



BAL BHARATI PUBLIC SCHOOL, PITAMPURA, DELHI – 110034

SUBJECT: HISTORY

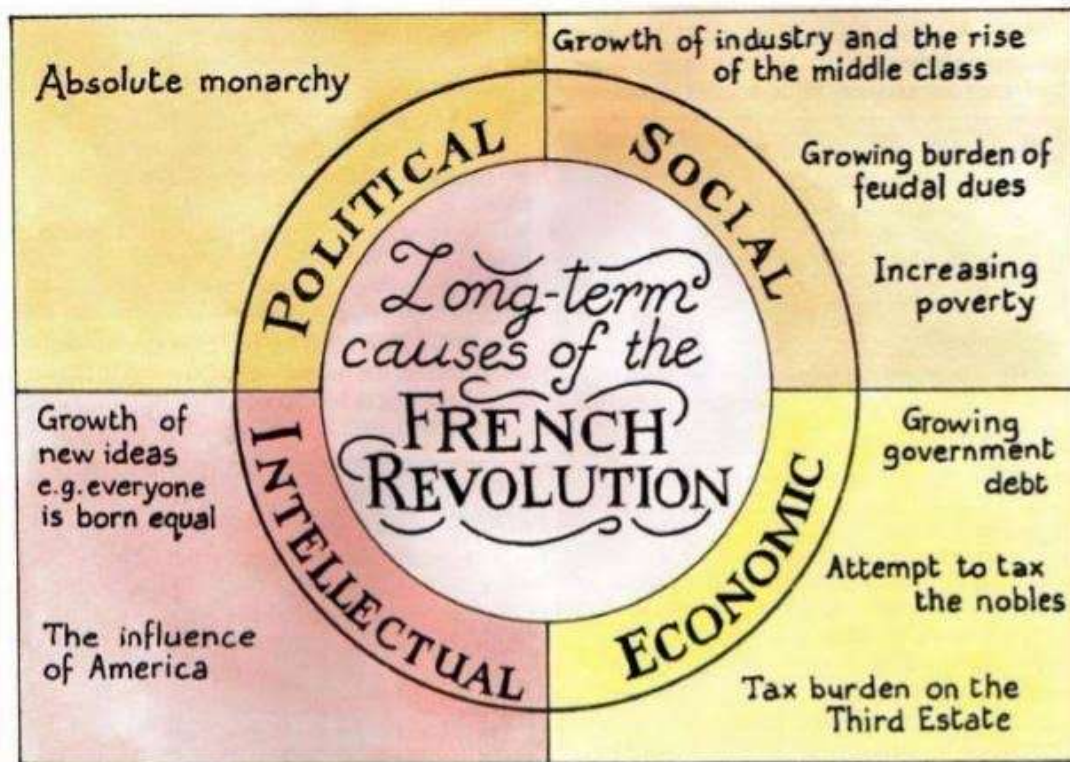
CLASS IX

CHAPTER: - The French Revolution

Kindly read the content given below and view the links shared for better understanding. Attempt the given assignment in History notebook.

Link of the chapter:- <http://www.ncert.nic.in/textbook/textbook.htm?iess3=1-5>

TOPIC: - Causes of the French Revolution



1. Absolute Monarchy of Louis XVI

The monarch had complete control over all aspects of the society including political power, economics and all forms of authority. The society involved people being placed into different estates of power such as clergy, nobility and peasants.

2. Age of Enlightenment

The ideals of liberty and equality that were needed to overthrow Louis XVI, emerged from the writings of important thinkers like Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Locke and Montesquieu. Each of these questioned the authority of an absolute monarch and argued against the rigid class divisions of feudalism.



- 17th and 18th century was the age of enlightenment.
- Various philosophers put forward their theories for the state to be based on equality and freedom.
- John Locke in his "Two Treatises of Government", sought to refute the doctrine of the divine and absolute right of the monarch.
- Rousseau proposed a form of government based on a social contract between people and their representatives.
- In The Spirit of the Laws, Montesquieu proposed a division of power within the government between the legislative, the executive and the judiciary.
- These ideas revolutionized the outlook of people.

3. History of the Estates System

The First estate comprised of the Roman catholic clergy which included people such as monks, priests. The church had a number of privileges like collection of taxes called tithes.

The second estate consisted of the French nobility. They were exempted from paying many taxes and were allowed to collect dues from the peasants.

The third estate included merchants, lawyers and ordinary peasants. They paid most of the taxes collected by the government.

By 1789, the third estate resented their position.

The Causes of the French Revolution (1)

By the late eighteenth century, France was on the brink of revolution. The reasons had been building up over many years, and mainly concerned the great divide between the nobility and the clergy, and everybody else. The French population was divided into three **estates**. The First estate was made up of the **clergy**. It numbered around 100,000 people. The Second estate was made up of the **nobility**. It numbered around 400,000 people. The Third estate was made up of the **bourgeoisie**, wage earners, and the **peasantry**. It made up the majority of the French population.



The first and second estates enjoyed certain privileges that that the third estate did not. Firstly, although they were the richest, they did not have to pay taxes. They were also the only members in society who could hold positions of importance such as Officers in the army. This caused great discontent within the Third Estate.

KEYWORDS

Revolution – a great change over a short period of time.

Estates – the class system in pre-revolutionary France.

Bourgeoisie – middle class.

Nobility – The upper class.

Clergy – The Church.

Peasants – The lower class, 90% of the population.



THE THIRD ESTATE

- Peasants were forced to do military service.
- Peasants could not hunt or fish on nobles' estates.
- Peasants had to pay taxes to their lord, the king and the Church.
- Peasants had to use the lord's mill, oven and winepress, and pay for them.
- Peasants made up 90% of the population.

THE FIRST AND SECOND ESTATE

- Nobles had almost complete authority over peasants.
- Nobles did not have to do military service.
- Nobles were exempt from most taxes.
- Nobles collected tolls from people using roads and markets.
- Many nobles and clergy lived in great luxury in chateaux and palaces.



The Kings, through their ministers and local officials **RULED ABSOLUTELY**. This meant that they had complete authority over France. The 'parliament' (States General) had not been called since 1614!

Peasants! Do you THINK it's fair? Which aspects of the French System might upset the Third Estate?



By Miss Lavells www.School-History.co.uk

4. Weather conditions before 1789

France experienced drastic shifts in the weather that negatively affected the food production. The winter was severe, summers included droughts that caused famines and poor harvests. The price of flour increased causing the price of bread to rise. Food crisis could not be solved.


In October 1789, a mob of Parisian women marched to the king's palace in Versailles in protest. This led to the imprisonment of Louis XVI and his family.

5. Economic Crisis

Throughout 1700s France participated in a series of expensive wars , especially against Britain . France allied with the American states which caused the country to push itself into bankruptcy. Louis XVI tried to solve the problem by increasing the tax rates.

The monarchy had expensive lifestyle. The construction and remodelling of the Palace of Versailles incurred a huge cost to the country. The peasants of the third estate resented the wealth and privileges of the king and queen.

TAX PAYERS !!



- The Third Estate bore the entire tax burden .
- * Tithe- 1/10th of the agricultural produce &
- * Taille- Tax paid to the state.
- Clergy and Nobility enjoyed at their cost.

Refer to the you tube link given below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBn7iWzrKoi>

Assignment:-

Q1. "Louis XVI was a despotic ruler." Justify the statement.

Q2. Comment on the cartoon given below.



Q3. Analyse the causes of the French Revolution. Make a table and divide the causes into political, social, economic and immediate.