

Ch 2 Liberty Equality Fraternity Short Answers

1. **What was the Tennis Court Oath, and when was it taken?**

Answer: The Tennis Court Oath was a pledge taken by the Third Estate representatives on **June 20, 1789**, in a tennis court near Paris, vowing not to disperse until a constitution granting sovereignty to the people was drafted.

2. **What event marked the beginning of the French Revolution?**

Answer: The **Fall of the Bastille** on **July 14, 1789**, when crowds stormed the Bastille prison, symbolized the start of the French Revolution.

3. **What was the Divine Right Theory?**

Answer: The Divine Right Theory claimed that kings derive their authority from God, not the people, making them unaccountable to citizens. It justified the despotic rule of the Bourbon kings.

4. **Name the three estates of 18th-century French society.**

Answer: The three estates were: **First Estate** (Clergy), **Second Estate** (Nobles), and **Third Estate** (Commoners, including middle class, workers, and peasants).

5. **What was the Assignat, and why did it fail?**

Answer: The **Assignat** was a paper currency introduced in 1789 to stabilize France's economy. It failed due to excessive printing, leading to massive inflation and devaluation by 1796.

6. **Who were the sans-culottes, and what did they symbolize?**

Answer: The **sans-culottes** were workers and peasants who wore long trousers (pantaloon) instead of noble breeches, symbolizing their protest against aristocracy and support for the revolution.

7. **What was the Phrygian cap, and its significance?**

Answer: The **Phrygian cap** was a red cap worn by revolutionaries, symbolizing liberation from oppression and support for the French Revolution.

8. **Name two taxes imposed on the Third Estate by the nobles.**

Answer: **Corvée** (forced unpaid labor for 3-4 days a year) and **Banalité** (tax on wine production and use of landlord's facilities).

9. **Who was Olympia de Gouche, and what was her contribution?**

Answer: Olympia de Gouche was a playwright and activist who advocated women's rights through her book, **Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen**, demanding equal rights for women.

10. **What was the purpose of the Continental System introduced by Napoleon?**

Answer: The **Continental System** was Napoleon's plan to ban trade with Britain by France and its allies, aiming to weaken Britain's economy.

11. **Why did the Third Estate demand a joint meeting of the Estates General in 1789?**

Answer: The Third Estate demanded a joint meeting to ensure fair voting, as the existing

system (one vote per estate) allowed the First and Second Estates to outvote them, despite the Third Estate's larger representation.

12. How did the economic crisis of the 1770s contribute to the French Revolution?

Answer: The 1770s agricultural crisis caused a 60% rise in cereal prices, while wages rose only 22%, leading to poverty. A trade agreement with Britain flooded markets with British goods, causing unemployment, fueling public unrest.

13. Why did the French Revolution lead to the Reign of Terror?

Answer: The Reign of Terror (1792–1794) arose due to foreign invasions by Britain, Austria, and Russia, and internal threats. The Jacobins, led by Robespierre, used extreme measures to eliminate traitors, resulting in mass executions.

14. How did the ideas of Rousseau influence the French Revolution?

Answer: Rousseau's **The Social Contract** argued that sovereignty lies with the people, and a king's rule is a contract for public welfare. His idea that a king violating this contract loses the right to rule inspired revolutionaries to challenge monarchy.

15. Why was the fall of the Bastille a significant event?

Answer: The fall of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, symbolized the collapse of Bourbon despotism, ignited widespread violence against tax collectors, and forced Louis XVI to approve National Assembly reforms.

16. What role did salons and coffee houses play in the French Revolution?

Answer: Salons, hosted by enlightened women, and coffee houses were centers for discussing revolutionary ideas of philosophers like Voltaire and Rousseau, inspiring and planning revolutionary activities against despotism.

17. Why did the Assignat fail to stabilize the French economy?

Answer: The Assignat failed because the government printed it excessively to cover expenses, leading to hyperinflation and loss of value by 1796, worsening economic instability.

18. How did the Women's March to Versailles impact the revolution?

Answer: In October 1789, thousands of women marched to Versailles, protesting food shortages, and forced Louis XVI and his family to relocate to Paris, compelling the king to accept National Assembly decisions.

Application-Level Questions

19. **If you were a member of the Third Estate in 1789, what grievance would you present to the Estates General, and why?**

Answer: I would protest the **Vingtième** tax, which burdened the Third Estate while clergy and nobles were exempt. This inequality was unfair, as the Third Estate, despite being the majority, had no political power to influence tax policies.

20. **Imagine you are a French peasant in 1789. How would the ideas of Montesquieu inspire you to support the revolution?**

Answer: Montesquieu's idea of separating government powers into legislative, executive, and judicial branches would inspire me to support the revolution, as it promised a system where no single authority, like the king, could oppress peasants, ensuring greater freedom.

21. **As a historian, how would you argue that the French Revolution influenced modern nationalism?**

Answer: The French Revolution redefined a nation as its people, not the monarchy, through the Declaration of the Rights of Man. This idea of collective national identity inspired independence movements in Asia and Africa, fostering modern nationalism.

22. **If you were to design a symbol for the French Revolution today, what would it be, and why?**

Answer: I would design a **broken chain** as a symbol, representing the end of feudal oppression and the liberation of the Third Estate, aligning with the revolution's ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity.