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The French Revolution

The French Revolution: A Fight for Liberty and Equality

DEFINITION

The French Revolution was a period of radical social and political change in France from 1789 to 1799. It aimed to overthrow the monarchy and establish a republic based on the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

KEY CONCEPTS

Estates System

French society was divided into three estates: clergy, nobility, and commoners, leading to inequality.

Declaration of the Rights of Man

A fundamental document that proclaimed individual rights and the principles of democracy in France.

Reign of Terror

A period marked by extreme violence and political purges led by the Committee of Public Safety.

Napoleon Bonaparte

A military leader who rose to power after the revolution and established himself as Emperor of France.

Bastille Day

Celebrated on July 14, it marks the storming of the Bastille prison, symbolizing the revolution's start.

EXAMPLES

- The storming of the Bastille in 1789.
- The execution of King Louis XVI.
- The rise of Napoleon after the revolution.

MEMORY TIPS

- ★ Remember 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' as the revolution's motto.
- ★ Use the acronym 'DRM' for key documents: Declaration, Rights, Monarchy.
- ★ Visualize the Bastille as a fortress to recall its significance.

COMMON MISTAKES

- ✗ Confusing the Estates System with social classes in other countries.
- ✗ Overlooking the impact of the Reign of Terror on society.
- ✗ Misunderstanding Napoleon's role as merely a dictator.

QUICK RECAP

The French Revolution transformed France by abolishing the monarchy and establishing democratic ideals. Key events include the storming of the Bastille and the rise of Napoleon, which shaped modern Europe.