

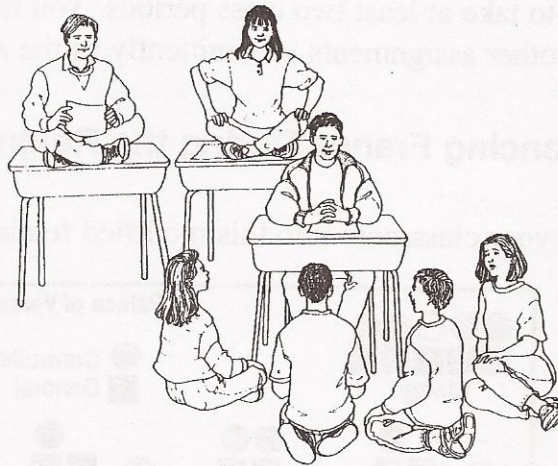


# Experiencing the Fervor of the French Revolution

## Experiential Exercise

### Overview

In this **Experiential Exercise** students reenact three stages of the French Revolution by assuming the role of an individual in revolutionary France—a monarch, a noble lord, a member of the clergy, or a commoner. In the first stage, students live through the financial crisis during the era of Louis XVI. Then they experience the optimism of the moderate stage of the Revolution. Finally, they become engulfed in revolutionary fervor during the radical Reign of Terror. After each stage, the teacher debriefs the experience and then provides a historical summary of what actually happened.



### Procedures at a Glance

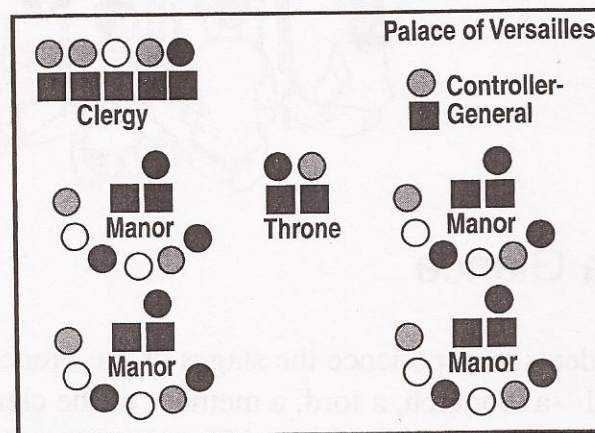
This activity allows students to experience the stages of the French Revolution by assuming the role of an individual—a monarch, a lord, a member of the clergy, or a commoner—in revolutionary France. Use **Role Cards 1.3A** and **Transparency Master 1.3B** to direct students through Stage One of the activity. Then debrief the experience with students, and use the information in the **Historical Summary** to provide factual detail about the first stage of the revolution. Repeat this process for Stages Two and Three. Use **Role Cards 1.3C** and **Transparency Master 1.3D** for Stage Two of the activity. Use **Role Cards 1.3E** and **Transparency Master 1.3F** for Stage Three of the activity.

## Procedures in Detail

1. This activity allows students to experience the stages of the French Revolution by assuming the role of an individual—a monarch, a lord, a member of the clergy, or a commoner—in revolutionary France. For each of the three distinct stages of the French Revolution portrayed in this activity, students react in character to the sequence of events, discuss the experience, and then learn what actually happened. By participating in the activity, students will experience how different groups reacted and felt during the revolution.
2. The procedures for each of the stages have been divided into three sections: 1) guidelines explaining the steps to prepare for and direct students through the experience, 2) debriefing questions that enable students to make connections between the experience and the historical reality, and 3) a historical summary designed to provide students with factual details about the French Revolution. Expect executing each stage of the activity—preparing students, conducting and debriefing the experience, and providing the historical summary—to take at least two class periods. You may want to assign additional reading or other assignments intermittently as the activity unfolds.

### Stage One: Experiencing France During the Reign of Louis XVI

1. Before class, arrange your classroom into this modified feudal structure:



- At the front of the class, set up two desks as thrones for King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette. Label the desks "Throne." Set up another desk to the side and slightly behind them and label it "Controller-General." On the wall nearest these desks, place a "Palace of Versailles" label.
- Create four manors by placing two desks together in four different areas of the room. Label each set of desks "Manor." Put a stack of scratch paper and a pair of scissors in each manor.
- Set aside five desks to the right of the king and queen and label the area "Clergy."

2. Make copies of **Role Cards 1.3A** in these quantities:

- 1 King Louis XVI
- 1 Queen Marie Antoinette
- 1 Controller-General
- 5 Members of the Clergy
- 4 Noble Lords
- 24 Peasants

(**Note:** With larger classes, increase the number of peasants. With smaller classes, decrease the number of peasants.)

3. As students enter the classroom, randomly give each one a **Role Card 1.3A**. Tell them they are assuming the role of members of French society during the 1780s. Have students move to their places in the classroom. Have one lord reside at each of the four manors, and place peasants at each of the four manors so peasants are evenly distributed. Make sure students assume the sitting position appropriate for their roles: peasants on the floor next to their manor, lords and clergy in the seat of the desk, royalty atop the desk, thronelike. Tell students to carefully read the description of the character that appears in italics at the top of the role card. Answer any questions students have about their roles.

4. Project **Transparency Master 1.3B: Stage One: Experiencing France During the Reign of Louis XVI**. Cover it so only Step 1 is showing. This transparency outlines the five steps of Stage One. Tell students that the information on all role cards corresponds to the five steps outlined on **Transparency Master 1.3B**. As you reveal each step of Stage One, have students read the corresponding step on their **Role Card 1.3A** to find out what they need to do. Here are guidelines for you to follow for each step of Stage One:

**Step 1: Read the background information on your role card.** Allow students time to read the background information about France during the reign of Louis XVI.

**Step 2: Discuss background information.** Once all students have read the background information, project Transparency 1.3A, which shows the Palace of Versailles. Ask students: **Who was King Louis XIV? When did he reign over France? What was the Palace of Versailles? How did Louis XIV use the palace to increase his power?** After students have answered the questions, project Transparency 1.3B, a portrait of Louis XVI. Ask students: **Who was King Louis XVI? When did he reign? Who was the Queen of France during Louis XVI's reign? Where was she from?** At the end of this step, students should have a basic understanding of the absolute monarchy in France of the late 1780s. Provide any additional information necessary to help them understand the conditions in France in the late 1780s that bred revolutionary fervor.

**Step 3: Peasants produce food.** Have peasants use scratch paper and scissors to carefully reproduce the food token that appears on their role card. Remind peasants that food production was crucial to the stability and well-being of French society, and their primary function in society was to produce food. Tell peasants that if they do not reproduce the food tokens, they will “starve” and lose points for the activity. As peasants work, the rest of the students may quietly watch, talk among themselves, provide words of encouragement, or simply relax. This simulates the reality of French society at this time—peasants working extremely hard while the privileged elite engage in leisure activities. Expect some of the peasants to resent this inequity. Continue this step until each peasant has produced at least 20 food tokens. You may want to have peasants work for 15 minutes or more to accentuate the inequities in French society.

**Step 4: Peasants pay taxes.** Announce that the government will collect taxes and the Church will collect tithes. Tell the lord of each manor to collect all food tokens from peasants. Have clergy members go to each manor and take 10 percent of all food tokens as the Church’s tithe. Then have the Controller-General take 50 percent of the food tokens as the government’s tax and show it to the king and queen. Finally, tell the lord of each manor to keep half of the rest of the manor’s food tokens (to represent peasants’ payment for protection) and to evenly distribute the remaining tokens to the peasants (to represent food for survival). Expect some peasants to complain about the heavy taxation, but inform them that this was typical of the situation in France in the late 1780s. Tell students to keep their food tokens, which they will need during Stage Two of the activity. (**Option:** You may want to collect the food tokens and redistribute them during Stage Two to ensure they are not lost.)

**Step 5: Controller-General makes emergency announcement.** Have the Controller-General read this emergency announcement, which appears on Step 5 of that role card: *“Fellow citizens, though we have collected taxes this year, France is still in a grave financial crisis. The king and queen need the full support of French citizens to resolve this problem. I ask you, citizens, to consider how you can help your country.”* After this announcement is made, students should realize that serious measures may need to be taken to remedy the situation.

## Connecting the Experience with History

- After the experience, hold a class discussion centering on these questions:
  - How did it feel to be a monarch? The Controller-General? A noble? A member of the clergy? A peasant?
  - How does it feel to be “born” into a role you cannot change?
  - Who has the most power in society? Who has the least?
  - What are some of the advantages of organizing a society in this way? What are some disadvantages?
  - What do you think should be done to save the French nation?
  - In what ways do think your experience was different from the historical reality? In what ways do think your experience was similar?

## Historical Summary

- After the class discussion, use Transparencies 1.3C and 1.3D and the information below to review with students the conditions in France during the late 1780s and the call for a meeting of the Estates General. An understanding of these issues is necessary preparation for Stage Two of the activity.

**Transparency 1.3C: Noble and clergyman riding on the back of a peasant** *Toward the end of the eighteenth century, France continued to spend much more than it received in income, taking out loans to pay for wars with England and government operations. By 1788 France spent half its annual budget for the interest payments on the ever-increasing national debt. In addition, 25 percent of the annual budget paid for military expenditures and 6 percent paid for the extravagant life-style of the king and his court at Versailles. With no other financial options available to the government, a sharp rise in taxes became inevitable. This new tax burden was born largely by the peasants, since the clergy and nobility were largely exempt from taxes. At the same time, the peasants were beset by poor harvests, and the price of bread soared.*

**Transparency 1.3D: The Meeting of the Estates General** *Desperate to solve the financial crisis, King Louis XVI called for the Estates General to meet. This medieval representative body, which had not been convened since 1614, divided France into three orders, or estates: the clergy, nobility, and commoners.*



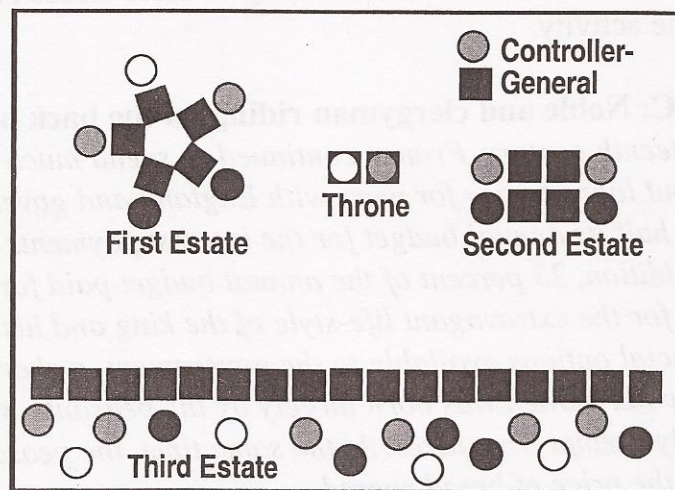
**Idea for Class Notes:** Have students take notes on the events in the Historical Summary. Then have them create a face representing the feelings of each of the groups featured in Stage One of the activity: monarchs, noble lords, members of the clergy, and peasants. For example, the expression on the peasant's face might show anger, frustration, and burden.



**Idea for Student Response:** Have students assume the role of the character they played in Stage One and write a journal account of the events they experienced as if they were living in France at that time. You may want to have students continue these journal accounts after they have experienced Stages Two and Three of the activity.

### Stage Two: Experiencing the Meeting of the Estates General

1. Before class, arrange your classroom for the preparation and meeting of the Estates General as shown:



- At the front of the class, set up two desks as thrones for King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette. Label the desks "Throne." Set up another desk to the side and slightly behind them and label it "Controller-General."
- Place five desks in a circle on one side of the classroom and label them "First Estate."
- Place four desks together on the other side of the classroom and label them "Second Estate."
- Put the remainder of the desks in a row across the back of the room to create a separate "room." Label the area "Third Estate."

2. Make copies of **Role Cards 1.3C** in these quantities:

- 1 King Louis XVI
- 1 Queen Marie Antoinette
- 1 Controller-General
- 5 Members of First Estate
- 4 Members of Second Estate
- 24 Members of Third Estate

(**Note:** With larger classes, increase the number of members of Third Estate. With smaller classes, decrease the number of members of Third Estate.)

3. Give each student the **Role Card 1.3C** that corresponds with the role they assumed for Stage One of the activity. For example, students who played members of the Clergy in Stage One should be members of the First Estate. Similarly, the students who played Peasants in Stage One should be members of the Third Estate. Have students assume their places in the classroom. Have members of the Third Estate stand in their area to symbolize their lack of privilege. Allow the others to sit. Tell students to carefully read the description of the character that appears in italics at the top of the role card. Answer any questions students have about their roles. (**Note:** If you collected the food tokens after Step 4 of Stage One, redistribute them to students.)
4. Project **Transparency Master 1.3D: Stage Two: Experiencing the Meeting of the Estates General**. Cover it so only Step 1 is showing. This transparency outlines the seven steps of Stage Two. Tell students that the information on all role cards corresponds to the seven steps outlined on **Transparency Master 1.3D**. As you reveal each step of Stage Two, have students read the corresponding step on their **Role Card 1.3C** to find out what they need to do. Here are guidelines for you to follow for each step of Stage Two:

**Step 1: The king assembles the Estates General for advice.** Have King Louis XVI read this announcement from Step 1 of his role card: *“French citizens, we are faced with a grave financial crisis that threatens to ruin France. We collect far less money than it costs to run this nation. We must either raise more money for the royal treasury or perish as a nation. I seek your advice and support. This is why I have assembled the Estates General. I instruct each of the Three Estates to decide and explain 1) whether they think the separate Estates should vote by order (each Estate, one vote) or by head (one person, one vote) and 2) how they propose France and its people can solve this horrible economic crisis.”* Have the rest of the class listen and kneel in reverent silence as he speaks. Make sure they applaud respectfully when the king finishes.

**Step 2: The Three Estates prepare to meet.** Allow students at least 20 to 25 minutes to prepare for the meeting of the Estates General. Each Estate must 1) decide whether to vote by head or by order, 2) draft a proposal to solve the financial crisis, 3) designate a spokesperson to present the proposal to the king and queen, and 4) create a banner with a slogan and a visual symbol representing their Estate. (**Note:** While historically inaccurate, having each Estate design a banner helps create unity and solidarity within each group.) These tasks are outlined for students on the role cards.

Allow the king, queen, and Controller-General to encourage members of the First and Second Estates to propose to vote by order and to continue taxation of the Third Estate, so they can maintain their privileges. Urge members of the Third Estate to propose to vote by head and more equitable taxation. After the king, queen, and Controller-General give their recommendations to the members of the First and Second Estates, have them relax, talk quietly, and watch while the groups prepare for the meeting. Have each Estate hang its banner on the nearest wall.

**Step 3: Each Estate proposes a plan to save France.** Have the spokesperson for the First Estate approach the throne, kneel before the monarchs, and present the Estate's proposal. Make sure the class listens respectfully during the presentation. Repeat this process with the spokespersons from the Second and Third Estates. After all proposals have been read, expect members of the Third Estate to be angered by the selfishness of the First and Second Estates. (**Note:** In reality, the proposals of each Estate were never formally presented to the king, but the interests of each Estate were well known within the government. This step provides students with a forum to present and learn the ideas held by each Estate.)

**Step 4: The king proposes a plan to save France.** Have the king read this statement from Step 4 of his role card: *"After hearing the wishes of each Estate, here is my plan. As established by long-standing precedent, I hereby proclaim that voting by the Estates General will continue to be by order. Furthermore, I strongly recommend that we continue our existing system of taxation in order to solve our dire financial crisis."* Have the rest of the class listen carefully and silently to the king's proposal. (**Note:** In reality, the king never announced a plan for how to solve the financial crisis to the Estates General. This step is included to show students that Louis XVI largely sought to preserve the status quo. In calling the meeting of the Estates General, for example, he always intended to adhere to the medieval tradition of voting by order. In addition, as a devout Catholic, he had no intention of shifting the tax burden to the clergy to solve the financial crisis.)



**Step 5: The Estates General votes on the king's plan.** As decreed by the king in the previous step, have the three Estates discuss the king's proposal for one or two minutes and then vote by order on it. The First and Second Estate should vote for the proposal; the Third Estate should vote against it. Thus, the proposal should pass by a 2 to 1 vote. Afterward, have King Louis XVI read the statements from Step 5 on his role card: "*The meeting of the Estates General is now over. Thank you for being here. France appreciates your courage and devotion.*" Expect increased anger and disbelief among members of the Third Estate. (Note: In reality, this vote never occurred. The Third Estate knew that a vote by order would go against them, so they refused to consider decrees proposed by the Estates General. Since students do not know this, we include this step to show them that the Third Estate was rendered powerless under this system.)

**Step 6: Severe famine occurs.** To represent the severe famine that occurred throughout the 1780s, make this announcement: "*A severe famine has occurred. Bread prices have doubled. Commoners are having extreme difficulty obtaining food.*" Then collect all but one of the food tokens from the members of the Third Estate. As supplies diminished, bread prices doubled in 1789, thus making the plight of the Third Estate more desperate. By taking food tokens from only the Third Estate but not the others—who could afford to pay higher prices food prices and thus did not go hungry—students should feel the desperation of the Third Estate.

**Step 7: The Third Estate responds to the situation.** Ask the Third Estate each of the questions below. Have the remainder of the class listen quietly to their responses. Allow members of the First and Second Estates to respond only to the final question.

- Describe what happened at the Estates General.
- How does it feel to be a member of the Third Estate?
- Do you agree with the results of the Estates General? Explain.
- Which groups had the most power during the Estates General? The least power?
- How did you feel when the famine occurred? Why?
- What options do the members of the Third Estate have to change their status?
- How many people of the Third Estate would now vote to meet apart from the privileged orders as the true representatives of the people of France and start their own government? Why?
- How many people of the First and Second Estates would support the members of the Third Estate who wish to start a new government? Why?

5. Count the number of students who vote to meet as a separate governmental body. Usually, most, if not all, members of the Third Estate and a few of the members of the First and Second Estates vote to meet as a separate body. Then announce that a revolution has begun. Tell all revolutionary students to hold one hand out in front of them and repeat the actual Tennis Court Oath as follows: *"I swear an oath to God and nation never to be separated until we have formed a solid and equitable Constitution as our constituents have asked us to."* (**Option:** You may want to take students out to the tennis court at your school to recite the Tennis Court Oath.)

### Connecting the Experience with History

- After the experience, hold a class discussion centering on these questions:
  - **How did it feel to be a monarch during the meeting of the Estates General? The Controller-General? A noble? A member of the clergy? A peasant?**
  - **For those who voted to meet as a separate body, how did it feel to take that action?**
  - **For those who chose not to become part of the revolutionary movement, how did it feel to see so many people move toward revolution?**
  - **Who might have the most power in society after the meeting of the Estates General? Who might have the least?**
  - **What questions do you have about the similarities between your experience and the historical reality? About the differences?**

### Historical Summary

- After the class discussion, use Transparencies 1.3E, 1.3F, and 1.3G and the information below to review with students the events that were outgrowths of the meeting of the Estates General: the Tennis Court Oath, the Storming of the Bastille, the March on Versailles, and the Constitution of 1791. An understanding of these events is necessary preparation for Stage Three of the activity.

**Transparency 1.3E: The Tennis Court Oath** *In the actual meeting of the Estates General, the Third Estate refused to conduct any business until the king broke tradition and ordered the three Estates to sit together as a single representative body. When it became clear that the Estates General would meet and vote as separate orders, the Third Estate adopted the title National Assembly and declared itself the true representative body of France. On June 19th a majority of the clergy voted to join the Third Estate. On June 20, 1789, members of the National Assembly, excluded from their hall in Versailles because of "repairs," moved to a large indoor tennis court in town and swore the famous Tennis Court Oath, pledging never to disband until they had written a new constitution for France.*

*The National Assembly later established a constitutional monarchy, which the king accepted in July 1791. All lawmaking power was placed in the hands of the National Assembly, which was elected by the wealthier half of French males. The king remained the head of state and could veto any law passed by the assembly. In an attempt to solve the financial crisis, the newly elected government seized the land of the Catholic Church and the land of any nobles who fled France.*

**Transparency 1.3F: The Storming of the Bastille** *By July 1789 about one fourth of the people of Paris were unemployed, and the bread prices soared so high many people were left without food. As rumor spread that the king's troops were coming to sack Paris, angry crowds seized arms for defense of the city. On July 14, 1789, hundreds of people marched to the Bastille, a medieval fort and prison, to search for gunpowder. The commanding officer of the Bastille refused to relinquish the gunpowder and fired on the crowd, killing 98 people. The soldiers finally surrendered hours later, and the revolutionary crowds took the Bastille. As the news spread across France, peasants began to rise in spontaneous revolt against their lords. The storming of the Bastille symbolized the beginning of the French Revolution.*

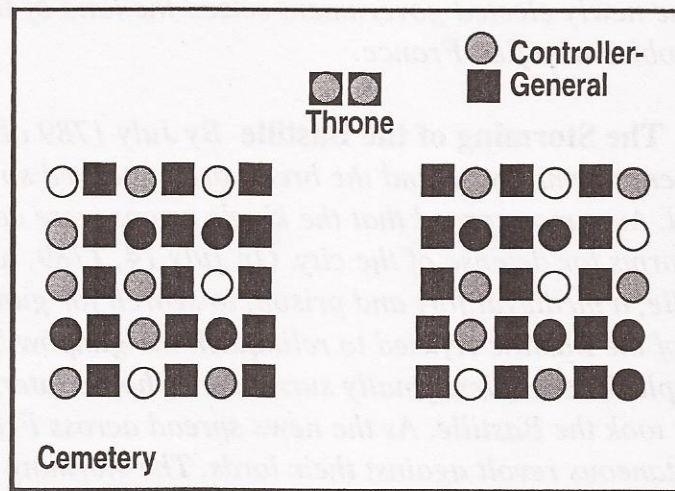
**Transparency 1.3G: The March on Versailles** *As the financial crisis heightened in the months following the Storming of the Bastille, unemployment and hunger increased. On October 5th, 7,000 desperate women marched the 12 miles from Paris to Versailles to demand bread. The women invaded the palace and killed several guards. The king promised to give them bread immediately and to accompany them back to Paris with his family. The heads of two nobles, stuck on pikes, led the way, followed by the unarmed royal guard. The king and his family never returned to Versailles.*



**Idea for Class Notes:** Have students take notes on the events in the Historical Summary. Then have them create a face representing the feelings of each of the groups featured in Stage One of the activity: monarchs, First Estate, Second Estate, and Third Estate. For example, the expression on the monarchs' face might show concern and anxiety.

### Stage Three: Experiencing the Radical Republic

1. Before class, arrange your classroom for the meeting of the National Assembly and the emergence of a radical republic as shown:



- Arrange all but three desks in parliamentary-style rows as diagrammed.
  - At the front of the class, set up two desks as thrones for King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette. Label the desks "Throne." Set up another desk to the side and slightly behind them and label it "Controller-General."
  - Label the back corner of the room "Cemetery."
2. Make copies of **Role Cards 1.3E** in these quantities:

- 1 King Louis XVI
- 1 Queen Marie Antoinette
- 1 Controller-General
- 5 Members of National Assembly: Clergy
- 4 Members of National Assembly: Noble
- 23 Members of National Assembly: Commoner
- 1 Member of National Assembly: Robespierre (2 pages)

(Note: With larger classes, increase the number of Members of National Assembly: Commoner. With smaller classes, decrease the number of Members of National Assembly: Commoner.)

3. Give each student the **Role Card 1.3C** that corresponds with the role they assumed for Stage Two of the activity. For example, students who played members of the Second Estate in Stage Two should be Members of National Assembly: Noble. Similarly, the student who played King Louis XVI in Stage Two should assume that role for this stage. Assign the role of Robespierre to one of the students who played Member of Third Estate in Stage Two. (**Note:** You may want to choose a confident, dynamic student to play Robespierre, who has a critical role during Steps 4, 5, and 6 of this stage. You may also want to meet briefly with the student—perhaps even before class—to review what he or she must do in Steps 4, 5, and 6.) Have students assume their place in the classroom. Tell students to carefully read the description of the character that appears in italics at the top of the role card. Answer any questions students have about their roles. (**Note:** It is important for students playing members of the National Assembly to recognize that they are all now considered supporters of the revolution, even if they did not vote to support it in Step 5 of Stage Two.)
4. Project **Transparency Master 1.3F: Stage Three: Experiencing the Radical Republic**. Cover it so only Step 1 is showing. This transparency outlines the seven steps of Stage Three. Tell students that the information on all role cards corresponds to the seven steps outlined on **Transparency Master 1.3F**. As you reveal each step of Stage Three, have students read the corresponding step on their **Role Card 1.3E** to find out what they need to do. Here are guidelines for you to follow for each step of Stage Three:

**Step 1: King Louis XVI recognizes the National Assembly.** Have King Louis XVI make this speech announcing his support of the new constitution, from Step 1 of that role card: *“French citizens, as your king, I recognize the Constitution of 1791, which abolishes noble privileges and allows the National Assembly, as a representative body of the people, to make laws for France. I recognize your power, and I recognize the new limitations on mine.”* Make sure the rest of the class listens in respectful silence. Have the National Assembly applaud at the end of the speech.

**Step 2: The Controller-General describes the financial crisis.** Have the Controller-General make this speech, from Step 2 of that role card: *“French citizens, though we have a new constitution, we have the same financial crisis. We don’t have enough money to even pay the interests on our loans. In addition, Austrian troops have invaded France, and we need money for our armies. The National Assembly must pass legislation immediately to raise money for our great country.”* Make sure students listen carefully and quietly as the Controller-General delivers the speech. This step is included to remind students that even though the revolution has begun, France continues to face major financial problems.

**Step 3: The National Assembly discusses and proposes solutions.** Have members of the National Assembly discuss among themselves solutions to the financial crisis. Several possible solutions are listed on Step 3 of their role cards. After members of the National Assembly informally discuss possible solutions for two or three minutes, call any member to kneel before the monarchs and make their proposal. Once a proposal is made, conduct a simple voice vote on it. If a proposal is approved, ask the king if he accepts the proposal. As instructed on Step 3 of his role card, the king will veto any proposal by saying, *“I exercise my constitutional right to veto that proposal.”* Repeat this process several times, or until the National Assembly has become sufficiently frustrated by the king’s refusal to accept their ideas. This step allows students to recognize that given the king’s obstructionist behavior, the Constitution of 1791 still did not afford French citizens enough power to make desired changes.

**Step 4: Robespierre announces a revolutionary plan.** Before you begin this step, discreetly give Robespierre **Student Handout 1.3G: Secret Document**. Have Robespierre stand and dramatically read from Step 4 of his role card: *“French citizens, we have just uncovered secret documents from the royal palace that prove beyond a doubt that the king is a traitor. He attempted to leave France. He collaborated with the Austrian enemy. He conspired to stop the revolution and take back his power. I hold the proof in my hands. See for yourself!”* Make sure students listen to his proclamation carefully. Allow members of the National Assembly to examine the secret document as “proof” that the king and queen are traitors. Then have Robespierre continue reading from his role card: *“French citizens, revolutionary brothers and sisters, we have been tricked by this wicked king. I propose we sell off the church lands, tax all citizens equally, fight the Austrians with revolutionary spirit, and put the king on trial for treason. Raise you hand if you’re in favor!”* Expect most members of the National Assembly to raise their hands in support of Robespierre.

**Step 5: The National Assembly puts the king on trial.** Have Robespierre ask members of the National Assembly: *“Who will speak in defense of this wicked king?”* Allow the king to speak on his own behalf. If supporters of the king emerge, allow Robespierre and his followers to call them “traitors.” After any speeches have been made on behalf of the king, have Robespierre call for a vote on whether the king is guilty of treason by saying: *“Who votes to convict the king as guilty of treason?”* Most students will vote to convict the king. (**Note:** Make sure either you or Robespierre notes who supported the king. This information is needed for Step 6.) When the king is convicted, announce that he has been sentenced to death. Turn off the lights, and project Transparency 1.3H, which shows a guillotine. Escort the king to the “Cemetery” area of the classroom to symbolize his execution.

**Step 6: Robespierre leads the radical republic.** Have Robespierre read this speech from Step 6 of his role card, which announces the Republic of Virtue and ushers in the Reign of Terror: *“Revolutionary brothers and sisters, the problem with France is that there are too many traitors. If we execute all traitors, we will have a Republic of Virtue and then will be able to continue the revolution. To all traitors of the Revolution, terror is now the order of the day. I ask you revolutionary citizens of France to write a new constitution that will save France.”*

As students begin discussing a new constitution—a bogus task that is included simply to keep them busy while Robespierre carries out the Reign of Terror—have Robespierre identify traitors to his cause that he wants “executed.” Robespierre may choose the queen, the Controller-General, nobles and clergy, supporters of the king, or anyone who bothers him by not working on a new constitution or by challenging his authority. Once a traitor has been pointed out, turn off the lights, project Transparency 1.3H (the guillotine), and escort the traitor to the “Cemetery” to symbolize his or her execution. Allow Robespierre to “execute” six to eight students. As the Reign of Terror occurs, most students will likely appear anxious, scared, or shocked. Those who protest or question Robespierre’s authority should be “executed.”

**Step 7: The Reign of Terror ends.** Read to the class this statement to inform students about the scope of the Reign of Terror: *Robespierre and his followers led this stage of the revolution for almost two years. During that time, France successfully defended itself against invading European armies. However, approximately 40,000 French men and women were executed for “treason.” Treasonous acts included saying, “Down with the Republic” and possessing a book with the king’s seal on it. Given these facts, what do you want to do to Robespierre?* Allow students to discuss Robespierre’s fate. Expect most students to immediately urge his execution. If this occurs, quickly turn out the lights, project Transparency 1.3H (the guillotine), and escort Robespierre to the “Cemetery.”

## Connecting the Experience with History

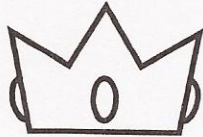
- After the experience, hold a class discussion centering on these questions:
  - Describe what you observed in this stage of the activity.
  - Why did the National Assembly turn against the king?
  - How did you feel when Robespierre gave his initial speech and showed the secret document?
  - How did you feel when the King was executed?
  - How did you feel toward Robespierre during the Reign of Terror? How did you feel when classmates were executed?
  - How did you feel when Robespierre was executed?
  - What do you think occurred in France after Robespierre was executed?
  - In what ways do think your experience was different from the French roles you played? In what ways do think your experience was similar?

## Historical Summary

- After the class discussion, use the Transparencies 1.3I through 1.3K and the information below to review with students the events that correspond with students' experience in Stage Three and what occurred in France after the Reign of Terror.

**Transparency 1.3I: The Execution of Louis XVI** *On June 21, 1791, the royal family attempted to flee France, but was caught a few miles from the French border and returned to Paris. The king agreed to sign the Constitution of 1791 and then proceeded to veto key revolutionary decrees. A new, more radical government, the National Convention, was popularly elected in September 1792. France fought to preserve the Revolution in "a war of people against kings" against Austria and Prussia. In November 1792 incriminating royal documents were found that showed that the king was negotiating secretly to restore his authority and thwart the Constitution. The National Convention overwhelmingly voted to convict Louis XVI of treason and then voted to sentence him to death in January 1793 by one vote (361 of the 720 members). Just before he was guillotined, he declared calmly, "I die innocent of all the crimes of which I have been charged." The Queen was executed in October 1793.*





## Queen Marie Antoinette

*You are Queen Marie Antoinette of France. You live in the enormous Palace of Versailles. You were born into the royal family of Austria and married King Louis XVI, who has absolute power to rule France. Like your husband, you support the traditional role the Catholic Church and nobility play in French society. You enjoy the opera, taking care of your family, and touring the spacious gardens of Versailles.*

- Step 1:** Read this background information about France during the reign of King Louis XVI: King Louis XIV ruled France from 1638–1715 and built the enormously extravagant Palace of Versailles. The king invited nobles to stay at the Palace and showered them with parties and royal attention. At the same time, Louis XIV transferred all political power into his own hands. From 1754 to the late 1780s, Louis XIV's grandson, King Louis XVI, ruled the French nation. Louis XVI married Marie Antoinette, a member of the royal family in Austria, who became Queen of France. The noble lords of France owned much of the farming land, which they allowed the peasants to use in exchange for food. Nobles had the privilege of not being taxed and the duty to protect their peasants. The Catholic clergy provided religious support and social services for the poor. The clergy were not allowed to be taxed by the government, and they also collected a tithe, a 10 percent tax on all income.
- Step 2:** Listen to the questions your teacher asks about France during the reign of Louis XVI. Use the information you just read in Step 1 to help you answer the questions.
- Step 3:** As the peasants work to produce food, chat with the king, relax on the throne, quietly watch, and/or provide words of encouragement.
- Step 4:** Relax and watch as the church collects its tithe and the Controller-General collects taxes for the government.
- Step 5:** Listen quietly to the Controller-General's announcement. Nod your head in agreement with what he or she says.



## Controller-General

*You are the Controller-General for France. This is the most important government position beside the king and queen. Appointed by King Louis XVI, you are responsible for the financial health of the nation. You collect and keep track of taxes paid to the government and advise the king on how to make France wealthy and economically strong.*

- Step 1:** Read this background information about France during the reign of King Louis XVI: King Louis XIV ruled France from 1638–1715 and built the enormously extravagant Palace of Versailles. The king invited nobles to stay at the Palace and showered them with parties and royal attention. At the same time, Louis XIV transferred all political power into his own hands. From 1754 to the late 1780s, Louis XIV's grandson, King Louis XVI, ruled the French nation. Louis XVI married Marie Antoinette, a member of the royal family in Austria, who became Queen of France. The noble lords of France owned much of the farming land, which they allowed the peasants to use in exchange for food. Nobles had the privilege of not being taxed and the duty to protect their peasants. The Catholic clergy provided religious support and social services for the poor. The clergy were not allowed to be taxed by the government, and they also collected a tithe, a 10 percent tax on all income.
- Step 2:** Listen to the questions your teacher asks about France during the reign of Louis XVI. Use the information you just read in Step 1 to help you answer the questions.
- Step 3:** As the peasants work to produce food, chat with the king and queen, relax, quietly watch, and/or provide words of encouragement.
- Step 4:** After the Clergy have collected their church tithe from each noble Lord, go to each manor to collect 50 percent of the food tokens as the government tax. After collecting the taxes, show the "revenue" you collected to the king and queen. Then return to your seat.
- Step 5:** When the teacher instructs you to, read the following statement in a very serious tone: *"Fellow citizens, though we have collected taxes this year, France is still in a grave financial crisis. The king and queen need the full support of French citizens to resolve this problem. I ask you, citizens, to consider how you can help your country."*



## Member of the Clergy

*You are a member of the French Catholic clergy. Like your king, you are devoutly religious. You provide religious guidance to the French people, and, in return, you are not taxed. You also provide social services to the poor, such as food, education, and moral guidance.*

- Step 1:** Read this background information about France during the reign of King Louis XVI: King Louis XIV ruled France from 1638–1715 and built the enormously extravagant Palace of Versailles. The king invited nobles to stay at the Palace and showered them with parties and royal attention. At the same time, Louis XIV transferred all political power into his own hands. From 1754 to the late 1780s, Louis XIV's grandson, King Louis XVI, ruled the French nation. Louis XVI married Marie Antoinette, a member of the royal family in Austria, who became Queen of France. The noble lords of France owned much of the farming land, which they allowed the peasants to use in exchange for food. Nobles had the privilege of not being taxed and the duty to protect their peasants. The Catholic clergy provided religious support and social services for the poor. The clergy were not allowed to be taxed by the government, and they also collected a tithe, a 10 percent tax on all income.
- Step 2:** Listen to the questions your teacher asks about France during the reign of Louis XVI. Use the information you just read in Step 1 to help you answer the questions.
- Step 3:** As the peasants work to produce food, chat with the king and queen, relax, quietly watch, and/or provide words of encouragement.
- Step 4:** Go with your fellow clergy members to each of the manors. Collect 10 percent of all food tokens from the Noble Lord as the tithe owed to the Church. After you have collected the tithe, return to your seat.
- Step 5:** Listen carefully to the Controller-General's announcement.



## Noble Lord

*You are a member of the French nobility. Your king, Louis XVI, has the legal power to make decisions without your agreement. He sometimes requires you to stay at his palace for long periods of time, far away from your family. But the king needs the support of lords like you to collect taxes and protect the nation. Also, you control a manor in the countryside—complete with a castle—where peasants produce food for you. In return, you provide the peasants a place to live and protection from harm.*

- Step 1:** Read this background information about France during the reign of King Louis XVI: King Louis XIV ruled France from 1638–1715 and built the enormously extravagant Palace of Versailles. The king invited nobles to stay at the Palace and showered them with parties and royal attention. At the same time, Louis XIV transferred all political power into his own hands. From 1754 to the late 1780s, Louis XIV's grandson, King Louis XVI, ruled the French nation. Louis XVI married Marie Antoinette, a member of the royal family in Austria, who became Queen of France. The noble lords of France owned much of the farming land, which they allowed the peasants to use in exchange for food. Nobles had the privilege of not being taxed and the duty to protect their peasants. The Catholic clergy provided religious support and social services for the poor. The clergy were not allowed to be taxed by the government, and they also collected a tithe, a 10 percent tax on all income.
- Step 2:** Listen to the questions your teacher asks about France during the reign of Louis XVI. Use the information you just read in Step 1 to help you answer the questions.
- Step 3:** As the peasants work to produce food, chat with the other lords, relax, quietly watch, and/or provide words of encouragement.
- Step 4:** Collect all food tokens from your peasants. Count them. When the clergy arrives at your manor, give 10 percent of the food tokens to them for the Church's tithe. Then recount them. When the Controller-General arrives, give 50 percent of the tokens to her or him for the government tax. Keep half of the remaining tokens (to represent your peasant's payment for protection), and evenly distribute the remaining tokens to the peasants.
- Step 5:** Listen carefully to the Controller-General's announcement.



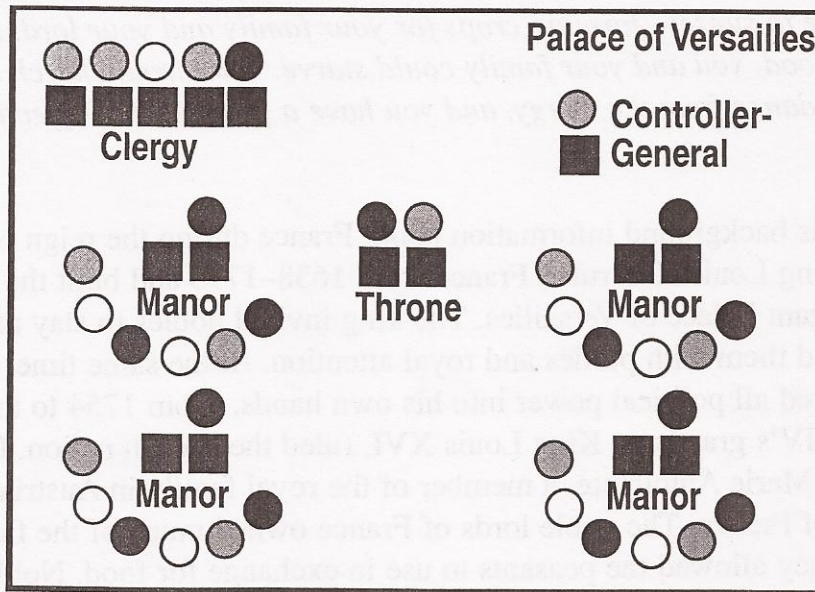
## Peasant

*You are a French peasant. You live on a manor owned by your noble lord. You spend the day—from sunrise to sunset—farming crops for your family and your lord. If you don't produce enough food, you and your family could starve. You attend church each Sunday to gain spiritual guidance from the clergy, and you have a great deal of affection for your king and queen.*

- Step 1:** Read this background information about France during the reign of King Louis XVI: King Louis XIV ruled France from 1638–1715 and built the enormously extravagant Palace of Versailles. The king invited nobles to stay at the Palace and showered them with parties and royal attention. At the same time, Louis XIV transferred all political power into his own hands. From 1754 to the late 1780s, Louis XIV's grandson, King Louis XVI, ruled the French nation. Louis XVI married Marie Antoinette, a member of the royal family in Austria, who became Queen of France. The noble lords of France owned much of the farming land, which they allowed the peasants to use in exchange for food. Nobles had the privilege of not being taxed and the duty to protect their peasants. The Catholic clergy provided religious support and social services for the poor. The clergy were not allowed to be taxed by the government, and they also collected a tithe, a 10 percent tax on all income.
- Step 2:** Listen to the questions your teacher asks about France during the reign of Louis XVI. Use the information you just read in Step 1 to help you answer the questions.
- Step 3:** Use scratch paper, a pen or pencil, and scissors to reproduce the food token that appears at the bottom of this role card. Since your main role in life is to produce food, work hard to replicate the food token as many times as possible. Minimally, you must produce at least 20. If you produce fewer than 20, you will “starve” and lose points for the activity.
- Step 4:** Give all your food tokens to your lord.
- Step 5:** Listen carefully to the Controller-General's announcement.



## Stage One: Experiencing France During the Reign of Louis XVI



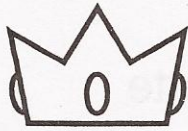
**Step 1: Read the background information on your role card.**

**Step 2: Discuss the background information.**

**Step 3: Peasants produce food.**

**Step 4: Peasants pay taxes.**

**Step 5: Controller-General makes emergency announcement.**



## King Louis XVI

*Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, you have decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.*

**Step 1:** When the teacher directs you, stand and read the following statement to the class announcing the meeting of the Estates General:

*“French citizens, we are faced with a grave financial crisis that threatens to ruin France. We collect far less money than it costs to run this nation. We must either raise more money for the royal treasury or perish as a nation. I seek your advice and support. This is why I have assembled the Estates General. I instruct each of the Three Estates to decide and explain 1) whether they think the separate Estates should vote by order (each Estate, one vote) or by head (one person, one vote) and 2) how they propose France and its people can solve this horrible economic crisis.”*

**Step 2:** Once the Three Estates begin working on their tasks, visit the First and Second Estates with the queen and the Controller-General. Remind those Estates that voting “by order” will help them preserve their privileges. Afterward, relax and talk quietly with the queen and the Controller-General.

**Step 3:** Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before you and presents the Estate’s proposal.

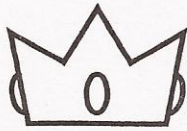
**Step 4:** When the teacher directs you, read the following proposal for the Estates General to consider:

*“After hearing the wishes of each Estate, here is my plan. As established by long-standing precedent, I hereby proclaim that voting by the Estates General will continue to be by order. Furthermore, I strongly recommend that we continue our existing system of taxation in order to solve our dire financial crisis.”*

**Step 5:** Listen as the spokesperson for each Estate announces the Estate’s vote on your proposal. When the vote of the Three Estates has been announced, say, *“The meeting of the Estates General is now over. Thank you for being here. France appreciates your courage and devotion.”*

**Step 6:** Listen to your teacher’s announcement.

**Step 7:** Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.



## Queen Marie Antoinette

*Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, your husband has decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.*

- Step 1:** Listen carefully to the king's speech. Applaud respectfully when he finishes.
- Step 2:** Once the Three Estates begin working on their tasks, visit the First and Second Estates with the king and the Controller-General. Remind those Estates that voting "by order" will help them preserve their privileges. Afterward, relax and talk quietly with the king and the Controller-General.
- Step 3:** Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before you and presents the Estate's proposal.
- Step 4:** Listen to the king's proposal for the Estates General to consider. Nod in agreement.
- Step 5:** Listen as each Estate announces its vote on the king's proposal.
- Step 6:** Listen to your teacher's announcement.
- Step 7:** Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.





## Controller-General

*You are the Controller-General for France, appointed by King Louis XVI. Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, the king has decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.*

- Step 1:** Listen carefully to the king's speech. Applaud respectfully when he finishes.
- Step 2:** Once the Three Estates begin working on their tasks, visit the First and Second Estates with the king and queen. Remind those Estates that voting "by order" will help them preserve their privileges. Afterward, relax and talk quietly with the king and queen.
- Step 3:** Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before the king and queen and presents the Estate's proposal.
- Step 4:** Listen to the king's proposal for the Estates General to consider. Nod in agreement.
- Step 5:** Listen as each Estate announces its vote on the king's proposal.
- Step 6:** Listen to your teacher's announcement.
- Step 7:** Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.



## Member of First Estate

*You are a member of the First Estate, the French Clergy, preparing to attend the meeting of the Estates General in 1789. Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, the king has decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.*

**Step 1:** Kneel and listen carefully to the king's speech. Applaud respectfully when he finishes.

**Step 2:** Work with the other members of the First Estate to complete the tasks described below. In doing so, you must protect the privileges and interests of the First Estate. Seek advice from the king and queen, who are very religious and support the clergy.

- Decide whether you think the separate Estates should vote by order (each Estate, one vote) or by head (one person, one vote) during the meeting of the Estates General. Explain why.
- Write suggestions for how to solve the current financial crisis. For example, who should be taxed? Why? How much should they pay?
- Choose a spokesperson to present and read your proposal to the king and queen.
- Create banners with a slogan and a visual symbol representing the ideas and interests of the First Estate.
- Display your banners.

**Step 3:** Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before the king and queen and presents the Estate's proposal. If you are the spokesperson for your Estate, kneel in front of the king and queen and read your proposal when instructed by your teacher.

**Step 4:** Listen silently to the king's proposal.

**Step 5:** Discuss with the other members of the First Estate whether to vote for or against the king's proposal. When your teacher instructs you, have your spokesperson announce the First Estate's vote. Listen to see how the other Estates voted.

**Step 6:** Listen to your teacher's announcement.

**Step 7:** Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.



## Member of Second Estate

*You are a member of the Second Estate, the French nobility, preparing to attend the meeting of the Estates General in 1789. Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, the king has decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.*

- Step 1:** Kneel and listen carefully to the king's speech. Applaud respectfully when he finishes.
- Step 2:** Work with the other members of the Second Estate to complete the tasks described below. In doing so, you must protect the privileges and interests of the Second Estate. Seek advice from the king and queen, who are very supportive of the noble class.
- Decide whether you think the separate Estates should vote by order (each Estate, one vote) or by head (one person, one vote) during the meeting of the Estates General. Explain why.
  - Write suggestions for how to solve the current financial crisis. For example, who should be taxed? Why? How much should they pay?
  - Choose a spokesperson to present and read your proposal to the king and queen.
  - Create banners with a slogan and a visual symbol representing the ideas and interests of the Second Estate.
  - Display your banners.
- Step 3:** Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before the king and queen and presents the Estate's proposal. If you are the spokesperson for your Estate, kneel in front of the king and queen and read your proposal when instructed by your teacher.
- Step 4:** Listen silently to the king's proposal.
- Step 5:** Discuss with the other members of the Second Estate whether to vote for or against the king's proposal. When your teacher instructs you, have your spokesperson announce the Second Estate's vote. Listen to see how the other Estates voted.
- Step 6:** Listen to your teacher's announcement.
- Step 7:** Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.



## Member of Third Estate



*You are a member of the Third Estate, the commoners, preparing to attend the meeting of the Estates General in 1789. Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, the king has decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.*

**Step 1:** Kneel and listen carefully to the king's speech. Applaud respectfully when he finishes.

**Step 2:** Work with the other members of the Third Estate to complete the tasks described below. In doing so, you must assert the rights of the Third Estate, whose members have been taxed heavily, while the nobles' and clergy's wealth has been taxed little or not at all.

- Decide whether you think the separate Estates should vote by order (each Estate, one vote) or by head (one person, one vote) during the meeting of the Estates General. Explain why.
- Write suggestions for how to solve the current financial crisis. For example, who should be taxed? Why? How much should they pay?
- Choose a spokesperson to present and read your proposal to the king and queen.
- Create banners with a slogan and a visual symbol representing the ideas and interests of the Third Estate.
- Display your banners.

**Step 3:** Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before the king and queen and presents the Estate's proposal. If you are the spokesperson for your Estate, kneel in front of the king and queen and read your proposal when instructed by your teacher.

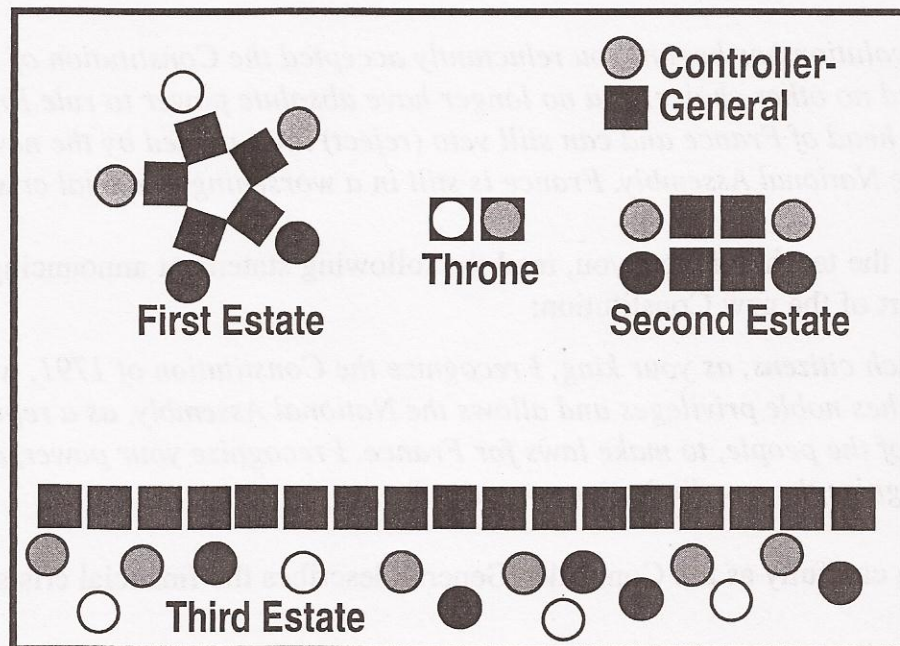
**Step 4:** Listen silently to the king's proposal.

**Step 5:** Discuss with the other members of the Third Estate whether to vote for the king's proposal. When your teacher instructs you, have your spokesperson announce the Third Estate's vote. Listen to see how the other Estates voted.

**Step 6:** Listen to your teacher's announcement and follow her or his directions.

**Step 7:** Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.

## Stage Two: Experiencing the Meeting of the Estates General



**Step 1:** The king assembles the Estates General for advice.

**Step 2:** The Three Estates prepare to meet.

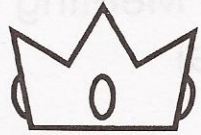
**Step 3:** Each Estate proposes a plan to save France.

**Step 4:** The king proposes a plan to save France.

**Step 5:** The Estates General votes on the king's plan.

**Step 6:** Severe famine occurs.

**Step 7:** The Third Estate responds to the situation.



## King Louis XVI

*The French Revolution has begun. You reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because you had no other choice. You no longer have absolute power to rule France, but you remain the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the new government, the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

**Step 1:** When the teacher directs you, read the following statement announcing your support of the new Constitution:

*“French citizens, as your king, I recognize the Constitution of 1791, which abolishes noble privileges and allows the National Assembly, as a representative body of the people, to make laws for France. I recognize your power, and I recognize the new limitations on mine.”*

**Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.

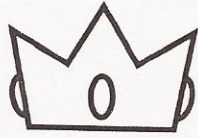
**Step 3:** Wait quietly as the National Assembly discusses possible solutions to the financial crisis. Then listen as members of the National Assembly kneel before you and explain their proposals. Wait to hear the result of the vote by the National Assembly on each. If a proposal is passed, your teacher will ask if you approve of it. To every proposal that passes, reply, *“I exercise my constitutional right to veto (reject) that proposal.”* Using your veto shows the National Assembly that you still have ultimate power.

**Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.

**Step 5:** When called upon, speak in defense of yourself. Then listen to the debate in the National Assembly.

**Step 6:** Listen and watch quietly.

**Step 7:** Listen and watch quietly.



## Queen Marie Antoinette

*The French Revolution has begun. King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer have absolute power to rule France. But he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the new government, the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

- Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Nod in agreement with what he says. Applaud respectfully at the end.
- Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.
- Step 3:** Listen as members of the National Assembly propose solutions to the financial crisis. Support the king by nodding in agreement with any action he takes on the National Assembly's proposals.
- Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.
- Step 5:** When asked to, speak in defense of the king.
- Step 6:** Work with the members of the National Assembly to create a new constitution.
- Step 7:** Listen and watch quietly.



## Controller-General

*The French Revolution has begun. King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer has absolute power to rule France, but he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the new government, the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

**Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Applaud respectfully at the end.

**Step 2:** When the teacher directs you, read this statement about the continuing financial crisis:

*“French citizens, though we have a new constitution, we have the same financial crisis. We don’t have enough money to even pay the interests on our loans. In addition, Austrian troops have invaded France, and we need money for our armies. The National Assembly must pass legislation immediately to raise money for our great country.”*

**Step 3:** Listen as members of the National Assembly propose solutions to the financial crisis. Support your king by nodding in agreement with any action he takes on the National Assembly’s proposals.

**Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.

**Step 5:** When asked to, speak in defense of the king, to whom you have always been loyal.

**Step 6:** Work with the members of the National Assembly to create a new constitution.

**Step 7:** Listen and watch quietly.

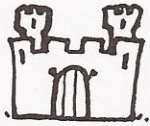




## Member of National Assembly: Clergy

*The French Revolution has begun. You are one of the clergy who joined the revolution and are now a member of the National Assembly, the new governmental body. King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer has absolute power to rule France, but he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

- Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Applaud respectfully at the end.
- Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.
- Step 3:** Discuss with the members of the National Assembly possible ways to raise money to save France from financial ruin. (Ideas include selling all church lands, taxing all French citizens, and declaring bankruptcy.) Afterward, if you have a proposal for the National Assembly to consider, kneel before the king and queen and announce your plan. The National Assembly will vote on it. If it passes, the king will announce whether he approves it or vetoes (rejects) it.
- Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.
- Step 5:** Listen to and participate in the debate of the National Assembly.
- Step 6:** Work with the members of the National Assembly to create a new constitution.
- Step 7:** Discuss the question your teacher raises.



## Member of National Assembly: Noble

*The French Revolution has begun. You are one of the nobles who joined the revolution and are now a member of the National Assembly, the new governmental body. King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer has absolute power to rule France, but he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

- Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Applaud respectfully at the end.
- Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.
- Step 3:** Discuss with the members of the National Assembly possible ways to raise money to save France from financial ruin. (Ideas include selling all church lands, taxing all French citizens, and declaring bankruptcy.) Afterward, if you have a proposal for the National Assembly to consider, kneel before the king and queen and announce your plan. The National Assembly will vote on it. If it passes, the king will announce whether he approves it or vetoes (rejects) it.
- Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.
- Step 5:** Listen to and participate in the debate of the National Assembly.
- Step 6:** Work with the members of the National Assembly to create a new constitution.
- Step 7:** Discuss the question your teacher raises.



## Member of National Assembly: Commoner



*The French Revolution has begun. You are one of the commoners who joined the revolution and are now a member of the National Assembly, the new governmental body. King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer has absolute power to rule France, but he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

- Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Applaud respectfully at the end.
- Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.
- Step 3:** Discuss with the members of the National Assembly possible ways to raise money to save France from financial ruin. (Ideas include selling all church lands, taxing all French citizens, and declaring bankruptcy.) Afterward, if you have a proposal for the National Assembly to consider, kneel before the king and queen and announce your plan. The National Assembly will vote on it. If it passes, the king will announce whether he approves or vetoes (rejects) it.
- Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.
- Step 5:** Listen to and participate in the debate of the National Assembly.
- Step 6:** Work with the members of the National Assembly to create a new constitution.
- Step 7:** Discuss the question your teacher raises.



## Member of National Assembly: Robespierre

*The French Revolution has begun. Your name is Maximilien Robespierre, and you joined the revolution and are now a member of the National Assembly, the new governmental body. At certain points in the activity, you will stand and deliver dramatic and impassioned speeches, which are scripted for you below. Keep your identity secret from all students until Step 4.*

*King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer has absolute power to rule France, but he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.*

- Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Applaud respectfully at the end.
- Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.
- Step 3:** Discuss with the members of the National Assembly possible ways to raise money to save France from financial ruin. (Ideas include selling all church lands, taxing all French citizens, and declaring bankruptcy.) Afterward, listen to proposals made to the king by members of the National Assembly. The National Assembly will vote on all proposals. For each proposal that passes, the king will announce whether he approves or vetoes (rejects) it.
- Step 4:** When the teachers shows the class “Step 4: Robespierre announces a revolutionary plan,” stand up dramatically on a chair, point to the king, and read the following speech with passion and anger:

*“French citizens, we have just uncovered secret documents from the royal palace that prove beyond a doubt that the king is a traitor. He attempted to leave France. He collaborated with the Austrian enemy. He conspired to stop the revolution and take back his power. I hold the proof in my hands. See for yourself!”*

Reveal the secret document to the class. After they have seen it, say:

*“French citizens, revolutionary brothers and sisters, we have been tricked by this wicked king. I propose we sell off the church lands, tax all citizens equally, fight the Austrians with revolutionary spirit, and put the king on trial for treason. Raise your hand if you’re in favor!”*

**Step 5:** When directed by the teacher, ask: “*Who will speak in defense of this wicked king?*” Watch to see who speaks in defense of the king. You can call anyone who speaks a “traitor.” When directed by the teacher, ask: “*Who votes to convict the king as guilty of treason?*” Take note of the traitors who do not vote the king as guilty. Watch what the teacher does to the king.

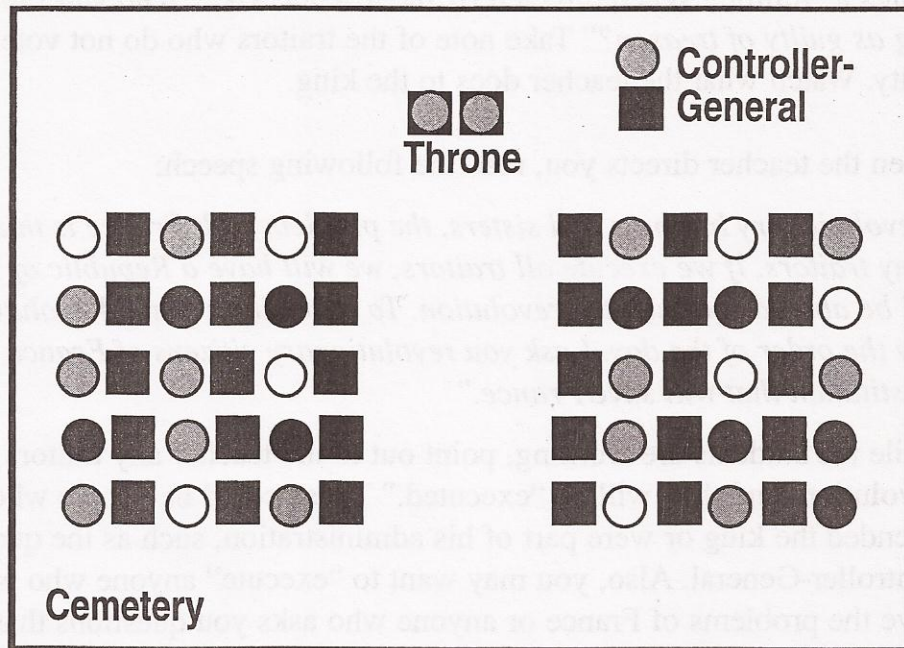
**Step 6:** When the teacher directs you, read the following speech:

*“Revolutionary brothers and sisters, the problem with France is that there are too many traitors. If we execute all traitors, we will have a Republic of Virtue and then will be able to continue the revolution. To all traitors of the Revolution, terror is now the order of the day. I ask you revolutionary citizens of France to write a new constitution that will save France.”*

While the students are working, point out to the teacher any traitors to the Revolution, and they will be “executed.” These could be people who simply defended the king or were part of his administration, such as the queen and Controller-General. Also, you may want to “execute” anyone who isn’t working to solve the problems of France or anyone who asks you questions that bother you. You may “execute” six to eight students.

**Step 7:** Discuss the question your teacher raises.

## Stage Three: Experiencing the Radical Republic



**Step 1: King Louis XVI recognizes the National Assembly.**

**Step 2: The Controller-General describes the financial crisis.**

**Step 3: The National Assembly discusses and proposes solutions.**

**Step 4: Robespierre announces a revolutionary plan.**

**Step 5: The National Assembly tries the king.**

**Step 6: Robespierre leads the radical republic.**

**Step 7: The Reign of Terror ends.**

## Secret Document

*In the Year of Our Lord,  
Seventeen hundred and ninety-one*

*Dear Louis-Charles, Noble Baron de Breteuil,*

*This new Constitution of 1791 is absurd and detestable. Though I have signed it, I regret it. I have contacted the Royal Court in Austria and plan to flee there when possible. From there, perhaps I can organize support for the return of the monarchy. God bless you in these times of shame.*

*Respectfully,*

*Louis XVI, King of France*

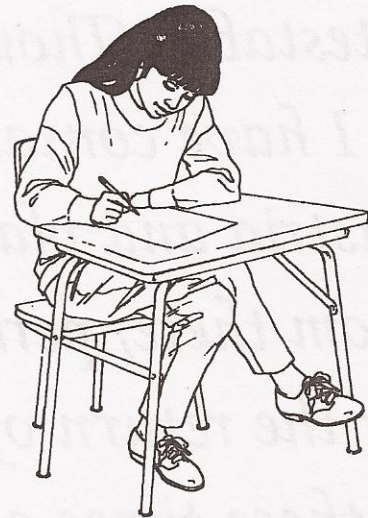
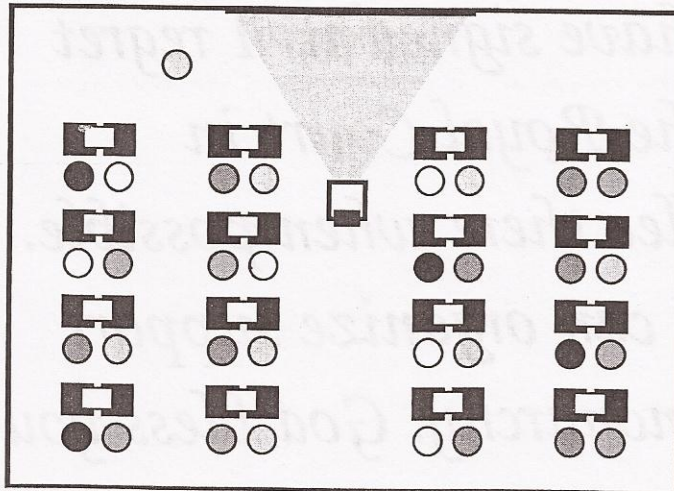


# Creating a Storybook About the French Revolution

## Writing for Understanding

### Overview

In this **Writing for Understanding** activity students create an illustrated storybook that chronicles major events in the French Revolution and assesses whether each event contributed to the growth of democracy. Working in pairs, students view transparencies of six key events of the French Revolution. Pairs then use drawings of each of the transparencies and key vocabulary from a word bank to create an illustrated storybook—complete with text, illustrations, voice and thought bubbles, and artistic adornments—that shows their understanding of the French Revolution and how it led to the rise of democracy in Western Europe.



### Procedures at a Glance

Place students into mixed-ability pairs. Tell them they will create an illustrated storybook on the French Revolution. Project **Transparency Master 1.4A**, and review the guidelines with students. Give each pair **Student Handout 1.4B**. Project the transparencies from Activity 1.3 and review the salient points regarding each of the six key events of the French Revolution. Have pairs record the details of the transparencies and brainstorm ideas for the storybooks by completing **Student Handout 1.4B**. Then give **Student Handout 1.4C** to each pair. Have pairs complete a final draft of their storybooks.



## Procedures in Detail

1. This activity allows students to demonstrate their knowledge of some key events of the French Revolution and assess how it contributed to the growth of democracy. To participate in this activity, students must have previous knowledge of these six events:

- The Meeting of the Estates General
- The Tennis Court Oath
- The Storming the Bastille
- The March on Versailles
- The Reign of Terror
- The Rise of Napoleon

(**Note:** If students participated in Activity 1.3, they should be adequately prepared to create a storybook.)

2. Place students into mixed-ability pairs. Tell students they will create an illustrated storybook—complete with text, illustrations, voice and thought bubbles, and artistic adornments—that shows their understanding of the French Revolution. Project **Transparency Master 1.4A: Directions for Creating a Storybook About the French Revolution**. Review these guidelines with students:

- a. You and a partner will create an illustrated children's storybook that chronicles major events of the French Revolution and describes how the revolution contributed to the rise of democracy. It should be written in simple, clear language so that a 10-year-old could read and enjoy the story.
- b. Your storybook will contain ideas generated on **Student Handout 1.4B** and will include these features:
  - A visually appealing cover with an appropriate title.
  - A brief introduction that describes the conditions in France in the late 1780s.
  - Sections on each of these six events: the Meeting of the Estates General, the Tennis Court Oath, the Storming of the Bastille, the March on Versailles, the Reign of Terror, and the Rise of Napoleon.
  - Each section must contain 1) an illustration of the event, 2) thought or voice bubbles coming from characters in the illustration, 3) a summary describing how the event related to the French Revolution, 4) a brief explanation of whether the event represented a step toward democracy, and 5) use of all the vocabulary in the word bank that appears on **Student Handout 1.4B**.
  - A brief conclusion that explains how the events of the French Revolution contributed to the growth of democracy.
  - Additional touches to make the storybook artistic and visually appealing—use of color, page numbers, additional visuals or graphics, and the like.
- c. Your storybooks may be designed with stapled or bound paper or on a larger piece of tagboard or butcher paper. They should be written in ink or typed.

3. Once students have a general understanding of the writing assignment, pass out **Student Handout 1.4B: Brainstorming Ideas for a Storybook About the French Revolution** to each pair. Project Transparency 1.3D, which shows the meeting of the Estates General. (**Note:** You will use the transparencies from Activity 1.3 here). Have students carefully examine the transparency as you review with them the summary of the meeting contained in the **Teacher's Guide**. Then allow pairs time to complete the tasks outlined on the handout. Encourage pairs to add as much detail to the illustration as they can. Repeat this process for Transparencies 1.3E, 1.3F, 1.3G, 1.3I, and 1.3K.
4. Once pairs complete **Student Handout 1.4B**, give them **Student Handout 1.4C: Illustrations of the Events of the French Revolution**. Have students use these as the outline for their illustrations in the final draft of their storybook. Tell students they may shrink or enlarge the drawings on a photocopier to fit the format of their storybook. Alternatively, some students may want to use the drawings only as a model and create their own original illustrations.
5. Allow students time to create their storybooks. Encourage them to be creative, colorful, and clever in the design and detail. Remind them to write their story in a voice that makes the events dramatic and comprehensible to a 10-year-old, like children's books do. (**Note:** You may want to encourage students to peruse history books written for children to give them ideas for their own. These are available in the children's sections of most public libraries.)



**Idea for Student Response:** After students have completed their storybook, have them make a spectrum on the left side of their notebooks that ranges from “Shows People Can Be Trusted to Govern” to “Shows People Cannot Be Trusted to Govern.” Have students work in groups of four to discuss whether each event shows that people can or cannot be trusted to govern. Afterward, have students record their response—which may differ from the responses of their group members—on their spectrum, with a one-sentence justification for its placement. Expect student responses to vary, but emphasize the need to explain placements clearly and succinctly.