

French Revolution (1789-1799)

Introduction:

The French Revolution was a period of time in France when the people overthrew the monarchy and took control of the government.

The causes:

The French Revolution lasted 10 years from 1789 to 1799. It began in 1789 when revolutionaries bombed a prison called the Bastille. The revolution came to an end in 1799, when a general named Napoleon established the French Consulate (with Napoleon as leader).

The King and the Queen:

The French king Louis XIV and his wife Marie Antoinette were extravagantly spending the tax money of the people, while the people were in poverty. The people became revolutionaries and entered the place and caught hold of the king, queen and the other royal people. They were all killed by the machine guillotine in the public place. The motto of French Revolution was “**liberty, Equality & Fraternity.**” There was blood flowing down the streets of Paris. Finally Napoleon became the Emperor in 1804.

The impact of French Revolution on England:

The French Revolution gave rise to many Napoleonic wars. Napoleon constantly waged war against England for nearly 20 years. This affected the economy of England. The people of England also suffered because of the wars by Napoleon on England. Many English people also became poor and died.

French Revolution on English Literature:

The French Revolution influenced many writers of English Literature including Shelley. Yet, there are three writers of the 18th century had considerable influence of the Revolution in their writings. They are:

1. Edmund Burke - Reflections on the French Revolution
2. Thomas Carlyle - French Revolution
3. William Wordsworth - his poems

The Victorian novelist Charles Dickens wrote a novel entitled as *A Tale of Two Cities* with the French Revolution as the background. Basically the French Revolution was meant for the poor people to get equality. This concept attracted many of the English writers.



The French Revolution 1789

Absolute Monarchies

- All kingdoms in Europe had absolute monarchies (France, Russia, Spain, Austria, Prussia, etc.) EXCEPT:
 - » Britain
 - » The Netherlands

French King Louis XVI & his Austrian wife Marie Antoinette



- Louis XVI spent money on:
 - Unsuccessful wars to enlarge France's territory and
 - Versailles
 - ...he and his father and grandfather had made France wealthy, but they spent all France's money and emptied the treasury!

Versailles



American Revolution: 1776 - 1783

- Louis XVI sent troops & money to help American Revolutionaries
- Wanted to strike a blow against England
 - England was France's biggest rival in Europe



Why did French citizens feel the need to revolt?

- Louis XVI was a weak ruler
 - Borrowed money to finance his wars
 - Needed/ wanted to tax people more
- American Revolutionaries had successfully broken away from an unfair leader who taxed them without giving them representation in government
 - French citizens were **INSPIRED!!!**



“liberté,
égalité,
fraternité”
=
liberty,
equality,
brotherhood

colors are
red, white
and blue



Declaration
of the
Rights
of Man

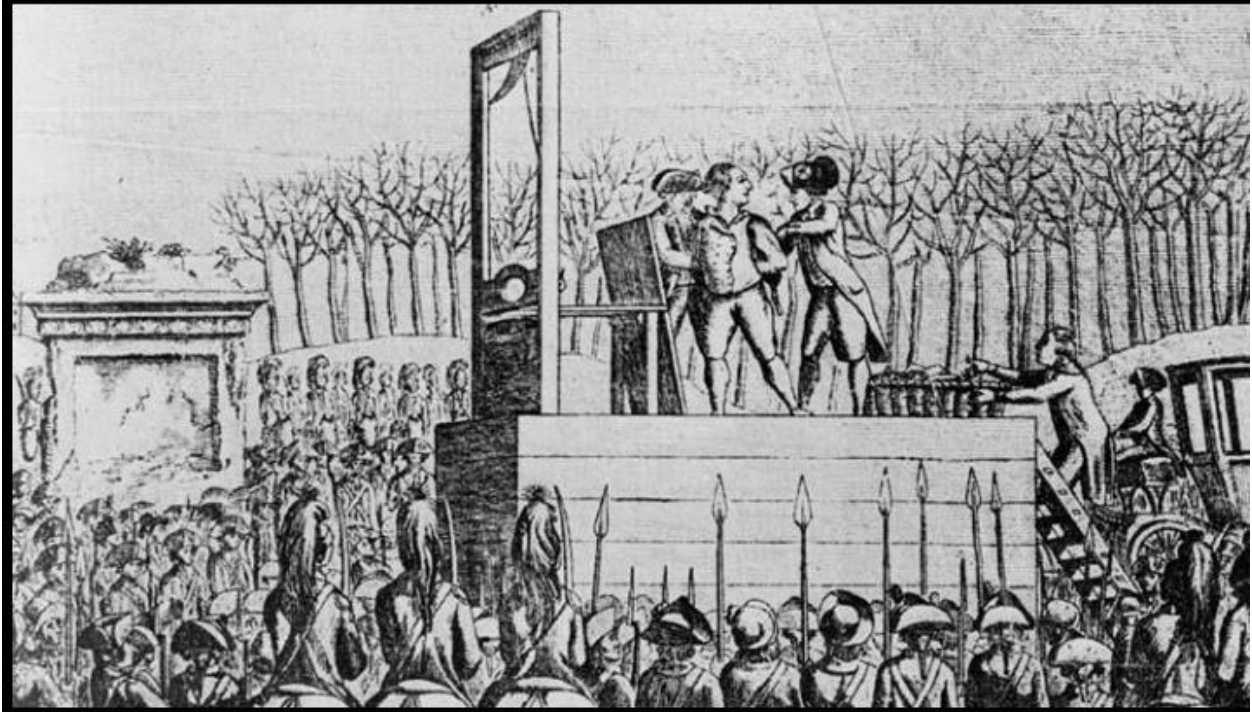
1789

Declaration of the Rights of Man

First Article –

“Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can be founded only on the common utility.”

Execution of King Louis XVI, 1792



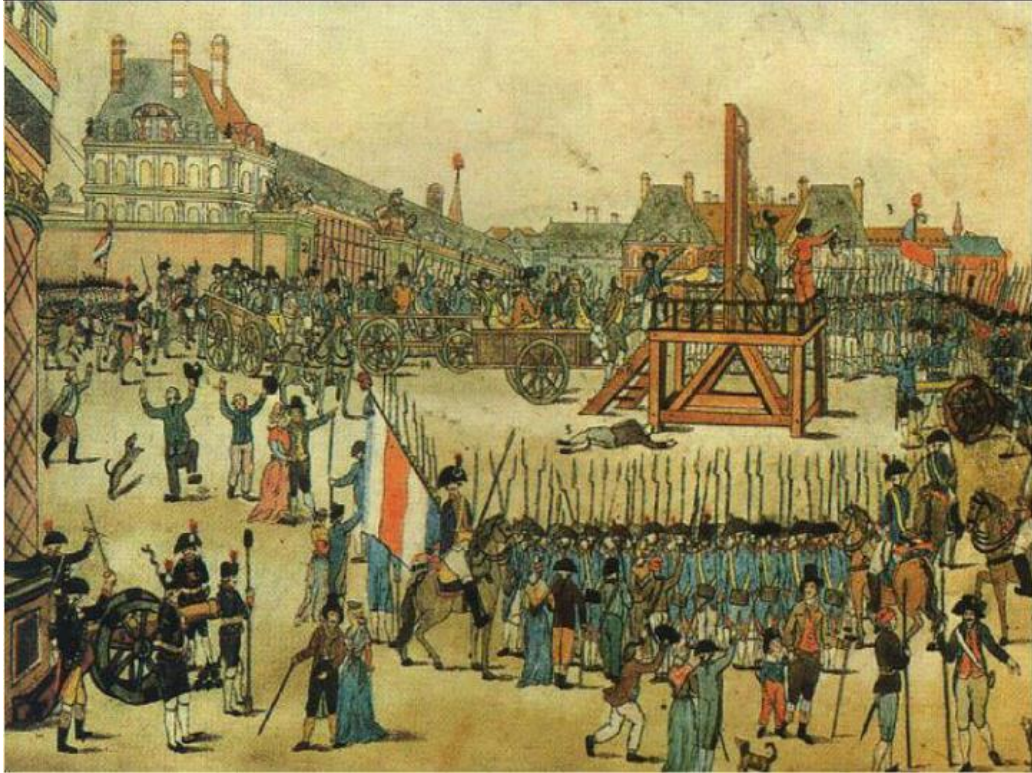
Guillotine – “Death to the Traitors!”



- Executed Marie Antoinette & other leaders of the French Republic
 - More than 40,000 killed under Robespierre

guillotine





Napoleon Bonaparte

- Popular military hero from Corsica called on to save France from the continuing chaos!





Corsica,
the island
where
Napoleon
was born

Young
Napoleon
Bonaparte
as a
French general,
circa 1795

by
Gros



1803

- Went to war against 3rd Coalition
 - Britain
 - Russia
 - Austria
 - Sweden
 - Prussia
- Won majority of battles & gained land for empire



Dec. 2, 1804

- Crowned him self Emperor of France in Notre Dame Cathedral



Romantic English Literature

- ▶ The French Revolution & the industrial revolution
- ▶ Poetry
William Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge
Robert Southey; Byron, Shelley, Keats
- ▶ Prose: Charles Lamb
- ▶ Novel: Walter Scott, Jane Austen