

RHODES HIGH SCHOOL
GRADE 10 HISTORY
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

LESSON 1

The concept Revolution : Revolution means - change. Can occur violently or peacefully

Violent revolutions such as French and American Revolutions

Peaceful such as the industrial and agrarian revolutions

- 1 There were a number of causes that led to the French Revolution such as
 - (a) Political
 - (b) Social
 - (c) Economic
 - (d) Intellectual

1.1 POLITICAL CAUSE

- France during the Ancien Regime was ruled by KINGS ..ruled by decree
- French King believed that they were born to kings
DIVINE RIGHT- King believed he received his powers from God and as such his powers were unquestionable. His actions and decrees were law and could not be challenged'.

LETTRE DE CACHET – King could issue this document to anyone—did not have to give a reason. Anyone could be put into prison without a fair trial.

LIT DE JUSTICE- King had power of VETO...stop any law if passed by parlement without his authority.

- King was therefore AUTOCRATIC—ruled with an iron fist – one man rule
- French people had no representation – no political rights—unable to fight for improvement to their lives.

1.2 SOCIAL CAUSE

- France divided into a number of estates

First Estate : King and the privileged classes which included the nobles

1.2.1 THE NOBLES – had all the privileges such as

- Exempt from taxation
- Force the peasants to perform unpaid labour(corvee)
- Force peasants to pay road tax
- Peasants had to pay for use of winepress and slaughter house
- Demand a % of peasants crops
- Damage peasant crops not forced to pay compensation

- Nobles of the Gown—these nobles bought these positions from the state such as tax farmers- collected tax for the state.

1.2.2 THE CLERGY (2n Estate)

Divided into TWO: the UPPPER clergy and LOWER clergy

- UPPER CLERGY
Were untrained nobles but occupied the highest positions in the church
Did little or no religious work
Demanded 85% of church income
- LOWER CLERGY
Trained and ordained ministers
Did all the church work
Received only 15% of church's income
Planted crops and made wine to supplement income

1.2.3 THE PEASANTS

- * had little or no privileges
- * No land
- * No political representation
- * used by the nobility

1.2.4 THE MIDDLE CLASS(Bourgeoisie)

- * educated
- * little or no privileges
- * no political power

1.2 ECONOMIC CAUSE

- * King fought futile wars.. drained France's economy
- * Spent his time repairing watches/ horse riding than attend to state matters
- * Built new palace at Versailles
- * Queen Marie Antoinette felt France's resources were inexshhaustible—
Built doll houses and dolls
- * Taxation system corrupt- tax farmers did not pay all tax collected to State
- * Rich nobles paid no tax

Feudal Taxes Gabble –salt tax Taille – Land tax

1.3 ROLE OF PHILOSOPHERS

The educated class such as philosophers soon began to encourage the masses to rebel against the repressive state.

JEAN JAQUES ROUSSEAU

The state has an obligation to take care of the masses

King has an unwritten contract with his people

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT : Rousseau believed that the king had to serve his people if

Not the people have the right to replace him with a new king.

MONTESQUIE : Believed that France should change to the British system of Rule

Separation of POWER

EXECUTIVE: Make up laws

LEGISLATIVE: Draw up laws

JUDICARY : Executive the laws

DERERIOR

Wanted a strong king and not a weak parliament { Id rather be ruled by ONE lion than HUNRED RATS)

Questions to follow -----

Read the notes provided and answer the following questions that will help

U understand the above section

1. Define the following terms/concepts
 - 1.1 Revolution
 - 1.2 Ancien regime
 - 1.3 Autocratic rule
 - 1.4 Divine rights of kings
 - 1.5 Lettre de cachet
 - 1.6 Lit de justice

2. Explain why you consider the political situation in France would have Contributed to the revolution

3. Why do think that the privileges of the nobility became a form of oppression to the peasants

- 4, Who the bourgeoisie ? why would they be unhappy in France

5. Compare and contrast the role and functions of the upper clergy to the

6. How did the economic conditions in France speed uo the coming of the Revolution

7. Explain Rousseau's Social Contract

- 8 Why would the peasants agree with Montesquieu about how France Should be governed

ESSAY TASK

There can be no single cause of the Revolution

Do you agree? Substantiate your answer