: Beamer/Whiteboard

Test

M 10 The French Revolution – A test

Absolutism in France – A short recapitulation

M 1

Absolutism is a form of rule that spread across Europe in the 17th century. What else do you know about absolutism?

Tasks

1. In class, collect terms and associations with absolutism.
2. Compare your results with the terms from the word cloud and clarify all the terms.
3. Read each statement carefully and decide whether it is true or false. Tick the appropriate column. There are three true statements and five false ones. For the five false statements, write a corrected version



© Graphic created with ChatGPT

statements	right	wrong
In France, people were categorised into three different classes.		
The nobles formed the first class.		
The clergy formed the second class.		
The farmers, craftsmen and merchants formed the third estate.		
The nobles were rich. They paid the most taxes.		
The church was very rich. Above all, it owned a lot of land. The bishops and abbots therefore paid high taxes.		
The king spent most of his money on wars, his army and his palace in Versailles, where lavish parties were held.		
Despite his high expenditure, the king always had enough money in his coffers.		

The assembly of the Estates General

M 4

Why did the Estates General meet in May 1789?

Tasks

1. The king and the three estates had different interests at the general assembly. Mark the respective interests in four different colours in the text.
Create a table like the one below and fill it with the information and your own ideas.
2. Carry out a role play. Act out the proceedings of the general assembly.

The convening of the General Assembly (5 May 1789)			
King	Clergy	Nobility	Bourgeoisie/ craftsmen/ peasants/ day labourers

Why did the Estates-General meet and what did they demand?

On 5 May 1789, for the first time since 1614, the Estates-General of clergymen, nobles and citizens convened. There

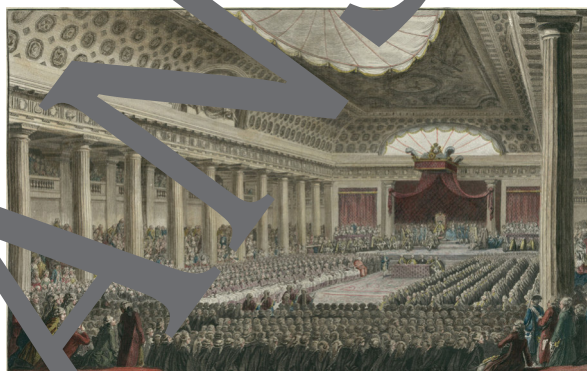
was a financial crisis: the king's spending had tripled the national debt in 15 years. The monarch had convened the assembly to prevent the threat of national bankruptcy.

As king by the grace of God, he had unchecked access to the state coffers. He could not

only enact laws and have them implemented but was also the supreme judge.

The king's orders were carried out by loyal civil servants. They ensured that the subjects paid taxes and that customs duties were paid on goods at the borders. To secure his power, the king also maintained an army of around 400,000 soldiers in peacetime. This standing army, numerous wars and the lavish court at the Palace of Versailles swallowed up huge sums of money.

Most farmers, craftsmen and day labourers were impoverished and could not pay higher taxes. They also owed their landlords taxes and services. The clergy and nobles on the other hand, refused to give up their privileges. Members of the first two estates enjoyed special privileges. In addition to the right to hunt - which they often used to ravage the peasants' fields - they were mostly exempt from paying taxes. They were also favoured in the allocation of high state offices in the church, administration or the army.



© Opening of the Estates-General on 5 May 1789, painting by Jean-Michel Moreau; public domain

From monarchy to republic

M 7

Tasks

1. Cut out the puzzle pieces and put the picture together.
2. Describe the picture and make a guess about what it might depict.
3. Form a judgment about the execution of the king and provide your comments on the death penalty.

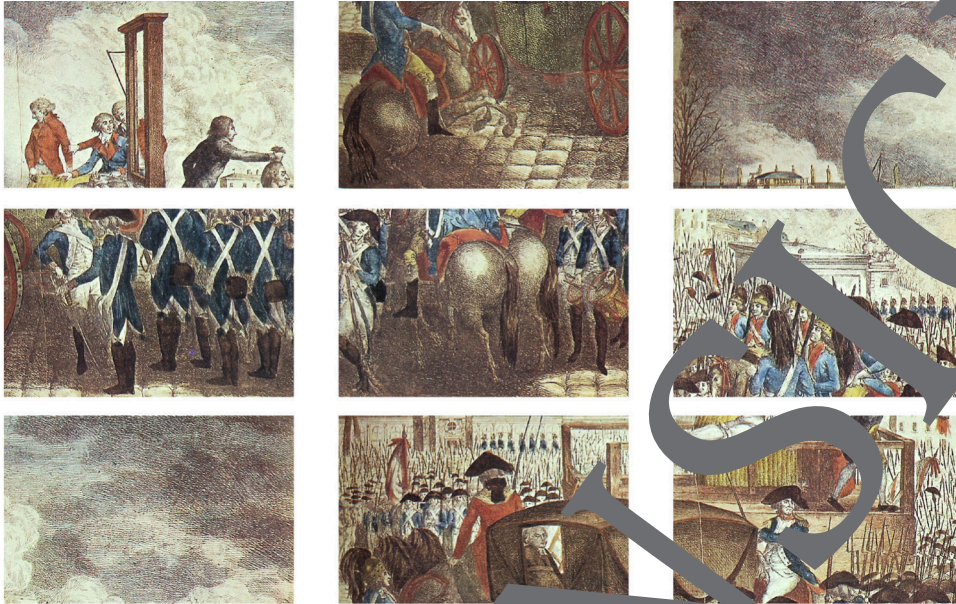


Image: © Georg Heinrich Sieveking, public domain

The execution of the king

France's neighbouring states, which were also governed by absolutist rulers, feared that the revolutionary spark would spread to their countries. Therefore, they prepared to intervene militarily in France. The French King Louis XVI was suspected of having conspired with the enemies of the revolution. When he tried to flee France, he and his family were arrested. He was sentenced to death by a narrow majority at trial and was executed by guillotine on 21 January 1793. This meant that France was no longer a monarchy but had become a republic.

Glossary

M 9

Enlightenment	An intellectual movement of the 17th and 18th centuries that opposed outdated traditions and arbitrary rule, aiming to promote individual self-determination through the use of reason
Absolutism	Form of government in which a king or emperor exercises unrestricted power
Estates General	Assembly of elected representatives of all three estates, which previously had the right to authorise taxes until the establishment of absolutism
Guillotine	A construction with a cleaver for decapitation
Monarchy	State with a monarch as head
Human rights	Fundamental rights to which every individual is entitled. In Europe, they have been regarded as natural rights since the Enlightenment. They include the right to equality and freedom.
National Assembly	Term for the assembly of elected representatives of the people. The representatives of the third estate gave themselves this name in 1789 when they broke away from the Estates-General.
Republic	Form of government in which the government is elected by the people for a certain period of time and, thus, is the holder of state power
Revolution	Fundamental, often sudden and violent change in the state and social order
Estate system	The social order of absolutism, divided between the clergy (first estate), nobility (second estate) and burghers, peasants, craftsmen, day labourers etc. (third estate) and assigned them different rights and duties
Constitution	Principles of state, the form of government and the rights of citizens
Versailles	City near Paris with royal castle, centre of power under the absolutist French king
Serfdom	Situation where farmers were not free and had to work on land owned by a lord.
Sovereignty	Supreme authority within a territory; a sovereign (e. g. a king) or a sovereign entity (such as a nation-state), with exclusive right to make laws, enforce them, and interpret them within its domain
Mercantilism	Economic theory from the 1500s to 1700s, stating that a country becomes rich and powerful by exporting more goods to other countries than it buys and by controlling trade
Divine right	Idea that the king's right to rule is given by God

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