

A Tale of Two Cities

Historical Background Project



"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way..." These famous first lines from Charles Dickens' classic 1859 novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, represent the time period of the late 1700s, when social ills plagued both France and England. As you read the novel, you will need to understand the events of the French Revolution and the impact that it had on European society. Through this project, you will explore the turbulent atmosphere of the French Revolution.

Objectives: To understand the historical perspective in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

Task: Using the Internet, and some of the websites listed on the back, you will research the French Revolution and the impact it had on the era in which *A Tale of Two Cities* was written. You will choose **ONE** of the following assignments to present your findings.

Diary

Create a journal composed of **FIVE** entries from the perspective of an individual living in France during the revolution. Your entries can be from the perspective of a peasant, a noble, a revolutionary, etc. Just be sure to include specific details showing the events, places, and people relevant to the Revolution.

Newspaper Editorial

Write a newspaper editorial from the time period of the Revolution that identifies the factors contributing to the French Revolution (at least four factors: social, political, religious, etc.) and your opinion on who should be blamed for the devastating events that took place during the Revolution. You want to be persuasive in your article as means of gaining support.

Timeline

Develop a timeline of the French Revolution and include its impact on other countries. For example, think in terms of trade and travel with England or how the Revolution impacted relations between France, England, and the United States. You may create your timeline on a computer or handwritten.

Helpful Websites:

Historical Events:

<http://www.thenagain.info/WebChron/WestEurope/FrenchRev.html>
<http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/terrace/adw03/c-eight/france/frevents.htm>
<http://www.unlv.edu/faculty/gbrown/hist462/resources/chrono.htm>
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>
<http://www.historychannel.com/frenchrevolution/>

Famous Figures

<http://www.thenagain.info/WebChron/WestEurope/FrRevPeople.html>
<http://www.sparknotes.com/history/european/frenchrev/terms.html>
<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REV/LOUISXVI.HTM>
<http://www.historychannel.com/frenchrevolution/>
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>

Important Landmarks

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>
<http://www.historychannel.com/frenchrevolution/>
<http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/Paris/Monuments-Paris/Bastille.shtml>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Force_Prison
<http://www.glasssteelandstone.com/BuildingDetail/117.php>

Causes and Effects

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French-Revolution>
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>
<http://www.historychannel.com/frenchrevolution/>
http://www.thecorner.org/hist/f3/fr_revo_causes.htm
<http://www2.sunysuffolk.edu/westn/frenchrev.html>