The French Revolution

The French Revolution
France had a tradition of strong monarchs
Louis XIV – “The Sun King”

Louis XV
1743 - Louis XV decides to rule himself upon Fleury’s death extremely weak and lazy influenced by ministers and mistresses
Loses empire and territory during Seven Years War

Louis XVI
inherits the throne from his father poor ruler who lacks intelligence and desire to reform France married to Marie Antoinette of Austria both of them extremely spoiled and out of touch “let them eat cake”

American Revolution
has a tremendous impact upon France based on Enlightenment ideals England had already developed constitutional monarchy Magna Carta, Parliament, English Bill of Rights Declaration of Independence resonates with Frenchmen France sides with Americans to defeat rival British thousands of Frenchmen go to colonies to fight the British 1789 - United States adopts the Constitution very influential on French thinkers

Estates General
France’s society was reflected by divide of legislature First Estate clergy less than 1% of population, own 10% of land exempt from many taxes Second Estate nobility approximately 2% of population, own 30% of land held most Gov., military, and judicial appointments held legal privileges and were exempt from taxes Third Estate peasants, merchants, professionals, and urban dwellers 97% of the population, own 60% of land only the poorest land was left intellectuals and merchants upset at political slavery most reside in Paris, center of revolution

France had several other problems that led to revolution food shortages led to rising prices and unemployment in cities bourgeois wanted more political freedom and reform
France was on the verge of financial collapse
constant warfare and failure to est. national bank
Summer, 1789 - Louis XVI calls the Estates General into session
wanted them to pass new taxes against the peasants
had not met since 1614
was counting on 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} Estates to out vote the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Estate
The 3\textsuperscript{rd} Estate wanted to discuss the issues facing France
large percentage of members were lawyers

National Assembly
June 17, 1789 - 3\textsuperscript{rd} Estate votes to form the National Assembly
will meet to devise a new constitution for France
June 20 - locked out of meeting hall by the King's guards
Tennis Court Oath
representatives vow to continue until finished

Louis XVI sides with the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} estate
wants to disband the national assembly
afraid of using the army in case they revolt
begins exploring hiring Swiss mercenaries

July 14, 1789 - Storming of the Bastille (Bastille Day)
rumors in Paris that Louis will disband the National Assembly
Parisian mob wants to arm themselves to protect NA
surround the Bastille, royal armory in Paris
guards fire on the crowd
army units mutiny, attack and seize the Bastille

August 26, 1789 - Declaration of Rights of Man published
statement of goals for the coming constitution
first document for equal representation in European government
no equal rights for women
Louis XVI laid low at Versailles hoping problems would blow over
forced to return to Paris by the mob
National Assembly seizes most of the church's property to finance Gov.
angers Catholics throughout Europe

The Great Fear
rumors swept through France of all sorts of horrors
nobles and peasants clash in many panics
many nobles flee France for relative's estates in other countries

1791 - National Assembly finishes the new French constitution
constitutional monarchy with Louis XVI at the head
Legislative Assembly will have significantly more power

Political Spectrum
conservatives - supported monarchy
didn't want to go too far in reform
liberals - wanted middle ground of constitutional monarchy
radicals - wanted to overthrow the monarchy
wished to established a more direct democracy
The Jacobins
Louis and Marie Antoinette attempt to flee the country for Austria
Hoped that they could raise a foreign army to retake power
captured near the French border
confidence in the new government is destroyed
the radicals will eventually come to power

The First Coalition
1792 - Emperor Leopold II of Austria wants nations to attack France
afraid of example being set by revolutionaries
France declares war on Austria
hopes war will lead to solidarity
accusations of treachery made against king and generals
Paris Commune takes power in government (National Convention)
radicals also known as sans-culottes
“patriots without fine clothes”
Jan 21, 1793 - Louis XVI is executed
Austria, Prussia, Britain, Spain, Portugal attack France
countries see opportunity to gain power/revenge
France will raise the first European “citizen army”
650,000 respond to the call to defend France
Levee En Masse
advantages: well motivated, promote through talent
disadvantages: poor organization/leadership to start
army will be successful defending French soil, not on offense
nationalism

Reign of Terror
During 1st Coalition crisis, Committee of Public Safety takes power
Maximilien Robespierre chairman
radical who thought he knew “truth” of revolution
will become first modern dictator
courts were formed to find and execute “enemies of the state”
very loose standards of evidence were used
up to 50,000 people were executed
guillotine
victims included Marie Antoinette
Revolutionary armies enforced compliance of all France
Robespierre sought to establish a “Republic of Virtue”
seized economic control of France
reformed the administration of the county
sought to eliminate all Christianity from France
wanted to replace with reason
extremely moralistic, bans crime and vice
military success led to questions as to need for Terror
executes leading members of Paris Commune
July 28, 1794 - radicals have Robespierre executed
brings end to radical phase of the revolution

The Directory
five moderates were selected by National Convention to rule
period of stagnation, no leadership from committee
Directory was very corrupt, materialistic
People of France want true leadership
sets the stage for Napoleon Bonaparte

Napoleon Bonaparte
Born in 1769 in Corsica
joins military at age 16
rises through ranks during first coalition wars
  1795 - saves National Convention from Paris mob
  1796-97 - given command in Italy
    uses artillery, terrain, spies, psychology to defeat enemies
    earns nickname "little corporal"
Austria and Prussia bow out
1797 - returns to Paris as hero
given command of army in Egypt
  leaves when supplies are cut off by British navy
liberator or conqueror?

Napoleon seizes power
Directory was corrupt
1799 - Napoleon’s troops occupy the legislature
  Votes to end directory
  Why bother?
  Napoleon is named one of three consuls

Second Coalition - 1800
Britain organizes with Austria and Russia
Napoleon victorious again in Italy
Treaty of Amiens - 1802
1800 - Napoleon named First Consul
approved by the voters
1802- voted consul for life
Dec 2, 1804 - pope crowns him emperor

Napoleon established many reforms
  balanced the budget
  established national bank
  encouraged nobility to return
  made merit the measure of success
  Catholic church allowed to return
Napoleonic Code
  Equal rights for all
began to build a large French navy

Empire is extended
Third Coalition
  Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia
Battle of Austerlitz
  Napoleon defeats Russians and Austrians
Austria sues for peace
Battle of Friedland
French defeat Russians
czar Alexander I in command of Russian troops
Treaty of Tilsit
Battle of Trafalgar
British navy under Horatio Nelson defeats French
No invasion of Britain possible

Britain vs. France
Continental System
Napoleon orders all countries to boycott British goods
not in the best interest of Europeans
Britain survives through smuggling, colonies
trade actually triples thanks to world-wide trade
War of 1812

Spain revolts
Napoleon attempts to put his brother on Spanish throne
Spanish rebel with guerrilla warfare
Britain lands army to assist
Duke of Wellington
nationalism has been exported Spain

Napoleon invades Russia - 1812
Alexander I breaks CS to buy British grain for starving Russians
The Grand Army
600,000 man French army
many non-French
Napoleon seizes horses and supplies throughout Europe
Alexander I employs scorched-earth policy in defense of Russia
trades land for time by drawing Napoleon into Russia
burns all supplies army can’t carry with them
burns Moscow to the ground
severe Russian winter devastates French army
Russians counterattack
Napoleon is forced to retreat
only 10,000 make it back to France

Fall of Napoleon
Grand Alliance
Britain, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Sweden
Battle of Leipzig
April 1814, Napoleon surrenders
Exiled to Elba
Louis XVIII is made new king
Napoleon returns in March of 1815
Hundred Days
Duke of Wellington defeats him at Waterloo
June 18, 1815
Napoleon exiled to St. Helena
Dies in 1821