

# The French Revolution and Napoleon, 1789–1815

The French Revolution establishes a new political order, Napoleon Bonaparte gains and loses an empire, and European states forge a balance of power.



Napoleon Bonaparte crossing the Great Saint Bernard pass in 1801. Painting, Jacques Louis David.



Napoleon's Empire, 1810



Napoleon Bonaparte crossing the Great Saint Bernard pass in 1801. Painting, Jacques Louis David.







## Napoleon's Empire, 1810

- French Empire
- Countries allied with Napoleon
- Countries controlled by Napoleon
- Countries at war with Napoleon




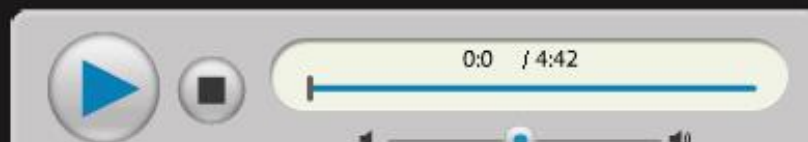
# Voices From the Past

## Napoleon's Mysterious End

Some people have theorized that Napoleon died from arsenic poisoning, which may have been administered accidentally or by design.



 Napoleon's death on the island of Saint Helena. Oil (1821), Carl von Steuben.



## Section 1

# The French Revolution Begins

Economic and social inequalities in the Old Regime help cause the French Revolution.

# The Old Order

## The Old Regime

- **Old Regime**—social and political system in France during the 1770s
- **Estates**—three social classes of France's Old Regime

## The Privileged Estates *[Visual]*

- First Estate—Catholic clergy—own 10 percent land, pay few taxes
- Second Estate—rich nobles—2 percent population, own 20 percent land

Population of France, 1787



Percent of Income Paid in Taxes



Population of France, 1787 /  
Percent of Income Paid in Taxes.



# The Old Order

## The Third Estate

- 97 percent of people are peasants, urban workers, middle class
- Have few privileges, pay heavy taxes, want change *[Visual]*



French satire on inequality of taxation. Caricature of over-taxed peasant carrying a nobleman and a cleric on his back (1789).



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# The Forces of Change


## Enlightenment Ideas

- Enlightenment ideas inspire some in Third Estate

## Economic Troubles

- High taxes and rising costs damage economy by 1780s
- King **Louis XVI** and his wife **Marie Antoinette** known for extravagance *[Visual]*
- Louis doubles nation's debt; banks refuse to lend more money



 Louis XVI, king of France, in his coronation robes. He died under the guillotine in 1793. Painting, Antoine-François Callet.

# The Forces of Change

## A Weak Leader

- Louis's poor decisions and lack of patience add to France's problems
- He calls **Estates-General**—meeting of representatives from all three estates

**\* Today people often refer to the FOURTH ESTATE which is a label for the news media**

# Dawn of the Revolution

## The National Assembly

- Third Estate has little power under old rules
- Sieyès persuades them to make major changes in French government
- Third Estate sets up **National Assembly**—new legislature to make reforms
- **Tennis Court Oath**—delegates decide to write new constitution for France

## Storming the Bastille

- Rumors fly in Paris that Louis wants to suppress National Assembly
- Mob attacks and seizes Bastille, killing guards on July 14, 1789 *[Visual]*



🔍 Conquerors of the Bastille before the Hotel de Ville. Painting (1839), Paul Delaroche.




# A Great Fear Sweeps France

## Rebellion

- Rumors and panic spread throughout France
- **Great Fear**—attacks by peasants taking place across France
- Peasants destroy legal papers binding them to feudal system
- In October 1789, Parisian women revolt over rising price of bread *[Visual]*
- They demand action, forcing Louis to return from Versailles to Paris



 *To Versailles, to Versailles.* Women of Paris march to Versailles on October 5–6, 1789, to bring back Louis XVI.



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## Section 2

# Revolution Brings Reform and Terror

The revolutionary government of France makes reforms but also uses terror and violence to retain power.



# The Assembly Reforms France

## The Rights of Man

- National Assembly adopts Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
- Revolutionary leaders use the slogan, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"

## A State-Controlled Church

- National Assembly seizes church lands, turns clergy into public officials
- This action alarms many peasants, who are devout Catholics

# The Assembly Reforms France

## **Louis Tries to Escape**

- Louis, worried about his future, attempts to escape France
- Revolutionaries catch the royal family near Netherlands' border

# Divisions Develop

## Factions Split France

- Major problems, including debt, food shortages remain
- Assembly split into Radicals, Moderates, Conservatives
- **Émigrés**—nobles who flee country, want Old Regime back in power
- **Sans-culottes**—lower class who want more change from the Revolution *[Visual]*



Parisian sans-culotte. Drawing, 18th century.



# Divisions Develop

## A Limited Monarchy

- In September 1791, Assembly finishes new constitution
- **Legislative Assembly**—new body created to pass laws

# War and Execution

## Problems with Other Countries

- Austrians and Prussians want Louis in charge of France; France declares war

## France at War

- Prussian forces soon threaten to attack Paris
- Parisian mob jails royal family, kills guards
- Mob breaks into prisons, killing over 1,000, including many who support king
- Pressured by mob, Legislative Assembly deposes the king and then dissolves
- National Convention takes office in September, forming French republic

# War and Execution

## Jacobins Take Control

- **Jacobins**—radical political organization behind 1792 governmental changes
- After a close vote, Louis XVI is found guilty of treason and beheaded
- Guillotine—machine designed during the Revolution to behead people *[Visual]*

**INTERACTIVE**

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### The Guillotine

If you think the guillotine was a cruel form of capital punishment, think again. Dr. Joseph-Ignace Guillotin proposed a machine that satisfied many needs: it was efficient, humane, and democratic. A physician and member of the National Academy, Guillotin claimed that those executed with the device "scarcely even felt the slightest pain."

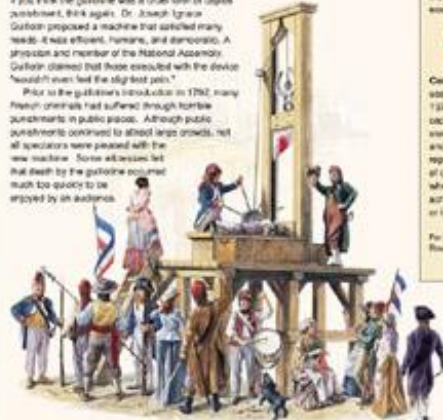
Prior to the guillotine's introduction in 1792, many French criminals had suffered through horrible punishments in public places. Although public punishments continued to attract large crowds, not all spectators were pleased with the new machine. Some witnesses felt that death by the guillotine consumed much too quickly to be enjoyed by an audience.

**Connecting to History**  
**Synthesizing** In what ways was the guillotine an efficient means of execution?

**GO TO EDUCATION WEBSITE**  
**Comment to Today**

**Comparing** France continued to use the guillotine until the late 1790s. Compare the instrument of capital punishment with the ones used in the United States today, and present your findings in an oral report. Speculate on what the goals of capital punishment are and whether they have been achieved—in the French Revolution or in today's world.

For an interactive activity on the French Revolution, visit [www.ck12.com](http://www.ck12.com).



 The Guillotine



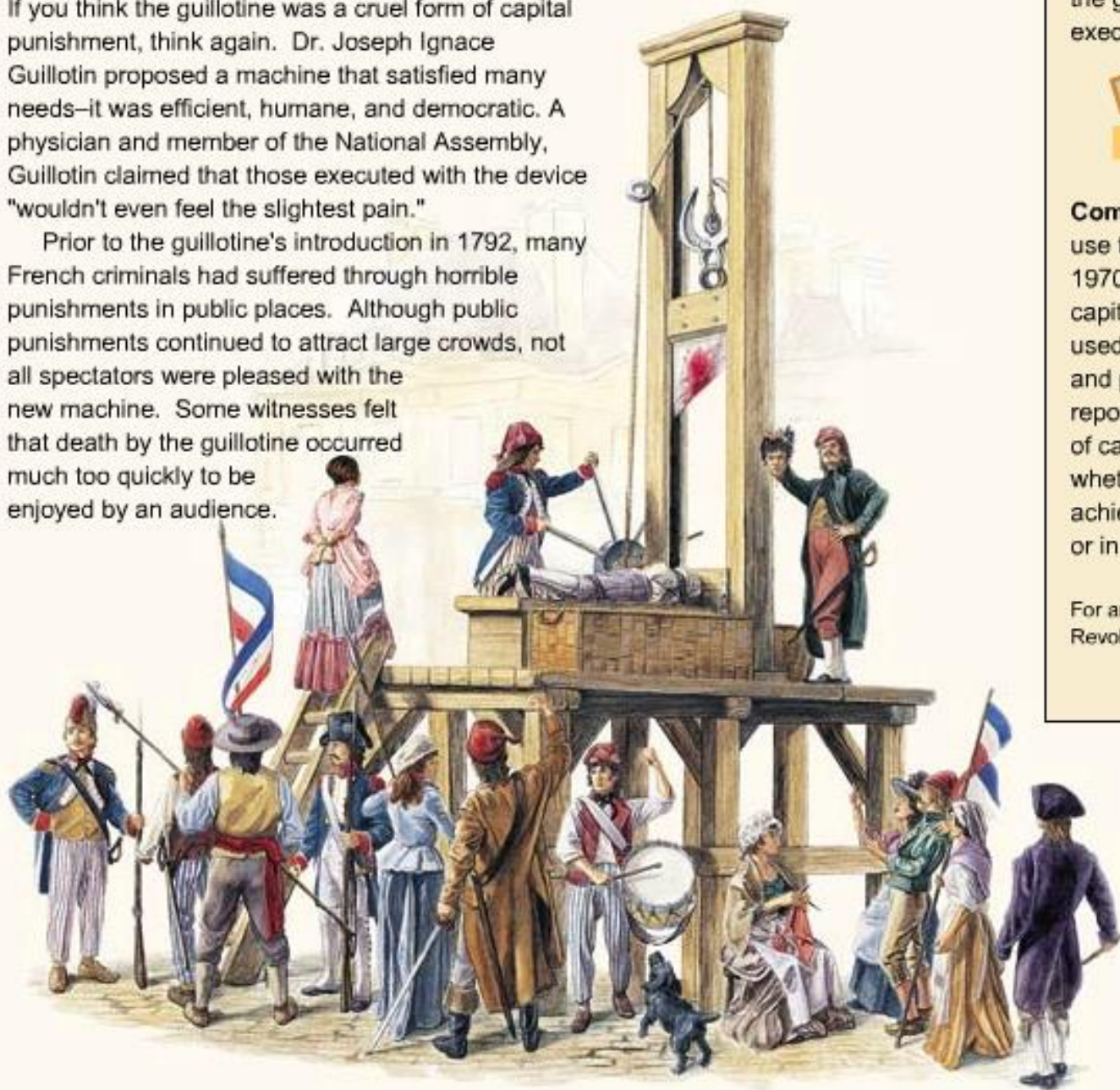
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SEE SKILLBUILDER  
HANDBOOK

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For an Internet activity on the French Revolution...



CLASSZONE.COM

# War and Execution

## The War Continues

- French army wins great victory against Prussians and Austrians
- In 1793 Britain, Spain, Holland join forces against France
- National Convention orders draft of 300,000 to reinforce army

# The Terror Grips France

## Divided Country

- Not all people in France support all changes of the Revolution

# The Terror Grips France

## Robespierre Assumes Control

- **Maximilien Robespierre**—Jacobin leader rules France for a year
- Becomes leader of the Committee for Public Safety, a dictator
- **Reign of Terror**—Robespierre's rule, which includes killing many opponents
- Thousands die during the Terror, including former allies and Marie Antoinette
- 85 percent of those who die during the Terror are middle or lower class



# End of the Terror

## Another Change in Government

- In July 1794, Robespierre arrested, executed
- Terror results in public opinion shifting away from radicals
- Moderate leaders write new constitution
- Two-house legislature and five-man Directory restore order
- New government makes Napoleon Bonaparte commander of armies

# Napoleon Seizes Power

## Early Life

- **Napoleon Bonaparte**—born in Corsica, attends military school, joins army

## Hero of the Hour

- In 1795, Napoleon defeats royalist rebels attacking National Convention
- Napoleon wins stunning victories in Italy, gaining popularity
- News of his defeats in Egypt is suppressed

## Coup d'État

- In November 1799, he carries out **coup d'état**—seizure of power
- Napoleon defeats British, Russians, Austrians who join forces against him

# Napoleon Rules France

## Vote of Approval

- New constitution is approved through **plebiscite**—vote of the people

## Restoring Order at Home

- To fix economy, he sets up national banking system, efficient tax collection
- Establishes **lycées**—government-run public schools to train officials
- Signs **concordat**—agreement—with pope restoring Catholicism in France
- Creates **Napoleonic Code**—uniform system of laws

# Napoleon Rules France

## Napoleon Crowned as Emperor *[Visual]*

- In December 1804, Napoleon crowns himself emperor of France



Coronation of Emperor Napoleon I (Bonaparte), with Empress Josephine kneeling. Painting (19th century), Jacque Louis David.



# Napoleon Creates an Empire

## Loss of American Territories

- In 1801, Napoleon attempts to retake colony of Saint Domingue but fails
- Gives up on the Americas and concentrates on Europe
- Sells the Louisiana Territory to United States for \$15 million in 1803

## Conquering Europe *[Visual]*

- Britain, Russia, Austria, Sweden join forces against Napoleon
- Napoleon crushes enemy forces in several brilliant battles
- Napoleon forces Austria, Russia, Sweden to sign peace treaties



# Napoleon Creates an Empire

## The Battle of Trafalgar

- In 1805, British win **Battle of Trafalgar**—ensures British naval superiority
- This defeat forces Napoleon to give up plan of invading Britain
- Looks for another way to control Britain

## The French Empire

- Napoleon controls Europe except for Britain, Portugal, Sweden, Ottomans
- Has puppet rulers in some countries, alliances with others
- French Empire reaches largest extent from 1807 to 1812

## Section 4

# Napoleon's Empire Collapses

Napoleon's conquests aroused nationalistic feelings across Europe and contributed to his downfall.

# Napoleon's Costly Mistakes

## The Continental System

- Napoleon strikes Britain through **blockade**—forced closing of ports
- **Continental System**—economic plan to strengthen Europe, weaken Britain
- Smugglers and uncooperative allies make France's blockade fail
- Britain responds with blockade of its own, led by its stronger navy
- Americans fight Britain in War of 1812; war does no major damage to Britain



# Napoleon's Costly Mistakes

## The Peninsular War

- Napoleon sends troops across Spain to attack Portugal, causing protest
- Napoleon makes his brother king of Spain, making things worse
- Spanish fight as **guerrillas**—small groups that attacked and then disappear
- British aid Spanish guerrillas
- Napoleon loses 300,000 soldiers during this **Peninsular War**
- Nationalist rebels fight the French in other conquered territories

# Napoleon's Costly Mistakes

## The Invasion of Russia

- Relations with Russia break down, Napoleon decides to invade
- In June 1812, Napoleon's army marches into Russia with 420,000 men
- Russians use **scorched-earth policy**—destroying crops, livestock
- In September 1812, Russians retreat from Moscow after Battle of Borodino
- Napoleon finds Moscow abandoned and burning
- Napoleon retreats, losing thousands of soldiers to raids, cold weather *[Visual]*



🔍 Napoleon's campaign in Russia during harsh winter.

# Napoleon's Downfall

## Napoleon Suffers Defeat

- Britain, Prussia, Sweden, Russia, Austria join forces against Napoleon
- Napoleon raises another army, but meets quick defeat by allied powers
- Napoleon finally surrenders and is exiled to island of Elba

## The Hundred Days

- Louis XVIII, new king, is soon overthrown and Napoleon returns from exile
- **Waterloo**—British, Prussian forces defeat Napoleon's army
- This defeat ends **Hundred Days**—Napoleon's last attempt at power

## Section 5

# The Congress of Vienna

After exiling Napoleon, European leaders at the Congress of Vienna try to restore order and reestablish peace.



# Metternich's Plan for Europe

## A Meeting of Nations

- **Congress of Vienna**—series of meetings that reshape Europe

## Metternich and the Great Powers

- Klemens von Metternich—foreign minister of Austria, influential at Congress
- **Balance of power**—a chief Metternich goal, with no one country a threat

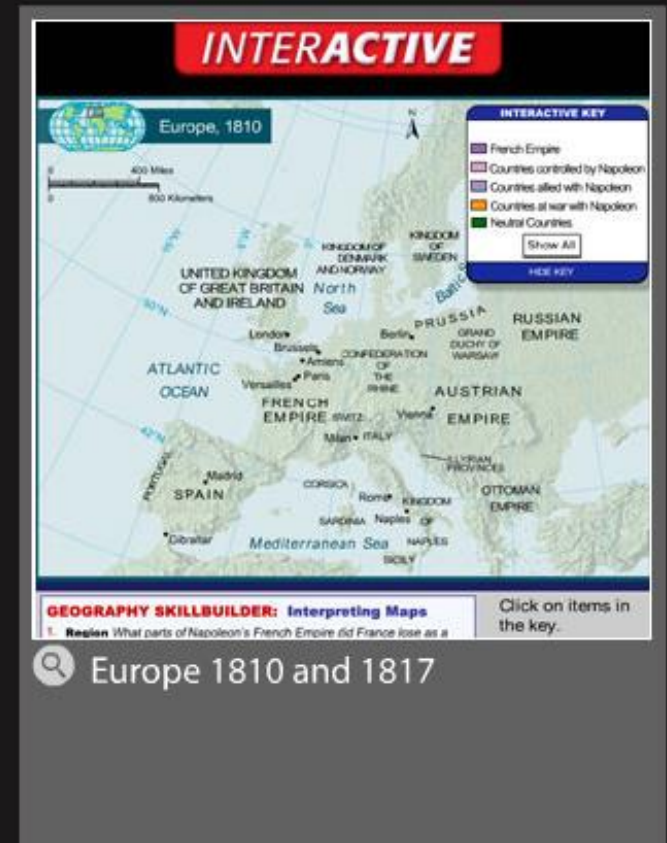
# Metternich's Plan for Europe

## The Containment of France *[Visual]*

- Kingdom of the Netherlands formed, and Switzerland made independent
- Austria dominates new German Confederation of 39 German states
- Kingdom of Sardinia is strengthened by adding Genoa

## Balance of Power

- European powers weaken France but leave it mostly intact



# Metternich's Plan for Europe

## Legitimacy

- **Legitimacy**—monarchs deposed by Napoleon are returned to thrones
- Leaders hope to restore order through these changes
- Congress of Vienna succeeds in getting all European governments together
- Fair deals are worked out so that the meeting does not lead to more war
- European nations agree to preserve peace, which lasts almost 40 years

# Political Changes Beyond Vienna

## Conservative Europe

- **Holy Alliance**—Russia, Prussia, Austria pledge to fight revolution
- **Concert of Europe**—European nations pledge to help fight revolutions
- Conservative governments rule across Europe, but new ideas have impact

## Revolutions in Latin America

- Napoleon's replacing king of Spain set off rebellions in Spanish America
- Many former colonies of Spain and Portugal gain independence

## Long-Term Legacy

- Britain, Prussia gain power; spreading nationalism leads to revolutions

**End of Chapter.**