Grades: 9-12  
Subjects: World History and Geography, English/Language Arts  
Time required: 2 days  
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OVERVIEW
During the late 18th century, France was one of the most populated European countries and on the verge of bankruptcy. Many of France’s citizens were starving. People from all social classes were beginning to question King Louis XVI’s spending habits and lavish lifestyle. The revolution in France lasted from 1789 to 1799 and resulted in the end of the monarchy and the execution of King Louis XVI. Inspired by the Enlightenment and fed up with political alienation, unfair taxation, and no social mobility, members of the Third Estate fought for political representation and a restructuring of social order. The start of the revolution began when members of the Third Estate took over the Bastille. They later formed the National Assembly which held meetings without the King’s approval and took control of the country. The French Revolution was complicated and very violent. Opinions varied on the revolution for a multitude of reasons. Factions developed within revolutionary political groups, and France experienced a dark and disturbing period called the Terror.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL
Students will investigate the causes of the French Revolution by reading various secondary sources. Students will also explore the Storming of the Bastille and the events that took place after. Students will compare and contrast the aims of the revolution with the events that took place during the Terror by reading historical texts and primary source documents.

OBJECTIVES
Students will identify the causes of the French Revolution  
Students will explain the aims of the French Revolution and The Declaration of the Rights of Man.  
Students will investigate and breakdown sources covering the French Revolution.  
Students will compare and contrast the aims of the Revolution with the Terror.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION
What were the major factors/grievances that led to the start of the French Revolution? How does the outcome of the Revolution compare to the initial aims set forth by the National Assembly and Third Estate?

CURRICULUM STANDARDS
World History and Geography:
- W.5 Identify the major causes of the French Revolution, including the impact of: The American Revolution, Conflicting social classes, Economic factors, Enlightenment political thought, Government corruption and weakness  
- W.6 Summarize the major events of the French Revolution (e.g., storming of the Bastille, execution of Louis XVI, reign of terror), and trace the evolution of France’s government from constitutional monarchy to democratic despotism to the Napoleonic Empire.

English/Language Arts:
- 11-12.RI.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; support an interpretation of a text by citing and synthesizing relevant textual evidence from multiple sources.  
- 11-12.W.TTP.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to analyze, synthesize, and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection and organization of content.
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<th>DAY 1</th>
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<td>Day one will cover the key terms and figures of the French Revolution. Students will learn about the causes of the revolution, storming of the Bastille and the Terror. Teachers also have the option, if time allows, of having students explore the political cartoons of the French Revolution.</td>
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| Step 1 | Before students take notes on key terms and figures ask them what revolutions or rebellion are they familiar with, American Revolution, Civil War, slave rebellions,…Cuban Revolution? How did these revolutions start? Why were people after change? Who was usually involved?  
*At this point you want students to start talking and/or thinking about powerful governments and social classes. |

| Step 2 | Have students analyze the political cartoon on Power Point slide #1 as an introduction. Who do they think is depicted in this image? What emotions do you see? What does the character seem to be upset about? |

| Step 3 | Introduce students to key terms and events of the French Revolution. Using Power Point Slides 3-4, go over the key terms and figures. Have students compare the three Estates that existed in France prior to the revolution with the social classes and struggles of Americans prior to their revolution. |

| Step 4 | Students will then go over the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Ask students which parts of the Declaration sound familiar and what they share with the Declaration of Independence? What are the overall aims? |

| Step 5 | Using Power Point slides 6 through 9, go over the Storming of the Bastille, formation of the National Assembly and the Terror. |

| Step 6 | Have students fill out an exit ticket answering the following investigative question: What were at least three major factors/grievances that led to the start of the French Revolution? |

| Optional Step 7 | If time allows, have students explore the political cartoons located on the Library of Congress’s website. Students can be divided into groups or work independently. Students will pick out at least one cartoon and fill out the political cartoon analysis tool.  
*If time does not allow for students to independently research, use the images located in the Power Point and analyze each image as a group. |
**DAY 2**

On day two students will use secondary sources covering the French Revolution to further investigate the causes and major events. Students will participate in a Jigsaw Activity where they become the teachers of their particular content. At the end students will write a short essay pulling in all three parts.

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<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Divide students into three groups. The groups will be divided into three themes; causes, the Storming of the Bastille, and the Terror.</th>
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| Step 2 | Pass out the worksheets that go with each group:  
• Causes and Discontent  
• Storming of the Bastille  
• The Terror |
| Step 3 | Explain to students the Jigsaw Activity:  
Students become the teachers and need to think of a creative way to teach their fellow classmates.  
Give them examples of ways to teach their content: a skit, drawing on the white board, question and answer, quick debate. Those who are being taught will need to come up with three questions to ask the other group at the end of their teaching. |
| Step 4 | Allow time for group research and for students to complete the worksheets.  
*Make sure students understand that the worksheet and Jigsaw Activity will be graded. |
| Step 5 | Students will have 5-7 minutes to perform their style of teaching and to answer questions from the rest of the class. |
| Step 6 | Bring the class back together for group discussion and question and answer. How did the initial aims of the National Assembly differ from the events of the Terror? |
| Step 7 | Students will complete a short essay answering the following investigative question: What were the major factors/grievances that led to the start of the French Revolution? How does the outcome of the Revolution compare to the initial aims set forth by the National Assembly and Third Estate?  
*Have students use a set amount of key terms and figures presented in Power Point slides 3 and 4. |

**EVALUATION**

**TOTAL POINTS: 100**

- 30 points: Primary Source Analysis Tool
- 10 points: Exit Ticket
- 60 points: Jigsaw Activity/Essay

*Comité de l’an deuxième* [1794 or 1795]
EXTENSION

This lesson provides a great opportunity for creative extension ideas. For example, teachers could...

- Have students read the following blog that traces France’s history through analyzing political cartoons. Students can create their own cartoons of an event or historical figure from the French Revolution.
- Have students watch a video and read an article about Bastille Day in France and the events that took place during the Storming of the Bastille. How does this compare and contrast to our celebration of Independence Day?
- Have students dive further into the idea of revolutions and the way they shape our politics, cultures, and future. How did the American Revolution change our future? Discuss how America or France would look today had a revolution not of taken place?
- Students can read about another important event of the French Revolution; the Women’s October March on Versailles.
Day 1: Rubric

Student Name:_________

1. Primary Source Analysis Tool:_________ out of 20
Student completed worksheet using research presented throughout the presentation.

Points Achieved:_____  

Total Points: 40

2. Exit Ticket:_______ out of 20
Student answered the investigative question using research and complete sentences.

Grade:_____  

Day 2: Rubric

Student Name:_________

1 Worksheet:______ out of 10
The student completed the handout. The student used complete sentences.

Total Points: 60

2. Jigsaw/Presentation:______ out of 20
The student contributed to their group’s presentation. The presentation included five main takeaways from the groups sources.

Points Achieved:______

3. Essay :______ out of 30
The student answered the investigative questions using research, key terms, and figures. The student wrote in complete sentences and cited evidence to back their claims.

Grade:_____
At the close of the 18th century France had more nearly reached her growth than any of her great European rivals; she was far more like the France of to-day, than might at first be supposed by an Englishman, American or German, thinking of what his own country accomplished during the 19th century. Her population of about 25,000,000 was three times more numerous than that of England. Paris, with 600,000 inhabitants or more, was much nearer the present-day city in size than any other capital of Europe, except Naples. Socially, economically, politically, notwithstanding gross abuses, there was great development; and the reformer who re-

All this reposed, however, on a very incongruous foundation. Feudalism, mediaevalism, autocracy, had built up a structure of caste distinction and class privilege to which custom, age, stagnation and ignorance, lent an air of preordained and indispensable stability. The Church, most privileged of all corporations, turned her miracles and her terrors, both present and future, into the most powerful buttress of the fabric. The noblesse, supreme as a caste, almost divided influence with the Church. The two, hand in hand, dominated France outside the larger towns. Each village had its curé and its seigneur. The curé collected his tithes and inculcated the precepts of religion, precepts which at the close of the 18th century, preached Bourbonism as one of the essential manifestations of Providence on earth. The seigneur, generally owning the greater part of all freehold property, not only weighed as a landlord but exercised many exclusive privileges, and applied the most drastic of sanctions to the whole as the local administrator of justice. There were hundreds of devout priests and of humane seigneurs, but a proportion, conspicuous if small, were otherwise; and the system gave such an opportunity for evil

How can sudden growth in population negatively affect a country and its people?

Using your notes, what is an autocracy and how does this present an issue within society? Are people able to move up in society?

Seigneur= Lord/Landlord
Cure=Priest
Tithes=Form of tax collected, usually in the form of produce/wheat
Precepts= general rule intended to regulate behavior
Bourbonism=European royal line of family members

What “evil” is this passage referring to? Who holds the majority of the power and who is suffering because of this?
The great religious and military struggle of the 16th and 17th centuries had in one direction resulted in enhancing the prestige and crystallizing the power of the French monarchy. In another direction it had resulted in establishing even more firmly the new intellectual position of Europe, the spirit of inquiry, of criticism, of freedom of thought. The Roman or supreme doctrine of authority had been questioned, and questioned successfully. It could not be long before the doctrine of Bourbon authority must also be questioned. Even if French thought and literature did for a moment pay tribute at the throne of Louis XIV the closing years of the century were marked by the names of Leibnitz, Bayle and Newton: the mercurial intelligence of France could not long remain stagnant with such forces as these casting their influence over European civilization.

Wheat had become the great medium of financial speculation. It was an article that came on the market at a stated period in large quantities, though in quantities which experience showed were rarely sufficient to meet the requirements of the succeeding twelve months. The capitalist who could pay cash for it, and who had the means of storing it, was therefore nearly certain of a moderate profit, and, if famine occurred, of an extravagant one. That capitalist of necessity belonged to the privileged classes. Frequently religious communities embarked in these ventures, and used their commodious buildings as granaries. Syndicates were formed in which all varieties of speculators entered, from the bourgeois shopkeeper of the provincial town to the courtier and even the King. But popular resentment, the bitter cry of the starving, applied the same name to all of them: from Louis XV to the inconspicuous monk they were all accapareurs de blé, cornerers of wheat. And their profits rose as did hunger and starvation. The computation has been put forward that in the year 1789 one-half of the population of France had known from experience the meaning of the
According to this passage, what was the Bastille used for? Why do you think rebels chose to invade this structure?

Invalides = sick or handicapped
Swiss = native or descendant of Switzerland
Rue St. Antoine = Street in France

Great placards = Warning signs
Camille Desmoulins = French journalists and politician, produced pamphlets calling for revolution, influenced by enlightenment ideas
Hunted hares = a common spectator sport in France where dogs chase hares (similar to rabbits)

Why would they need to tell each other apart? Does this sound like a very organized attempt at an overthrow?

Jaques Necker = Swiss banker and French statesmen under Louis XVI, eventually dismissed for being too honest and critical of French finance. His dismissal sparked outrage.
According to this passage, who is De Launay and what is he hired to protect? What reason might he have for not surrendering the Bastille to the rebels?

Deputations—a group of people ordered to take upon a mission or job (group of rebels)

Parley= meeting of two opposing sides in a group, usually to discuss terms
Pardon= granted to a group or individual eliminating guilt or responsibility

Bore him off= chopped off his head
Why did the rebels choose to kill the general in this manner? What did he represent?

Nero fiddling while Rome was Burning= Famous quote referring to the emperor of Rome, Nero, doing nothing while Rome burned to the ground.
What does the author mean when he makes the comparison between King XIV and Nero?

What is the difference between revolt and revolution?
Several of the Girondin leaders, including Barbaroux and Buzot, left Paris, and endeavored to head a revolt of the departments against the Convention. The nation as a whole was by no means ready to submit to the irresponsible rule of Paris, and four of the largest cities of France, Lyons, Marseilles, Bordeaux, and Caen, rose in rebellion. In each of these towns the Jacobin influence had been supreme, but in each the bourgeoisie without difficulty regained possession of the municipal government and prepared to resist the Convention. Could they have combined under some competent leader, these cities might have put an end to the Commune’s influence; but here again the inefficiency of the Girondins showed itself, and the Convention was able to deal with each city independently, while the Girondins themselves were declared outlaws. This half-hearted effort at civil war therefore failed, but none the less for the time being it constituted a real danger to the Convention, and gave apparent justification for extreme measures. The permanence of the republic seemed to depend upon the masses rather than upon the bourgeoisie. So far had political indifference done its work.

French armies everywhere defeated; Dumouriez, the greatest commander of the French armies, gone over to the enemy; a third of the territory of France, including Vendée and many great cities, in open and successful insurrection; the assignats rapidly depreciating; and throughout the nation misery, poverty, and approaching anarchy. No government was ever beset with greater or more desperate needs, and no government ever proceeded more relentlessly to bring success to its armies, order to its domestic affairs, food to its poor, annihilation to rebellion. But on what could government be based? Not on the constitutions, for millions of Frenchmen were in arms against constitutions; not on the past, for the Old Régime and the Constitutionalists of 1789-91 were the Mountain’s bitterest opponents; not on the armies, for generals might at any moment imitate Dumouriez or La Fayette; not on the ready assent of law-abiding citizens, for the bourgeoisie were enemies of the Jacobins. The question was as legitimate as pressing, and the Mountain’s answer was Upon Terror. If men would not obey government from love, they must be made to obey from fear. The action was only a rig-
Constituent Assembly = Another name for the National Assembly

Why does the author call France “morally weak”?

Absolutism/Old Regime = France’s form of government before the Revolution

How is the Terror similar to the Old Regime and government of France?

Martial law = direct military control of civilian life, often by physical force

Jacobin Rousseauism = philosophy of the Jacobin political/radical group, a return to a more simple way of life

What tactics did the new regime use to control the French population? Do these tactics align with the original aims of the revolution? According to this passage what does Robespierre’s Utopia consist of?

Robespierre = radical Jacobin leader and leader of the French Revolution & Terror