**Year 11 ATAR Modern History | The French Revolution**

OUTCOMES OF THE REVOLUTION – SOCIAL IMPACT

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|  | **Social Impact** |
| **Sovereignty** | * A divinely ordained absolute monarch replaced by popular sovereignty.
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| **State** | * An administrative system of departments.
* The state was now synonymous with the nation.
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| **Law** | * A uniform legal system and procedures for all citizens, whatever their social background.
* The introduction of Justices of the Peace to meet demands for cheap and prompt resolution of the minor disputes.
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| **Social Relations** | * The abolition of seigneurialism and the nobility changed their social relationships form a culture of difference to one of negotiation based on personal achievement and economic power.
* France remained a distinctly hierarchical society in terms of wealth, power and opportunity, but the basis of political legitimacy had changed radically from birth to merit and wealth.
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| **Peasants** | * Land sales increased peasant holdings form one-third to two-fifths of the total.
* A lower tax burden, higher wages for agricultural labourers and greater incentives to increase production resulted in an improved standard of living (a decrease in mortality and an increase in life expectancy) for peasant families because they retained a greater proportion of their own produce, which also increased the safety margin when crops failed.
* The abolition of tithes and seigneurial dues, which were usually collected in kind, allowed peasants to shift their produce to other forms of agriculture, for example cattle-raising or wine making.
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| **Nobility** | * Remained the largest landowners despite the loss of seigneurial dues and the loss of land by emigres.
* Suffered the decade after 1789 that was politically and personally traumatic.
* Its prestige was lost
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| **Bourgeoisie** | * Emerged as far more powerful than before.
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| **Religion** | * The freedom to worship for all religions including the Protestants and Jews.
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| **Catholic Church** | * It’s authority over the lives of people and its dominance of public life was diminished.
* Loss of its property made the Church less economically independent but enabled it to refocus on its religious mission.
* For some Catholics, the traumatic experience of the revolution resulted in their renewed commitment to their faith.
* The end of the near-universal practice of churchgoing in France.
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| **Women** | * Inheritance rights meant daughters were equal to sons.
* Divorce law empowered wives.
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| **Ruling class and** **social elite** | * Composed of individuals representing the coincidence of economic, social and political power.
* Based on wealth.
* Deputies were elected from the wealthiest men in France, regardless of occupation or opinion.
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| **Weights and measures** | * A national decimal system of weights, measures and currency.
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| **Trade and commerce** | * The creation of a national market by the abolition of tolls and internal customs.
* The cotton, iron and coal industries benefited from protection form British imports.
* Wars and economic blockades resulted in a sharp decrease of French exports.
* The downturn in trade caused a decrease in the population of some regional centres.
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| **Taxation** | * Uniform taxes.
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| **Language** | * French became the only official national language, cementing the collective identity of the citizens.
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| **Elections** | * Male suffrage to elect national deputies.
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| **Privilege** | * All privilege based on birth was now abolished.
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| **Land** | * More than 10% of land was estimated to have changed hands as the result of the expropriation of the Church and the emigres.
* Landholding remained the major source of wealth in France.
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| **Economy** | * Institutional, legal and social changes established a foundation for an economy based on private ownership.
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| **Rural Society** | * The emergence of profit-oriented farms.
* Most nobles kept their lands intact, now employing labourers and deriving income form rents charged to tenants.
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