

Chronology	
5 th May 1789	The Estates General meet
17 th June 1789	Formation of the National Assembly
20 th June 1789	Tennis Court Oath – to continue meeting until the king recognises the National Assembly
14 th July 1789	A Parisian mob storm the Bastille
26 th August 1789	National Assembly passes the Declaration of the Rights of Man
5 th October 1789	Women's march on Versailles
1792	France declares war on Austria and Prussia
21 Jan 1793	Execution of King Louis XVI
2 nd Nov 1795	The Directory set up (First Republic)

Key Themes	
Government/ Monarchy	
Protest	
Democracy / Society	
Military	
Empire	

Key Words	Definition
Ancien Regime	Old system of government . society in France before the Revolution
Cahiers de doléances	Book of complaints the French were asked to write before Estates General met
Constitution	A document which states the rules of a country
Coup d'etat	A sudden change of government carried out by force
Feudal	Feudal system where people received land in return for work for their lord / king
Republic	A country which has no monarch
Regicide	Killing a monarch after a trial
Socialism	Political and economic system based on equality for all
Guillotine	New weapon for executing criminals by decapitation
Clergy	Higher members of The Church (Pope, Archbishop, Bishops)
Revolution	A change which means that nothing will ever be the same again
Aristocracy	Nobility and Royalty
Tithe	Tax of 10% paid to The Church
Bourgeoisie	Very well off people (middle classes), particularly merchants, doctors and lawyers
Estates General	A special meeting of elected representatives of each of the three estates
Estates	All people in France belonged to one of three estates

Key People	Role
Louis XVI	King 1774-1792
Napoleon Bonaparte	Emperor in France post Revolution
Max Robespierre	Leader of France during 'The Terror'
Necker	Finance Minister sacked by King Louis
Abbé Sieyès	Author of 'What is Third Estate'
Mary Antoinette	King Louis' Austrian wife and Queen

Common misconceptions
Mary Antoinette never said 'Let them eat cake'. It was a rumour but whether she did or didn't, the effect was the same, it angered the protesters even more.
When the protesters stormed the Bastille, they didn't intend for it to get as aggressive as it did, they were just looking for gunpowder and supplies

Key discoveries / ideas
A new form of democratic government was set up, the National Assembly which gave the Third Estate much more of a say in the government of their country
The Declaration of Rights of Man abolished of the Ancien Regime (The Feudal System) in France, freeing the peasants for the first time in nearly 1000 years. It also gave the French Freedom of speech, Free press and ending special rights for nobility / clergy
Socialism was born in France out of the revolution, building on the enlightenment ideas of the Renaissance. For the first time, there would be social equality amongst all citizens

Important image(s)	
<p>Above: The breakdown of the Estates System in France before the Revolution</p>	<p>Right: Image highlighting the Ancien Regime of the poor carrying the rich at the bottom of the Feudal System</p>

Core Knowledge

France was bankrupt due to fighting in the American wars of independence

France's worsening economic situation led to hunger and anger where people, especially the poor, got desperate. This situation was made even worse with the failed harvests

King Louis XVI didn't seem to understand the feeling of anger in France and failed to help the poor despite calling the Estates General and allowing the people to give their grievances in the Cahiers De Doléances. Many felt their voices were being ignored

Due to the ideas growing during the Renaissance period, known as the Enlightenment, people began questioning and challenging the old ways of life. This came at the right time as it inspired protest and a fight for change

The Third Estate (consisting of the majority of the French citizens) set up their own government, The National Assembly, that would represent the majority not the minority

King Louis closed down the National Assembly and invited troops to the streets of Paris. This made the situation even more tense whereby the Parisians believed the King was about to strike on them, leading to the Storming of the Bastille castle, the peasants looking for gun powder to defend themselves against the king's armies. This started the revolution officially

King Louis and his family tried to escape Paris and seek support from foreign countries supportive of the monarch, probably Austria thanks to his wife being Austrian.

King Louis was captured as someone recognised his face on the new paper money Louis had just introduced. They were brought back to Paris and King Louis was executed by Guillotine.

Robespierre took control of France after the King's death and became paranoid that there was going to be a counter revolution and began killing anyone he suspected of being against the Revolution, this became known as 'The Terror'

Robespierre was eventually executed as well leaving France in the control of Napoleon, who became its emperor. France would never be the same again, it was the beginnings of socialism and equality

Literacy

CHAPTER I.

The Period.

IT was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way — in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

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There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England; there were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair face, on the throne of France. In both countries it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled for ever.

How does the opening of a Tale of two cities give you a feeling of what was happening in Renaissance Europe?

What impression of society does it give you?

Useful Websites

<https://www.history.com/topics/france/french-revolution>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/French-Revolution>

https://www.ducksters.com/history/french_revolution/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suZdYkZ_fm

Terror Robespierre and the French Revolution

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pe-R8Z7YWWg>

The French Revolution

Books / Articles / Films

Horrible Histories – France & Rowdy Revolutions

Marie Antoinette Movie - 2006

Tale of two cities – Charles Dickens



History Department