

1^oOIB History

French Revolution DBQ Assignment

Using the documents and your knowledge analyse how France was transformed by the Revolution in the period 1789-1904.

Discuss the values and limitations of the documents in your response.

Document 1: Taille, Impôts et Corvée, 1789



<https://www.akg-images.fr/archive/Taille--Impots-et-Corvee-2UMDHURBOTG2.html>

Accessed 15th September 2022, Artist unknown

The Taille was a very unpopular tax from which the First and Second Estates were exempt. The corvée refers to work the peasants were obliged to do for their feudal lords.

Document 2: Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, 26th August 1789

Article 1: Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.

Article 2: The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

Article 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.

Article 4: Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.

Article 5: Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.

Document 3: Establishment of French Civil Code, 1804

Napoleon set out to reform the French legal system in accordance with the ideas of the French Revolution. Before the Napoleonic Code, France did not have a single set of laws. Law consisted mainly of local customs, which had sometimes been officially compiled in “customals” (*coutumes*). There were also exemptions, privileges, and special charters granted by the kings or other feudal lords. During the Revolution, the last vestiges of feudalism were abolished and a new legal code was required to address changes in the social, economic, and political structure of French society... The Code recognized the principles of civil liberty, equality before the law (although not for women in the same sense as for men), and the secular character of the state. It discarded the old right of primogeniture (where only the eldest son inherited) and required that inheritances be divided equally among all children. The court system was standardized. All judges were appointed by the national government in Paris.

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory2/chapter/the-napoleonic-code/>

Accessed: 15th September 2021

Guidance for answering Document Based Questions (DBQs)

Document based questions always include the following instructions:

Using the documents and your own knowledge.... answer the question

and

Discuss the values and limitations of the documents in your essay

Firstly you must **use** the document in your answer (e.g. quote pertinent information from it, do not copy it word for word, and use it to inform and develop your response to the question). Next you must also use your **own knowledge** from your studies in your response – you cannot rely on only using information from the document.

Critical evaluation of a document

Discuss the values and limitations of the document (or documents) means you must **critically evaluate** the document:

- comment on the strengths/weakness of a document,
- consider the reliability of a document (e.g. reliability of newspaper accounts, cartoons)
- consider the objectivity/bias of the author

For history questions, also consider if it is a primary or secondary source.

Primary sources are contemporary, first hand, unedited information.

Secondary sources are second hand information, edited (e.g. a textbook).

Generally, the closer the information is in time and space to the event itself the more accurate or reliable it should be. However, you should keep in mind:

- * Who is the author?
- * Why was it recorded?
- * When was it recorded?
- * What is it?

Eyewitness accounts are the most obvious primary sources of information, but they can be selective, inaccurate, limited and undetailed. Personal experience

accounts are often invaluable but don't necessarily contain much factual information.

Factors that affect the reliability of a document:

Bias/Prejudice – occurs when one point of view is favoured over other points of view.

Propaganda – using half-truths or lies to convince the receiver of a certain point of view

Subjectivity (subjective) – occurs when one person's viewpoint is given, reflects an emotional input

Exaggeration – adding additional fictitious details – bigger/smaller, better/worse

Cross-checks – have the details been verified through another source

Evaluating cartoons

Cartoons are useful to historians when trying to understand how people or events in the past were viewed by contemporary observers.

- * They give insight into mood and attitude at the time, however
- * Cartoonists are not interested in a balanced view
- * They rely heavily on **caricature** and **exaggeration** to make their points
- * They assume the viewer has a certain amount of background knowledge in order to understand the image