

## Year 8 HT 4 – The French Revolution

The French Revolution, a watershed moment in European history, occurred between 1789 and 1799. During this period, a series of political upheavals, social unrest, and economic changes led to the toppling of the Bourbon monarchy and the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. The French Revolution was a big event that happened in France in the late 18th century. People were unhappy with the way the country was being run and wanted more rights and equality. They wanted a say in how their country was governed. The revolution began with the storming of the Bastille, a famous prison, in 1789. The French people started to make big changes, like getting rid of the king and queen, and declaring that all people should be equal. They created a new government called the French Republic. However, the revolution also had some violence and challenges. The French Revolution is an important event because it showed how people can come together to fight for their rights and bring about big changes in their country.

Concurrent historical events in the UK:

1. **Industrial Revolution:** This period of British history is usually dated from the mid-18th to mid-19th centuries. The Industrial Revolution saw the mechanisation of economic production and the mass migration of people from the countryside to cities. It led to increased prosperity, urbanisation, and the rise of a middle class.
2. **British Empire expansion:** In the late 18th century, the British Empire was expanding rapidly. The acquisition of new territories in Asia and Africa allowed Britain to develop a global trading network, which brought unprecedented wealth to the nation.
3. **American War of Independence:** The American War of Independence (1775-1783) was a crucial event in Britain's imperial history. Britain's defeat led to the recognition of the United States as a sovereign nation, which would become a global superpower in the 20th century.

Key historical events around the world:

1. **The American and French Revolutions:** The American Revolution (1765-1783) and the French Revolution were both major historical events that marked a turning point in the political history of the modern world. They marked the rise of republicanism and the demise of the monarchies across Europe.
2. **The Napoleonic Wars:** The Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) were a series of battles fought across Europe, a legacy of the French Revolution. The wars marked the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte as a military strategist and leader of the French Empire.
3. **The Age of Revolutions:** The French Revolution and the American Revolution set off a wave of revolutions across Europe and Latin America. These revolutions aimed to establish republics and dismantle the institutionalised power of monarchies across Europe.

Focusing on the interrelation of history is key to a thorough understanding of chronology. By studying the French Revolution alongside the concurrent events in the UK and around the world, students will comprehend how significant historical events can trigger a chain reaction that leads to other historical events, creating a domino effect.

### Further reading:

Fiction:

"The Scarlet Pimpernel" by Baroness Orczy - This adventure novel follows the exploits of a mysterious hero known as the Scarlet Pimpernel, who rescues French aristocrats from the guillotine during the Revolution

Non fiction:

"The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction" by William Doyle - This book provides a concise and informative overview of the causes and events of the French Revolution.