

# FRENCH REVOLUTION

STUDENT  
WORKBOOK

SAMPLE

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## INTRODUCTION

This Student Workbook will build your historical knowledge and skills as you study Revolutions at the Senior level.

Section A focuses on the causes of the French Revolution, covering the period from 1774 (accession of Louis XVI to the throne) to October 1789 (the October Days). It addresses the following key knowledge: The events and other conditions that contributed to the outbreak of revolution; The ideas that played a significant role in challenging the existing order; The role of individuals; and The contribution of popular movements in mobilising society and challenging the existing order.

Section B focuses on the consequences of the French Revolution, covering the period from October 1789 (the October Days) to 1795 (the dissolution of the Convention, Year III). It addresses the following key knowledge: The challenges the new regime faced in attempting to consolidate its power; The changes and continuities in political, social, cultural and economic conditions that influenced leaders to compromise their revolutionary ideals; The contribution of significant individuals that changed society; and The diverse revolutionary experiences of social groups and their responses to the challenges and changes to the conditions of everyday life.

Activities in the Workbook address the following key skills:

- Analyse the long-term causes, short-term triggers and consequences of revolution
- Use primary sources as evidence to analyse the causes and consequences of revolution
- Evaluate the significance of ideas, events, individuals and popular movements that contributed to revolution
- Compare a range of historical perspectives to understand how the ideas and experiences of individuals and movements contributed to revolution
- Evaluate historical interpretations about the causes and consequences of revolution
- Construct arguments about the causes and consequences of revolution using primary sources and historical interpretations as evidence
- Evaluate continuity and change in society
- Evaluate the degree to which revolutionary ideals were achieved or compromised
- Compare a range of revolutionary experiences and perspectives to understand the change brought to society.

Each Section contains a range of the following activities:

- Source Analysis: Visual Representation
- Source Analysis: Extract
- Historical Interpretations Task
- Memory Aid
- Who Said That?
- Fill in the Blanks
- Fact File
- Short Response.

Use this Workbook throughout your study of the French Revolution to record key information and understandings. Once completed it will be a comprehensive resource for revision.

**IMPORTANT:** The activities in this resource may differ substantially from tasks required in exams and school-assessed coursework. Please consult the curriculum authority for the latest advice on assessment.



# CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

(1774 to October 1789)

SAMPLE

## HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS

Read the two historians' viewpoints and answer the questions below.

### SOURCE

#### INTERPRETATION 1

[T]he circulation of the *Mercure* rose to some twenty thousand on the eve of the Revolution. If a contemporary's own estimates of the ratio of circulation to readership is correct, then it seems possible that Panckoucke's paper had a readership of over a hundred and twenty thousand at the time it was reporting in grim detail the final debacle of Louis XVI's government. "This review," observed one commentator, "has spread everywhere, to the commoner as well as the noble, in the salons of the aristocracy as well as the modest household of the bourgeois, delighting equally both court and Town." Nor was this just a Parisian phenomenon, since over half the copies of the *Mercure* were sold in the provinces.

Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2004), 148.

### SOURCE

#### INTERPRETATION 2

Then the slander turned on Louis XVI, deriding his supposed impotence... Defamation of this kind could not be laughed off... But the slander appeared faster than they could repress it, so "the law was particularly ineffective against anti-government libelles<sup>1</sup> during the years before the Revolution... The public believed the wildest stories, despite the government's attempts to counter them with accurate reports in propaganda of its own: "Parisians put more faith in wicked rumors and libelles that circulated clandestinely<sup>2</sup> than in the facts, which were printed and published by order of the government or with its permission."

<sup>1</sup> Libelles – political pamphlets

<sup>2</sup> Clandestinely – secretly

Robert Darnton, 'The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France,' in *The French Revolution*, ed. Ronald Schechter (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 96.

1. According to Schama, what influence did the *Mercure* have on French society?

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2. According to Darnton, what struggles did the old regime face in controlling public information and perceptions?

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## SOURCE ANALYSIS: VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Examine the representation carefully and answer the questions that follow.

SOURCE



France depicted as a globe is supported by members of the French society.

1. Identify the social groups depicted in the representation.

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2. Identify the likely message of the representation, as conveyed by symbols and other features.

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3. Referring to the representation and using your own knowledge, explain the significance of the peasants' grievances during the *ancien regime*.

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## FACT FILE

Fill in the details below.

Define 'noble privileges':

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Identify up to 3 specific noble privileges in France under the *ancien regime*.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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Identify up to 3 duties expected of nobles.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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How were nobles affected by the relocation of the royal court to Versailles in the 1680s?

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## FACT FILE

Fill in the details below.

Define 'monarchy' and 'Parlements':

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Identify up to 3 tensions between the monarchy and Parlements between 1774 and 1789.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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Identify up to 3 instruments the king used to overrule the Parlements.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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Why was August 1787 a turning point in relations between Louis XVI and the Paris Parlement?

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## SOURCE ANALYSIS: EXTRACT

Read the extract carefully and answer the questions that follow.

## SOURCE

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS WRITING ABOUT NECKER'S DISMISSAL ON 12 JULY 1789.

Morris dined with the Maréchal [General] de Castries. "As I am going away he takes me aside to inform me that M. [Mr] Necker is no longer in place. He is much affected at this intelligence, and, indeed, so am I. Urge him to go immediately to Versailles. He says he will not, that they have undoubtedly taken all their measures before this moment, and therefore he must be too late. I tell him he is not too late to warn the King of his danger, which is infinitely greater than he imagines; that his army will not fight against the nation, and that if he listens to violent counsels the nation will undoubtedly be against him; that the sword has fallen imperceptibly from his hands, and that the sovereignty of the nation is in the Assemblée Nationale. He makes no precise answer to this, but is very deeply affected... [T]he whole administration is routed out and Necker banished. Much alarm here. Paris begins to be in commotion... M. de Narbonne,... considers a civil war as inevitable, and is about to join his regiment, being, as he says, in a conflict between the dictates of his duty and of his conscience."

Gouverneur Morris, *The Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol 1, ed. Anne Cary Morris (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1888), 119–120.

1. Identify two reasons, stated in the extract, why Louis XVI was considered to be in danger.

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2. Identify groups or individuals mentioned in the extract whose fates were to be decided by the new 'nation.'

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3. Quoting from the extract and using your own knowledge, explain the events during the Estates-General that led to the dismissal of Jacques Necker.

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**SHORT RESPONSE**

1. What was the purpose of the *Cahiers de Doléances*? To what extent did the First, Second and Third Estates express similar grievances?

Para 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Para 2 \_\_\_\_\_

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2. 'The *Cahiers de Doléances* showed that Louis was genuinely open to reform.' Discuss.

Para 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Para 2 \_\_\_\_\_

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SAMPLE