

The Most Important Parts of the French Revolution

Application Question: What were the pivotal points throughout the French revolution? Which is the most important?

So What?: Through this lesson students will understand the key points of change throughout the French revolution and how the state shifted as a result of them. They will discover the timeline of events themselves and why the changes took place.

NCSS Thematic Strand: Culture & Individuals Groups and Institutions

“How culture develops and changes in ways that allow human societies to address their needs and concerns.” (27)

“Construct reasoned judgements about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues.” (28)

“The impact of tensions and examples of cooperation between individuals, groups, and institutions, with their different belief systems.” (43)

“How groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and can promote the common good and address persistent social issues.” (43)

Content Standard: To be determined based on state standard.

Grade Level: 9th grade world history

Class Periods Required: Two 50-minute class periods

Purpose, Background, and Context:

The purpose of this lesson is to outline the timeline of the French revolution for students. This lesson will help students make sense of the pivotal moments within the timeline of the revolution. Students will begin to understand the changes within the government and culture of France during the time.

The background of this lesson is May 5, 1789 till November 9, 1799, the full timeline of the French revolution. The ten years of this revolution were filled with many changes in ideals, rulers, and government systems. This revolution can become complicated for students to understand with how many events took place within it and the various key people involved. Angered by the estate system, absolutism, food shortages, heavy taxation, the high power of the monarch, and fueled by the success of the American revolution, the French people decided to rise up against the monarchy.

The context of this lesson is within a greater French revolution unit. It should come after an introductory lesson to the revolution, ideally one discussing the causes of the revolution. Students will attempt to discover the timeline themselves before being given the correct answers. Then students will work to understand how ideals shifted throughout the revolution causing the events.

Goals/Objectives/Student Outcomes/Performance Expectations:

The goals of this lesson lie within students being able to understand the timeline of events throughout the revolution and reflect on why they took place. Providing all the events of the revolution for students to see will help them visualize what took place within the ten years. Students will be able to identify the key moments and discuss why they took place.

Students will:

“Construct reasoned judgements about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues.” (28)

(Understand) “That the cultural values and beliefs of societies influence their analysis of challenges, and their responses to these challenges.” (27)

“Analyze instances of tensions between individual expression and group conformity.” (44)

Materials: Large sheets of paper for students to construct their timelines, main events of the French revolution printed and cut out for students, glue, computers, and writing utensils.

Procedures:

Procedure 1 (3 minutes): Assign students into groups of 3-5 depending upon class size and pass out large sheets of paper and glue.

Procedure 2 (5 minutes): Before passing out the events for the timeline the teacher should ask students to recall what they remember about the causes of the French revolution. These causes, as they are recalled by students, should be written on the board for students to look back at throughout the lesson.

Procedure 3 (25 minutes): Now the events for the timeline will be passed out to the students. Without the use of technology students should try their best to place the events along the timeline. Once they believe they have gotten the events in the correct order, they will call over the teacher to check their work. The teacher will tell them which ones they have correct and which ones are wrong. This pattern will continue till every group gets all the events in the correct timeline and glued onto their pages.

Procedure 4 (30 minutes): Once the groups have their events in the correct timeline students will be directed to use computers to research the dates these events took place and some general information about the events. This should all be written on their timelines next to each event.

This will continue into the second day of the lesson

Procedure 5 (10 minutes): After all students have their timelines completed with all the necessary information the class will shift into a discussion about the events within the French revolution. First the teacher will give students 10 minutes to pick which event they think created the greatest shift/change within the revolution. They should write down a paragraph detailing their choice and why they believe it created the greatest change for people within the society. It should be

noted that this reflection should be focused on the greatest changes for people, not the government or the state as a whole, because the French revolution was started by the people for the people.

Procedure 6 (30 minutes/rest of time): The remainder of the class, based on the time left, should be used discussing students choices for the most impactful event. This is also the time for the teacher to present more information about each event to the students. Students should be engaged in discussion and probed with questions by the teacher if necessary. Questions asked could include: How did your event create change? Who was involved in your event? What issues were addressed by your event? Was the event successful in creating change? How did culture change surrounding your event?

Assessment of Outcomes: The students' timelines and written reflections outlining their chosen events will be turned in at the end of class. These will be graded by the teacher and reflect the effort given by the students. They also will help the teacher understand what students were able to understand and what may need to be clarified.

Students will:

- Comprehend the timeline of the French Revolution.
- Reflect on which event was the most influential and explain why.
- Interpret events during the revolution.
- Defend their choice for the most influential event.

Extensions and Adaptations: These should be handled on a case-by-case basis based on students' specific needs in tandem with their IEPs. Based on recommendations from specialists, "Infusing these suggestions within curricular design, alongside content standards, instructional strategies, and dispositional objectives" (Misco and Casteneda, 2009, 139). Students with specific extensions and adaptations should still be able to participate in this and accommodations should be made to help them fully participate. If needed for ELL students a computer translator can be used during discussion to understand other students.

Resources:

Misco, T. & Castañeda, M. (2009). "Now, what should I do for English language learners?" Reconceptualizing social studies curriculum design for ELLs. *Educational Horizons*, 87 (3), 182-189.

National Council for the Social Studies. (2010). *National curriculum standards for social studies: A framework for teaching, learning, and assessment*. Maryland: National Council for Social Studies.

Appendices:

Events included in the timeline for students (years not included when given to students):

- 1789 The Estates-General and Constituent Assembly
- 1789 Rise of the Third Estate

- June 20, 1789 Tennis Court Oath
- July 14, 1789 The Storming of the Bastille
- Sept 3, 1791 Adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
- Aug 10, 1792 The Jacobins attack and arrest the King
- Jan 21, 1793 King Louis XVI is condemned to death
- June 1793 The Reign of Terror
- Nov, 1799 French Revolution ends with Napoleon Bonaparte's coup d'état