



14 juillet

Bastille Day!

“La Fête Nationale”

- ... is the National Day of France and is celebrated on the 14th July. We call this day: "Bastille Day". In France, it is a national holiday which is celebrated all over the country.
- This special day gets its name from the event known as "The Storming of the Bastille" by the people of Paris on July 14th 1789. The Storming of the Bastille marked the start of the French Revolution, the end of the monarchy and the beginning of the Republic of France

L'argent



- In 1789, France was bankrupt - it had run out of money. King Louis XVI and his government had spent too much money.
- In France, the Royal Family and the court had spent money on luxurious living.
- Abroad, France had been involved in costly wars.
- In France, bad weather had ruined the harvests and there was not enough wheat and food grown to feed everyone. This caused a famine. Combined with high prices for the food that was available, all these things made the hungry citizens of France very discontented.
- There was a problem with the tax system. To help pay for the luxurious life at court and fighting overseas wars, the King had to increase taxes.
- The ordinary people paid 75% of their income in taxes to the nobles, the Church and the King.
- The Church and the rich nobles paid no taxes at all! It was hardly surprising that the ordinary people in France felt that this was very unfair.

Louis XVI

The King was Louis XVI. Louis was a very ordinary man - he did not really want to become King. He was not very interested in running the country, and left most of the work to his ministers. Unfortunately, they weren't very good at running the country either!



Marie Antoinette



Marie Antoinette was the Austrian wife of Louis XVI and the Queen of France. She was young, beautiful and elegant. Many people accused her of wasting money on jewellery, clothing and entertainment.

Pretending!



Here is a picture of part of the toy farm that Louis built for Marie Antoinette so she could play at being a farmer's wife.

La prise de la Bastille

- The Bastille was hated as it was a symbol of the power of the French monarchs, who could imprison people without a trial, for as long as they wished. It housed political prisoners - who had disagreed with the King and his way of running the country.
- Thousands of people stormed the Bastille - most were armed with little more than farming tools.
- The troops guarding the prisoners surrendered, and the prisoners were released. There were only four in the Bastille at the time and they were probably rather amazed at their good luck!



The remains!



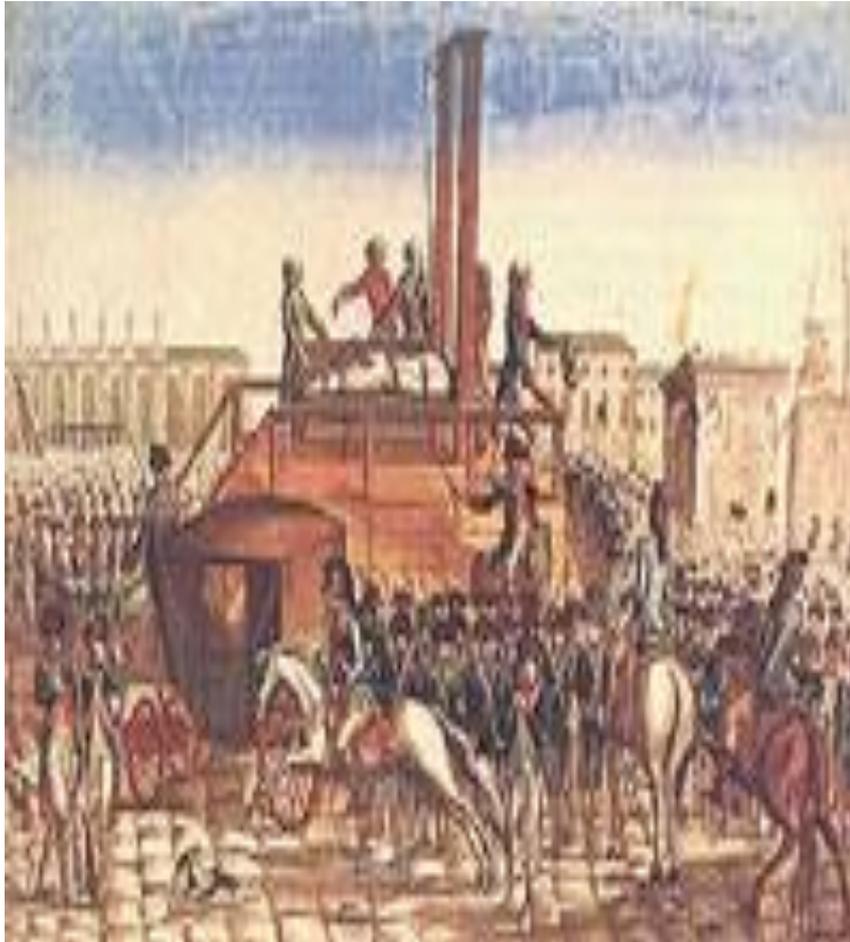
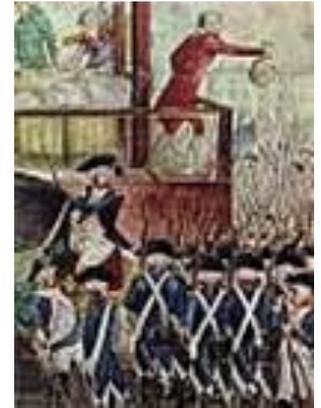
The successful attack on the Bastille became a very important event for French people, since it showed that they were able to challenge the King's authority. Today, this is all that remains of the Bastille!

What happened to the King and Queen?



The King and Queen were imprisoned with their children in The Conciergerie in Paris. The King, Louis XVI and his wife, Marie-Antoinette, met an unhappy end on the guillotine in 1793. Their children were sent back to Marie-Antoinette's family in Austria.

Who got the chop?



In the picture, Louis XVI mounts the scaffold to be guillotined and the executioner shows his head to a silent crowd. The guillotine was located in the Place de la Concorde in Paris.



Vive la Révolution

- Liberté
- Égalité
- Fraternité

La Marseillaise

- La Marseillaise, is the French national anthem, written in several hours by Rouget de Lisle, in 1792.
- When France declared war on Austria, voluntary soldiers from Marseille came to help, hence why it is called 'LA Marseillaise.

The declaration of the rights of man and citizen.

- Le 26 août 1789
- A mere six weeks after the [storming of the Bastille](#) and barely three weeks after the [abolition of feudalism](#), the Declaration put forward a doctrine of [popular sovereignty](#) and [equal opportunity](#):



Some examples from the Declaration.

- 1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
- 3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.

Feu d'artifice



Le Tricolore

- The Tricolore Flag was adopted. Its colours unified the old royal colours and those of the city of Paris.

Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

How is la Fête Nationale celebrated?

- In Paris, la Fête Nationale is commemorated with a military parade and a march past the President on the Champs Élysées. Thousands of people watch.
- There is a huge flag flown from the Arc de Triomphe and at night, there are fireworks and special celebrations in the city.
- The national holiday is important to all French people, and each town has its own special celebrations throughout the day, ending late at night with public balls in the street and traditional fireworks displays.

