

Name _____

The Consequences of the French Revolution for the Monarchy and King Louis XVI

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. The financial crisis in France before the French Revolution was primarily caused by a combination of factors. France had accumulated significant debt due to its involvement in wars, including the American Revolutionary War, and its extravagant spending on the royal court and military. Additionally, the taxation system was inefficient and unfair, burdening the common people while exempting the nobility and clergy. The financial crisis severely impacted the monarchy's stability, as the government struggled to address the debt and maintain public order. This crisis played a pivotal role in triggering the revolution.
2. The storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, was a pivotal event in the early stages of the French Revolution. The Bastille was a symbol of royal tyranny and oppression, and its capture by the people of Paris signaled a challenge to the monarchy's authority. The event sent a clear message that the common people were willing to take action to assert their rights and resist the old regime. It contributed to the revolutionary atmosphere by emboldening the National Assembly and inspiring further protests and uprisings across France.
3. King Louis XVI's trial and execution were significant moments in the French Revolution. He was charged with treason for allegedly conspiring with foreign powers against the French Revolution. His execution on January 21, 1793, marked the symbolic end of the monarchy and a turning point in the revolution. It demonstrated that the revolutionaries were willing to hold the king accountable for his actions and signaled a commitment to radical change. The execution had both national and international ramifications, as it shocked Europe and contributed to the revolutionary fervor spreading to other countries.
4. Napoleon Bonaparte played a crucial role in the aftermath of the French Revolution. He rose to power through his military successes and political maneuvering, ultimately becoming First Consul and later Emperor of the French. Napoleon's rule brought stability to post-revolutionary France through the Napoleonic Code and other reforms. He expanded French territory through conquests but also implemented some authoritarian measures. Napoleon's impact extended beyond France, as his ambitions led to the Napoleonic Wars and significant geopolitical changes in Europe. His legacy is complex, as he both preserved and transformed elements of the revolution's ideals.

